

Parasha Meditation Devarim

Devarim:1:1-3:22

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Turning our Vision into Reality

Introduction

Shabbat Chazon – The Shabbat of Vision

During the Shabbat before Tish'a B'Av, Hashem grants us a vision of the third Temple.¹ Therefore, This Shabbat is called *Shabbat Chazon* – meaning the Shabbat of Vision. It is also named so, because our *haftorah* relates Yesha'yahu's "*chazon*" / vision of the destruction of Jerusalem. However, other shabbats are not named by the first word of their *haftorah*.² Therefore, it makes sense that this Shabbat is named for the vision of the rebirth that is destined to follow the destruction of the Temple.

What has mourning for the ancient Temple have to do with our lives today? Understanding the deeper meaning of Shabbat *Chazon* explains why we mourn for some building which was destroyed in the past. The Midrash explains that "every generation in which the Temple is not rebuilt, is considered as if that generation destroyed it."³ Therefore, mourning for the Temple is really about repenting for why we are not yet able to rebuild it. The traditional way of repentance is, first get rid of all the negative and then you will be ready to build a positive foundation as it states: "Depart from evil and do good."⁴ However, the Chassidic interpretation is "depart from evil" by means of "doing good." The highest kind of repentance for the fact that we are not yet on the level to rebuild the Temple is not through beating ourselves on the breast in confession, but rather to begin the "good" work of reconstructing the Temple in our minds and souls. Shabbat is a special day when our inherent eternal connection with Hashem is activated. There is never any mourning on Shabbat. On Shabbat we all rise up from mourning to delight in eating, drinking, festive clothes and new fruits. Therefore, the Shabbat preceding the 9th of Av is especially suitable for the kind of repentance of "doing good" through visualizing the Temple.⁵ The purpose of the vision is not just to comfort us, but to inspire us and elevate us to turn the vision of the Third Temple into physical reality.

In our time, visualization – the ability to see mental images in your mind – has become a very popular tool, for attracting success and prosperity. When you visualize a new reality, you internalize it in a way that merely thinking or talking about it won't accomplish. It becomes something that you know, that you can relate to and understand.⁶

¹ Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, also quoted in the Tzemach Tzedek's notes to Eichah, Nach, Vol. II, p. 1097, in the footnotes.

² Except for *Shabbat Nachamu*, "the Shabbat of consolation" in the name of the first word of *Haftorah V'etchanan*.

³ *Midrash Tehillim* 137.

⁴ *Tehillim* 37:27.

⁵ *Netivat Shalom, Parashat Devarim*, pp. 18-19.

⁶ See Remez Sasson, *Visualize and Achieve*, <<http://www.successconsciousness.com/books/visualize-and-achieve.html>>.



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Prime time for Seeking out Tzion – our Holy Temple

Rabbi Yochanan explained: “For I will restore health to you, and from your wounds I will heal you; this is the word of G-d. They called you an outcast, saying, ‘She is Tzion; none seek her.’”⁷ It says, ‘None seek her,’ from which we learn that she requires seeking.⁸ We are called to seek out, learn about, desire and visualize Tzion – our Holy Temple. This Shabbat every Jewish soul receive a glimpse of our world as a Divine home – a place where all G-d’s creatures will experience His presence. This Shabbat is the prime time for seeking out Tzion, and imprinting our super-conscious experience into our conscious awareness. Through our effort to visualize in our minds and meditate on what our soul is seeing, we have the ability to shift the energy and become empowered to realize our vision in actual reality. Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the seventh Rebbe of Lubavitch emphasized the importance of meditating this Shabbat on a vision of a House which will fuse the upper and lower worlds, spiritual and physical reality, in permanent union.

Visualizing the Pillars of the Temple Gate

I’m finding it a bit difficult to create the kind of meditation that will mirror the vision of our souls during Shabbat *Chazon*. On the one hand the above description is very abstract and difficult to bring down into clear steps of visualization. On the other hand, trying to visualize the intricate details of the building of the Temple also makes me feel lost. So I decided to focus on visualizing the two pillars that Shlomo built at the entrance of the Temple. “He erected the pillars for the hall of the sanctuary, and he erected the right-hand pillar and called it ‘Yachin’ – (establishment), and he erected the left-hand pillar and called it ‘Boaz.’ – (strength)”⁹

Yachin and Boaz – Signs of Eternal Strength

The names of these two pillars seem to describe vision rather than function. These pillars “were at the entrance of the Temple, and he called them by names to create a positive sign. He called one ‘Yachin’, an expression of establishment, that the Temple should be established forever ... ‘Boaz’ is an expression of strength, a contraction of ‘Bo Oz [strength within]’, meaning that G-d should place in it strength and endurance...”¹⁰ These two pillars represent the transition from mundane to holy. Their names express a vision and promise to everyone who would transit within their gate. They taught every Jew who passed between them, “We are invested with Divine strength, and we will be established forever. There will never come a time when entering this Sanctuary will fail to transport you into another realm, and there will never come a time when this portal will cease to be available to any and all.”¹¹

Their Everlasting Power Engraved within our Soul

However, King Shlomo’s glorious Temple was destroyed on Tisha b’Av nearly two thousand years ago, and with it these pillars of faith. So was the promise of the pillars names of faith in vain? Were the names of promise for eternal establishment and strength deceiving? There must

⁷ Yirmiyah 30:17.

