

Torah Tidbits

כ"ז אלול תשפ"א 4TH SEP '21 ISSUE 1435

פרשת נצבים - ראש השנה - פרשת וילך

PARSHAT NITZAVIM - ROSH HASHANA -

PARSHAT VAYEILECH - PIRKEI AVOT 5 - 6

ב"ה

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40
Years
OU ישראל



SPECIAL ROSH HASHANA SECTION:
Laws and guidance to make your Chag more meaningful and joyous
page 81



Hearken Unto the Cannons!

Rabbi Shmuel Goldin
Faculty, OU Israel
Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation
Ahavath Torah, Englewood NJ
page 38

OU Israel
wishes you and
your family a
Shana Tova
filled with blessings
and good health!

שנה טובה
ומתוקה

YERUSHALAYIM IN/OUT TIMES FOR SHABBAT PARSHAT NITZAVIM

Candles 6:25PM • Earliest 5:41PM • Havdala 7:37PM • Rabbeinu Tam 8:16PM

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REMINDERS

- The custom is not to recite Mevarchim Hachodesh the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah.
- Reminder to light a 48 hour candle before Rosh Hashanah to provide a flame for second night lighting. On the second night we light from a pre-existing flame only and the match or helper candle should be put down (in a safe place) to go out on its own.

KIDDUSH LEVANA

- 3 days after the Molad is Motzei Shabbat (September 11). The opinion of the Rema is to recite Kiddush Levana on Motzei Yom Kippur.

CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



OTHER Z'MANIM



JERUSALEM

Ranges 11 days Wed.- Shabbat
Sept. 1 - 11 / 24 Elul - 5 Tishrei

Earliest Tallit and Tefillin	5:23 - 5:30
Sunrise	6:15 - 6:21
Sof Zman Kriat Shema	9:27 - 9:28
Magen Avraham	8:49 - 8:51
Sof Zman Tefila	10:30
<small>(According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)</small>	
Chatzot (Halachic Noon)	12:39 - 12:35
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha)	1:11 - 1:06
Plag Mincha	5:43 - 5:31
Sunset (Including Elevation)	7:07 - 6:54

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CANDLES	EARLIEST	NITZAVIM	HAVDALA	VAYEILECH	
				Candles	Havdala
6:25	5:41	Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	7:37	6:16	7:27
6:42	5:43	Aza area (Netivot, S'derot, Et al)	7:39	6:33	7:29
6:43	5:42	Beit Shemesh / RBS	7:37	6:34	7:28
6:40	5:41	Gush Etzion	7:37	6:31	7:27
6:42	5:42	Raanana/ Tel Mond/ Herzliya/ K. Saba	7:38	6:33	7:29
6:41	5:42	Modi'in / Chashmona'im	7:37	6:32	7:28
6:42	5:43	Netanya	7:39	6:33	7:29
6:41	5:42	Be'er Sheva	7:38	6:32	7:28
6:42	5:42	Rehovot	7:38	6:33	7:29
6:25	5:42	Petach Tikva	7:38	6:32	7:29
6:41	5:41	Ginot Shomron	7:37	6:32	7:28
6:32	5:42	Haifa / Zichron	7:39	6:22	7:29
6:40	5:41	Gush Shiloh	7:36	6:31	7:27
6:42	5:43	Tel Aviv / Giv'at Shmuel	7:39	6:33	7:29
6:40	5:41	Giv'at Ze'ev	7:37	6:31	7:27
6:40	5:41	Chevron / Kiryat Arba	7:37	6:31	7:27
6:43	5:43	Ashkelon	7:39	6:34	7:30
6:42	5:42	Yad Binyamin	7:38	6:33	7:29
6:35	5:40	Tzfat / Bik'at HaYarden	7:37	6:25	7:27
6:39	5:40	Golan	7:36	6:30	7:26

Rabbeinu Tam (J'lem) - 8:16PM • next week - 8:07pm

Times According to MyZmanim (20 min. before sundown in most cities,
40 min. in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva, 30 min. in Tzfat/Haifa)

*See page 89 for Rosh Hashana Candle lighting Times



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DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY



RABBI AVI BERMAN

Executive Director, OU Israel



In an effort to create a safe environment for OU Israel employees, we implemented an extra level of caution that if someone in one's home is in Bidud, the employee should work from home until their family member/s are out of Bidud. As such, I had five days last week when I was out of Bidud from Covid, but my wife was still in Bidud. Like with so many areas in life this was bittersweet. It was obviously hard for my kids and I to have my wife in Bidud and we would not have chosen it, but it also provided us with special bonding opportunities. I had more time to be with my children over their summer vacation, and we worked together on Kibud Em while preparing and bringing meals to my wife.

These five days also provided me with a beautiful opportunity to see my children and parents bask in each other's company and be reminded of an important lesson. The most vivid example was one afternoon when my children were playing in our backyard intex pool. For safety reasons, we have it in a locked area of the yard, and I was outside with them when my mother came to visit them. Instinctively, she picked up a beach ball and threw it in, and then she and my children continued to throw the ball back and forth for about 20 minutes having a great time together. Later that evening, I asked my children how

they enjoyed the pool, and without missing a beat they responded "especially playing with Savta."

So often, as a parent and educator I focus on making sure my children and the youth in our OU Israel youth programs have other children their age to socialize with, and socializing with peers is indeed important. Yet, this afternoon by the pool reminded me how much children thrive when they are given love and attention from adults – parents, grandparents, neighbors, youth counselors, aunts and uncles. As we embark on a new school year and a Chagim season full of Corona related uncertainties, let's take a moment to think about our friends, relatives, and neighbors who could benefit from a visit, meal invitation, or opportunity to bond. While we must be sensitive to everyone's health and comfort levels, there are children in and out of Bidud and adults who have been alone for extended periods of time that would mutually benefit from the opportunity to connect.

This past Motzei Shabbat my family and I had another beautiful intergenerational activity. Every year for many years, we have a Berman family grape picking Motzei Shabbat. Having a backyard in Israel is a tremendous *zechut*, and we are blessed with three grape vines in ours. The grapes are ready at the end of the summer, and our grape picking often falls out on Motzei

Shabbat of Parshat Ki Tavo in which we read the Torah portion about Bikkurim, Terumot and Maasrot. Looking at the grapes from our own yard provides us with a special connection to this Parsha and feelings of Hakarat Hatov to Hashem for the incredible mitzvah of Yishuv Eretz Yisrael and the Mitzvot Hatluyot BaAretz.

This year, we were *zoche* to experience another promise from the Torah come to fruition. Hashem promises Bnei Yisrael that the Land will give forth double the amount of produce the year before Shemita, and indeed we picked more than double the amount of grapes that we had last year. This was a great example to show my children that when Hashem promises something, in this case extra produce, we can always count on Him to fulfil those promises.

Since my family and I are not big wine drinkers, we make grape juice out of the grapes that we pick. We measure the juice into 1 liter quantities, freeze in ziploc bags, and take out a liter each week for Shabbat as well as for the Chagim. This grape juice is absolutely delicious and natural (no preservatives). In making our own grape juice, we learned an interesting Halacha. When you make wine, grape juice, or olive oil, you don't take Terumot and Maasrot when you pick the fruit. Rather, because of its elevated status, you fulfil those mitzvot when the liquid (wine, grape juice, or olive oil) is ready. This is in contrast to other fruits you make juice out of, such as oranges, lemons, grapefruits, etc., where you take Terumot and Maasrot from the fruits prior to making the juice.



We also know the Halacha that turning grapes into wine/grape juice elevates the Bracha from Borei Pri Haetz to Borei Pri Hagafen. In the hierarchy of blessings, Hagefen is considered a more important Bracha than Haetz. This is the reason that we make Kiddush on a cup of wine/grape juice. The goal of Kiddush is to elevate the day of Shabbat or Yom Tov, just as we elevated the grapes to a higher spiritual status.

I want to take this Rosh HaShana edition to wish each and every one of you an uplifting and inspiring year. May all of us merit to have a year full of health, happiness, and Yiddishe Nachat from ourselves and all those surrounding us.

Wishing you and uplifting and inspiring Shabbat and Rosh HaShana,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Avi', written in a cursive style.

Avi,
Executive Director, OU Israel
aberman@ouisrael.org

NITZAVIM



ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



Rabbi Reuven Tradburks Director of RCA Israel Region

With Parshat Nitzavim we begin 4 very short parshiot that are the conclusion of the Torah. Although the parsha has but 40 verses, the emotional impact is hard to match.

The Talmud says that the curses of Parshat Ki Tavo should be read before Rosh Hashana. We don't do that; Nitzavim is always read on the Shabbat before Rosh Hashana. It would seem that the harshness of the calamities that would befall us as outlined in Ki Tavo, while true, are difficult. What mood do we want to face Rosh Hashana with? The harshness and seriousness of the doom that will result from lack of loyalty to the Torah? Or the optimism

May the Torah learned
from this issue of Torah Tidbits
be in loving memory of לע"נ

חנה בת משה ע"ה
Chana Ehrlich a"h

beloved wife, mother
and grandmother

on her 7th yearzeit - כ"ח אלול

The Ehrlich and Stodel families

and encouragement of the prediction of return of our parsha? The fear of Ki Tavo is tempered by the hope and assurances of Nitzavim.



1st aliya (Devarim 29:9-11) The Brit of Arvot Moav. All the people are gathered, men, women, children, water carriers and woodchoppers to enter the covenant.

We have had covenants before in the Torah. A covenant was made with Avraham; another at Sinai. Striking in this covenant is 2 things: specific people and the word Hayom that appears 4 times in 6 verses.

A deal or covenant made with a nation could allow us to hide: it doesn't apply to me personally, but to the nation. You all take care of it. Moshe avoids hiding: you are all included, men, women, common folk. And this is not ancient, old news. It is today. As if Moshe is saying, "I am not making this covenant on my today – but for you, readers, this covenant is being made on your today." All of you are in; present and future generations. No hiding.



2nd aliya (29:12-14) To enter the covenant; that G-d will be our G-d and we will be His people. As was said to the Avot. This covenant is with you here today and those not here.

The Talmud understands this covenant to be the one that binds all Jews with the notion that "all Jews are guarantors for each other – kol Yisrael areivim zeh b'zeh". It would seem that it is the extension here of the covenant to not only people present but to all future generations that generates

the idea of mutual responsibility. We are all bound by this covenant spanning generations.



3rd aliya (29:15-28) Should there be amongst you those chasing idols, rationalizing that they are free to follow their hearts; the consequence of the special bond of this covenant is that your disloyalty, your chasing idol worship will be met with Divine wrath. The destruction of this Land because of your unfaithfulness will be so profound people will look at it and be shocked by its utter desolation. They will recognize that your disloyalty resulted in this desolation and in your being tossed out of this Land.

The description of the Land of Israel as a Land flowing with milk and honey is hard for us Westerners; we know what green, lush landscape looks like and the present Land of Israel does not look that way. The rocky, grassless, treeless topography of Israel is jarring to our eye – we are used to grass and trees. Especially as it is the Land flowing with milk and honey. Something bad happened to it. The Ramban maintains that the Land is not permanently sentenced to being barren and desolate; as long as it

איזהו חכם? הרואה את הנולד
Who is wise? He who foresees the future.
פרקי אבות ב', ט'



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from this issue of Torah Tidbits
be in loving memory of
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Rifka Edelstein a"h
beloved wife, mother, grandmother
and great grandmother
on her 12th yearzeit - 25 Elul
The Rosner, Edelstein, Sokoloff families

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remained in non Jewish hands, the topography remained rough. Once returned to Jewish hands, the green returns. Privileged are the eyes who have seen the green return.



4th aliya (30:1-6) When you are cast out of the Land to the 4 corners of the earth, you will take to heart your fate – and return to G-d. He will return to you, returning to you to gather you from the far flung places. Even if you are at the ends of the earth, He will gather you and take you from there, to bring you back to this Land.

This is the most beautiful paragraph in the entire Torah. It is so good it is split in the middle, to savor it. It is called the Parshat HaTeshuva, the section of Return. The word “return” appears 7 times. We to Him. He to us. We take a step, He steps to us. But our first return is described as “we take it to heart”. Heart murmurings are the beginning of teshuva. And He is our cardiologist, He knows our murmurings, as faint as they may be. And Gives us the strength, the will to build on our deepest pinings. He dances with us, but waits for us to take the first step. Then He gives us more strength and more. Just take that step.



5th aliya (30:7-10) And He will implant in you love of Him. And you will return to Him. And He



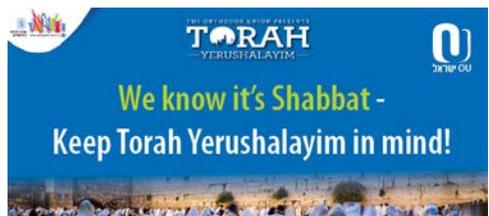
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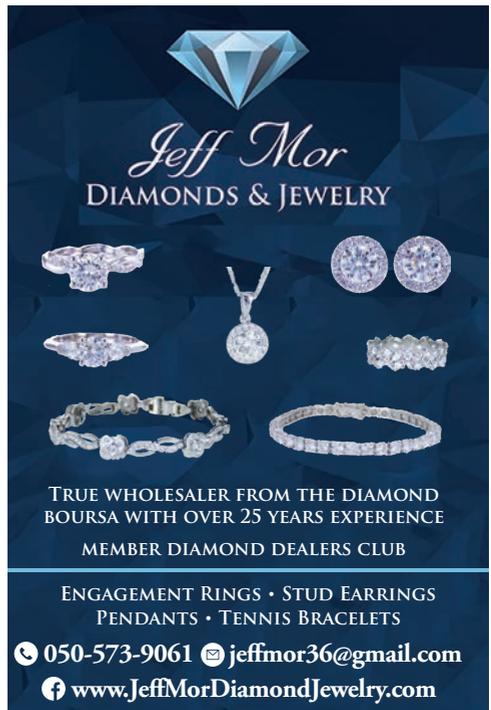
will be thrilled with you because your return is with sincerity, a full heart.

Moshe chooses words in Sefer Devarim that are words of affection. There is lots of love, love of Hashem, lots of heart, all your heart. Words like life, good, cleave to Hashem, today. Moshe does not want to be only the teacher of halacha. He wants to be the teacher of our inner life as well. We need tutelage in not only what to do, but also in what and how to feel. Our feelings: let Him in, with love, with the deepest feelings of your heart, every day. The language is noticeably more emotive than the rest of the Torah. Moshe, as he is departing as leader, and from this world, desperately wants to convey his deepest feelings and to reach our deepest emotions.

6th aliya (30:11-14) For this Mitzvah is not sublime, as if needing one to ascend the heavens or cross the ocean to retrieve it. Rather it is very close; on your lips and in your heart.

This short paragraph is the most beautiful in the Torah (ok, tied for the lead). It may be understood to be referring to the entire Torah. As if to say, "I know the Torah looks daunting; but it is not, it is the real you." Or it could be referring to Teshuva. As if to say, "Change looks daunting; but it is not change, it is the real you." We have this expression,

לעילוי נשמת
 ר' חיים צבי בן אליהו ז"ל
Dr. Henry C. Romberg z"l
 Beloved husband, father,
 and grandfather - we miss you!
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the pintele yid. That deep down, everyone has a connection to G-d and to the Jewish people. That is exactly what this verse says; we don't need to adjust, to adapt to a belief in G-d. We need to be sensitive to, to plumb our real selves, to dig deep and discover ourselves. It is close: on our lips and in our heart.



7th **aliya (30:15-20)** Life and good, death and evil lie before you. Life is a consequence of loyalty to the mitzvot. Destruction awaits lack of loyalty. Heaven and earth stand witness: life and death, blessing and curse lie before you. Choose life.

These words are the last of Moshe's long speech. He will move on to speak of transition of leadership. But these last words are like a tincture, a dilution. After all is said and done, the stakes of this grand venture of mitzvot is nothing short of life and death. And with these words, Moshe prepares to take leave of the people. Nothing more to say. Choose life.

HAFTORAH

YESHAYAHU 61:10-63:9

This week's *haftorah* is the seventh and final installment of a series of seven "*Haftarot* of Consolation." These seven

haftarot commence on the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av and continue until Rosh Hashanah.

The navi begins by describing the great joy that we will experience with the Final Redemption, comparing it to the joy of a newly married couple.

Yeshayahu then states that he will not passively await the Redemption: "For Zion's sake I will not remain silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be still, until her righteousness emerges like shining light..." He implores the city of Yerushalayim itself not to be silent until G-d restores Yerushalayim and establishes it in glory.

The *haftorah* then declares Hashem's promise to redeem Zion. The *haftorah* describes the punishment that will be meted out to Edom and the enemies of Israel.

Yeshayahu concludes with the famous statement:

"In all [Israel's] afflictions, He, too, is afflicted, and the angel of His presence redeemed them..."

Like a loving father who shares the pain of his child, Hashem too, shares the pain of His people, and awaits the *Geulah Shlemah* along with them. ■



STATS

51st of the 54 sedras; 8th of 11 in D'varim
Written on 87 lines in a Torah (rank: 52)
4 Parshiyot; 1 open, 3 closed 40 p'sukim - ranks 53 (10th in D'varim)
657 words - ranks 51 (8th in D'varim)



MITZVOT

No Mitzvot in Nitzavim

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 In loving memory of
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THE PERSON

BY RABBI DR. TZVI HERSH WEINREB
OU Executive Vice President, Emeritus

IN THE PARSHA

This Season's *Leitmotif*: Return!

We have all been brought up to believe in the importance of progress. For the past several centuries, the goal of philosophy, religion, culture, and certainly science has been to develop ideas and practices which advance humankind beyond its present state.

Poets have acclaimed the superiority of progress; one of them, Robert Browning, put it this way:

“Progress, man’s distinctive mark alone,
Not God’s, and not the beasts’: God is, they
are; Man partly is, and wholly hopes to be.”

Browning is certainly not the only person who enthusiastically endorsed progress to the point of seeing it as the hallmark of humanity, and as that which sets him apart from and above the animal world, and even distinguishes him from the Almighty Himself.

So forceful has been the emphasis upon progress that any attempt to return to past ideas and methods is almost universally criticized as backward and primitive,

and, at the very least, old-fashioned. The antonym for progress, regress, is a word with strong negative connotations. No one wants to be seen as regressive.

At this time of the year, just before Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, the theme of progress is definitely in the air. We all hope to progress to a better year, to a year of growth and development. Indeed, many synagogues conclude the old year and begin a new one with the refrain, “May this year and its curses be gone, and may a new year with its blessings begin!”

