A respected Korean pastor once sat in my office and asked me a deep question: “What are the keys to transferring leadership from one generation to the next?” This question is being asked by ministry leaders around the world.

Other Asian Christians with passionate hearts for Israel, also perceive this same need. As a result, they initiated a multinational conference, held in Taiwan in August, 2017, with the theme “From Generation to Generation/M’Dor L’Dor.” They invited me to be one of the speakers.

To my great joy they also invited a spiritual son of mine, Guy Cohen. The organizers said, “We want both you and Guy, so that we can understand the dynamic of a spiritual father and son. How does a father prepare a son for ministry responsibility? What are the keys, the tensions, the pitfalls, and the blessings of such a relationship?” To top it off, Guy decided to bring his son, Ofek, who had recently celebrated his bar-mitzva. Thus, we represented three generations of Israeli believers.

The conference, held in Taiwan’s hi-tech capital, Hsin-Chu, was attended by dedicated believers from Japan, Korea, India, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and China. Guy and I were received with more love and respect than was possible to absorb. There is a hunger in the Asian body of Messiah, to build real relationships with Israel’s Messianic Jews. Their heart is to learn, to intercede, to serve and to support the reawakened community of Yeshua in His land. Truly, we experienced the fulfillment of what the prophets of Israel saw:

“Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock’” (Jeremiah 31:10).

“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you”’” (Zechariah 8:23).

How were Guy and I to present the richness of our relationship, developed over a period of 20 years? We decided to “team teach.” We alternated, speaking honestly of our trail together. The approximately 1000 Asian believers who took part in this remarkable event (called Asia Messianic Forum) received our message at a far deeper level than I had dared to hope. Here’s some of what we shared in Taiwan:

**Generational Contrasts**

Obviously there are differences from one generation to the next. In addition, Guy and I come from very different backgrounds. I find this both challenging and rewarding.
I was born in the USA, the son of a mixed marriage (Jewish and Gentile). Guy was born in Israel, of Moroccan Jewish and Yemenite Jewish families. Before coming to Yeshua my knowledge of Judaism was minimal. Guy spent five years in ultra-Orthodox education studying rabbinic texts in the original Hebrew.

Contrasts between generations of leadership can and should enrich both sides - causing us to learn from each other.

The Unfolding of Friendship: A Relay Race

Chronicling the history of our relationship was unexpectedly moving. We reflected on the gradual building of trust and the many stages we went through in growing together. Guy has always pursued goals with intensity. This was no exception. We found our hearts woven together as we faced ascending challenges. From being a learner (disciple) he became an assistant. Then, years later, he planted a congregation with my supervision.

I see these intergenerational relationships as a relay race. The runner who receives the baton must begin running before the hand off. As he gains the same speed as the previous runner, the baton is placed in his hand without him even looking back. Quite a metaphor, eh? This is, in fact, the holy, down-to-earth process required to “win the race” of God’s kingdom taking root in the earth.

Prophetic Timing: Why is this Important Now?

We are walking into the end-times. Malachi’s conclusion stresses the next generation. “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse” (Malachi 4:5, 6).

God knew that we would be challenged in our faith before an increasingly secular/idolatrous world. He knew that a dynamic transfer would be needed to raise up leadership for the last generation before Messiah’s return.

There is a leadership vacuum. Many, including secular voices, are asking “Why the vacuum? What must we do to produce leaders?” I believe there are no shortcuts. It’s not about inventing more programs. Rather, the key is the time-honored method of investing life, of pouring ourselves — our time/love/instruction and example of how to live — into spiritual sons and daughters.

Overwhelming Response

When we finished the presentation, Guy and I invited the fathers and mothers to seriously consider making such an investment in the youth of their nation. To our amazement, scores of men and women from the nations of Asia came forward. I then challenged the younger believers present. “Are you ready to receive the relay baton from these spiritual moms and dads? If so, come and face them, so they can bless you.” The sons and daughters came up to receive the loving prayers of veteran believers from their nations. There were virtually no empty chairs after the youth came forward. It was one of the most remarkable responses to a message I’ve seen in over 40 years of ministry.

I believe this simple key of intergenerational love, respect, and dedication will transform nations. May the Lord energize and focus us to engage in His own method of expanding the kingdom—now, preparing for the day.
AN INVITATION TO

Of all the symbols related to the biblical “High Holidays” – a stoplight is not traditionally among them. Apples dipped in honey, pomegranates, shofars and even fish are images which classically signify the season. Rosh Hashanah (the “head of the year”) is the first of these fall holidays. Following it come the ten Days of Awe – days of preparation, prayer and self-evaluation leading up to the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.

