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Bullets and Blessings

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If this has ever happened to you, you know how horrible you feel. While you are stressed out over some major work or family-related problem, your ten-year-old does something slightly mischievous. Under normal circumstances you would respond with a warning and a smile.

However, because of the problem that has been tormenting you and of which your child obviously knows nothing, you let fly with a shocking outburst of anger. The minute you see the look of fear crossing the little face, you wish you could take it all back.

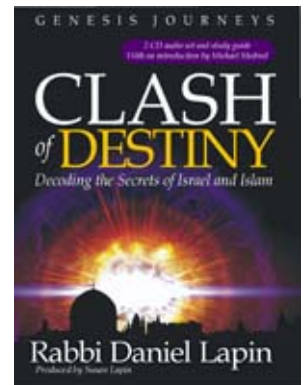
Your spouse who witnessed the interchange says, "Gosh, you're on a bit of a hair-trigger today, what's up?" A hair-trigger is an expression taken from how guns work. On many weapons, a gunsmith can adjust how hard one must pull the trigger in order to fire the gun. For certain purposes such as a military sniper rifle, a very light pull might be desirable. We'd say that the rifle possesses a hair-trigger. It takes almost no effort to make it fire.

Many circumstances reflect this situation in which a tiny effort produces enormously significant consequences. For instance, the engineer-in-charge at the colossal Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River can reach across his desk, push a button and instantly release enough water to irrigate over half a million agricultural acres in Washington State. Like a firearm, a tiny effort produces disproportionate results.

In both cases the power already exists; a human merely releases it. In the case of the gun, the power is in the form of the gunpowder's chemical energy contained in the shell ready to be detonated. In the case of the dam, the power derives from the billions of gallons of water restrained behind the five-hundred-foot high dam wall.

There is another example of massive power which can be released by a human performing a trigger action. I refer to the power of God's blessing.

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Many Jewish families, including ours, sing Psalm 128 each Saturday night as we bid farewell to the Sabbath with a short ceremony, called havdalah. Here is the entire psalm:

1: *Happy is everyone that fears God and walks in His ways.*

2: *You will eat of the work of your hands,
you will be happy and it will be good for you.*

3: *Your wife will resemble a fruitful vine inside your house;
your children will be like olive shoots around your table.*

4: *This is how a man who fears God will be blessed.*

5: *God will bless you from Zion and
you will see the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life.*

6: *And you will see your children's children. Peace upon Israel.*

Ancient Jewish wisdom reveals the symmetry that King David embedded into this psalm.

Verse 1 is general while verses 2 and 3 address us. Then verse 4 is general while verses 5 and 6 again address us.

The first verse presents a general rule. Happiness and fearing God are interlinked.

Verses 2 and 3 address us directly: You will work productively and things will go well for you and for your family.

Verse 4 gives us another general rule: Fearing God is a trigger that releases blessing.

Then verses 5 and 6 inform us that God will bless you from the ancient source of blessing, Zion and Jerusalem. Not only will you be blessed, there is a promise of joy in future generations.

This is hinted at in the very word for blessing itself. Each Hebrew letter has a numerical value. The root of blessing looks like this:

ברכ

These three letters are the only ones whose numerical value is double the letter that precedes them in the Hebrew alphabet. In other words they suggest a multiplying effect. Fearing God and walking in His way triggers blessings with powerful results that can expand eternally.

The potent blessings given to Abraham's sons, Isaac and Ishmael, still echo through generations. Those blessings influence their descendants and lie behind every apocalyptic Middle East news headline. [Clash of Destiny: Decoding the Secrets of Israel and Islam](#) reveals these mysteries and offers a glimpse into tomorrow. It is now available in download format as well as by mail and is specially priced through Friday, 4pm, PST.

Susan's Musings



Rabbi,

I am a Christian and have considered cremation.

Is there anything wrong with cremation?

Sincerely,

Nancy A.

[See Rabbi Lapin's Answer](#)

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This week's musing - [One Night of Fun?](#)

Post comments and feedback at www.susanlapin.com

Last Tuesday night was just plain fun. Endless pundits have analyzed Scott Brown's victory but for me, while I am very concerned about the many issues confronting our nation, the bottom line was straightforward: David vs. Goliath. An easily dismissed, good guy brought down an arrogant, inflated and heavy-handed party machine. Now comes the hard part...

To read the rest of Susan's Musings click [here](#)

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