No one seems to wish that the coming year be one of status quo. Certainly, very few hope for a return to the past.

And yet, it is precisely “return” that our Torah promulgates, especially at this time of year.

This week’s Torah portion, *Parshat Nit-zavim*, contains the following passage (*Deuteronomy* 30:1-10). I provide a literal translation of some of the verbs, in accordance with their Hebrew root:

“When all these things befall you—the blessing and the curse...And you take them to heart [literally, and you *return* them to your heart]...And you will *return* to the Lord your God, and you and your children will heed His command...Then the Lord your God will *return* your captivity...He will

return you from all the nations...You will return and again heed the voice of Lord... For the Lord will return to delight in your well-being...Once you return to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul."

In the space of just several verses, the word "return" appears, in one form or another, at least seven times! It was in the writings of the great Nechama Leibowitz that I first learned the importance of a word that appears repetitiously in the course of a single text. We are to think, she wrote, of such a term as a *leitvort*, a leading word, a word which gives us a clue and leads us to the deeper meaning of the text at hand.

Even my limited familiarity with the German language was sufficient for me to draw the comparison between *leitvort*, a word that identifies the theme of an entire passage, and the word *leitmotif*, which is a thought or melody that pervades a literary work or a musical composition.

The ten days that begin on Rosh Hashanah and conclude on Yom Kippur are known as the *Aseret Yemei Teshuvah*, which is usually translated as The Ten Days of Repentance. But *teshuvah* does not really mean repentance, and it certainly does not mean penitence, as it is frequently rendered. Rather, it means return.

The *leitmotif* of this entire season is the Torah's call for us to engage in profound introspection and to return to a place which we have lost, forgotten, or abandoned. It is not progress that is demanded of us during the next several weeks; it is, oddly enough, regress.

It can legitimately be asked, return to what?

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I would like to provide an answer or two to that question, inspired by the book that I find so personally meaningful at this time of year. It is *The Lights of Teshuvah*, by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook.

Rav Kook emphasizes that over the course of time, we each develop as individuals, and in that process isolate and alienate ourselves from others, from our families, from the people of Israel. To return means to return from our self-centeredness to the collective, from the *prat*, or single unit, to the *klal*, or all-encompassing group. There can be no *teshuvah* unless the person reconnects with larger components of society. We all, in our heart of hearts, know the ways in which he has cut himself off from significant people in his life, and each of us knows how to reconnect to those individuals.

My experience as a psychotherapist has taught me that there is another destination to which it would pay for us to return. I speak of our childhood. As we mature and develop in life, we grow in many positive directions. But we also move away from our innocence, from our childish enthusiasm, from the hope and sense of potential that

characterizes the young, but which older individuals eschew cynically.

People find it very rewarding to, if only in their imaginations, return to their youth and recapture some of the positive qualities that they left behind as they made their adult choices.

Finally, we all need to return the Almighty, to His Torah, and to His Land.

No matter how intense our worship of Him during the past year was, we can return to Him for an even stronger connection.

No matter how studiously we explored His Torah, we can return to even deeper levels of its impenetrable depth.

No matter how loyal our faithfulness to the land of Israel was, we can return to even greater loyalty and more courageous faith.

And no matter what our relationship was with others in our lives, we can draw upon our own inner sources of generosity and compassion and enhance those relationships in a spirit of genuine *teshuvah*, of returning to those others, and, in the process, to our true selves. ■

A SHORT VORT

BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES

Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

“Reah Natati Liphanecha hayom et hachayim ve’et hatov” (Devarim30:15)

“See I have placed before you today that which is life and that which is good”

The Kli Yakar (Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim Luntschitz 1550-1619, Rabbi of Prague) asks an intriguing question. Usually, life is granted to those who prove their worthiness through acts of goodness- “Tov”. Therefore, wouldn’t it make more sense to reverse the order of the “life” and the “good”, “See I have placed before you today the “good” which results in “life”?”

He answers that they live their lives in order to simply enjoy the world’s pleasures. They accept to be good for the sake of life. We, however, should see life has a higher goal, one to serve Hashem. We should not see “life” as a purpose but rather a means to the end. One should live their life to do “the good”.

Now the Pasuk is clear. Take advantage of “life” to emphasize and accomplish “the good.”

Shabbat Shalom and K’tiva V’chatima Tova ■



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Dedicated by
Dr. Robert Sreter DDS., M.S.

Defeating Death

Only now, reaching Nitzavim, can we begin to get a sense of the vast, world-changing project at the heart of the Divine-human encounter that took place in the lifetime of Moses and the birth of Jews/ Israel as a nation.

To understand it, recall the famous remark of Sherlock Holmes. "I draw your attention," he said to Dr Watson, "to the curious incident of the dog at night." "But the dog did nothing at night," said Watson. "That," said Holmes, "is the curious incident."¹ Sometimes to know what a book is about you need to focus on what it does *not* say, not just on what it does.

¹ Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Adventure of Silver Blaze."

What is missing from the Torah, almost inexplicably so given the background against which it is set, is a *fixation with death*. The ancient Egyptians were obsessed with death. Their monumental buildings were an attempt to defy death. The pyramids were giant mausoleums. More precisely, they were portals through which the soul of a deceased pharaoh could ascend to heaven and join the immortals. The most famous Egyptian text that has come down to us is The Book of the Dead. Only the afterlife is real: life is a preparation for death.

There is nothing of this in the Torah, at least not explicitly. Jews believed in *Olam HaBa*, the World to Come, life after death. They believed in *tehiyat hametim*, the resurrection of the dead.² There are six references to it in the second paragraph of the Amidah alone. But not only are these ideas almost completely absent from Tanach. They are absent at the very points where we would expect them.

² *The Mishnah in Sanhedrin 10:1 says that believing that the resurrection of the dead is stated in the Torah is a fundamental part of Jewish faith. However, according to any interpretation, the statement is implicit, not explicit.*

The book of *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes) is an extended lament at human mortality. *Havel havalim... hakol havel*: Everything is worthless because life is a mere fleeting breath (Ecc 1:2). Why did the author of Ecclesiastes not mention the World to Come and life-after-death? Another example: the book of Job is a sustained protest against the apparent injustice of the world. Why did no one answer Job to say, “You and other innocent people who suffer will be rewarded in the afterlife”? We believe in the afterlife. Why then is it not mentioned – merely hinted at – in the Torah? That is the curious incident.

The simple answer is that obsession with death ultimately devalues life. Why fight against the evils and injustices of the world if this life is only a preparation for the world to come? Ernest Becker in his classic *The Denial of Death* argues that fear of our own mortality has been one of the driving forces of civilisation.³ It is what led the ancient world to enslave the masses, turning them into giant labour forces to build monumental buildings that would stand as long as time itself. It led to the ancient cult of the hero, the man who becomes immortal by doing daring deeds on the field of battle. We fear death; we have a love-hate relationship with it. Freud called this *thanatos*, the death instinct, and said it was one of the two driving forces of life, the other being *eros*.

Judaism is a sustained protest against this world-view. That is why “No one knows where Moses is buried” (Deut. 34:6) so that his tomb should never become a place of

3 New York: Free Press, 1973.



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pilgrimage and worship. That is why in place of a pyramid or a temple such as Ramesses II built at Abu Simbel, all the Israelites had for almost five centuries until the days of Solomon was the *Mishkan*, a portable sanctuary, more like a tent than a temple. That is why, in Judaism, death defiles and why the rite of the Red Heifer was necessary to purify people from contact with it. That is why the holier you are – if you are a Kohen, more so if you are the High Priest – the less you can be in contact or under the same roof as a dead person. God is not in death but in life.

Only against this Egyptian background can we fully sense the drama behind words that have become so familiar to us that we are no longer surprised by them, the great words in which Moses frames the choice for all time:

See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil ... I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life, that you and your children may live. (Deut. 30:15, 19)

Life is good, death is bad. Life is a blessing, death is a curse. These are truisms for us. Why even mention them? Because they were not common ideas in the ancient world. They were revolutionary. They still are.

How then do you defeat death? Yes there is an afterlife. Yes there is *techiyat hameitim*, resurrection. But Moses does not focus on these obvious ideas. He tells us something different altogether. You achieve

immortality by being part of a covenant – a covenant with eternity itself, that is to say, a covenant with God.

When you live your life within a covenant something extraordinary happens. Your parents and grandparents live on in you. You live on in your children and grandchildren. They are part of your life. You are part of theirs. That is what Moses meant when he said, near the beginning of this week's parsha:

It is not with you alone that I am making this covenant and oath, but with whoever stands with us here today before the Lord our God *as well as those not with us here today*. (Deut. 29:13-14)

In Moses' day that last phrase meant "your children not yet born." He did not need to include "your parents, no longer alive" because their parents had themselves made a covenant with God forty years before at Mount Sinai. But what Moses meant in a larger sense is that when we renew the covenant, when we dedicate our lives to the faith and way of life of our ancestors, they become immortal in us, as we become immortal in our children.

It is precisely because Judaism focuses on this world, not the next, that it is the most child-centred of all the great religions. They are our immortality. That is what Rachel meant when she said, "Give me children, or else I am like one dead" (Gen. 30:1). It is what Abraham meant when he said, "Lord, God, what will you give me if I remain childless?" (Gen. 15:2). We are not all destined to have children. The Rabbis said that the good we do constitutes our *toldot*, our

posterity. But by honouring the memory of our parents and bringing up children to continue the Jewish story we achieve the one form of immortality that lies this side of the grave, in this world that God pronounced good.

Now consider the two last commands in the Torah, set out in parshat *Vayelech*, the ones Moses gave at the very end of his life. One is *hakhel*, the command that the King summon the nation to an assembly every seven years:

At the end of every seven years ... Assemble the people – men, women and children, and the stranger living in your towns – so that they can listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words of this law. (Deut. 31:12)

The meaning of this command is simple. Moses is saying: It is not enough that your parents made a covenant with God at Mount Sinai or that you yourselves renewed it with me here on the plains of Moab. The covenant must be perpetually renewed, every seven years, so that it never becomes history. It always remains memory. It never becomes old because every seven years it becomes new again.

And the last command? “Now write down this song and teach it to the Israelites and make them sing it, so that it may be a witness for me against them” (Deut. 31:19). This, according to tradition, is the command to write [at least part of] a Sefer Torah. As Maimonides puts it: “Even if your ancestors have left you a Sefer Torah, nonetheless you are commanded to write one for yourself.”

continued on next page...

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What is Moses saying in this, his last charge to the people he had led for forty years, was: It is not sufficient to say, our ancestors received the Torah from Moses, or from God. You have to take it and make it new in every generation. You must make the Torah not just your parents' or grandparents' faith but your own. If you write it, it will write you. The eternal word of the eternal God is your share in eternity.

We now sense the full force of the drama of these last days of Moses' life. Moses knew he was about to die, knew he would not cross the Jordan and enter the land he had spent his entire life leading the people toward. Moses, confronting his own mortality, asks us in every generation to confront ours.

Our faith – Moses is telling us – is not like that of the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, or virtually every other civilization known to history. We do not find God in a realm beyond life – in heaven, or after death, in mystic disengagement from the world or in philosophical contemplation. We find God in life. We find God in (the key words of Devarim) love and joy. To find God, he says in this week's parsha, you don't have to climb to heaven or cross the sea (Deut. 30:12-13). God is here. God is now. God is life.

And that life, though it will end one day, in truth does not end. For if you keep the covenant, then your ancestors will live in you, and you will live on in your children (or your disciples or the recipients of your

kindness). Every seven years the covenant will become new again. Every generation will write its own Sefer Torah. The gate to eternity is not death: it is life lived in a covenant endlessly renewed, in words engraved on our hearts and the hearts of our children.

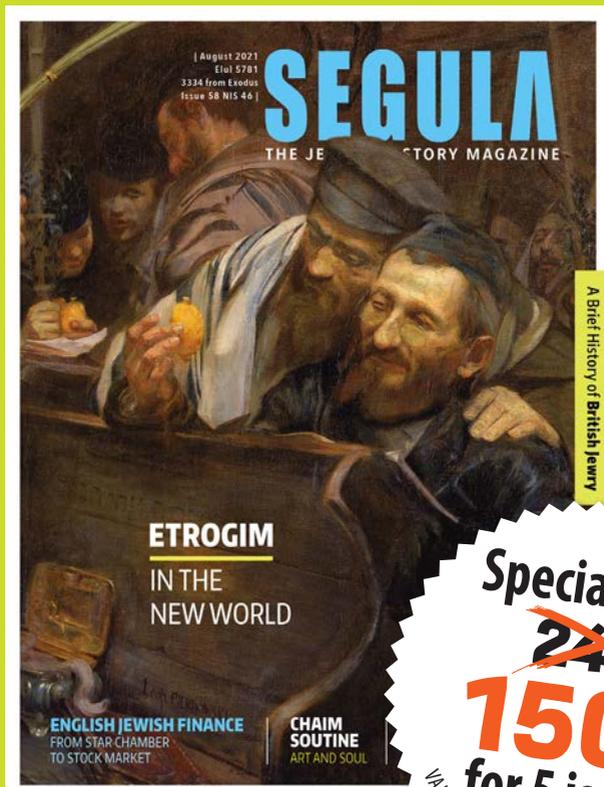
And so Moses, the greatest leader we ever had, became immortal. Not by living forever. Not by building a tomb and temple to his glory. We don't even know where he is buried. The only physical structure he left us was portable because life itself is a journey. He didn't even become immortal the way Aaron did, by seeing his children become his successors. He became immortal by making us his disciples. And in one of their first recorded utterances, the Rabbis said likewise: Raise up many disciples.

To be a leader, you don't need a crown or robes of office. **All you need to do is to write your chapter in the story, do deeds that heal some of the pain of this world, and act so that others become a little better for having known you. Live so that through you our ancient covenant with God is renewed in the only way that matters: in life.** Moses' last testament to us at the very end of his days, when his mind might so easily have turned to death, was: Choose life. ■

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“*Sos Asis BaShem!*”

“I shall rejoice in G-d!”

No longer do we hear Hashem urging the prophets to comfort Israel.

No longer do we read how Israel weeps because G-d had abandoned them!

Nor does she claim that all consolation has failed.

Hashem need no longer reassure her that He will comfort her, or that she should rejoice and bask in His light.

All of these were the opening messages of the first six haftarat of consolation. But it is not the message of this seventh and final haftarah of comfort. Yishayahu opens with no words urging solace or promising a glorious future. He expresses no reassurance

that the nation would comforted by G-d. Not at all.

This selection from the 61st, 62nd and 63rd prakim of Sefer Yishayahu is the culmination of previous chapters of comfort because it is not G-d or the prophet who proclaims the message – it is Israel herself! Which is precisely why this is the high point of this series of haftarat – because the people have accepted the message, they have felt the comfort that Hashem promised and have recognized the redemption.

We might think that recognizing the arrival of geula would not be among the final stages of redemption. If anything, we would rightly believe that identifying Yad Hashem, the hand of G-d, as He miraculously begins to fulfill His prophecies would be something we would realize in the very early stages of the redemptive process. But at the end will there be “Sos Asis”??

Hard to believe after two-thousand years! Hard to believe after almost one-thousand years of promising “Ani Ma’amin”, how we believe that the Mashiach, the geula, will be coming!

Or is it really so hard?

When a spouse returns home after a late meeting in the office....When a child returns after driving the car for the first time after getting a license....When a soldier

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wearily enters his home after a military campaign...What is the common response of those who waited impatiently when they hear that knock on the door?

“I don’t believe that you’re finally here!”

So what about those who waited for two-thousand years?

An oppressed people, thirsting for relief, cannot believe when it finally arrives. So often in the past, they have believed that the “knock on the door” would bring their long wait to an end. Only to be disappointed over and over again.

“Sos Asis” is a reaction that comes with time. It will not be recognized by everyone during the first stages of geula and, perhaps, not even in the middle. Some will make aliya early on and prepare the land for the return of the exiled. Some will return in time to defend the land from the enemies. Some will return to join their people and contribute to binyan ha’aretz in any way they can. And some will take longer.

We rejoice at all stages of the redemption. But the “Sos Asis” will come only when all will recognize that Hashem returned to His land and, perhaps, it is time for them to do so.

And only then can there be a complete rejoicing when all will declare: “Sos Asis BaShem”. ■

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Teshuva Is for Everyone

Parshas Nitzavim deals with the mitzva of Teshuva. The Ramban interprets the following pasuk as the source for the mitzva of Teshuva:

כִּי הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם לֹא־נִפְלְאָת הוּא מִמֶּךָ וְלֹא־רַחֲקָה הוּא:

For this commandment which I command you this day, is not concealed from you, nor is it far away. (Devarim 30:11).

This pasuk is referring to a mitzva that is not out of reach. We are able to do teshuva and return to the correct path. This is consistent with the previous *pasuk*, which uses the term “*ki tashuv*”- when you return!

Often we think of teshuva as being performed by a person who committed a serious transgression. In fact, this is something that is to be contemplated by each and every individual. Introspection is necessary in order to constantly improve upon

ourselves and to become better human beings.

A story is told of Rav Saadia Gaon who informed his student of the following experience. Rav Saadia Gaon was traveling and stayed at an Inn overnight. In those days, there was no internet or Rebbe cards and although Rav Saadia’s reputation preceded him, not everyone was familiar with how he looked.

When Rav Saadia arrived at the Inn, he was treated well by the owner of the Inn, given a comfortable room and a tasty meal. When he was checking out, another guest recognized Rav Saadia and greeted him with the utmost respect. Upon witnessing this, the owner of the Inn, was mortified and apologized. He told Rav Saadia ‘If I had known who you are, I would have treated you better.’ Rav Saadia was puzzled. He informed the Innkeeper that the service he received was impeccable and that nothing was lacking. The Innkeeper replied: ‘Yes, but had I known that you are Rav Saadia Gaon, I would have given you super treatment!’

Rav Saadia explained that he learned an important lesson from the Innkeeper. Rav Saadia told his student: “Every single day I have a deeper appreciation of HaKadosh Baruch Hu; therefore, every single day of my life I should spend doing *teshuvah* because yesterday I didn’t truly appreciate

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God's greatness." In other words, something was lacking in my *avodas Hashem* yesterday, given what I know today.

We cannot be content with our level of spirituality. There is always room for improvement. Life is like climbing up a downward escalator. If we are not constantly climbing, we will descend! If Rav Saadia Gaon felt he could get closer to Hashem each day, then we have plenty of room to improve our relationship with Hakadosh Baruch Hu as well.