These Days of Awe are like a red light. Imagine you are driving. You have a destination, maybe a meeting – and you are in a hurry. Suddenly a traffic light turns red, and you have to stop. The red light does not “take into consideration” your destination or how soon you need to get there. The red light causes you to do three things:

1. to allow those on the intersecting road to pass through,
2. to stop and evaluate your journey, and
3. to “congregate” with other cars at the light and then leave the light in one flow.

None of us like to stop at a red light! Most of us sit at the light, annoyed that we even had to stop. But everyone agrees that in order for traffic to flow with few accidents, we need to stop at red lights. The High Holy Days are an invitation to stop, to consider where we are heading, who we are going with, how we are getting there and most of all, who is directing our journey. We pause and acknowledge the Director of our path and the Author of our life. This is a time when we look back to the starting point of creation and acknowledge the Beginner and the Finisher of our life’s race.

Stop, Listen and Praise

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a Sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of horns, a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD’” (Leviticus 23:24-25).

The Shofar (ram’s horn) is a silent object until we breathe into it. Then it receives a voice – the sound of a trumpet. In Genesis 2:7 God formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed into him; and he became a living soul. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord – including shofars and humans.

New Traditions

At Tents of Mercy we have developed two Rosh Hashanah traditions. First of all we prepare ourselves to give to the needy in our city. This year we were blessed with groups from Maine and Texas who helped us prepare and distribute 600 baskets of holiday food items. Following these distributions it is endearing and deeply touching to see residents walking around town with our bags in which they received the holiday food. Our city is being marked with the heart and love of Yeshua for His people. Secondly, we gather as a network of congregations and blow the shofar in recognition of the Author of our life.

As the shofar sounds, heaven is opened. God in His mercy closes what is passed and opens a fresh page in the Book of Life. May He clear the path before you as you enter into the next stage of the journey!

AVI T.
We are now in the season of autumn’s biblical High Holy Day festivals. These days are full of joy and celebration…but they also lead us to times of soul searching and repentance.

We find atonement in Yeshua the Messiah, and He is the treasure of our life together. At the same time we are commanded to repent for our sins, to examine ourselves, turn toward Him, and then to walk the next stretch of our lives in a better way.

Now I want to apply this corporately. Many times there are differences of opinion in the body of Messiah concerning theological teaching and related issues, what to do or not to do and what is relevant. These arguments often tear us apart and waste valuable time that could be spent in bringing forth fruit together as one body in the Lord Yeshua.

God looks at mankind both individually and collectively. At Mount Sinai we see an interesting thing when reading in the original Hebrew. [In Hebrew there are several words for “you” – some plural and some singular.] God spoke to the gathered people of Israel, not in the plural as many (“you all”), but rather in the singular as one man.

“I am the Lord your (singular) God, who brought you (singular) out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You (singular) shall have no other gods before Me” (Exodus 20:1-3).

From this we draw two conclusions. Firstly, unity needs to be a unity of the people standing before God as one whole – even with all of our differences and variety. Secondly, at the same time, the individual, personal relationship between each one of us with our Father in heaven, is still unique. Each of us still has our different personalities and unique qualities. Everyone grows and transitions at his own pace, and we should not judge or argue about the way in which each one develops and moves forward. Rather we need to find common ground in the Lord who is the absolute truth, and to deepen our roots in Him. All the rest will be added in due time.

“Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same…” (Philippians 3:15 - 16).

This scripture emphasizes that each of us follows his own path and that we are not to judge each other nor each other’s congregations. In order to continue to walk we must be faithful where we are at any given moment. This is relevant in our stages of understanding and spiritual growth.

When we reach common ground, we put disagreements aside and focus on being effective together as one body “…avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless…” (Titus 3:9-10). We produce good fruit abundantly and bring joy to the Lord Who sent us to do good deeds for all His creatures. At the same time we must not cease learning and growing and engaging in a healthy “conversation” accompanied with love.

As we celebrate the fall festivals, I want to encourage us all to stop being judgmental and to start becoming a people who are bearing good fruit for the kingdom of God together as one, as is expected of us.

YEVGENI STANUKEVITCH