

IN SEARCH OF DIAMONDS

By: Rabbi Yosef Vogel

Most human beings want to make an impact. We would like to add value to the world around us and to the lives of the people that we know and beyond. The methods to achieve this are many and the question is where we should focus our efforts.

Over sixty years ago the Lubavitcher Rebbe presented his vision to a small group of people at a chassidic gathering in Brooklyn NY.

On the surface what was said seemed very simple, however on a deeper level the message was quite revolutionary and with very powerful practical consequences.

In very simple yet eloquent language he said the following: every single Jew is a mine filled with great deposits of diamonds, gold and silver and that it was incumbent on every single Jew as an emissary of G-d to not only discover those deposits within oneself but even more importantly to help every other Jew discover their own unique deposits on infinitely valuable resources.

You might ask that this is all good in theory, however in reality things seem to be a little different. When I dig, you may say, not only don't I find diamonds or gold, on the contrary, the only thing I find is dirt.

Now that's a good question. To which the Rebbe would respond by saying that if you find dirt it's because you are looking in the wrong places and wearing soiled lenses which impair ones vision. If you want to find those very valuable commodities, you have to know both how to look and also where to look. And once you have mastered that skill you are guaranteed to find those diamonds both inside of you and every other Jew with whom you come into contact.

In other words the Rebbe was saying, that the world's most valuable asset is human capital. It is not bricks and mortar, it is not land, it is not even the vast (but limited) raw materials that exist beneath the ground. It is the human being in general and the Jew in particular who possesses an inherent and infinite capacity to do change the world by doing good. It is our job, the Rebbe said, to become skilled in the ability to uncover this capacity that exists inside each and every one of us.

The brilliance of this vision is even more profound. For by summing up the core and purpose of Jewish life in this way, the Rebbe was in fact empowering each and every Jew - irrespective of their observance or affiliation – with a responsibility that is well within the reach of every individual. One does not have to be a scholar or a visionary or a communal leader, all that is needed is the belief that within every Jew there exists an infinite deposit of diamonds waiting to be uncovered. It is our mission and privilege as Jews to unlock this potential.

6th July
17th Tammuz 5772

Sedra: Balak

Shabbat Begins: 21.05pm
Shabbat Ends: 22.22pm