As we reflect upon our challenges and accomplishments over the past year, we should also carefully consider concrete new goals so that we can further enhance our *limud torah*, our *tefilla* and our acts of *chesed*. Determine what new shiur we plan to attend, or new sefer we intend to learn. How we will make an effort to catch minyan more often, or undertake to better understand the *tefilla*. Consider ways of assisting those less fortunate than us by both by volunteering our time and allocating our ma'aser money effectively.

As we are told in the parsha – it is up to us to engage in the act of teshuva. "*B'ficha ubilvavcha laasoto*" (it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can fulfill it) Devarim 30:14. May we be successful in identifying the areas in which we can improve, so that we can achieve *teshuva shlema!* ■

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Totality of Teshuvah

“It is something that is very close to you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can keep it.” (Devarim 30;14) Ramban maintains that this refers to the mitzvah of *teshuvah* that is accessible to all and can be achieved by anyone. *Teshuvah* is about returning to the core of one's relationship with Hashem. The *Sefarim Hakedoshim* explain that the letters in the word *teshuvah* itself hints at the construct and attitude one needs to effectively follow through the *teshuvah* process.

ת is for "תמים תהיה עם ד' אלקיך" – indicating complete dependence on Hashem no matter what the future might bring. When one understands that his challenges and uncertainties are part of his individual path designed by Hashem, he can connect with Hashem profoundly despite the unknown.

ש is for "שויתי ד' לפני תמיד" - place Hashem before you at all times. The *Rema* begins *Orach Chayim* with this directive to feel as if we are in standing in Hashem's presence throughout our entire day. The word *שויתי* is related to the word *שויו*, equality.

No matter what we are doing or in what situation we find ourselves, we must recognize that Hashem accompanies us every step of the journey.

ו is for "ואהבת לרעך כמוך" – signifying the imperative to love every Jew with the understanding that we are all Hashem's children. The *Tanya* teaches (*chapter 32*), that the divine is found within each of us. Indeed, all our souls are connected at the root. When we relate to others on a soul level, we experience a unique relational closeness and ultimately significant closeness to Hashem.

ב is for "בכל דרכיך דעהו" - in all your ways know Hashem. The *Chazon Ish* explains that one should daven to Hashem to provide whatever he lacks. Nothing is ever too big or too small for Hashem to hear. When one has private *tefilot* and requests says the *Chafetz Chaim*, one should turn in the direction of the *Beit Hamikdash* where all *tefilot* ascend to heaven. In acknowledging that all our needs are endowed by Hashem, we become more deeply connected to Him and feel a greater sense of gratitude for all that Hashem does for us.

ה is for "הצנע לכת עם אלקיך" - walk humbly with Hashem. Many of the monumental moments in *Tanach* occurred in private settings. There was no audience to witness the *akeidah*, the struggle between Yaakov

Avinu and Eisav nor the Kohen Gadol's entrance into the Holy of Holies. Judaism highlights the private relationship between man and G-d. It is knowing that He is aware of our actions, however private they are and the awareness that we don't perform for public opinion. When we do a mitzvah with only Hashem as our witness, we cement this special holy bond. This is the essence of return; it is returning to this state of attachment and intimacy.

It is noteworthy that four of the five *pesukim* alluded to in the word *teshuvah* are associated with one's relationship with Hashem. There is only one *passuk* that suggests one's interpersonal relationships, yet if one would remove the letter *vav* from the word, it would result in two words, *תב*, that imply weakness. Only when we invest in treating others (Hashem's children) with sensitivity, can we expect to successfully connect to Hashem in a lasting, meaningful way.

To merit a favorable judgement on *Rosh Hashanah*, The Tolna Rebbe proposes developing a positive relationship with others. Whether displaying patience with a possibly annoying seatmate or not being judgmental of those around us, we can find ways to stretch ourselves *bein adam lechavero*. Additionally, we can look around our *shul*, identify those who are suffering, feel their plight and offer a heartfelt *tefila* on their behalf. When we strengthen the *vav* of connectedness, *Rosh Hashanah* will truly be a day of *teshuvah* and an authentic *Yom Teruah*; a day of *reut*, friendship and kinship. ■

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View from the apartments of the Beresheet community.

The New Year Starts with Beresheet

Who doesn't love those videos of silver-haired, wizened old folks running marathons and lifting weights? I think they appeal to that part of us that is in denial about our own future – and besides, don't we all aspire to be among those select non-aging nonagenarians?!

Genes notwithstanding, no one really knows what lies in store for them in the future. And as another Rosh Hashanah rolls around, signifying another year of life - thank God! - it makes sense to think ahead and be prepared.

More and more Anglos have been recently been expressing interest in Beresheet, a brand-

new concept for senior living in the heart of nature. With construction well underway and occupancy planned for August 2023, the Beresheet community, located in Motza (literally Jerusalem's backyard), is intended for seniors age 70+ with a joie de vivre and who are eager to take full advantage of all the opportunities offered.

"We believe in creating a safe environment for residents to enjoy an unmatched quality of life as they pursue the interests and hobbies that they love and/or that they always dreams of – all on their own terms. We offer a variety of social and cultural options, alongside complete independence," explains Beresheet founder Avi Lichak.

If anyone has the qualifications and the know-how to navigate this new concept for successful senior living in Israel, it would have to be the Lichak family. Owners of a chain of nursing homes in central Israel with a sterling reputation, these three brothers and sister are not

your typical entrepreneurs. "After our mother was widowed at a young age, she supported us by working as a cook in an old age home, which was basically where we grew up. Years later, when Ima degenerated and needed round-the-clock nursing care, we were unable to find accommodations that met our standards. That was when we decided to open our own facility, and since then, we've been catering to the



senior population with the same care and devotion that we wanted for our own mother."

Beresheet has everything you could think of – and then some. Luxurious, well-planned apartments, varied gourmet culinary options, a mini mall with

boutiques and cafes, fitness rooms and spa including a half Olympic-sized pool, to name just a few. To facilitate family connections, tech-equipped party rooms of different sizes can be reserved for celebrations, and fully accessorized guest suites are available for an extended stay. There are even special programs planned for grandchildren (and great grandchildren!) who come to visit. All of this is in Beresheet's mind-expanding, bucolic setting, adjoining a nature reserve that is beckoning with opportunity to see and explore.

"This is your time!" says Lichak. "We invite you to participate in the founding of this unique project, to enjoy these years to the fullest and find meaning, fulfillment, satisfaction and joy!"

For more information :
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RABBI JUDAH

MISCHEL

Mashpiah, OU-NCSY
Executive Director, Camp HASC
Author of *Baderech: Along the Path of Teshuva* (Mosaica 2021)

Where Have I Been?

Rav Shlomo Heiman, zt'l, Rosh Mesivta of Torah Vodaath, was renowned as a clear and deep thinker, and a dedicated master teacher. Each *shiur* he gave was an event filled with drama, suspense, passion and emotion. Rav Shlomo used every ounce of strength when teaching, and by the end would often pass out, completely exhausted.

One winter morning, Rav Shlomo arrived at the yeshivah amid a blizzard and found just four talmidim at shiur. Instead of cancelling, postponing or giving a scaled down version of what he had prepared, Rav Shlomo was all-in. He delivered a full shiur with all the dramatic flair and excitement as if he were addressing a full *beis medrash*. Concerned for the Rav's health and energy, one of the talmidim motioned to the room and whispered, "Rebbe, there's only four of us here..."

Rav Shlomo glanced around the near empty Beis Medrash and thundered, "Four talmidim? You only see four talmidim?! I'm speaking to you, your descendants, your future generations and students... there are hundreds and hundreds of *Yidden* learning Torah here today!"

Our sedra this week is a continuation of Moshe Rabbeinu's parting address, his 'final *shiur*' to Klal Yisrael:

אַתֶּם נֹצְבִים הַיּוֹם כְּלַכֶּם לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם...

"You are all standing this day before Hashem...

וְלֹא אַתְּכֶם לְבַדְכֶם אֲנִי כֹרֵת אֶת־הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת... כִּי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר יֵשְׁנו פֹּה עִמָּנוּ עַמְּד הַיּוֹם לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֶת־אֲשֶׁר אֵינָנו פֹּה עִמָּנוּ הַיּוֹם:

"I make this covenant... not with you alone, but both with those who are standing here with us this day before Hashem and with those who are not with us here this day." (Devarim, 29:9, 13-14).

Rashi quotes *Midrash Tanchuma* (Nitzavim, 3), saying that all who were physically present at Mount Sinai — more than two million women, children and men, embodying the souls of all future Jews — experienced the Revelation of *Matan Torah*. Remembering this powerful fact brings us back to our national and personal mission and baseline. All of us were standing there, completely present before the Infinite One.

The Baal Shem Tov taught that "*Ha-yom, this day*" is a reference to Rosh Hashanah, the day on which we all stand in judgment before Hashem. Therefore, on each year, Parshas Nitzavim precedes Rosh Hashanah,

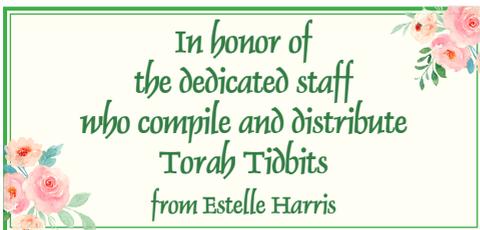
and at this critical moment it transmits to us words of reproach, encouragement and *mussar*, urging us to remember that no matter the deficiencies in our service of God, we are to believe in our connection with Hashem and to know that we can always repair what we have damaged:

כי המצוה הזאת אשר אנכי מצוה היום לא נפלאה הוא
מקנה ולא רחוקה הוא. לא בשמים הוא... ולא מעבר לים
הוא... כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד, בפיך ובלבבך לעשותו.

“For this commandment (*teshuvah*)... is not concealed from you, nor is it far away. It is not in Heaven... Nor is it beyond the sea... Rather, it is very close to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so you can fulfill it!” (30:11-14)

“If I am the king, why haven’t you come to greet me until now?”

Rebbe Aharon haGadol of Karlin strode toward the *amud* to begin Shacharis of Rosh Hashanah, with the customary *niggun*. As the Rebbe reached the end of that dramatic melody leading to the proclamation of “*HaMelech*,” he fainted and collapsed in awe. The chasidim rushed to revive the Rebbe, who soon stood up on trembling legs, steadied himself, and continued to lead the relieved congregation in



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prayer. After the davening, the chassidim gathered around him to understand what had occurred.

The holy Karliner explained, “During the Roman siege of Yerushalayim, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai went to plead with Vespasian to spare the lives of the Jews of the Holy City. When he encountered Vespasian, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai said, שלמה עלך מלכא שלמה עלך מלכא, “Peace upon you, O king, peace upon you.” Vespasian’s anger flared and retorted, מחייבת תרי קטלא, “You are liable for two death penalties: first of all, you addressed me as the king, which I am not. Furthermore, אי מלכא אנא עד האינדא אמאי, “If I am the king, why haven’t you come to greet me until now?” (Gittin, 56a)

The Karliner explained: “When I was about to declare *HaMelech*”, I suddenly remembered Vespasian’s rebuke, and my heart grew faint. Standing before Hashem, coronating Him as the King of Kings, all I could think was the question, “If I am the King, why haven’t you come to greet Me until now?”



Somehow, despite the clear message in our

sedra, as well as the month-long Elul shofar blowing, extra davening, and emphasis on preparation for the new year, it seems that every year we ask ourselves: ‘How is it already Rosh Hashanah — where have I been? I am not ready to approach Hashem this *Yamim Nora'im!*’

This Shabbos, as we prepare to ‘stand’ before Hashem and declare His *Malchus* on Rosh Hashanah, let us remember, כי קרוב, אֵלֵינוּ: we are “very close”; there is no such thing as a space devoid of Godliness. We all stood at Sinai; ‘Far away’ from Hashem is simply a construct. The right time and place for teshuvah is exactly wherever we are, “in our mouths and in our hearts”. Hashem is waiting for us. The opportunity is right here, right now, and it all depends on us.

The question is not how many chevreh have shown up to the shiur. I need to ask myself, have I arrived? How much of me is ‘here’? If we haven’t been fully present in moments of holiness, tefillah or mitzvah observance, Rosh Hashanah is an opportunity for us to stand before the King and re-establish direction and intention — to let the Ribbono Shel Olam that we are ‘all in’, now and forever. ■

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RABBI MOSHE

TARAGIN

Ram, Yeshivat Har Eztion

Geulas Yisrael: Rosh Hashanah- A Great Day to Be Jewish

“The angels tremble and are seized with fear. Terrified, they announce: The Day of Judgement is upon us”. This alarming image- conjured in the *Musaf* section of *Netaneh Tokef*- captures the fear and grandeur of Rosh Hashanah. This remarkable scene also underscores the “sweep” of a day which reverberates across the highest heavens. Jew and non-Jew, and even celestial inhabitants, perceive the solemnity and royalty of Hashem’s presence on this day of awe. Rosh Hashanah isn’t just universal, it is cosmic.

On the day that the universe was created, it is annually renewed. Not only is the natural world rebooted but human fate is recalibrated. One by one we pass in front of Hashem, our behavior assessed, our motives scrutinized, and our future decided. Unlike classic Jewish holidays, Rosh Hashanah isn’t associated with a formative event of Jewish history. This day of immensity and enormity is broader than the Jewish experience. It is the day of creation and the day of “everything”. It is timeless and comprehensive.

Yet, despite the far-reaching and universal nature of the day, Rosh Hashanah is also a particularly Jewish experience. It is the mix of universalism and Jewish experience which powers the day and infuses it with such vigor and splendor. This day of all humanity is also the day of the Jews:

We Are Aware

The trial of humanity fortifies Divine authority in our planet. No human can escape His gaze nor can any human avoid His judgement. It is a day of immense authority and supreme power. However, only one nation is aware of this unfolding drama and only one nation is responsive to the augmented presence of Hashem. A verse in Tehillim (89) extols the privilege of the one nation that comprehends this day: *Ashrei ha’am yodei teru’ah*. We alone are ‘yodei teru’ah’; we alone identify the shofar sound. Our world is abuzz with noise and commotion- horns detonate and sirens blare. On this day, the mighty and majestic voice of the shofar coronates the Master of All. Only one nation understands the full weight of this day and its proceedings. The chosen nation.

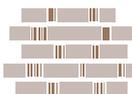
Authors, Not Spectators

Beyond being the lone nation to fully grasp the gravitas of this day, the Jewish people also shape the contours of the day.

continued on next page...

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The world, having been launched by the word of Hashem, once bristled with His uncontested will. However, Man's first disobedience plunged the world into rebellion and into centuries of religious confusion. One day the world will return to its pristine state of global recognition of Divine authority. Until that day arrives, we continue to stand for God in this world. Without our heroic defiance, His presence in this world would fade. Throughout the year we represent Him - quietly but heroically- defying a world of hate and hostility. One Rosh Hashanah, for one day, we taste the future world we so tirelessly pursue- a world of His uncontested presence. If we don't coronate Hashem in this fallen world, who will? We are the guardians of Hashem's presence in our world, and on this day we preview the future state we are so committed to designing. Without willing subjects, sovereignty is hollow.

Sweet Memories

The gravitas of this day can be fearsome. Our *Mussaf* tefillah declares: "You recall all history and scan all creatures. Hidden truths are laid bare to you while nothing is forgotten". Recognizing the enormity of this audit, we lament: "Happy is the man who hasn't forgotten you ". Sadly, we acknowledge that we never miss an opportunity to forget Him. The repercussions of this day of Memory are frightening.

Yet, for us, the Day of Memory is also promising and empowering. We invoke illustrious memories of past glories. From the courage of the *akeidah* to the faith of the desert. From the valleys of our *Avot* to

the mountain-ranges of Sinai. From the melodies of the *Mikdash* to the defiance of Jewish exile. The sad still sound of the shofar echoes with our everlasting Covenant with Hashem. A potentially crushing day of harsh inspection transforms into a sweet and nostalgic day of Jewish peoplehood, heroism and historical destiny. Pride replaces fear.

Inching Toward Utopia

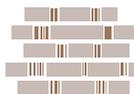
On this day the world was launched we recall creation, but we also envision redemption. Our world will only be fully repaired when the Jews are resettled in their Land, realigned with Heaven, and, once again, positioned to provide the world with moral clarity and human prosperity. The prophetic and visionary sound of the shofar predicts the "Gathering" without which human progress is forever delayed: "The lost Jews will return from Ashur and the refugees from Egypt and we will all bow to Hashem in Yerushalayim". One day that assembly will be awakened by the blaring sound of a heavenly shofar. Each year, on Rosh Hashanah, we symbolically blow our human shofar in hopes of accelerating that Heavenly sound. Universal welfare will not transpire without the Jewish return to history. Utopia runs through Jerusalem. On the very day we pray for universal prosperity, we ponder Jewish selection and dream of redemption. It is a day of Jewish destiny precisely because it is the day of universal future. We will lead humanity toward that terminus. Each Rosh Hashanah we inch closer.

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MIDEI CHODESH

B'CHODSHO

BY RABBI SHMUEL GOLDIN

Faculty, OU Israel

Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation Ahavath
Torah, Englewood NJ

Hearken Unto the Cannons!

מערב עד ערב תשבתו שבתכם from evening until evening, you shall observe your Shabbat (Yom Kippur).

How abundantly strange! What is the meaning of the Torah's instruction concerning Yom Kippur?

Every day on the Jewish calendar begins with nightfall and ends at nightfall; every day effectively runs מערב עד ערב, from “evening until evening. Why would we assume otherwise when it comes to Yom Kippur? Why does the Torah specifically emphasize that this holiest of days, of all days, is observed מערב עד ערב?

While many interpretations are offered for this phrase, I believe that an answer to our question can be found through the retelling of my father's favorite joke. A quiet unassuming man, my father ע"ה was not much of a joke-teller, but this particular anecdote held a special place in his heart. The narrative loses something in the writing, but the message is powerful, nonetheless. So, here goes...

Jack was an unassuming man who held a secret dream. He desperately wanted

one moment of fame as a “movie-star”; an opportunity to appear, even briefly, on the “silver screen”. One day Jack's prayers were answered. A movie crew rolled into town, advertising a search for “extras” in an upcoming motion picture on the American Civil War. Jack applied and, lo and behold, was accepted- for a speaking part, no less.

Jack had one line to learn and deliver: “Hearken unto the cannons!”

