



**Special
Rosh Hashana
Double
Issue!**



**TORAH TAVLIN IS
AVAILABLE FREE OF
CHARGE! TO SPONSOR /
DEDICATE AN ISSUE, OR
RECEIVE IT BY E-MAIL FOR
YOURSELF AND FOR YOUR
SHUL, PLEASE CALL
845-821-6200 OR SEND
AN E-MAIL TO:
TORAHTAVLIN@YAHOO.COM**

ראש השנה - יום הדין / פרשת האזינו - שבת שובה

Rosh Hashana - Yom Hadin / Parshas Haazinu - Shabbos Shuva

א' - ג' תשרי תשע"ג - September 5 - 7, 2013

הגה"צ רבי גמליאל חכם רבינו ביץ שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים עיה"ק

רעינות ופירושים לעורך את האדם לעבודת הש"ת והתחזקות באמונה ובסתחון מאת

טיב התבלין

בראש השנה יכתבון (תפילת ונתנה תוקף) - ה'ראש' של השנה

כוחו בפסוקי דומרה, עד שבהגיעו ליציא, כבר לא היה מסוגל להביע הדברים. גם יראה האדם להתעורר בתפילות אלו הימים לבכי, וכן מובא **מזא"ר הק'** (שער הכוונות דרוש ר"ה בהקדמה) כי מי שאין בכיה נופרת עליו בימים אלו, הוא הוראה שאין נשמתו הגונה ושלמה, ועוד כתב שם כי האדם הנופלת עליו בכיה רבה מאדיו בימים אלו בתפילה, הוא הוראה שגידן בטאותה שעה למעלה, עכ"ל.

וכן כתב בספר **מטה אפרים'** (תקפב, כח): נוהגים לבכות ולהוריד דמעות בתפלת ראש השנה ויום הכפורים אף כשחל בשבת. וכבר כתבו האחרונים (ראה 'אלף המגן' שם, שהאר"ך הרבה בענין הכבייה והדמעות) כי מי שמטבעו קשה לו לבכות, ישתדל על כל פנים להתפלל בקול של בכי, וכדכתיב (תהלים ו, ט): כי שמע ה' קול' בכיי. וידוע מה שהאריכו הרבה בספרים הקדושים אודות הדמעות, שזו סגולה גדולה שתתקבל תפילתו, וכמבואר ב**תיקוני זוהר** (תיקון י"א) רום חשיבות סגולת הדמעות, על הפסוק (שמות ב, ו): 'ותפתח ותראה את הילד והנה נער בוכה' וגו', לכן מיד – 'ותחמול עליו'. לכן כאשר ישראל פותחין בתשובה 'בבכיה', מיד 'ותחמול עליו'!

וראו להביא כאן מעשה נורא המסופר על הרה"ק **רבי בונם מפשיסחא זי"ע**, שהגיע ל**הרה"ק החוזה מלובלין זי"ע** בערב ראש השנה בכדי לקבל את ברכתו לשנה החדשה. וברכו החוזה' כבקשתו, אך להפתעתו הוסיף לומר לו: דע לך שאני רואה שהשנה תהיה לך שנה קשה מאוד בפרנסה ואתה תפסיד את כל כספיך, ולא ישר לך מאומה! וכאשר אמר הד"ר כך הוה! עבר חודש ועוד חודש, ואט אט הכסף אול, עד שלא היה לו במה להאכיל את בני ביתו, ולהביא טרף בפיהם. בצד לו, ההליט לצאת למסע חרוק, לתור אחר עבודות מזדמנות, שמא תגלח יוזמתו ויוכל לקבץ פרוטה לפרוטה ולהאכיל את בני ביתו הרעבים. אלא שגם יוזמתו זו לא עלתה יפה, ולא היתה לו שום הצלחה במשלה דיו.

