

דברי מנחם

Diarei Menachem

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We cannot say that we were not warned! For in this week's Parsha we come across the blessings bestowed upon us for the good that we do and the curses (G-d forbid) that befall us on account of our misdeeds. Perhaps one of the first things that we have to accept is that this world has its fare of darkness and bad tidings.

The next concept to internalize, in this respect, is that all those sad and tragic events that transpire have their source, ultimately, in the way that Hashem has fashioned our world. For is it not written that, "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil" (Yeshayahu 45:7).

It is important to note that the admonitions in the Parsha increase in severity as the narrative unfolds. It is as if Hashem is giving us warnings; today, we might call them "wake-up calls". Insofar as these terrible tidings are punishments, ultimately they are intended to induce us to repentance which activates Hashem's attribute of mercy.

The Midrash (Sifra) recounts that there is a chain reaction that leads us on the slippery slope, whereby one's ceasing to study Torah and to observe Mitzvot leads to a disdain of Torah scholars, all the way down to a denial of G-d's role in running the world. No wonder then that we conclude this week's Parsha with the call to be strong and to be strengthened: "CHAZAK, CHAZAK V'NITCHAZEIK!"