For weeks prior to the filming, Jack practiced day in and day out, repeating his line in all sorts of different ways and with all sorts of different emphases. “**Hearken** unto the cannons... Hearken **unto** the cannons... Hearken unto the **cannons**....” Over and over again...

Finally, the big day arrived. Jack could hardly control his excitement. Over and over and over again, Jack feverishly practiced his line: Hearken unto the cannons.... “Hearken unto the cannons...”

Jack was taken to a room at the side of the filming stage, and was told that, in a few moments, he would be pushed out to stumble onstage and recite his line. Nervously, he kept practicing: “Hearken unto the cannons... Hearken unto the cannons...”

The moment arrived...Jack was shoved out of the room...He stumbled onstage, heard a

continued on next page...

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huge boom and exclaimed:

“What the #*%! was that???”

Cannons sound throughout our lives, divine challenges and opportunities presented to us through the events we experience, the people we meet, the very world that surrounds us. More often than not, however, we are “too busy” to notice; and the messages pass, unobserved and unheeded...

But, then along comes Yom Kippur, and everything changes... The day arrives when *עצומו של יום*, the essence of the day, can itself be transformative.

מערב עד ערב... A complete day of cannon blasts. While year-round, the cannons may fire sporadically and intermittently; the cannons of Yom Kippur sound for a continuous 25-hour period. Their calls shift with each passing moment, as the day's messages flow one into the other; cannon blasts that are at times hushed, at times loud, at times plaintive, at times proud.

The cannons of Yom Kippur are singular each year. This year's blasts will be different from last year's, and different from next year's. Even more, these calls will be individual. The Yom Kippur sounds I hear throughout the day will vary from those heard by my neighbor, and the sounds he hears will vary from mine. Separate moments, each unique, will be woven into a symphony of meaning, captured by the rabbis in the liturgy of the day. From Kol Nidrei to Neila, we experience a journey of consequence, each moment rich and powerful.

No amount of advance preparation will

ensure that we will hear the cannons of Yom Kippur. While prior study of the day's halachot, tefillot and messages can be extremely helpful, such study offers no guarantee. Success relies on our ability to truly “be present” in each moment of this holy day, and in our openness to each moment's meaning.

מערב עד ערב ... Which of Yom Kippur's cannon blasts will each of us hear this year? Will we be moved by the cadence of Yizkor and the bittersweet memories of those who touched and shaped our lives? Will we shudder at the words of *ונתנה תקף* and its description of the heavenly court on this holiest of days? Will we be moved to sincere contrition by the detailed confessional of *על חטא*? Will the closing of the gates at Neila carry us one step further?

We have no way of knowing in advance which moment of Yom Kippur will reach us; which of its powerful cannon blasts will enter our hearts. Perhaps that is why the Torah specifies that we must each “be present” on Yom Kippur in heart and mind, *מערב עד ערב*, from evening to evening... all day long.

The cannons of Yom Kippur will soon sound. Will we truly hear and appreciate their blasts? And, will our Yom Kippur experience make us more sensitive to the cannon blasts sounding in our lives year-round?

The challenge lies before us... “Hearken unto the cannons!” ■

Rabbi Goldin is the author of the OU press volumes “Unlocking the Torah Text,” and “Unlocking the Haggada.”



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SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

The moments when the *Shofar* is sounded on *Rosh Hashana* are perhaps the most emotionally charged and spiritually significant time of the entire *Yomim Noraim* period. The *Shofar* has many profound messages; its most familiar message is of course to remind us of the *Akeidat Yitzchak* and the ram that takes the place of *Yitzchak Avinu* as a sacrificial offering. But there are many other messages inherent in the *Shofar's* sounds as well.

Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Neriah, zt'l one of the close students of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook zt'l, edited a beautiful work called *Moadei HaReiah*- which is a collection of essays, stories, and sound bytes from the life and work of Rav Kook specifically regarding each of the Jewish Holidays. There is a particularly powerful story, which occurred one *Rosh Hashana* in the late 1920's that really sums up the multi-tiered inspirational messages contained within the *shofar's* sounds.

It became known to Rav Kook on the eve of *Rosh Hashana* that there was a particular construction project that was quickly nearing completion, and that those involved in building this particular edifice, planned to continue to work toward completing this project, even on *Rosh Hashana*. Obviously saddened by this news, Rav Kook decided upon a strategy as to how he must address

this situation.

The next morning, Rav Kook sent one of his *gabbaim* (ritual assistants) to visit the workers, and to bring a *Shofar* with him. Rav Kook gave the *gabbai* careful instructions not to speak any harsh words, rather to merely go to the construction site, and to simply sound the *Shofar*.

Upon hearing the familiar sounds of the *Shofar*, construction ceased, and most of the laborers quickly changed their clothing and made their way to synagogues. When the *gabbai* returned to the synagogue, he asked Rav Kook how come the rabbi did not simply go and address these workers himself; surely a visit from the esteemed Chief Rabbi would have encouraged all of the laborers to join the many who had decided to return to the synagogue with the *gabbai*. Rav Kook's answer is perhaps the most powerful point of this entire story. Rav Kook explained that had he arrived at the site, surely he would have caused great embarrassment, even shame to the many workers! Although the public desecration of this holiest of days certainly pained him deeply, the pain he felt when the Torah's honor was tarnished in such a public manner enveloped his entire being; but what pained him most was to know that there were Jews who might go through an entire *Rosh Hashana* and not

continued on next page...

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hear the beautiful sweet sounds of the *Shofar*.

Three times each day we recite the *Amida*-the nineteen blessing benediction which forms the foundation of Jewish prayer. Included among these blessings are the following words:

“Sound the great *Shofar* for our freedom, raise the banner to gather in our exiles and gather us together from the four corners of the Earth....”

This blessing is of course a reference to the prophetic vision of the “Great *Shofar*” which will be sounded, with the onset of the Messianic era.

However, Rav Gedalia Schorr zt'l, one of the giants of American Jewish life in the twentieth century, explains this blessing in relation to the *Shofar* we will sound in just a few days on *Rosh Hashana*. In his masterpiece of Torah essays, *Or Gedalyahu*, Rav Gedalia wrote these moving words:

“It is through the experience of the sounding of the *Shofar* on *Rosh Hashana* that every person has an awakening within his heart, that rouses the pure spark innate within each of our hearts, and can bring us to true freedom; the freedom from all that clouds our vision in the here and now, and ultimately it is this clarity which will help us to usher in the era of true freedom, of peace and harmony in the world, represented by the sounding of the Great *Shofar of Moshiach*...”

The words of Rav Kook and Rav Gedalia Schorr are particularly profound as we are

about to commemorate *Rosh Hashana* in the here and now of these unprecedented days of the on-going global pandemic. If these two giants had such a deep understanding of how the *Shofar's* emotionally charged sounds had the power to literally transform each and every soul scattered throughout the four corners of the world, and to inspire harmony and unity, how much more vividly does this message resonate for the times we live in today.

But it is Rav Kook's beautiful lesson which must guide us and must serve as the basis for building bridges with all our brothers and sisters. The *Shofar's* sweet sounds remind us of the beauty that is a Jewish way of life, the enrichment, fulfillment and contentment that *Torah* can bring to each of our lives. The *Shofar's* sounds reach that pure spark within each of us, and softly remind us that we can indeed leave behind all those issues and confusing circumstances that cloud our vision- our vision of ourselves, our vision of the world, and our vision of each other.

When we hear the *Shofar* this *Rosh Hashana*, may it inspire within us a new-found desire for true freedom; freedom to leave behind the many challenging events of this past year, freedom to leave behind whatever lingering grudges and preconceived notions we may hold toward family, friends, and neighbors. May the sounds of the *Shofar* this *Rosh Hashana*, soon be echoed with the sounds of Great *Shofar* of Freedom, that we have been longing for for so, so long... *Shana Tova U'metuka* - Warmest wishes for a happy sweet New Year. ■

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BY MENACHEM PERSOFF

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When the Total is More than the Sum of the Parts

Our Parsha opens with the Pasuk: “You are standing today, each of you, before Hashem, your God – the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers – all men of Israel.”

We look at this verse with awe! Everyone is on parade, erect, alert, and attentive to what Moshe has to say. But if the verse tells us “each of you is standing,” why does it spell out the types of leaders present? And why repeat at the verse’s end, “all men of Israel”?

And why does the narrative then spell out the others present: the children, women, and proselytes in the camp, and the hewers of wood and drawers of water?

On the surface, we see a hierarchy of participants at this gathering, stretching from the aristocracy to the lowest echelons of society. The Alshich, however, indicates that on this occasion, rather than first approaching the elders (who would then communicate Moshe’s message to the people), Moshe now addressed the people as a whole entity.

Yes – the situation called for unity. The beloved leader Moshe was about to leave this world, and the people were about to

conquer Eretz Yisrael. Towards the latter goal, Bnei Yisrael had to constitute a united collective where status was of no consequence: Standing before God, the people ‘are as one.’

In this month of Elul, it is worth considering that we are of equal standing in Hashem’s eyes. Who knows? Perhaps Hakadosh Baruch bestows greater value to the spiritual strivings of the Pintele Yid than to the elevated actions of the leadership?

But more so, adds the Shem Mishmuel, to conquer Eretz Yisrael, the individual’s role is superseded by the *Kelal* – the collective entity that is the Jewish people. In the spirit of the sainted Rav Kook, the vibrant, living soul of Eretz Yisrael combines with and galvanizes the collective merits of the individuals within its borders.

Indeed, our rabbis teach that the notion of collective responsibility enjoined the people only after they crossed the Yarden River. So, while “each one of us” must strive to reach our highest spiritual level, if we wish to conquer “the Land” and Hashem’s heart, as we enter the Yamim Nora’im, we need to break down the barriers between us. Yes, in Gestalt fashion, we let our collective merit be more than the sum of our personal virtues – וכן יהי רצון. ■

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Preparations Before *Shemita*

A well-known Rabbinic saying states that “one who prepares prior to Shabbat will eat on Shabbat” (*Avodah Zara* 3:a). Our Sages meant to relay that in order to enjoy and maximize the experience of Shabbat, one must exert effort to prepare prior to Shabbat. A similar idea can be applied to *shemita*. By performing the necessary preparations prior to *shemita*, one can better maximize the observance of the *shemita* year.

Private gardens

There are certain preparations that must be carried out prior to *shemita* (see *Chazon Ish* 21:17). Tree branches that require trimming must be trimmed prior to *Rosh Hashanah* (*Kedushat Ha'aretz* 19:15). Planting grass also must be done prior to *Rosh Hashanah*. Even though fertilization is permitted under certain circumstances, if possible one should fertilize prior to *shemita*. In certain instances it is preferable to use a granulated fertilizer called CRF (control released fertilizer) which releases nutrients gradually into the soil. In such a fashion, one might not need to fertilize at

all during the year of *shemita* (see *Katif Shevi'it* p.190). Watering plants, flowers, and trees is permitted within certain guidelines during *shemita* (*Moed Katan* 2:b). It is recommended to increase the interval between waterings for plants and trees during *shemita* (see *Chut Shani* 1:31 and *Katif Shevi'it* 10:7)). The irrigation and watering systems (such as automatic sprinklers) should be set up prior to *shemita*.

Jointly-owned gardens

In many apartment complexes in Israel, buildings have gardens with trees, flowers, plants and even grass. The *vaad bayit* (building committee) should review with a rav and instruct the gardener what forms of gardening are allowed. In a situation where non-observant residents insist on performing prohibited labor on *shemita* (such as planting new plants) observant residents should attempt to dissuade them from doing so (*Kedushat Ha'aretz* 23:27). This may be done by explaining the halachic sensitivity of desecrating *shemita* and the fact that it is halachically prohibited to fund such activities.

In the case that persuasion is ineffective, authorities debate what should be done in terms of contributing one's payment for gardening that transgresses the laws of *shemita*. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (*Kovetz Teshuvot* 232) requires that people



relinquish ownership of their part in the garden for the entire year of *shemita*, absolving the religious owner of responsibility for the transgression in working the garden. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (*Shulchan Shlomo* p.65) and Rav Ben-Tzion Abba-Shaul (*Ohr Litzion* 1:16) maintain that there is no need to relinquish ownership of the land. The dispute is whether the obligation to keep *shemita* is on the individual and the land or just on the individual. In other words, if the obligation to keep *shemita* is also meant to guarantee that one's land isn't worked, then one must relinquish ownership of the garden. However, if the obligation not to work the land is only on the individual and one is not required to prevent the land from being worked in all circumstances, then the lenient opinion seems correct (see *Ma'adnei Eretz* 13:15).

Rav Auerbach and Rav Abba-Shaul both mention that even though relinquishing ownership is not required, one should surely request that his monthly *vaad bayit* payment should not be spent on the garden, but rather used for electricity, water, gas or other utilities. In a case where there is a specific payment for the garden from all apartment owners, one should consult with a rav.

Tosefet Shevi'it

A biblical mitzvah was observed in

Talmudic times to add on to the *shemita* year at the end of the sixth year (Such as, to begin observance in certain areas of *shemita* from *Rosh Chodesh Elul* of the sixth year). Following the destruction of the Second Temple, *Rabban Gamliel* ruled that there is no longer a mitzvah of *tosefet shemita* (adding on to *shemita*) as the obligation is only in effect when the *Beit Hamikdash* is standing (see *Rambam Shemita Veyovel* 3:1-3). However, certain authorities still maintain that one should add a minimal amount to the observance of *shemita* (*Derech Emuna* 3:11). Those *poskim* recommend that just before *Rosh Hashanah* begins, everyone should accept upon themselves the prohibitions of working the land. This custom should be done shortly prior to candle lighting. ■

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RABBI AARON

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GOLDSCHIEDER

Hand, Head and Heart

וְשָׁבַת עֲדָהּ אֱלֹקֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹלִי כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר-אָנֹכִי מְצֹוֶה
הַיּוֹם אֲתָהּ וּבְיָיֶךָ בְּכֹל-לְבָבְךָ וּבְכֹל-נַפְשְׁךָ: (דברים ל:א)

“And you will return (*ad*) to the Lord, your God with all your heart and with all your soul...” (*Devarim* 30: 2)

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik was intrigued by the one, small, word in the above verse: *ad*. He noted that there is a significant difference between the words *ad* and *el*. The word *el* (“to”) means that I am going in a specific direction and have not yet reached my goal, while the word *ad* means that I have already reached that goal.

The Rav cited two rabbinic teachings that emphasize the uniqueness of the word *ad* in this context. The Sages (*Pesikta D’Rav Kahana* 24) records the following conversation: Israel said before the Holy One Blessed be He: Master of the Universe! If we repent, who testifies for us? He said to them: I will testify for you, as it says [*Hoshea* 14:2]. “Return, Israel, unto [*ad*] the Lord your God - the Lord your God is witness [*ed*].

The Talmud (*Yoma* 86a) brings a different homily based upon the same verse: “Great is repentance, for it reaches unto the throne of glory, as it is written, “Return, Israel, unto

the Lord your God.”

In both cases the word *ad* (unto) intimates a closeness and intimacy which is achievable through the act of *teshuva*. The act of *teshuva* must not only address subpar performance or correcting a particular mistake but it ought to enhance the repentant’s relationship with God. Within this framework the Rav quoted the Rambam (*Hilchot Teshuva* 7:7) who speaks of the repentant sinner as cleaving to the *Shechina*; one who repented cleaves and is united with the presence of God. (On Repentance, pp. 220-221)

The Rav often emphasized the experiential or spiritual aspect of religious life. Albeit “Halachic Man” is committed to meticulous observance of every mitzvah he must also be moved in his performance of mitzvot to greater awareness of God and feeling His presence.

Along similar lines the Rav offered the following incisive teaching: Judaism rests on the three attributes of the individual, signified by the head, the hand, and the heart. The head involves the intellectual discipline inherent in Judaism. An ignoramus cannot be a good Jew. The ideal of *Talmud Torah* involves the highest levels of logic, the ability to think abstractly, analytically and conceptually. The learning of Torah is therefore nothing less than the sanctification of the mind through intellectual struggle.

The hand involves *mitzvah* performance. Being vigilant in keeping mitzvot that are difficult as well as easy sanctifies a person's hands.

The Rav then proceeded to note that although one can find the first attributes in abundance today, it is the third aspect which is wanting among contemporary Jews. The heart involves experiencing God emotionally. "God desires the heart" (*Sanhedrin* 106b). One must feel the emotional pull of the *Ribbono shel Olam* or, as William James put it, "the presence of the Unseen." (Before Hashem, pp. 134-136)

God, the ultimate spiritual essence, was for the Rav not merely something in which he believed but a palpable presence which hovered above his shoulders.

"There are times at night when I feel as if someone [the Divine Presence] is standing behind me, bending Himself to look over my shoulder to peer into the Talmudic text at the topic I am studying at that moment." (Rakefet Vol. 2, p.189)

Although one must approach Torah study with the utmost seriousness and intellectual rigor, the attainment of Torah knowledge becomes a vibrant, engaging and invigorating experience which reaches into the depths of the human personality:

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OU ISRAEL CENTER 51



Children Hearing *Shofar* Blowing

Question: Must children hear *shofar* blowing, at what age, when, and how many?

Answer: As a rule, boys are obligated to fulfill positive *mitzvot* on a Rabbinic level from the age of *chinuch* (Sukka 42a), and this includes *shofar* (Arachin 2b). (There is a fundamental *machloket* whether the child is himself obligated in the *mitzva* or whether it is the father who is obligated to make sure the child does the *mitzva* (see Rashi and Tosafot, Berachot 48a).) Girls are fundamentally exempt from *shofar*, as all women are exempt from this time-based *mitzva* (Kiddushin 33b). However, there is much to consider about the details in practice.

The *gemara* and Shulchan Aruch do not

give an age for when children become obligated. Rashi (Arachin 2b) invokes the ages found in Yoma (82a) – opinions range from 8-10, but Tosafot (ad loc.) argues that that context, fasting on Yom Kippur, which depends on physical ability, is irrelevant to other *mitzvot*. Tosafot points out that the *gemara* (Sukka 42a) gives potentially different stages for different *mitzvot* – for *lulav*, when he knows how to shake it; for *tzitzit*, when he knows how to cloak himself in it; for *tefillin* – when he knows how to stay clean with them on. An exact age is not given, and for *shofar*, not even a description.

