

The Wisdom of Rabbi Proschwitz



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February, 2018

Rabbi Proschwitz (aka Chubby Cheeks) teaches that:

All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players; and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages.

His friend, Shakespeare, told him that. And it is something he believes but does not quite understand.

So -----, Rabbi wants to teach his students what this could mean. But first he needs to put on his sacred robe and hat and read from his scroll because he can't remember everything, can he? Always keep in mind he is a small Rabbi hamster. And that is important to consider when you hear his words. Big thoughts need to be kept simple.

Now Shakespeare said strange things. Before he died in April of 1612 at his home in Stratford, England (whew, that was a long time ago) in his will he left his wife, Anne Hathaway, "his second best bed". Of course, Rabbi Proschwitz wonders what that means but realizes only Shakespeare and Anne know. Understandably, some assumptions must be left alone. And this leads us to Lesson Number One from Rabbi's Book of Wisdom.

Listening to gossip might lead to trouble. In the case of Shakespeare, the talk of the town was and still is that he was not a man named

Shakespeare, but a man named Sir Francis Bacon. Things are all mixed up here. Oh, to the Lesson-

Lesson # One -

Don't tell stories that might not be true. They may be but don't always assume this. As we have said, assumptions might prove to be trickery.

Every now and then, Rabbi must take a break from these profound teachings and walk outside into the morning air. Listening to the Carolina Wren sing his beautiful awakening song he recalled a poem by W. H. Auden (*As I Walked Out One Evening*).

And down by the brimming river/ I heard a lover sing/ Under an arch of the railway/Love has no ending.

Just substitute a few words and places (and time) and the story is the same.

Lesson # Two:

Love is found everywhere - In the green valleys, in the ocean breeze, in the soothing rhythms of great musicians, in the seeds underground soon to sprout to fill the world with beauty and nourishment. It lies beneath our headaches and worries, our desperate acts to live in this world of confusion and distress. It is there, clear as crystal, solid as a rock, and lovely as a dewdrop sparkling in the sun. Love is always present but often disguised as other than that. But look for it – always, always.

Rabbi has lived a long life but never ages. He moves back and forth in time, transforming himself from young and innocent to

wise elder and teacher. He knows of what he speaks and he lives as if this is so.

Let the hour chime, the light wane/ The days go away, I remain. – Ron Padgett, 1942

Lesson Three –

Days and weeks, months and years pass so quickly, like falling stars we cannot catch. Only in the now. Lose yourself in that one moment, gaze into that splendid night of heavenly darkness and light and choose to follow the light.

Rabbi Proschwitz is in awe of this Lesson as it is written in his Book of Wisdom. He knows he is not the Source but the Messenger - which is still an honor and good enough for him.

He tells his students that to lose sight of the shooting star from the night sky is not really a loss but a return to the place where it might be born again in another form. How charitable is that?

When the Rabbi takes off his robe and hat, he is Chubby Cheeks again in his real world as he walks in the woods seeking new experiences. However the Rabbi (his Best Self) has told him that if you have everything you want or desire in front of you, you might not become a seeker of new things. So that takes us to -

Lesson Four –

You may not find what you are looking for in life. But in your search for that which has not been found you might discover something even more beautiful.

Chubby Cheeks remembers when he lost his cherished white hat. Somewhere along the forest walk it fell off his head into the leaves. He retraced his steps but the hat was nowhere to be seen. Perhaps a little critter found it and put it on his head to keep warm and dry. If so, this loss was worth it. And Chubby C. did see something far more beautiful! Look carefully at the gorgeous bright orange mushrooms. They were not there a few days ago but today the gift was given.



Leaving recollections aside, once again Chubby Cheeks adorns his hat and robe to complete his teaching. He begins to seriously consider if he is wise or brave enough to share Lessons Five and Six. In a lifetime we are offered challenging opportunities to learn and experience that which will complete the purposes of this life incarnation. And, after much pondering, Lesson Five arises on the horizon in his tiny, curious mind.

Lesson Five –Life is a gift to make new the old, worn out habits, thoughts and actions of past times. Don't waste your time on this Earth doing mean spirited and unimportant things. Everything in life matters. Know that. Live that.

Let us now return to Lesson One, to revisit Shakespeare's quote paraphrased that all life is a stage and we are simply players acting different parts. Dear Shakespeare (or Francis) you have written a cosmic truth. It is a statement that has neither boundaries nor limitations. It is an idea which illuminates the process of evolution for growth of the human race. It can be interfered with as we have seen but this will only delay the lighted path we seek to travel. It will not stop it. Why is this? The Rabbi tells us it is because the human spirit is brighter and purer than the vestiges of the personality which often entangle us in the briars of the journey towards greater brilliance. And the next and last Lesson is this:

Lesson Six –

You must write your own Lessons in life by listening to your inner Teacher. When you do so, all the parts and stages of discipleship living will fall in place and you will sooner or later arrive at your

promised destination. This is set in stone so faltering a few times won't hurt. Imperfection is allowed.

It is now time for Rabbi Proschwitz to remove his robes for good and return unadorned (except for the hats) as Chubby Cheeks. He likes it better that way. He goes back to the forest with its overshadowing trees, flowing streams and its fallen logs upon which he sits to rest awhile. And there is where his stories begin – and end.



PS – Why six lessons? Did you notice the six-pointed star on the Rabbi's scroll?