באחד הלילות, בהיותו בארץ נכר, ישב ובכה כל הלילה ממעמקי הלב, וביקש שירחמו עליו מהשמים, להשפיע לו שפע גשמי, למען יוכל לשוב לביתו ולהביא טרף בפי עולליו. למחרת, ארו את חפציו והועיד פעמיו לעיד מגוריו, בהיותו סמוך ובטור, עד עזרתו מעם ה'. ואכן, באותו יום, הגיע אליו אחד בשליחותה של גבירה מעיד מגוריו, החפצה להעסיק אותו תמורת תשלום הוגן, אך הד"ר ר' בונם, שזה עתה שב מגלות נוראה, וחפשו אחר מקור פרנסה כלשהו, אור עזו בנפשו והשיב לשליח כי אין הוא חפץ לעבוד כעובד רגיל, אלא בתור שותף שיה בחלקי הרווחים. אותה אשה, שידעה עד כמה המצב קשה בביתו, היתה תמהה: הן, המצב של הרב קשה מאד, ואין יתכן כי אין הוא מעוניין לעבוד תמורת משכורת. ולא עוד,

ידוע לכל, כי הגוף עם כל אבריו וגידיו ונימיו, מושלט במלאוה על פי פקודת הראש. כי הראש' הוא העיקר בכל דבר. וכעין ששייך ענין זה בנפש, כך הוא שייך גם בשנה, ואין שמתנהג האדם בראש השנה כך הוא יתנהג בכל השנה, וכמו באדם אם הראש נקי אזי כל הגוף נקי ומושלם, כך הוא בשנה, שאם הראש הוא כראוי, ניכר רישומה על שאר ימות השנה, וכמובא בגמרא (תענית כד, א): משל לכלה שהיא בבית אביה, כל זמן שענינה יפות אין כל גופה צריכה בדיקה! 'ראש השנה' כשמו כן הוא ה'ראש' של השנה, ועל פי הראש נקבע כל דבר במשך השנה, והוא מכתוב את כל אשר יארע במשך השנה. ואולי זו משמעות חדשה בדרך רמו במה שאומרים: 'בראש השנה יכתבון', כי עתה הוא הראש שמכתיב לכל השנה!

וראוי להתבונן, ששני ימי ראש השנה מכילים יחד מ"ח שעות, כמנין 'מח', והרי הוא מבואר בספה"ק **'מאור ושמש'**, (רמזי ראש השנה) שזו לנו הוראה לבל נשכח כי יום קדוש זה הוא המוח של כל השנה, וממנו פינה ויתר לכל המאורעות, בשנה הקרובה שתבוא עלינו לטובה ולברכה. ולכן ראוי מאוד לעורר ולהתעורר ב"ה, ולהתנתק מכל הענינים החיצוניים הסובבים אותנו, ולהקדיש את מ"ח השעות של ראש השנה, לעבודת השם עם קדושת המוח והמחשבה, ולהתרחק מחברת בני אדם המדברים דברים של מה בכך בימים קדושים ונעלים אלה, כי הרי זה מפרע לעלייה ורביקות בהש"ת, אלא להירבק בצדיקים ולהביט בהתעוררות החופפת ואופפת אותם, ומהם יראו וכן יעשו.

ובמיוחד יש להזכיר ולהקפיד על התפלות שתהיינה בשלמות מהחל ועד גמדיא, בלא להחסיד שום קדוש וכו"ב. וטועים המה האנשים שחושבים, כי עיקר התפלה בראש השנה היא תפלת 'ונתנה תוקף', ואינם שמים על לב, כי העיקר הוא כל התפילה, וכמו שכתוב **ביושר דברי אמת**, (בקונטרס השני אות נו) וז"ל בענין התפילות של ראש השנה ויום הכיפורים שהעולם אומרים אותם באמת בהתעוררות גדול, אך עיקר מגמתם שהם מתעוררים הוא בפיוטים ותפלות החדשות הנאמרים במחזור, אבל התפלה הסדורה בפסוקי דמירה וקרבנות וקריאת שמע ותפילה הם אומרים במרוצה כמו בכל השנה, ואינם יודעים כי זה העיקר, וזה התוספות, ולא יקובל התוספות בלתי העיקר, וברדושים של הרב ר' בער זלה"ה בהכתבים יש שם דרוש על גנות האנשים האלו, וכו' בפרט ביום נורה כזה צריך לשום נפשו בכפו לכוונת התיבות ואותיות כידוע, וכמו שכתבתי לעיל, ובוזה מעלה מעלים התפילות של כל השנה כידוע מכל הספרים, עכ"ל.