Rav Shternbuch (Teshuvot V'hanhagot II:281) raised a simple question: If the *mitzva* is to hear *shofar*, then any boy who can hear should be required to do so? Noting that we do not take babies to hear, he posits that since *kavana* is required to fulfill *mitzvot*, a child would have to be able to understand to hear because Hashem commanded to do so. He identifies the age as four or five. One can, though, analyze the matter differently. A boy is obligated in *sukka* from the age he does not need his mother (Sukka 28a), even though he can perform the *mitzva* earlier. *Lulav* requires knowing how to shake it, even though the *mitzva* is fulfilled by simply holding it (Sukka 42a). The Netziv (ad loc.) explains that the obligation is when a child can

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perform the *mitzva* in a manner appropriate for adults. For *shofar*, that probably means that he can reasonably concentrate on the sets of sounds coming from the *shofar*, which is somewhat older (Rav M. Willig told me around six).

However, the *minhag* is that we try to have even younger children come to hear *shofar* blowing. The main cut-off point is when he can listen without disturbing (Mishna Berura 587:16). (The formal obligation is pertinent, impacting on how hard to try to have him in *shul* then and when a child is old enough to blow on behalf of children who are Rabbinically obligated). This is not surprising, as the *minhag* is to educate children before the time that they are halachically obligated (see Halichot Shlomo, Tefilla 22:20 regarding *berachot*). Also, the *minhag*, which we consider proper, is for girls to also be careful to hear *shofar* blowing.

Although one can argue that the *tekiot* during *Musaf* are the more prominent ones, the accepted approach is that our main fulfillment of the *mitzva* is with the 30 blasts, with the *berachot*, before *Musaf* (see Ha'amek She'ala 171:2). In fact, women, or even men, who are unable to be with a *minyan* all day suffice with 30 blasts, as the additional ones are related to *tefilla b'tzibbur* (see Rama, Orach Chayim 592:2; our column, Rosh Hashana 5781).

Therefore, only to the extent that a child is mature enough to take part seriously in *Musaf* is he expected to hear the additional sets of *shofar*. While the average child in the 10-13 age range should be up to a full day of *davening* (or close to it), the average six-year-old is not and would likely disturb (see Rama, OC 124:7 and Mishna Berura 124:28). For such a child, who will not be there throughout *davening*, it is not critical to hear those *tekiot*.

If an obligated child misses the *tekiot* in *shul*, he should hear them elsewhere. In a blowing just for children, it is better if one of the [older] children makes the *berachot*, but if they have trouble doing so, an adult can do so for the obligated children (Chayei Halevi V:52). ■

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- Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah–Intimacy, Joy and the Thrill of Going Home–**Rabbi Manning**
- Complete Teshuva and Real Teshuva–**Rabbi Ari Kahn**
- **11:00AM** The Future of Shemita– Panel discussion with **Rabbi Ezra Friedman**, **Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon** and **Rabbi Yissascher Dov Krakowski**
- **12:00PM** On What Criteria are We Judged– Keynote Address with **HaRav Zev Leff**
- **1:00PM** Divrei Bracha with **HaRav Herschel Schachter**
- **1:15 PM** Fundamentals of Shemita– Keynote Address with **Chief Rabbi–HaRav David Lau**

1:45PM - SESSION TWO

- Who is afraid of Holiness? Handling holy fruit during the Shemita Year–
HaRav Yosef Zvi Rimon
- A Woman’s Approach to Teshuva (for women only)–**Rebbetzin Dina Schoonmaker**
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2:45 PM- SESSION THREE

- Love Thy Neighbor - Eating out during Shemita-**Rabbi Ezra Friedman**
- Celebrating the Yamim Nora'im with Rabbi Akiva-**Rabbanit Shani Taragin**
- יום הגשמים גדול- Great is the Day of Rain-**Rabbi Dr. Aaron Adler**
Teshuva in 3D -**Rabbi Baruch Taub**
- **3:45 PM** Divrei Bracha-**HaRav Zvi Sobolofsky**
- **4:00 PM** Late Afternoon Keynote Address-**HaRav Meir Goldwicht**

5:00 PM-SESSION FOUR

- BaDerech-Along the Path of Teshuva-**Rav Judah Mischel**
- L'Maan Yeidu Doroteichem-**Rabbanit Racheli Sprecher Frenkel**
- Incredible Investment-**Rebbetzin Shira Smiles** (Women Only)
- Ma Inyan Shemita Etzel Har Sinai-What Does Shemita have to do with Har Sinai
HaRav Gedaliah Rabinowitz
- **6:00 PM** Keynote Address-**Rabbi YY Jacobson**
- **7:00 PM** Parenting in Trying Times: Navigating Current Challenges and Growth During the Aseret Yimei Teshuva - Panel discussion Moderated by
Rabbi Yisrael Cohn, Panelists: **Rabbanit Shani Taragin**, **Mrs. Michal Silverstein**, & **Rabbi Dr. Ethan Eisen**
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Rabbi Ahron Adler
Rambam's
Commentary to
Pirkei Avot

11:30 AM
**Rabbi Yitzchak
Breitowitz**
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**Rabbi Jeffrey
Bienenfeld** Men's
Gemara Chabura
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4:30 PM
Rabbi Hillel Ruvell
Men's Gemara B'Iyun
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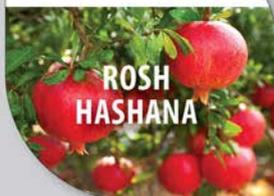
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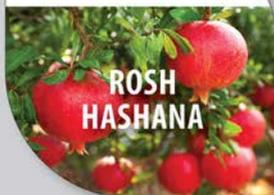
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TUE, SEP 7



WED, SEP 8



THURS, SEP 9

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The Father and the Frozen Eggs

Last time we asked whether a man who fathers a child through in-vitro fertilization is considered the halachic father. There are poskim who claimed that such a man is not the father and does not fulfill his halachic obligation to procreate, since this is an unusual conception and the natural connection between father and child does not exist.

Rabbi Shaul Yisraeli thought differently and brought a fascinating source that suggests the opposite, that the man does fulfill his obligation to procreate and is considered the father in such a case.

The Gemara (Chagiga 14b) tells the story of Ben Zoma who entered the Pardess, the spiritual realm, and went crazy. Others used this opportunity to ask him all sorts of unusual questions, that a “regular” Torah scholar would not be asked. One of the questions was whether a pregnant virgin could marry a Kohen Gadol. The Gemara asks how is it possible that she is pregnant and a virgin and one answer given is that she got pregnant in the bath house. A man entered the pool of water, emitted seed and she subsequently immersed herself in

the water and became pregnant from that seed.

This somewhat fanciful suggestion has been used as a precedent for the discussion of fertility treatment, a case of remote conception. The poskim discussed this case, well before IVF was invented, and claimed that the man would be considered the father of any child conceived and would have fulfilled his obligation to procreate.

Rav Yisraeli suggests that the husband is considered the halachic father of the fertilized eggs. He has as much claim to ownership of the eggs as his wife, and she would not be allowed to do anything with the eggs without his permission. This relates to the Nachmani case in which the wife wanted to use the eggs against the express wishes of her estranged husband. Halachically she would not be able to do so.

But, if we extend this logic, the husband would be considered the father of the child conceived from these eggs even if the eggs were used by another couple. He would be able to make decisions regarding the child and would be obligated to support the child. The child would also be halachically obligated to honor him and would be bound to follow the “father’s” wishes. This could create very serious problems.

More on this next time. ■



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What Is Preferable: Produce From The *Otzar Beit Din* Or *Heter Mechirah*?

This article is the view of Torah VeHa'aretz Institute, and not necessarily the OU's view.

Rav Avraham Shapira ztz"l favored the *otzar beit din* system, in which the farmers continue to work the land but only engage in the activities permitted by *halachah* during the *shemita* year. Consumers then buy their produce, the farmers are paid for serving as agents of the rabbinical court (*beit din*), and the consumers assist farmers who observe *shemita*.

Both Rav Kook in his generation, and Rav Shapira in his, also supported *heter mechirah* so that it could be employed by those who needed it. On the other hand, they continued to strongly encourage as many farmers as possible to observe *shemita* properly, without using leniencies meant for extenuating circumstances. They did not view this as a contradiction, but instead, they had different halachic positions with the same goal: strengthening Jewish agriculture in Eretz Yisrael and helping Jewish farmers avoid violating *shemita*.

The advantage of *otzar beit din*

Today, when the agricultural burden falls on the shoulders of a very small percentage of the population, it seems that the only way to restore the *mitzvah* of *shemita* is through *otzar beit din*. This means that since a small group of farmers must provide produce for everyone in the State of Israel, we must employ lenient halachic opinions regarding the sale of *shemita* produce. For example, this *shemita* produce is more expensive than other types of produce, even though the *otzar beit din* permits prices that only cover the actual costs. (The high prices are the result of the much higher expenses involved in growing this produce.) Nevertheless, this system is halachically preferable to *heter mechirah* and certainly to *yevul nochri*. The *halachic* leniencies employed for *heter mechirah* serve to uproot the *mitzvah* itself – letting the land rest. Instead, the leniencies employed by *otzar beit din* are connected only to a secondary prohibition (namely, selling the produce), which is a minor issue. ■

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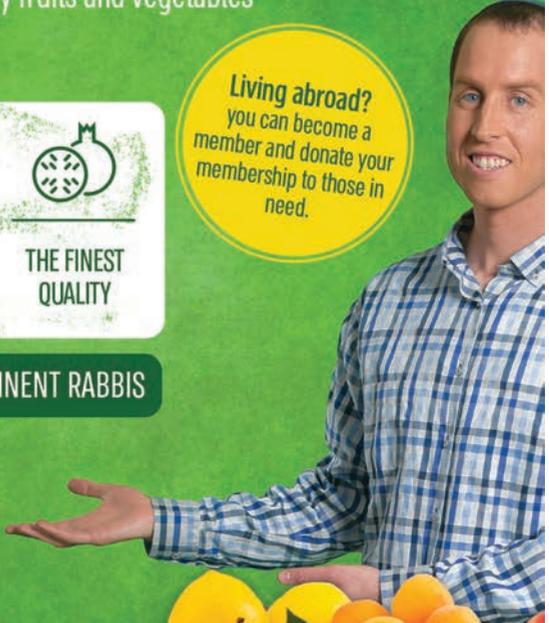
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THE Y FILES

(*YERUSHALAYIM)

BY
NETANEL EPSTEIN

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SHLOMTZI YERUSHALMI, I'M GOING TO PICKLE YOU IN POMEGRANATE JUICE!

BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!

AAARRGH!!
HEE-HEE -HEE!

FUNNY, YOUR DAUGHTER'S INFAMOUS CACKLE OF MISCHIEF HAD A GUILTY SORT OF EDGE TO IT TODAY...

YOU BET IT DID! I SAT UP HALF THE NIGHT, MAKING NOTES ON HOW TO PRESENT OUR ROSH HASHANA HAFTARAH SHOW, AND SHE RIPS THEM UP INTO MICROSCOPIC PIECES, AND THEN THROWS THEM OVER MY HEAD, SHOUTING "MAZAL TOV TO THE LOVELY BRIDE!"

DOORS CLOSING...

NO, YOU DON'T!
YOU'RE NOT ACTIVATING THAT TIME MACHINE ON YOUR OWN AGAIN...

OH! I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO CAPTURE THE ESSENCE OF ROSH HASHANA AGAIN BEFORE MY NEXT SHOW! YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR, YOUNG LADY! NO MORE MR. NICE DAD, IT'S TIME FOR JUDGEMENT...

AAARRGH!!
HEE-HEE -HEE!

OH, WOW...
THE TEMPLRARY TEMPO...
I MEAN... TEMPORARY TEMPLE OF SHILO... SUCH HOLINESS...

HOW MUCH LONGER WILL YOU WALK HERE AS A DRUNKARD? REMOVE THY WINE FROM UPON YOU!

DRUNK? ME? OH, NO. I KNOW I TALK AN AWFUL LOT OF RUBBISH, BUT THAT'S JUST ME, Y'KNOW? YOU CAN'T REALLY BLAME A WEEKLY DROP OF KIDDUSH WINE FOR SO MUCH NONSE...

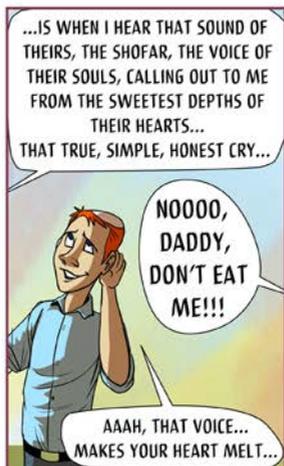
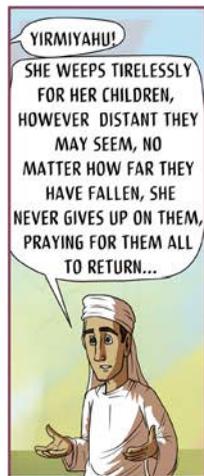
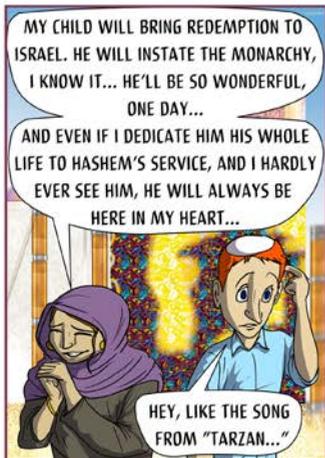
NOT YOU! I WAS ADDRESSING THE WOMAN BEHIND YOU, WHO IS STANDING THERE, MOUTHING SILENTLY IN A MOST PECULIAR MANNER...

WHAT WOM-
OH!

CHANNA.

PLEASE, SIR. I AM NOT DRUNK. I WAS POURING OUT MY HEART TO HASHEM, SHARING ALL MY PAIN AND LONGING WITH HIM... FOR I CRAVE MY CHILD, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE...

OH, ME TOO! I WANT TO PICKLE MINE IN POMEGRANATE JUICE! WHAT'S YOURS...?





TOWARDS MEANINGFUL

TEFILLA

BY REBBETZIN ZEMIRA OZAROWSKI

Director of OU Israel L'Ayla Women's Initiative



Tefilla Beyond Words

The story is told of an ignorant shepherd boy who was passing by a shul and heard the beautiful Tefillot emanating from within. He ran inside, excited to join them. He was eager to connect to Hashem through Tefilla. But he had a problem – he didn't know how to read and didn't know the words of any of the Tefillot. So instead, he began to whistle. The other congregants heard him whistling and got very upset – they wanted to remove him from the shul for his inappropriate behavior. The Rabbi of the shul turned to them and exclaimed – “This boy's whistling is at least as precious, if not more, than the other Tefillot that were recited here today! His heartfelt whistling surely went straight up to Shamayim!”

In this column, we have been exploring the words of Tefillot HaShachar. This is of course a very important endeavor as it enables us to try and get the most out of the morning Tefillot we recite on a daily basis. But what this story illustrates is that while the words of our davening are certainly significant, they sometimes can impede

our ability to truly let ourselves express our innermost yearnings and emotions. On Rosh Hashana, we have the opportunity to pray to Hashem without words, to express ourselves totally and completely through the sound of Shofar.

The **Baal HaTanya** in his Likutei Torah (quoted in the Rav Soloveitchik machzor p.440) explains that the Shofar represents an inarticulate shriek, the reaction of someone who is shocked out of complacency, one who does not have the presence of mind to compose a well-formulated prayer. In other words, the shofar blasts have the power to take our raw emotions and throw them straight up to Shamayim.

Rav Soloveitchik writes in *Noraot HaRav* (Volume 1, p.161) that “the spoken word often misrepresents thoughts; words do not always accurately express a thought but rather can alter it. Moreover, words can mean different things to different people. The Shofar, however, expresses unmediated emotion without the need for words.”

He explains that Shofar blowing is actually considered a type of Tefilla, which we see played out in the Halacha. The **Rambam** in *Hilchot Shofar 1:1* (based on Gemara Rosh Hashana 26b) rules that a *shofar* is required to be bent, and not straight. Why? Because when one davens, he should

continued on next page...



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daven with his eyes turned downwards, as he bends his thoughts and is humble before Hashem. Just as we humble ourselves in our Tefilla, the Shofar, which is the conduit for a very special type of Tefilla, must be bent and humble.

The beauty and simplicity of this special type of Tefilla is captured in the famous paragraph of אוחילה לקל recited by the Chazan in the Rosh Hashana Mussaf.

אוּחִילָה לְאֵל אֲחַלָּה פְּנֵי אֲשָׁאֲלָה מִמֶּנּוּ מִעֲנֵה לְשׁוֹן... אֶדְנִי
שְׁפֹתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ... לְאָדָם מִעֲרֹכֵי לֵב וְמֵה'
מִעֲנֵה לְשׁוֹן. יְהִי לְרִצּוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּינוּ לְבִי לְפִינֶךָ ה' צוּרִי
וְגוֹאֲלִי

I will put my hope in Hashem, I will beg of Him, I will request of Him eloquent speech... It is for man to arrange his feelings, but eloquent speech comes from Hashem. Hashem, open my mouth so I can declare your praise.

The Chazan calls out to Hashem to help him find the right words to express himself. In other words, he is saying – I know what I want to express, I feel my emotions so strongly, I just need you to help me formulate those feelings. So too, when we blow the Shofar, we too are saying to Hashem, please just take our emotions. Eloquent speech is beyond us, but please accept our

very deep feelings even if we cannot articulate them.

Ultimately though, there needs to be a combination of feelings and words. Judaism is not a religion which espouses silent meditation on its own. Our Tefilla, generally speaking, is made up of words. This is because speech is what differentiates man from animal. We therefore use the special gift of speech that we were given to communicate with Hashem. In the Rosh Hashana davening, we start each section of Malchyot, Zichronot, and Shofarot with oral recitation. Only when we finish what we want to articulate, do we then blow the Shofar. Rav Soloveitchik writes that only once we exhaust our verbal abilities, do we then blow Shofar to indicate that there is so much more that we need to communicate.

We ask Hashem to take the combination of the two – our attempt at eloquence together with our innermost thoughts, and accept those with love. And so we end off the paragraph of אוחילה לקל with these words:

יְהִי לְרִצּוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּינוּ לְבִי לְפִינֶךָ ה' צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי

May the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart be accepted before You, Hashem my Rock and Savior. ■



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Real Life Rescues



Two Women Save Their Neighbour's Life After He Collapsed In Front Of His Children

Talia Brauer and Tina Berkowitz, two United Hatzalah volunteer EMTs from the town of Ein Hod, which is located in a remote area of the Hof HaCarmel region, saved the life of one of their neighbours. The incident occurred when Talia received a phone call from a woman who lives nearby alerting Talia that the woman's husband was feeling ill. Talia dropped what she was doing and rushed over to the person's house. When she arrived, she found the man had already collapsed. He had suffered a heart attack and was in the middle of a VF (ventricular fibrillation). He had no pulse and was not breathing.

