

CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF CHAUTAUQUA

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Kabalah and Meditation – Week 1 – 2020

1. A song of David. The L-rd is my shepherd; I shall not want.
 - a. **A song of David:** The Rabbis said: Wherever it says: “A song of David,” he would play [his musical instrument] and afterwards the Shechinah would rest on him. It is a song to bring the holy spirit upon David. And, wherever it says: “Of David, a song,” the Shechinah rested on him [first] and then he recited a song.
 - b. **The L-rd is my shepherd:** In this desert where I am going, [therefore] I am confident that I will lack nothing.
2. He causes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters.
3. He restores my soul; He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
 - a. **He restores my soul:** My spirit, which has been weakened by troubles and haste, He will restore to its previous status.
4. Even when I walk in the valley of darkness, I will fear no evil for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff-they comfort me.
 - a. **Your rod and Your staff:** The pains that came upon me, and the support, that I rely upon Your loving kindness both of them will comfort me, for they will serve to expiate my iniquity, and I am confident that You will set a table before me. That is the throne.
5. You set a table before me in the presence of my adversaries; You anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows.
6. May only goodness and kindness pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the L-rd for length of days. (Psalms 23)
7. “G-d (Elokim) remembered Noah...”, (Genesis 8:1)
 - a. Rashi: This Name (Elokim) is the Name of the Attribute of Justice. It was transformed to Mercy through the prayers of the righteous.
8. MISHNA: One is obligated to recite a blessing for the bad that befalls him just as he recites a blessing for the good that befalls him.
9. GEMARA: What does it mean: ...Rava said: The mishna’s statement was only necessary to instruct us to accept bad tidings with the same joy with which we accept good tidings, [not to instruct with regard to which blessing to recite.]
- 10...Like this incident, when Rabbi Akiva was walking along the road and came to a certain city, he inquired about lodging and they did not give him any. He said: Everything that G-d does, He does for the best. He went and slept in a field, and he had with him a rooster, a donkey and a candle. A gust of wind came and extinguished the candle; a cat came and ate the rooster; and a lion came and ate the donkey. He said: Everything that G-d does, He does for the best. That night, an army came and took the city into captivity. It turned out that Rabbi Akiva alone, who was not in the city and had no lit candle, noisy rooster or donkey to give away his location, was saved. He said to them: Didn’t I tell you? Everything that G-d does, He does for the best.

(Talmud, tractate Berachot 60b)

- 11...it is specifically through these very hindrances and obstacles that an individual's power of self-sacrifice is revealed. This is why the power of self-sacrifice is more prominent during exile than it was while the Holy Temples existed. For the very concealment and difficulty of exile arouses the power of self-sacrifice. Accordingly, the very concealment that ostensibly hinders spiritual service actually strengthens it, up to and including the level of self-sacrifice. (Lekutei Sichos Vol. 20 page 35-36)
12. With ten tests our father Abraham was tested [by G-d] and he withstood them all—in order to make known how great was our father Abraham's love [for G-d]. (Ethics 5:3)
13. You have given those who fear You trials with which to be tested (elevated), in order to beautify [Your behavior] forever. (Psalms 60:6)
14. B”H, 27 Adar I, 5711,
Brooklyn
Greetings and blessings,

...I will repeat [my suggestion] again that you meditate in a manner that involves firmly affixing your thought to the concept that G-d rules over His world and over each and every one of us individually. As a natural consequence, this will remove worry from your heart. For G-d will certainly arrange your affairs in the best way possible; [how to manage them] is not our responsibility. What is relevant to us are the Torah and its *mitzvos* which were given to us and our free choice [in observing them].

I am not coming to develop a new idea. [On the contrary,] these matters are straightforward and known to all. If, however, [these ideas] are left on the abstract plane, and when it comes down to practice, one carries out his life as if his affairs are dependent on himself alone, one makes his life harder. In simple terms, this refers to one's life in this material world. In contrast, when one is permeated by the concept that “G-d is my shepherd,” then even the body and the animal soul feel that “I will not lack” [anything].

...As is well known, there is a difference between [the service of G-d] in response to challenges and the service [of G-d] involving the refinement [of the sparks of G-dliness invested in material existence], as explained in *Chassidus*.*

With blessing,

* [See the *maamar* entitled *Ki Menaseh*, 5708 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5708, p. 94ff.), *et al.*, where it is explained that, in general, man's service involves *birurim*, refinement of the G-dly sparks invested in the world's material substance. At times, however, a higher level of Divine service is demanded from man and he is presented with *nisyonos*, challenges. In such a situation, man is not asked to involve himself in the world and elevate it, but to persevere in his Divine service even though doing so involves a struggle. When he succeeds in such a challenge, he realizes that, in truth, the opposing forces had no substance. They merely appeared significant.]

(Letter from the Lubavitcher Rebbe)