וכבר העיד הרה"ק **בעל שומר אמונים זי"ע**, כי בצעירותו היה משקיע כל

A SERIES IN HALACHA
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Forgotten and Little Known Halachos and Customs (48)
Using Another's Mitzvah Item (cont.). As quoted previously, the *Mishna Berura* ⁽¹⁾ writes that one may use another person's *shofar* on *Rosh Hashana* without expressly receiving permission, as long as he remains in the same building. In fact, he may use it to blow the full one hundred sounds. Even though all one hundred sounds are not obligatory, nevertheless, since this is the prevalent custom, we assume that the *shofar's* owner would agree to allow the borrower to blow them all. The same would be true for a *kittel* that is worn for davening during the *Yamim Noraim*. One may use a *kittel* that was left in the *shul* cloakroom, however, on *Yom Kippur*, when a *kittel* is worn the entire day, one may not borrow it unless he knows for sure that the owner has another one to wear.

Sukkah. Even though we assume that a person will allow others to use his *mitzvah* item, a *sukkah* has its own set of rules. The *RMA* ⁽²⁾ states that one should not use his friend's *sukkah* without permission. The *Poskim* offer three different reasons to explain this ruling of the RMA specifically by a *sukkah*:

- 1) The owner might object to someone walking in and invading his privacy, i.e. watching him eating, sleeping, or doing any other activity he might not want to be seen ⁽³⁾.
- 2) The owner might come in while the borrower is there and be embarrassed to enter his own *sukkah*, or say anything ⁽⁴⁾. Therefore, he would prefer if nobody borrowed his *sukkah*. According to these two reasons, the *Mishna Berura* ⁽⁵⁾

הלכה למעשה

מאת מו"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
ראש כולל עטרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

rules that if one knows clearly that the owner will not come home during his usage, i.e. he is out of town for the day, one may use the *sukkah* and make the *beracha* of בסוכה.

3) The owner might object to another person coming in because he might leave a mess and not clean up properly, i.e. peels, bones, plates, cups, etc. ⁽⁶⁾. According to this reason, it is prohibited even if the owner will certainly not be home during the borrower's short stay. The *Mishna Berura* does not bring this third reason and therefore rules leniently that one may enter and use another's *sukkah*, if the owner certainly will not be back during the borrower's stay.

Nowadays. There might be another hesitation in using a *sukkah* without permission in today's day and age. Out of necessity, we live in a "security-conscious" world. The crime rate in many areas might be enough of a reason to disallow anyone from entering another person's private property without permission, and certainly not to make oneself at home in his *sukkah*. Most probably, this would depend on the type of neighborhood one lives in. If one specifically does want to allow others to use his *sukkah*, it would be a *mitzvah* for him to publicize it in *shul*.

Permission From a Wife. The *Mishna Berura* ⁽⁷⁾ writes that if one received permission from the owner's wife to use their *sukkah*, he is permitted to enter, because once the wife gave permission, the owner will not care. Also, the wife knows when and if her husband will care, and thus, if she gave permission, we assume it is with his consent.