Tina, who also lives in the neighbourhood, received the alert from United Hatzalah's dispatch and command center and also rushed over to the address. Talia had begun CPR by the time that Tina arrived so Tina immediately attached a defibrillator to the patient.

"The man is my neighbour. I see him all the time," said Tina. "He was lying pulseless on his floor. I attached a defibrillator to him and after receiving one shock, he woke up. Not only did he regain a pulse, he even regained consciousness. It was like you see it on TV and it rarely happens in real life," Tina exclaimed. "The man is in his 60's and still has some children living with him. He has a history of cardiac issues. I am so thankful that God sent him back to us. He woke up after one shock and the first thing he asked was 'where are my children?'" As the pair waited for the ambulance to arrive, Tina went to console the wife and children and explain what had happened in the hopes that it would help them calm down. "Everything will be alright now," she reassured them. Talia, the other medic, continued to treat the patient and made sure that he was stable until the ambulance arrived.

Talia spoke about her part in the dramatic rescue. "When I arrived, the man was semi-conscious. Together with his wife, I lowered him off of his chair and onto the floor and a few seconds later he was unconscious. I began CPR and asked his wife to attach the defibrillator but she panicked. Tina arrived and attached the defibrillator and a few seconds after we delivered one shock, the man revived. When he came back he looked at me and said; "Thank you for saving my life." I told him. "The whole town still needs you. It isn't your time to go."

The patient, who wished to remain anonymous, thanked Talia and Tina for saving his life. "When I felt ill, I knew that I was suffering a heart attack. I've had them before. I went into my house, chewed some aspirin, told my wife to call Talia who is on the rescue team of the town, and who I know is a United Hatzalah volunteer, and as soon as I was done drinking the water with my aspirin, I collapsed. The next thing I knew, Talia and Tina were leaning over me and I woke up with a defibrillator attached to me. I want to thank Talia, Tina, and United Hatzalah, for being there for me and saving my life. The fact that Talia had a defibrillator on her was what saved me because a person doesn't come back from ventricular fibrillation without a defibrillator."

(Photo – illustration of two women UH volunteer EMTs responding to an emergency)





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THE DAILY

BY SIVAN RAHAV-MEIR

PORTION

If I had not heard this story with the names of actual people, I would never have believed it. But Franny Weissman shared with me the following tale that, in fact, began more than 100 years ago and ended yesterday:

"I came on aliyah from the United States and got married to Evyatar, a native Israeli whose grandmother's parents, along with two of her siblings, were murdered at Auschwitz. Ten of her siblings survived and nine of them decided to make aliyah together, but one sister settled in the United States, never telling anyone there she was Jewish. She married a gentile, did not even reveal to him her identity, and announced that after the Holocaust she would not bring children into the world. When her family tried to connect

with her, she ignored them. She and her husband also left instructions to cremate their bodies after their death. Over and over again I heard the story of Aunt Adelle. There are more than 350 family members now in Israel, four generations, but she has always been the one piece missing from the puzzle.

Two years ago I was asked to go the United States to find girls for an educational

program in Israel. I agreed after my husband said to me: 'Even if you bring just one soul to Israel, it will be a great success.' They scheduled a lecture tour for me throughout the United States, and one of the lectures was five minutes from



the home of Adelle in Florida. I could not believe it. I arrived at her home, knocked



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on the door, and asked for Adelle Schwartz. The housekeeper said that there was no one there by that name, but then I understood that she had changed her name. I entered and saw someone who looked a lot like her siblings. I connected them through a video chat and they began to cry in Hungarian. Even the housekeeper cried.

Even if your exiles are at the end of the heavens, the Lord, your God, will gather you from there, and He will take you from there

Before we parted, I clasped her hand and said: 'Adelle, Hitler is finished. The war is over, you have a huge family, you are not alone. It's not important how far away you are. You can always return. Don't allow Hitler to win. Come to Israel to be buried there, at least.' We parted emotionally and kept in touch. She who was born into a family from which she went far away, and I who joined this family after being born far away from it.

Two weeks ago we received notification

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from an American attorney that Adelle had passed away at the age of 102. It turned out that she changed her mind and instead of being cremated, wanted to have a Jewish funeral. We exerted ourselves to bring her to Israel from which she had distanced herself her entire life. Yesterday at five o'clock in the evening at Moshav Nir Etzion, her funeral took place and she was buried in the family plot. All of us were there and it was one of the most formidable experiences of my life. We saw with our own eyes the meaning of the following verse: Even if your exiles are at the end of the heavens, the Lord, your God, will gather you from there, and He will take you from there. (Deuteronomy 30:4) What had my husband said to me? If you travel to the United States and bring just one soul to Israel, it will be a great success." ■

Sivan Rahav-Meir is a media personality and lecturer. Married to Yedidya, the mother of five. Lives in Jerusalem, and formerly served as the World Mizrahi Shlichah to North America. Sivan lectures in Israel and overseas about the media, Judaism, Zionism and new media. She was voted by Globes newspaper as most popular female media personality in Israel and by the Jerusalem Post as one of the 50 most influential Jews in the world.



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Why An Apple?

One of the most famous customs of Rosh Hashana is dipping an apple in honey. We all sing the songs and eat this dish every year, but have you ever wondered what's so special about the apple? A sweeter fruit or one of the **שבעת המינים** might have been a better choice but Chazal insisted that we specifically eat an apple.

What makes an apple so unique?

For starters, an apple tree bears the stems of its fruit before its leaves. Chazal on Shir Hashirim tell us that Bnei Yisrael are compared to apples. Just as an apple tree bears fruit before it's leaves, Bnei Yisrael said **נעשה** and only after that **נשמע**. When we eat the apple on Rosh Hashana we are essentially reminding ourselves of the greatness of our ancestors and hope that their Zchut will help us have a Shana Tova Umetuka.

Another special trait of the apple tree is the fact that its leaves are the minority of the tree and the fruit are the majority. We can

learn 2 key lessons from this act of nature.

The first lesson is how to set priorities. The main object of each tree is to produce fruit, the Ikar, whereas the leaves are the Tafel. On Rosh Hashana we should always keep our eyes on the Ikar, ask Hashem to focus on our good deeds, and hope they compensate for our wrongdoings.

The second lesson is how to achieve goals. In order to achieve any goal you need to work hard consistently. Most trees work hard only to produce fewer fruit than leaves. On Rosh Hashana we ask Hashem to give us the blessing of the apple tree, to see more fruit for our hard work.

May we all have a Shana Tova Umetuka, just like an apple in honey.



Ari Emmer
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Chashmonaim

Who Knew Simple Food Could Enhance Our Chag!

On Rosh Hashanah there is a tradition to have a seder with symbolic food (simanim). The word "simanim" literally means signs or indicators that are meant to improve circumstances.

Each food has a special bracha (blessing) that is said in connection to the character

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of the food. Some of these foods include, fish, honey, spinach, carrots, cabbage, pomegranates, leeks, and dates. One example of how the blessing connects to the food is the pomegranate. "May it be your will, Hashem our G-d, the G-d of our forefathers, that our merits increase as the seeds of a pomegranate." What this bracha is saying is that we want to be worthy of G-d's blessings and now should focus on how we can make ourselves more worthy by what we do. Each of these foods and blessings connects us further to the power of tefillah (prayers) on Rosh Hashana.

The first time I experienced a Rosh Hashana seder was after I made aliyah. It was not something that many Ashkenazi Americans do. We were by friends the first night of Chag, and they brought out each food. As we all said the brachot (blessings) together a new tradition was introduced to my family.

All the different types of colorful foods along with their meaningful brachot, changed the way I looked at Rosh Hashana. I was able to connect to the day a little more by seeing how each food we ate and each bracha we made connects us to Hashem in order to push us to improve our ways. I now look forward to participating in this seder and appreciate how much it enhances the chag. Although the Seder is a minhag, it is something that I feel should be a part of Rosh Hashana in all homes! ■

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Rosh Hashana Section



Shana Tova
שנה טובה

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THE LAWS OF ROSH HASHANA



Prepared
by Rabbi
Elyada
Goldvicht
Founder, Semichat
Chaver Program



Given the unique nature, again, of this year's Rosh Hashana *davening*, with many people *davening* in smaller *minyanim* or even ביחדות (if they are in isolation), we have compiled a step-by-step chronological overview of the *halachos* that pertain to RH (and specifically to RH during COVID). May Hashem bless this upcoming year with health, happiness and success for ישראל כלל and the entire world! Shana Tova!

Erev-RH and Both Nights of RH

התרת נדרים

There is a custom based on the נמרא נדרים (גמרא) to perform התרת נדרים – nullification of vows, on Erev-RH in order to enter the new year without violating the prohibition of transgressing vows ¹. Any three men

1 See ש"ה (תחילת) based on שערי תשובה סק"ז

above Bar-Mitzvah are qualified to form a *Beis-Din* and nullify נדרים of others even if they are relatives with one another and to the one who is nullifying his vows.² If you do not understand the Hebrew it is best to recite it in a language that you understand.³ One can perform התרת נדרים over Zoom as long as the three members of the *Beis-Din* are sitting together and they see the person reciting the התרה (i.e. his camera is on).⁴ With regard to women, some say that if she is married her husband should be her messenger for התרת נדרים and add the words “and this is also for my wife”,⁵ while others say that it is best for women to rely on the נדרים of התרת נדרים on כל נדרי YK.⁶

MIKVAH

The Rama writes that there is a custom for men to go to the Mikvah on Erev-RH.⁷ If one is in isolation or if there is no safe place to go to the Mikvah one can take a shower instead.⁸ The shower should be long enough for 16 liters to be poured on

(מס' יומא)

- 2 שו"ע סימן י"ד רכח-ג
- 3 חיי אדם (כלל קלח-ח)
- 4 פסקי קרונה #50 אות ה Rav Schachter
- 5 (תשובות והנהגות) ח"א-שלח
- 6 (הליכות שלמה) פ"א-י
- 7 תקפא-ד
- 8 פסקי קרונה #50 אות ד Rav Schachter

one's head.⁹

הדלקת נרות

Married women (as well as single men/women at home)¹⁰ light candles for RH.¹¹ The ברכה recited on both nights is "להדליק". "נר של יו"ט". Some women also have the custom to recite "שהחיינו" when lighting the candles while others do not and rely on the "שהחיינו" during *kiddush*. One can follow their family custom.¹² On the first night of RH, one should light the candles before שקיעה, though some have the custom to light the candles when returning from shul (but only from a preexisting flame).¹³ On the second night of RH, *Ashkenazim* light only after צאת הכוכבים and only from a pre-existing flame.¹⁴ Additionally, the candles should not be prepared until after צאת הכוכבים. Some *Sephardim* light before שקיעה, but only from a preexisting flame.¹⁵ On both nights, both *Ashkenazim* and *Sephardim* recite the ברכה before lighting the candles.¹⁶ As on the first night, some women have the custom to recite a "שהחיינו" on the second night, but ideally, they should only recite the ברכה if they will be eating a new fruit that night or if they are wearing a new dress that night. When reciting the "שהחיינו" they should have in mind that the ברכה should incorporate RH and the new

9 מתחת יצחק (ח"ד-כא)

10 שו"ע או"ח סימן רסג-ב

11 Ibid. ה' סעיף ה'

12 שמירת שבת כהלכתה (מד-ד)

13 (שש"כ (מד-ב)

14 (שש"כ (מד-ג)

15 חזון עובדיה (עמ' קפב)

16 (משנה ברורה (סימן רסג סק"ז)



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fruit or the new dress.¹⁷ (If they have a new fruit, they should wait for *kiddush* before eating the fruit). After lighting the candles, one is not allowed to blow out the match.¹⁸

GREETING A FRIEND

When greeting a friend on RH night and up until *חצות* on the 1st day of RH one should say “לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם” and to a woman one says “לשנה טובה תכתבי ותחתמי”. After that time, one should only say “חג שמח” or “good Yom Tov”.¹⁹ Some have the custom to say “לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם” on the second night as well.²⁰

KIDDUSH

The *ברכה* of “שהחיינו” is recited on both nights of RH. On Rosh Hashana of a *שמיטה* year, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l held that during the “שהחיינו” one should have in mind to be grateful to Hashem for the opportunity to fulfill all the *mitzvos* that pertain to *שמיטה* in the upcoming year.²¹ On

the second night of RH, one should wear a new garment or place new fruits on the table before *kiddush*. When reciting the “שהחיינו” one should have in mind that it goes on both RH and the new fruit.²²

סימנים

There is a custom based on the *גמרא כריי* (נמא to eat specific fruits and vegetables on RH as a good omen and prayer for the upcoming year.²³ The *סימנים* are eaten after washing one’s hands, reciting the *המוציא*, and eating bread.²⁴ The *ברכת העץ* should be recited on a date (since it is from the *שבעת* and closest to the word “ארץ” in the verse) and if *kidd* does not have a date then it should be recited on a pomegranate.²⁵ If one does not have either, the *ברכת העץ* should be recited on the apple. One should say the “יהי רצון” that pertain to each fruit/vegetable with Hashem’s name (i.e., “יהי רצון” “מלפניך אדני א-לוהינו וא-לוהי אבותינו וכו”²⁶ After reciting the *ברכת העץ* and the *ברכת האדמה* on

17 (שמירת שבת כהלכתה (מז-מד)

18 שו”ע סימן תקיד-א

19 רמ”א סימן תקפב-ט ומשנ”ב שם

20 (ט”ז) (שם) סק”ד

21 (הליכות שלמה (תפילה פרק ד- דבר הלכה יט

22 (הליכות שלמה (פ”א-כ

23 שו”ע סימן תקפג

24 (הליכות שלמה פ”א סקכ”ד

25 (הליכות שלמה (פ”א-ז

26 משנ”ב סימן תקפג סק”ב



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the first fruit/vegetable that you are eating, you should only recite the “יהי רצון” after tasting and swallowing the fruit/vegetable in order that there is no הפסק between the ברכה and the eating.²⁷ When reciting the תורה you should have in mind that it cover all the other fruits and vegetables of the סימנים.²⁸ Most have the custom to have סימנים on the second night of RH as well.²⁹

RH Day

SHOFAR

The Torah teaches us “יום תרועה יהיה לכם” and the גמרא ראש השנה (לג:) derives that the “תרועה” needs to be heard 3 times, with a תקיעה before and after it each time. Thus, you only need to hear 9 shofar blasts. However, the Gemara is uncertain as to the exact sound that the word “תרועה” is referring to. It is either referring to what we call a תרועה today, what we call a שברים today, or what we call a שברים תרועה today. Therefore, in order to make sure that we

are fulfilling our biblical requirement we blow a שברים (with a תקיעה before and after it) three times, a תרועה (with a תקיעה before and after it) three times and a שברים תרועה (with a תקיעה before and after it) three times.³⁰ All of these blasts together total 30 sounds (including the sounds of the תקיעות before and after each “30” blasts are blown before the *Mussaf Amidah* and are called תקיעות דמיושב. Another 30 are blown during the *Amidah* and are called תקיעות דמעומד (some locations blow 30 blasts only during חזרת הש”ץ while some blow an additional 30 during the silent *Amidah* as well). There is a custom to blow another 40 (for those who did not blow 30 during the silent *Amidah*) in order to blow a total of 100 blasts on RH.³¹

The congregation and the Shofar blower should remain standing during the recital of the ברכה and during the actual Shofar blasts.³² The בעל תוקע recites two blessings before blowing the Shofar: “לשמוע קול שופר” and “שהחינו”. The בעל תוקע should have in mind to be מוציא the congregation, and they

27 Ibid סק”ד

28 הליכות שלמה (פ”א-יח)

29 שערי תשובה (תקפג-א)

30 שו”ע סימן תק”צ (א-ב)

31 רמ”א סימן תקצו ומשנ”ב סק”ב

32 שו”ע סימן תקפג-א ומשנ”ב סק”א-ב



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should have in mind to be יוצא.³³ The *gabbay* should announce that you are not allowed to speak until the end of the תקיעות.³⁴ If you are walking or sitting at home and hear the Shofar blasts from a shul nearby you fulfill your obligation if you had in mind to be יוצא because the בעל תוקע has in mind to be מוציא all that hear.³⁵ Ideally, the outdoor *minyanim* should be spread out in a manner where one *minyan* will not hear the shofar blasts from another *minyan*. If you do hear a shofar blast from another *minyan* while your בעל תוקע is blowing you need to have in mind not to be יוצא with the תקיעות from the other *minyan* or you will not be יוצא.³⁶

If you are blowing the shofar for another and you already fulfilled your obligation, the person being יוצא should recite the ברכות if he/she can.³⁷ Sephardi women do not recite the ברכה.³⁸ You can blow for someone who is in isolation and in a different room as long as you are blowing close to the room.³⁹ If you are blowing the shofar ביחידות you should make sure not to blow

-
- 33 שו"ע תקפת ח-ט
 - 34 תקצב-ג תו הלכה as is the אגרו"מ או"ח ח"ב-לו
 - 35 שו"ע תקפט-ט
 - 36 ביה"ל סימן תקצ ד"ה כמתעסק, ועיין שם בשו"ע וכן
 - ביסמן תקפת ובמשנ"ב שם סק"ז-ח
 - 37 רמ"א סימן תקפט-ו ומשנ"ב סימן תקפה סק"ה
 - 38 שו"ע תקפט-ו
 - 39 משנ"ב סימן תקפז סק"ז

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in the first three hours of the day.⁴⁰ Ideally, one who is *davening* ביחידות should blow the shofar before *davening Musaf*⁴¹ and *Musaf* should not be *davened* within the first 3 hours (of שעות זמניות) from sunrise,⁴² but no later than 7 hours⁴³ (בדיעבד, *Musaf* can be *davened* after the 7th hour). One who is *davening* ביחידות should time his *Amidah* to begin at the same time as his congregation.⁴⁴

תשליך

After *Mincha*, there is a custom of תשליך, where one goes to the river and recites verses pertaining to מים טובים from מיכה from תשובה (ד:יט).⁴⁵ There are various reasons for this custom, including the fact that the מדרש teaches that the אברהם שטן tried drowning אברהם in a river on the way to the עקידה and we want to remind ourselves of אברהם'ס determination and devotion⁴⁶ (and learn from it). If there is no river nearby, you cannot leave your house due to isolation, you can recite it on water in a well⁴⁷ or even on a cup of water.⁴⁸

40 משנ"ב סימן תקצא סקט"ו

41 רמ"א סימן תקצב-ב

42 שו"ע סימן תקצב-ח

43 משנ"ב סימן תקצא-סק"ג

44 משנ"ב סימן תקצא-סקי"ד

45 רמ"א תקפג-ב

46 משנ"ב תקפג סק"ח

47 כף החיים סימן תקפג סק"ל

48 הליכות שלמה (פ"א ארחות הלכה הע' 71)



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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקי ואלקי אבותי, שתחונן אותי ואת בעלי (ואת בני ואת אבי ואת אמי) ואת כל קרובי, ותתן לנו ולכל ישראל חיים טובים וארכים, ותזכרנו בזכרון טובה וברכה, ותפקדנו בפקדת ישועה ורחמים, ותשכין שכנתך בתוכנו, וזכנו לגדל בנים ובני בנים חכמים ונבונים, אוהבי ה', יראי אלקים, אנשי אמת זרע קדש, בה' דבקים, ומאירים את העולם בתורה ובמעשים טובים, ובכל מלאכת עבודת הבורא. אנא שמע את תחנוני, בזכות שרך ורבקה ורחל ולאה אמותינו, והאר גרנו שלא יכבה לעולם ועד והאר פניך ונושעה, אמן.