⁸ Babylonian Talmud, Sukah 41a.

⁹ I Melachim 7:21.

¹⁰ Radak, I Melachim 7:21

¹¹ *Yachin and Boaz: The Pillars of our Faith* by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, Rosh Beit Midrash, Zichron Dov Yeshiva University Torah Mitzion Beit Midrash of Toronto.



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be a way to explain the eternal strength of these twin-pillars. Perhaps the everlasting power of Yachin and Boaz is engraved within our soul. Whenever the Temple would stand high in Jerusalem, these pillars had a physical expression, whereas during the two thousand years of exile, the spiritual energy of these pillars would continue to inspire every Jewish soul with vision and faith in the Temple's forthcoming rebuilding.



Meditation:

Sit down in a relaxing place and center yourself. Imagine inhaling Hashem's life-giving light and exhaling tension, pressure and worry.

1. Keep breathing slowly while inhaling יָ/ *Y-a*, exhaling יָיִן/ *chin* four times, think about strong establishment while you breathe.
2. Now keep breathing slowly while inhaling בּ/ *Bo*, exhaling בָּזָז/ *az* four times, think about inner strength and endurance.
3. Try to visualize the two great copper pillars at the opening of the Temple, towering nine meters high – about four and a half times the height of a person as you keep breathing.
4. Visualize the שושן/ *shoshan* –lily on top of each of the pillars with its six petals decorating the pillars Yachin on the right side of the Temple gate and Boaz on the left.
5. Visualize the glow of the full moon connecting with Yachin on the right, and the power of the Sun connecting with Boaz on the left.

6. Imagine the opening of the Temple and the light exuding from it. How does it make you feel? Can you feel how it lifts you up to a new you?
7. Imagine your heart expanding and really feeling the love for every Jew. Ask yourself, "What do I aspire to be? Which step do I need to take to get where I really want to be?"
8. Take your time to imagine going through the gate, really visualize the small figure of yourself entering between the tall pillars of Yachin & Boaz. What do you experience? Try to imagine the visions/colors, sounds, feelings, smells and even the taste of the air.
9. Make a resolution. Promise yourself and Hashem to make a positive change in your life that will bring you closer to who you really want to be, and help you bring about the rebuilding of the Temple, both in your heart and in the world.



Notes:

Shabbat *Chazon* is greater than any other Shabbat of the year. "There was never a holiday for Israel like the day that the Temple was destroyed." The reason can be understood in light of the Jewish law that a person is obligated to have relations with his wife before traveling on a journey.¹² The last moment before Hashem's *Shechina* (Indwelling presence) takes leave of Israel; there is a greater closeness and intimacy than ever. Let us take advantage of this Shabbat to visualize all the true goodness for which we are yearning!

¹² Rebbe Avraham Yehoshua Heshel of Apta, *Ohev Yisrael, Parashat Devarim*.

About Us



Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum, a native of Denmark, is Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. Chana Bracha also began her practice as a spiritual healer through Emuna, tefila and energy work.

For more than two decades Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin located in the Judean Hills of Israel offers a unique program to women of all ages and backgrounds to learn in a holistic Torah study environment that nurtures the mind, body and soul. Intensive textual study of Tanach, Halacha and Chassidut are woven together with creative spiritual expression, and connection with the land of Israel through organic gardening, herbology, Jewish sources of healing and sustainable living. Classes in Jewish mysticism, Chassidism and Jewish meditation are directed at the spiritual thirst so prominent in our times.

*In 2010 Rebbetzin Chana Bracha published her first book, *Women at the Crossroads: A Woman's Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion*.*

Chana Bracha has a married son and several granddaughters. She lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean hills, Israel.

If you are interested in:

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin contact info@berotbatayin.org or in Spiritual Healing with Rebbetzin Chana Bracha, please contact her at director@berotbatayin.org

or visit her blog: <http://rebbetzinchanabracha.blogspot.com/2010/11/emunah-healing-for-women.html>

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin – Holistic Torah Study for Women on the Land of Israel

At Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin, we weave together Torah studies with creative spiritual expression, connecting with the Land of Israel, and healthy, organic lifestyles. In the heart of the Judean Hills, with its serene beauty, our students experience an approach to Judaism that bridges mind, body and soul. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin is designed as a micro-community within the Village of Bat Ayin where women of all ages and backgrounds engage in intense Torah learning as part of an integrated, participatory approach to Torah living.

Come Learn With Us!

Beginner and advanced levels are offered for women of all ages and religious backgrounds. Whether your interest in Judaism has recently been ignited, or you are seeking a wider perspective, Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin offers the opportunity to improve your learning skills while strengthening your commitment to Judaism within the parameters of Halachah – all while engaging your inner creative spirituality, working the Land, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

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You have the unique opportunity to help us continue to build and amplify the light of Torah on the Land of Israel. With your help we can increase our ability to provide women an extraordinary Torah environment where they can build a solid Jewish foundation which will have an impact for generations to come.



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