הזאת היה צמר

(1) תקפוט (2) אור"ח תרל"ג (3) טורי וזהב תרל"ד (4)
עיי"ש באלויה רבה (5) תרל"ט (6) מקור חיים שם (7)
תרל"ז

R' Mordechai Twerski ZT"l (Rebbe of Kuzmir) would say:

"Our sages tell us: 'מלכותא דרקיעא כעין מלכותא דארעא': *"The Heavenly Kingdom is (conducted) like the earthly kingdoms.*' It is customary that when a new king is coronated, many wonderful things occur: Prisoners are reprieved, benefits are increased, gifts and assistance are distributed to the masses - *'He granted amnesty and gave out gifts worthy of the king'* (מגילת אסתר ב-יח). On this holy day of *Rosh Hashana*, when our entire purpose is to crown our King, the King of all Kings, we too, ask for His Royal gifts. We too, need a general amnesty and reprieve from our sins. We need gifts, both material assistance, mental capacity and spiritual rejuvenation. We beg of You, *Hashem*, for **בני חיי ומוזני** - children, good life and sustenance, for on this day we coronate You as our King!"

Bobover Rebbe, R' Shloime Halberstam ZT"l (Ateres Shloime) would say:

"*Rosh Hashana* is a day when חיבוב המצות - showing our affection for *mitzvos*, plays a large role. When *Hashem* commanded Avraham to take his son Yitzchok to the *Akeidah*, he spoke to him in a gentle, drawn-out manner. Rashi tells us why: *'In order to make the commandment beloved (to Avraham) and thereby reward him for every single spoken word.'* Similarly, when Jews buy כיבודים (honors) and *aliyos* on *Yom Tov*, they spend money for the 'honor' to do a *mitzvah*. What greater way to come before *Hashem* then with our love for His *Torah* and *mitzvos*?"

A Wise Man would say:

"Of all acts of man repentance is the most divine. The greatest of all faults is to be conscious of none."

**Printed By: Mailway Services,
Serving Mosdos and Businesses
Worldwide Since 1980
(1-888-Mailway)**

Tuvia's M

SEFORIM, JUDAICA & GIFTS
845.426.0825 Fax 845.426.6411

Merockdim
Camp
26 Parker Blvd.
845.362.0287

Dedicated לרעי"ה אהרן
בעד החולה אהרן
משה בן רחל ז"ל בשנת
And in Celebration
of the Bar Mitzvah
of Moshe Shmuel
Bennet ז"ל. May we all
see Nachas from him

אלא שהוא חפץ להיות שותף שוה בעסק, בעור שאין הוא נותן מאומה לחיזוק השותפות. כך הלכה והדררה בלבה, עד שבסוף ניאותה לקחת את הרב כשותף, ולחלוק ביניהם את הרווחים בשוה. כמובן שר' בונם חזר ונתעשר, וכאשר שב למעון קדשו של רבו ה'חזוה' וסח לו את כל אשר ארע, השיב לו רבו הגדול, כי כשיש גזירה מן השמים הגזירה מתקיימת, אך התפילות והבכיות שלך קרעו את הגזירה, כי 'שערי דמעות לא ננעלו'.

וראים מזה גודל כוחם של דמעות, ובימים אלו שבהם דנים את כל אדם, מה

לקחי חיים ודברי הצעירות
נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

זכרנו לחיים מלך חפץ בחיים ו**כתבנו בספר החיים למענך אלקים חיים** (תפילה שמו"ע) - **הנעם לבקשת החיים**
כתב הסוד (אורח חיים, הלכות ראש השנה, סי' תקפ"ב), 'זתיקנו להוסיף בברכת מגן 'זכרנו לחיים', כי בחיים נופל לשון זכירה, דכתיב (יחזקאל י"ח, פסוקים כ"א וכו') 'והרשע כי ישוב מכל חטאתיו וגו'. כל פשעיו אשר עשה לא **יזכרו לו**, בצדקתו אשר עשה (-אשר 'יזכר לו) **יזוהו**, וכתיב זכירה באברהם, דכתיב (תהילים ק"ה מ"ב) 'כי זכר את דבר קדשו (-היינו, בריתו אשר כרת עמו) את אברהם עבדו, לפיכך תיקנו זכירה במגן.