Greetings exchanged on the first night of RH, after Maariv

to one male:

לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם לאלתר לחיים טובים ולשלוש

to one female:

לשנה טובה תכתבי ותחתמי לאלתר לחיים טובים ולשלוש

to males or mixed group (and commonly used for female plural too):

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו לאלתר לחיים טובים ולשלוש

"traditional" (but possibly obsolete?) for females (plural)

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גמר חתימה טובה

RH NIGHT 1	RH NIGHT 2 LIGHT CANDLES AFTER:		HAVDALA WITHOUT CANDLE OR BESAMIM
6:21	7:32	Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	7:31
6:39	7:34	Aza area (Netivot, S'derot, Et al)	7:33
6:40	7:33	Beit Shemesh / RBS	7:32
6:36	7:32	Gush Etzion	7:31
6:38	7:34	Raanana/ Tel Mond/ Herzliya/ K. Saba	7:33
6:38	7:33	Modi'in / Chashmona'im	7:32
6:38	7:34	Netanya	7:33
6:38	7:33	Be'er Sheva	7:32
6:38	7:34	Rehovot	7:33
6:21	7:34	Petach Tikva	7:32
6:37	7:33	Ginot Shomron	7:32
6:28	7:34	Haifa / Zichron	7:33
6:36	7:32	Gush Shiloh	7:31
6:37	7:34	Tel Aviv / Giv'at Shmuel	7:33
6:37	7:32	Giv'at Ze'ev	7:31
6:37	7:32	Chevron / Kiryat Arba	7:31
6:39	7:35	Ashkelon	7:33
6:38	7:34	Yad Binyamin	7:32
6:31	7:32	Tzfat / Bik'at HaYarden	7:31
6:35	7:31	Golan	7:30

Reminder to light a 48 hour candle before Rosh Hashanah to provide a flame for second night lighting. On the second night we light from a pre-existing flame only and the match or helper candle should be put down (in a safe place) to go out on its own.

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Kiddush for leil Rosh Hashana

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Both nights:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

Kiddush for Rosh Hashana Day

קידוש ליום ראש השנה

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The Rosh Hashana 'Seder' סדר ראש השנה

Customs for the night of Rosh HaShana vary from community to community and from family to family. This page is provided as a set of suggestions for those who do not have a fixed custom in their home. Nothing mentioned here is the final word on anything. If you are in doubt about anything, check with your Rav.

After KIDDUSH, wash for HaMotzi and eat from the LECHEM MISHNEH. Some use honey on the challa rather than salt. Some use salt for the HaMotzi and then take another piece of challa with honey. After challa with honey, say:

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שתתחדש עלינו שנה טובה ומתוקה

It is appropriate to respond to Y'HI RATZON statements of others with AMEIN, as they are bracha-like.

Since the fruits and vegetables to be eaten as part of the SEDER LEIL ROSH HASHANA are not "normal" components of a meal, they are not covered by the HaMotzi, and need their own brachot, which should be said in accordance with the "rules of brachot" - as follows...

Among the fruits of trees, one should say the bracha on the fruit with the highest priority: [1] Olive, [2] Date, [3] Grape, [4] Fig, [5] Pomegranate, [6] your favorite among fruits not of SHIV'AT HAMINIM, [7] a whole fruit, rather than a piece, [8] larger piece. This list does not imply that all these fruits [1]-[5] are part of your Leil Rosh HaShana Minhag; the full list of priorities is provided to cover any situation.

ברוך אתה ה' אלוקינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי העץ.

Among vegetables, make the bracha on what you like best. Between HaEitz and HaAdama, HaEitz will usually be said first, unless you have a HaAdama that you like better than any of the fruits, in which case, HaAdama will precede HaEitz (even over 7-Minim).

ברוך אתה ה' אלוקינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי האדמה.

If one or more fruits require a Shehechyanu, they will be covered by the Shehechyanu of Kiddush, if they are on the table at the time. Otherwise, one additional Shehechyanu should be said (even if there are more than one fruit that "need" it).

When all brachot are taken care of, many eat a slice of (sweet) apple dipped in honey. The Y'HI RATZON above can be repeated for the Apple & Honey.

From this point on, whichever of the items on the next page that you have - to eat (or even to just be on the table), say the appropriate Y'HI RATZON.

This list follows no particular order:



For RUBIYA (black-eyed peas):

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שירבו זכויותינו



For KARTI (leek):

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שייכרתו שונאינו



For SILKA (beets or mangold):

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שיסתלקו אויבינו



For DATES:

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שיייתמו שונאינו



For KARA (type of squash, pale green):

some say this for carrots - play on words גזר

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שיקרע גזר דיננו, ויקראו לפניך זכויותינו



For POMEGRANATE:

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שנרבה זכויותינו כרימון

If one eats FISH on Leil Rosh HaShana, say the following:

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שנפרה ונרבה כדגים ושלא תהא עין הרע שולטת בנו כדגים הללו שאין עין הרע שולטת בהם



Some place the HEAD of a ram or fish on the table and say:

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקינו ואלוקי אבותינו שנהיה לראש ולא לזנב



If one eats the meat of a sheep (preferably a ram), he says:

יהי רצון שתזכר לנו אילו של יצחק

תשליך Tashlich

After *Mincha*, there is a custom of תשליך, where one goes to the river and recites verses pertaining to תשובה from (ז:ט) ספר מיכה¹. There are various reasons for this custom including the fact that the מדרש teaches that the שטן tried drowning אברהם in a river on the way to the עקידה and we want to remind ourselves of אברהם's determination and devotion² (and learn from it). If there is no river nearby, you can recite it on water in a well³ or even on a cup of water⁴.

מי קל כְּמוֹד נושא עֹון וְעוֹבֵר עַל פְּשַׁע לְשֹׂאֲרֵית נְחֻלְתּוֹ לֹא הִחְזִיק לְעַד אִפּוֹ כִּי חָפַץ חֲסֵד הוּא: יָשׁוּב וְרַחֲמֵנוּ יִכְבּוֹשׁ עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ וְתִשְׁלִיךְ בְּמַצְלוֹת יָם כָּל חַטָּאתֶם: תִּתֵּן אֲמֶת לְיַעֲקֹב חֲסֵד לְאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְרָהָם מִימֵי קְדָם:

מִן הַמַּצַּר קְרָאתִי קָה עֲנֵנִי בְּמִרְחַב קָה ה' לִי לֹא אֵירָא מֵה יַעֲשֶׂה לִי אֲדָם ה' לִי בְעוֹזְרֵי וְאֲנִי אֲרָאָה בְּשִׁנְאֵי טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בְּה' מִבְּטַח בְּאֲדָם טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בְּה' מִבְּטַח בְּנִדְבִיבִים:

רִנְנוּ צְדִיקִים בְּה' לִישְׁרִים נֶאֱמָה תְהִלָּה: הוֹדוּ לֵה' בְּכִנּוֹר בְּנִבֵּל עֲשׂוֹר זְמֵרוֹ-לוֹ: שִׁירוּ-לוֹ שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ הֵיטִיבוּ נֶגֶן בְּתִרְעוּעָה: כִּי-יִשָּׁר דְּבַר-יְהוָה וְכָל-מַעֲשָׂהוּ בְּאִמּוֹנָה: אֲהַב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט חֲסֵד ה' מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ: בְּדָבָר ה' שָׁמַיִם נִעֲשׂוּ וּבְרוּחַ פִּיּוֹ כָל-צִבְאָם: כִּנְס בְּנַד מִי הַיָּם נִתָּן בְּאַצְרוֹת תְּהוֹמוֹת: יִירָאָן מֵה' כָּל-הָאָרֶץ מִמּוֹנוֹ יִגְוֹרוּ כָל-יִשְׁבֵּי תֵבֶל: כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי הוּא-צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֹד: ה' הַפִּיר עֲצַת-גּוֹיִם הִנְיָא מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים: עֲצַת ה' לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֹד מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר: אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר-ה' אֱלֹקָיו הֵעָם | בְּחֹר לְנַחֲלָה לּוֹ: מִשְׁמַיִם הִבִּיט ה' רְאָה אֶת-כָּל-בְּנֵי הָאָדָם: מִמְּכוּן-שִׁבְתּוֹ הִשְׁגִּיחַ אֶל כָּל-יִשְׁבֵּי הָאָרֶץ: הֵיטֵר יְחַד לִבָּם הִמְבִּיחַ אֶל-כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם: אִי-ן הַמְלִיךְ נוֹשַׁע בְּרַב-חַיִל גְּבוּר לֹא-יִנְצַל בְּרַב-כַּחַ: שֶׁקֶר הַסּוֹס לְתַשׁוּעָה וּבְרַב חַיִּלוֹ לֹא יִמְלֹט: הִנֵּה עֵין ה' אֶל-יִרְאָיו לְמִיחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ: לְהַצִּיל מִמָּוֶת נַפְשָׁם וּלְחַיּוֹתָם בְּרַעַב: נַפְשָׁנוּ חִפְתָּה לֵה' עֲזָרְנוּ וּמִגִּנְנוּ הוּא: כִּי-בוֹ יִשְׁמַח לְבָנוּ כִּי בְשֵׁם קְדָשׁוֹ בְּטַחְנוּ: יְהִי-חֲסִדְךָ ה' עֲלֵינוּ כְּאֲשֶׁר יְחַלְנוּ לָךְ:

לֹא יִרְעוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתוּ בְּכָל הַר קְדָשִׁי, כִּי מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דְּעָה אֶת ה' כַּמִּים לַיָּם מְכַסִּים:

לְדוֹד מִזְמוֹר לֵה' הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ תִּבְּל וְיִשְׁבֵּי בָהּ: כִּי-הוּא עַל-יָמַיִם יִסְדָּה וְעַל-נְהָרוֹת יְכוּוְנָה: מִי-יַעֲלֶה בַּהַר-ה' וּמִי-יָקוּם בְּמִקּוֹם קְדָשׁוֹ: נָקִי כַפַּיִם וְבַר-לֵבָב אֲשֶׁר | לֹא-נִשְׂא לְשׁוֹא (נִפְשׁוּ) נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמַרְמָה: יִשָּׂא בְרַכָּה מֵאֵת ה' וְצְדָקָה מֵאֱלֹקֵי יִשְׁעוֹ: זֶה דוֹר (דַּרְשׁוּ) דַּרְשׁוּ מִבְּקָשֵׁי פְּנִידָה יַעֲקֹב סָלָה:

1 רמ"א תקפג-ב

2 משנ"ב תקפג סק"ח

3 כף החיים סימן תקפג סק"ל

4 (הליכות שלמה (פ"א ארחות הלכה הע' 71)

שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים | רָאשֵׁיכֶם וְהִנְשָׂאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם וַיָּבֹאוּ מִלֶּךְ הַכְּבוֹד: מִי זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד ה' עֲזָז וַגְּבוֹר ה' גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה: שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים | רָאשֵׁיכֶם וּשְׂאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם וַיָּבֹאוּ מִלֶּךְ הַכְּבוֹד: מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד ה' צְבָאוֹת הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד סֵלָה:

אֶלְקֵינוּ וְאֶלְקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִלֶּךְ רַחֲמָן רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ, טוֹב וּמִטִּיב הַדְּרָשׁ לָנוּ, שׁוּבָה אֵלֵינוּ בְּהַמּוֹן רַחֲמֶיךָ בְּגִלְגַּל אֲבוֹת שְׁעֵשׂוּ רְצוֹנְךָ, בְּנֵה בֵיתְךָ כְּבִתְחִילָה וְכוּנֵן בֵּית מִקְדָּשְׁךָ עַל מְכוּנֵנוּ, וְהִרְאֵנוּ בְּבִנְיָנוּ וּשְׂמַחְנוּ בְּתִקּוּנוּ, וְהִשָּׁב שְׂכִינְתְּךָ לְתוֹכֵנוּ, וְהִשָּׁב כְּהַנִּים לְעַבּוֹדְתֶם וְלוֹוִיִּם לְשִׁירְכֶם וְלִזְמִרְכֶם, וְהִשָּׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל לְנוּיָהֶם, וּמְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ דְּעָה אֶת ה' לִירְאָה וּלְאַהֲבָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ הַגְּדוֹל הַגְּבוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֲמֵן כֵּן יְהִי רְצוֹן

כָּל כְּלֵי יוֹצֵר עֲלֶיךָ לֹא יִצְלַח, וְכָל לְשׁוֹן תְּקוּם אֶתְךָ לְמִשְׁפָּט תִּרְשִׁיעִי, זֹאת נִחַלְתָּ עִבְדֵי ה' וְצִדְקָתֶם מֵאֵתִי נָאִם ה':

לֹא יִרְעוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתוּ בְּכָל הַר קִדְשֵׁי, כִּי מְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ דְּעָה אֶת ה' כְּפִמִּים לַיָּם מִכַּסִּים:

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלֹת מִמַּעַמְמֵקִים קְרָאֲתִיךָ ה': ה' שָׁמְעָה בְּקוֹלִי תִהְיֶינָה אֲזִינְךָ קְשׁוּבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי: אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר קָה ה' מִי יַעֲמֵד: כִּי עֲמֹד הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּזְכָּר: קוִיִּתִי ה' קוֹתֶה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֲלִיתִי: נַפְשִׁי לָה' מִשְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר שְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר: יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל יְה' כִּי עַם ה' הַחֲסֵד וְהַרְבֵּה עֲמוֹ פְּדוּת: וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיו:

שִׁיר לְמַעֲלֹת אֲשָׁא עֵינֵי אֶל-הַהַרִּים מֵאִין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי: עֲזָרִי מֵעַם ה' עֲשֵׂה שְׁמִים וְאָרֶץ: אֵל-יִתֵּן לְמוֹט רִגְלְךָ אֶל-יָנוּם שְׁמָרְךָ: הִנֵּה לֹא-יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה' שְׁמָרְךָ ה' צִלְךָ עַל-יַד יְמִינְךָ: יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא-יִכְפֶּה וְיָרַח בְּלִילָה: ה' יִשְׁמָרְךָ מִכָּל-רָע יִשְׁמָר אֶת-נַפְשְׁךָ: ה' יִשְׁמָר-צִאֲתְךָ וּבּוֹאֲךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם:

Say this pasuk 7 times

לְעוֹלָם ה' דְּבַרְךָ נֶצֶב בְּשָׁמַיִם:

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ עַל יְדֵי הָאֲרֶת תִּיקוּנִים עֲתִיקָא קְדִישָׁא דְעֲתִיקִין שְׁבָאֲרִיךָ דְזַעִיר יְכַבְּשׁוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ אֶת כְּעֶסֶךָ, וַיִּגְלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ עַל מִדּוֹתֶיךָ, וְתִתְנַהֵג עִמָּנוּ בְּמִדַּת הַרְחָמִים, וְתִתֵּן לָנוּ חַיִּים אַרוּכִים וְטוֹבִים בְּעֶסְקֵי תוֹרַתְךָ וְקִיּוּם מִצְוֹתֶיךָ לְעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ, אֲמֵן וְכֵן יְהִי רְצוֹן:

Tzom Gedalia is observed the day after Rosh Hashana:

3rd of Tishrei, Thursday September 9th

The fast begins at 5:06am

The fast ends at 7:11pm

(These times are for Yerushalayim)

Have an easy and meaningful fast.

Shacharit and Musaf for Rosh Hashanah for those Davening Alone

Prepared by the Rabbinical Council of America based on the rulings of Rav Hershel Schachter and Rav Modechai Willig.