ופידש **ב'בית יוסף**, 'זוהי כאילו כתוב באברהם חיים, ובראש השנה אנו צריכין להתפלל על החיים, לפיכך בברכת מגן שהיא ברכת אברהם, תיקנו להתפלל על החיים במלית זכירה, ולכן אנו אומרים בה 'זכרנו לחיים'.

והנה כתב **הסוד** (או"ח ריש סי' רס"ח), 'ועומדין (-שבבת) להתפלל, ואומרים אבות וגבורות וקדושת השם כבימות החול, בלא תוספת ובלא גירעו, ודלא כרב עמרם שכתב, שבשבת בין בערבית ושחרית ומוסף ומנחה אומד במגן כך, רצה והנחל שבת לבניהם למנוחה, למען שמו באהבה, מלך עוזר ומושיע ומגן וכו'".

ומבאר **הב"ח**, 'ואף על גב דרב עמרם הוסיף לומר רצה והנחל וכו' ולא היה גורע, מכל מקום, קיימא לן (ע' סנהדרין כ"ט), ד'כל המוסיף גורע, והכא נמי גורע, דעובר על מה שאמרו רבותינו ז"ל (ברכות לד.) ד'אין לשאול צרכיו בג' ראשונות', דאע"ג דמוסיפין זכרנו לחיים וכו' בעשרת ימי תשובה מטעם דצרכי רבים שואלין אף בג' ראשונות וכו', התם שאני, כיון דשאלה זו הזכרנו יש לה שייכות אצל אברהם, שנאמר 'כי זכר את דבר קדשו את אברהם עבדו' וכו', ומצורף לזה, שהקב"ה יושב על כסא דין, וכל אנשי העולם נידונין באלו הימים על יחיה ומי ימות, ואם כן צורך גדול הוא לכל ישראל לשאול על חיותם אף בג' ראשונות וכו', ומה שאין כן בהוספה זו והנחל שבת לבניהם וכו'".

אבל ב**משן חכמה** (ריש פרשת וזאת הברכה) יישב באופן אחר, שכתב על הא דאיתא בספרי (שם פיסקא ב'), 'ויאמר, ה' מסיני בא וזרח משעיר וגו'-מגיד הכתוב, שכשפתח משה לא פתח לצרכם של ישראל תחילה עד שפתח בשבחו של מקום וכו', שנאמר 'ויאמר, ה' מסיני בא וזרח וגו', ואח"כ פתח בצרכם של ישראל שנאמר 'זיהי בישורון מלך וגו', ואף שמונה עשרה שתיקנו חכמים הראשונים שיהו בני ישראל מתפללים, לא פתחו בצרכם של ישראל תחילה עד שפתחו בשבחו של מקום, שנאמר 'הא-ל הגדול הגיבור והנורא וכו', וכתב על כך ה'משן חכמה', 'וימה שאנו אומרים בעשיית 'זכרנו לחיים וכו' וכתבנו בספר החיים וכו', הכול הוא לשבח השי"ת, וכמו שאמר דוד (תהילים קט"ו י"ז) 'לא המתים ידללו י-ה וגו', וכן הוא אומר (שם, ל' י') 'מה בצע בדמי ברדתי אל שחת, היוזר עפר הדיגד אמת', ולזה אמר 'זכתבנו בספר החיים למענך אלקים חיים'.