Regular Font, Bold (required tefillot)

Italic (discretionary)

**Kaddish, Barkhu and Kedushah are not recited without a minyan*

	Koren	Artscroll	Birnbaum
Preliminaries			
Shir shel Yom/Le-David			
<i>Adon Olam/Yigdal</i>	262-264	180	53/55
Birkot ha-Shachar	267-26	184-188	59-63
Akeidah/Korbanot	271-293	188-216	63-87
Rabbi Ishmael	293	214-216	83-87
Pesukei de-Zimra			
Mizmor Shir Hanukkat ha-Bayit	297	220	133
Pesukei de-Zimra	301-345	222-260	135-167
Ha-Melekh	347	262	169
Shokhen Ad-Yishtabah	347-349	262-264	169
<i>Shir ha-Ma'alot</i>	349	264	171
Shaharit			
<i>*Some may skip the piyyutum in Birkot Keriyat Shema</i>			
Barukh attah Hashem...	352		
<i>Or Olam, Melekh</i>	997/1031	266, 268-276	171, 173-183
Ha-Me'ir la'Aretz	355-357	278-282	183-185
Titbarakh Tzureinu - melo kol ha'aretz...	363	284	187-189
<i>Kevodo Ihel</i>		286	189-191
Ve-ha-Hayyot / Ve-ha-Ofanim – Ga'al Yisrael	365-379	288-296	191-201
Amida (Quiet)	381-395	296-304	201-209
No Hazarat ha-Shatz			
<i>*While an individual praying alone has no obligation to recite any of the piyyutum from Hazarat ha-Shat"z. One may, however, recite them if desired.</i>			
<i>Hashem melekh</i>	431-433	435	225-227
	Koren	Artscroll	Birnbaum

<i>Le-Kel Orekh Din</i> ¹	435	330	261
Avinu Malkeinu	719-723	384-388	271-275
Keriyat ha-Torah			
<i>*Although not required, it is good to review the Torah and Haftarah readings.</i>			
Torah and Haftarah Readings			
- Tuesday	467-483	402-426	287-299
- Wednesday	737-749	402-426	299-309
Tekiyat Shofar			
<i>La-menatzei'ah</i>	757	432	315
<i>Min ha-meitzar</i>	759	434	315
Birkot ha-Shofar	761	436	317
30 Blasts of the Shofar	761-763	436-438	317
Ashrei	763-765	438-440	319-321
Musaf			
Amidah	515-549 / 771-803	448-468	327-347
No Hazarat ha-Shatz			
<i>*While an individual praying alone has no obligation to recite any of the piyyutim from Hazarat ha-Shat"z. One may, however, recite them if desired.</i>			
<i>Va-yehi be-Yeshurun melekh</i>	561-565	476-480	355-357
<i>U-netaneh Tokef</i>	565-575	480-484	361-363
<i>Ha-Ohez be-yad midat ha-rahamim</i>	581-585	490-492	367-371
<i>Ve-ye-e-tayu</i>	587-589	494-496	373
<i>Hayom te-amtzeinu</i> (without the concluding berakhah)	637	532-534	405-407
Day 2			
<i>Le-Kel Orekh Din</i>	807	538	261
<i>U-netaneh Tokef</i>	809-817	538-542	361-363
<i>Ha'ozeh be-yad</i> (see FN 8)	821-825	546	367-371
<i>Ha-yom</i> (see FN 9)	871-873	582	405-407
Ein Ke-Elokeinu / Pittum ha-ketoret	877-879	586-588	409-413
Aleinu	883-885	590-592	415

¹ On the second day of Rosh Hashanah *Le-Kel Orekh Din* is recited during Musaf.

ROSH HASHANA

ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



The Torah Reading of Rosh Hashana is read with a unique nusach, a stirring melody. During the year we have a number of different musical trop used for public reading: there is one trop or tune during the year for Torah reading, a different one for the Haftorah and different ones for the Megillot. The different trop, or tunes, convey meaning. G-d speaks to man, Reveals Himself to man in different ways. Torah is one form – direct. The Prophets is different – through visions. And Ketuvim, the Writings, is too a different communication – it is inspiration, Divine inspiration. The different forms of communicating with man are expressed by using different melodies in their reading.

The trop for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is a haunting one. The different trop reflect different moods of revelation. The Torah trop is in the major key – G-d’s speaking to man is strong and solid. The haftorah trop is in the minor key – for many of the prophecies are harsh and critical and many have yet to take place. On Rosh Hashana we view ourselves closer to the King, more intimate, in the Holy of Holies as it were. This closeness is both wonderful and scary, joyful and

with trepidation. Being close to Him and He close to us is a haunting experience. Hence, the trop of Rosh Hashana is itself haunting.

DAY 1

The Torah reading for the first day is Genesis, Chapter 21, v. 1-34. This chapter describes the birth of Yitzchak, the insistence of Sarah to send Yishmael away, and Hagar and Yishmael’s near death in the desert before being saved. It concludes with a pact made between Avraham and Avimelech in Beer Sheva.



1st aliyah (Genesis 21:1-4). The promise made to Avraham and Sarah is granted and Yitzchak is born. In describing the birth, the phrase “as He said” appears 3 times in the first 2 verses. That is the reason this is read on Rosh Hashana. The theme Zichronot is not just that G-d remembers, but that He does what He promises, acts on what He says. He granted to Sarah the child that He promised.



2nd aliyah (21:5-12) Sarah says “all who hear of this birth will laugh”. Hence Yitzchak. Jewish history begins with the incredulous. A laugh, expressing how incredulous this birth is. Sarah knew not how incredulous our history would truly be.

Sarah demands that Hagar and Yishmael be sent off, for Yitzchak alone is our future. While Avraham does not like this, Hashem tells him that Sarah is correct, for Yitzchak is the Jewish future. While

we value all people, Jewish destiny is different, our people are different and our covenant with G-d is different.



3rd aliya (21:13-21) Avraham awakens early to send Hagar and Yishmael away. They go to Beersheva. She cannot bear to see the death of her son, an angel calls to her that her son is saved as G-d heard the voice of the child; he too will be a great nation. She opens her eyes and sees water and they drink. He grows and becomes an archer.

This is a parallel story to the Akeda we will read tomorrow. Early in the morning, journey off, with a son, near death, the angel calls, her eyes are open.

There is a universal theme of Rosh Hashana, of all of G-d's creation. There are great nations. Like Yishmael. But the parallel to the story of Yitzchak and the Akeda is to highlight the difference. There are many great nations. Yishmael becomes a great warrior archer. But Yitzchak will carry on the covenant. There is only one Jewish people.



4th aliya (21:22-27) Avimelech makes a pact with Avraham because "G-d is with you in all you do". This too is a promise fulfilled. Avraham was promised he would have a great name. His fame has come to be. G-d promises and fulfills those promises.



5th aliya (21:28-34) They call the name of the location Beer sheva from the word oath, or pact. This too is to convey contrast: Avimelech and Avraham create a pact, but theirs is an

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earthly pact; lurking in the background of people making covenants, is the far more weighty and cosmic covenant of a pact with the Divine.

DAY 2

The Torah reading is the 24 verses of Genesis, Chapter 22. This story, Akedat Yitzchak, the binding of Isaac is the most dramatic expression of how far man is willing to go in his allegiance to G-d. It is a complex story. But the simplicity of the story, the deep and unswerving commitment of Avraham is majestic. The story concludes with the ram, caught in the thicket by its horn; the shofar we use for Rosh Hashana.



1st aliya (Genesis 22:1-3) G-d tests Avraham: Take your beloved son and offer him as an offering.

Avraham awakens early, gets up and goes with his assistants, with Yitzchak and with the wood.

The drama of the story is belied by the strikingly simple wording: hineni, here I am, he woke up early, got up and went to do what G-d requested. The absence of any dialogue, of any questions, of challenge to G-d, of discussion with Sarah, of explanation to Yitzchak is striking. This simplicity drives the message of the simplicity of Avraham's loyalty to G-d. For this terribly complex story is at its root quite simple. This simplicity is a Rosh Hashana theme. We live in a terribly complicated world; we have many unanswered questions, theological questions, many challenges and confusion. But at some very deep and profound level

we are simple in our devotion. Like the shofar – no words, just a simple call from way deep in our souls.



2nd aliya (22:4-8) They arrive at the place. The assistants stay back. Avraham and Yitzchak walk, together. Yitzchak inquires as to where the offering is. Avraham responds that G-d will provide the offering. And they walk together.

They walk together. This togetherness is ironic – for Avraham knows he is to sacrifice Yitzchak, while Yitzchak does not know this. Or perhaps he does. Maybe he really is together with Avraham. While Avraham is tested, Yitzchak is too. Yitzchak's role as the willing offering is dramatic. And as the father of the Jewish people he expresses the image of the Jew as nearly destroyed, but surviving.



3rd aliya (22:9-14) Avraham builds the altar, arranges the wood, places Yitzchak on the

altar and takes the knife to slaughter his son. The angel interrupts; instructing him not to slaughter his son, or do a thing, for now we know you would not withhold even your son from Me. Avraham sees the ram and offers it in place of his son. He calls the place “G-d will see, yireh” and it is called the mountain in which G-d is seen (Har HaMoriah).

What more can be said of this powerful and dramatic moment. The mountain is named “He sees” and “He is seen”. 2 directions: He sees us, we see Him. The story told *Him* a lot about Avraham. He saw Avraham not just profess faith, but be faithful. And the

story tells us a lot about Him. What we cannot perceive in Him remains mysterious: why did He do this. We see and know little of His ways. But at the same time there is something we do see: His mercy and His faithfulness to us. That was clear to see. He saved Yitzchak and He saved Avraham from a treacherous moment. The why remains mysterious; but the loyalty to us is displayed brilliantly.



4th aliya (22:15-19) The angel calls to Avraham a second time. He is told that G-d swore that if Avraham did not withhold his child, that he and his children would be blessed, would be a blessing and would be a great people.

This too is a Rosh Hashana theme. The Creation of the world was an expression of Divine desire for a partner in man. The choosing of Avraham was a more intimate expression of Divine desire for a specific partner in man. And the expression of blessing to the Jewish people is a further expression of our unique covenant. Rosh Hashana is not only the majesty of G-d but the majesty of man. We are partners with the King. He reaches to us, creates us, chooses us, instructs us, blesses us. What a majestic mandate – the partners, the intimate partner of the King.



5th aliya (22:20-24) Avraham is told that his brother has a full family of descendants including Rivka.

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Holydays Or Holidays?

I am writing these words just after Tisha B'Av.

I want to pose a question.

The 17th of Tammuz, the three weeks (Bein Hametzarim), Tisha B'Av, a total of 21 days. Before we turn around Elul, Rosh Hashana, the Aseret Yemei Teshuva and Yom Kippur a total of 40 days.

Not to mention the mourning period of Sefirat Haomer, another 49 days.

Throw in Ta'anit Esther and the fast 10th of Tevet for good measure.

Please do the math - a total of 102 days! That is almost 1/3 of our 354 lunar year or

365 solar year.

What exactly does the Almighty want from us?

Can't we relax a little bit without all this mourning and repentance (Teshuva)!? How about a Holiday instead of a Holyday?

We of this COVID generation who for 1 1/2 years have been experiencing an unprecedented period of anxiety know the answer. We know it because we have basically been asking the same question: what does the Almighty want from us? He wants to get our attention and He did!

Via the High Holyday season He truly wants us to enjoy life, celebrate Simchas, smile and be happy. But the Torah designed these 112 days in order to remind us that there is also a serious dimension to life which should not diminish our Simcha but expand its meaning.

These 112 days are designed to "get our attention" and to encourage us to focus on the TOTAL picture of "ivdu et HaShem BESIMCHA" (serve HaShem with joy). These days are designed to remind us of the bigger picture.

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The challenge is to utilize these final 10 days from Rosh Hashana through Yom Kippur to thank Him for this opportunity. A proper application of the meaning, message and mitzvot of these days are designed to recalibrate the real definition of living a joyous life.

Make no mistake about it the Almighty wants us to be happy and enjoy life to the fullest. He just wants us to realize that the joy and happiness will come by living a rich spiritual life.

Ketiva Vechatima Tova. Happy Holyday/ Holiday! ■



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VAYEILECH



ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



Rabbi Reuven Tradburks Director of RCA Israel Region

Vayeilech is the shortest Parsha in the Torah. The entire parsha is one chapter of just 30 verses.



1st aliya (Devarim 31:1-3) Moshe goes. And speaks to the entire people. I am 120 years old. I will not bring you into the land; G-d will lead you. And Yehoshua will lead you.

Moshe emphasizes that no leader is indispensable. G-d leads. Yehoshua will take his place as leader but as a partner to the Divine.

The parsha is called Vayeilech because of the first word. Moshe went. Where did he go? The Ibn Ezra said he went to each tribe to inform them that he would not be leading them, that he is about to die and to bless them. Moshe's gracious leave taking is precious; I have done what I have done. It is now time for Yehoshua to lead the next chapter.

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2nd aliya (31:4-6) G-d will do for you as He did with Sichon and Og. Be strong and firm, do not be afraid or worried; G-d will be with you. He will not let go of you or leave you.

The couplets are instructive. Moshe repeats the need to be strong, not to worry and that G-d will not abandon you. The doubling of expressions is Moshe's way of saying that this won't be easy. Don't think that the covenant with the Divine makes life a walk in the park. While He is with you, you need to be active participants in your own fate.



3rd aliya (31:7-9) Moshe called Yehoshua, and in front of the entire people charged him to be strong and of good courage. For G-d will be with you; He will not abandon you, so be not afraid. And Moshe wrote the Torah and gave it to the bearers of the Aron.

Moshe encourages Yehoshua a lot – be chazak, strong, and amatz, mighty. Don't be afraid. Although Moshe just said the exact same thing to the people, he assures Yehoshua of success. Moshe is addressing Yehoshua's fears. For although there is a promise to the Jewish people, who knows if I, Yehoshua, are deserving to be their leader. Maybe I am unworthy. That is the healthy humility that every leader should display. Who am I to lead this great people?



4th aliya (31:10-13) Hakhel: Every 7 years, during Sukkot, when all Israel gathers, read this Torah, so all will learn to have awe and observe the Torah.

After encouraging Yehoshua, Moshe writes

down the Torah and we learn the mitzvah of Hakhel – public reading of the Torah every 7 years. And although Hakhel is a meaningful mitzvah, its appearance here is curious. Moshe is transitioning. He is taking leave. Yehoshua is being invested. Why stick in the Mitzvah of Hakhel, of reading and teaching the people to fear G-d? Perhaps, and this is conjecture, the Mitzvah of Hakhel is not to teach the people but to teach the King. The King is to read the Torah in front of the people. Perhaps this is the Torah's version of the 7 year itch. Leaders, businesses, institutions often move in 7 year cycles. After 7 years, take stock. Where are you? Where are you going? Are you on track? Moshe is instructing Yehoshua. You are to lead the people. To be a servant of G-d. Lots will happen as leader that may make you overly confident, haughty, maybe fearful, pessimistic. Every 7 years, take the Torah and read it; take stock, publicly. Reboot in front of all the people. When they see that, what a lesson by example. They too will reboot to be servants of the people and of G-d.

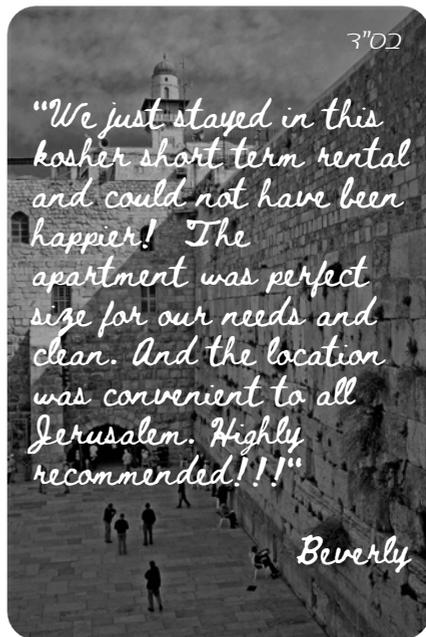


5th aliya (31:14-19) G-d calls Moshe and Yehoshua. A cloud appears. He says: this people will seek idols and abandon my covenant. I will leave them. I will hide my Face from them and they will feel I have abandoned them. I will surely Hide Myself from them. Write



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this song. Teach them this, so it shall be testimony for them.

This aliya turns rough. This is now not Moshe speaking, but G-d speaking to Moshe and Yehoshua. The Jews will rebel. And Hashem will withdraw, will leave the Jews subject to whatever calamities befall them. The greatest theological mystery is contained in this one verse: “I will hide My Face from you.” Chilling. And it is repeated: I will surely hide My Face. The greatest theological challenge, posed in our time by the unfathomable tragedy of the Holocaust, must grapple with this Divine eclipse – Hiding His Face. When and why does He Hide His Face? The Torah states it but does not explain it. And while Jewish history is replete with tragedies, seemingly moments of this Divine eclipse, at least in our time we are warmed by the opposite: we who have returned to His land are warmed by the Shining of His Face upon us.



6th aliya (31:20-24) I will bring the people to the Land, but they will respond to their success with rebellion. Let this song be at the ready for when this occurs. Moshe wrote the song, teaching it to the people. He charged Yehoshua again to be strong.

Moshe would again seem to be generous to Yehoshua. As if to say, “when things turn ugly, don’t take the blame. All you can do is



lead. Whether the people follow or whether they rebel is not your doing. Be strong.” Generosity to the next leader, doing all to help them succeed is the sign of a leader who leads not for his own ego, who would not want the next guy to be better than him, but is the sign of a leader who leads as a servant of the people, only wanting their success.



7th aliya (31:25-30) Moshe commanded the Leviim to place the Torah on the side of the Aron, as a permanent testimony. For, I know this people and they are stubborn and cantankerous. Gather all the leaders so I can charge them, for I am sure that following my death, there will be disloyalty. And Moshe spoke the words of the song to the people.

The song Moshe keeps referring to would seem to be Haazinu, the next parsha. History will have its share of surprises. But there will be sweeps of history that while tragic and full of suffering, need not be theological crises. At the dawn of our history we are already expecting the unexpected, facing history with a sober sense of success and challenge. ■



STATS

52nd of the 54 sedras; 9th of 11 D'varim
Written on 72 lines in a Torah (rank: 53)
3 Parshiyot; 2 open, 1 closed
30 p'sukim - ranks 54th (11th in D'varim)
553 words - ranks 53rd (10th in D'varim)
2123 letters - ranks 53rd (10th in D'varim)
Shortest sedra in number of p'sukim; longest p'sukim in the whole Torah



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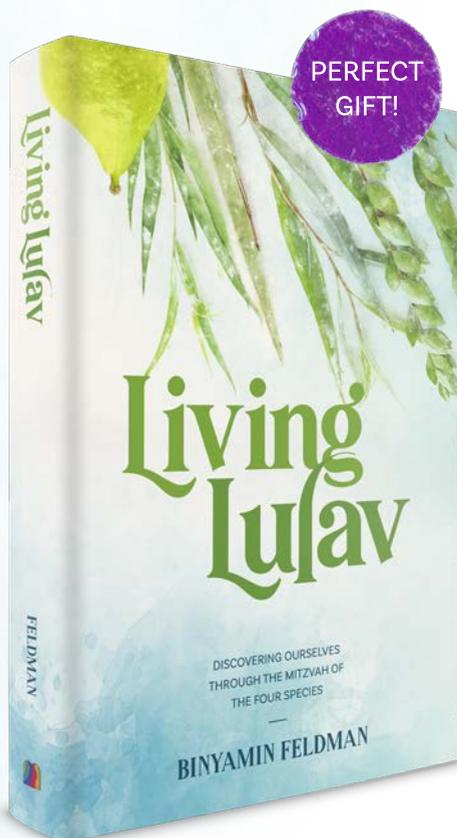
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