וזאת על דרך מה שביאר **רבינו נסים גאון** את מאמרם ז"ל (ברכות ל"ב) 'משה החייתני בדברך', וז"ל, 'זבעת שארע מעשה המרגלים, ואמר הקב"ה להשמיד לאומתו, ניגש הנביא עליו השלום בתפילה בעדם, ואמר בכלל דבריו 'מבלתי יכולת ה' וגו', ולפי שידע הקב"ה כי אמת דיבר, וכי אם הוא משמיד את העם במדבר ואינו כובש לפנינו את ארץ כנען, האומות יאמרו עליו כי קצרה ידו ותשש כוחו ואינו יכול לעמוד כנגד ל"א מלכים ולגרשם מפניו בניז, לפיכך קיבל תפילתו בעדם, ונתת לו ואמר 'סלחתי **כדברך**', ואמר לו אחר כך 'ואולם חי אני', ובכך הודיע לנביאו, שבוודאי שאילו השמיד לעם היו האומות אומרים שאין

מאוד יפה לו הדמעות בעת כזאת.

ומה שהורה **הגר"א וי"ע** (מעשה רב, אות רז) שלא לבכות בראש השנה, כמו שצויה עזרא (נחמ' ח, ט): ואל תבכו וגו' ואל תעצבו כי חדות ה' היא מעוזכם, כבר ביארו המפרשים שאין הכוונה לבכי מתוך תפלה ותחנונים, שוה בוודאי מותר ומדה טובה היא, אלא כוונתו היתה למחשבת עצלות ואבלות.

ויהי רצון שיתקבלו תפלותינו לרצון לפני אדון כל, ושנוכה על ידם להשפעות רוחניות וגשמיות בלי סוף, ולהיכתב בספרך של צדיקים גמורים, אמן.

מאנך חרב שלום פערל שליט"א
מגיד מ'שרים בק"כ בית שמש

זכרנו לחיים מלך חפץ בחיים ו**כתבנו בספר החיים למענך אלקים חיים** (תפילה שמו"ע) - **הנעם לבקשת החיים**

לו יכולת ולא היו מכידין גבורתו, והואיל ואין מתברר להם שהוא יכול, גם כן אין מתברר להם שהוא חי: והנה בגלל עתידת הנביא בעד העם, הודו האומות כי יש להקב"ה החיים לעלמין, ונתברר להם שהוא חי וקיים, ולכן זכה הנביא לשבח בשביל זה הדבר, כי בגלל עתידתו נודעה גדולתו של מלכנו וגבורתו, ונתפרסמו בקצות הארץ, ונתברר ונתקיים כי הקב"ה יתעלה שמו חי, ולפיכך א"ל רחמנא 'ואולם חי אני' אחר שאמר 'כדברך', ודרשי ליה רבנן 'החייתני בדברך', כלומר, שגבלל עתידתך נתברר לאומות שאני חי".

והוסיף **דבינו בחי'** (בספרו 'כר הקמח', סוף ערך לולב), "איתא בגמרא (שם), 'ואולם חי אני', אמר רבא א"ר ציחק, מלמד שאמר הקב"ה למשה, משה, החייתני בדברך', פ' לולא תפילתך כבר היו ישראל נענשים במאמר 'אכנו בדבר וגו', ואתה בכוח תפילתך ביטלת העונש, ובביטול העונש החייתני בדברך, היית סיבה שאני חי וקיים בעיני האומות, שאילו נתבטלו בני", מי יפרסם חיותי בעולם, והיותי חי וקיים ואדון הכל, כי האומות לא היו מכידין אותי, ותרבה הכפירה בביטול האמת". ומבואר, שכוונת 'למענך' היא, כדי להכידך בעיני אומות העולם, ע"י שאני מאמין ובוטח בך, ומחללך, ומקיים מצוותיך, ועוסק בתורתך.

ועד"ו פידש ב**יערות דבש' (לדבי יהונתן אייבשיץ זצוקל**, חלק ראשון, דרוש י"ד, ד"ה ומה תבינו וכו'), "כי כל מה שהאדם מבקש בזה העולם, הוא הכול בשביל קנין השלימות, אם מבקש עושר, הוא כדי שלא תסריד אותו העניות בעבודת ה', כאמרם (עירובין מ"א) 'עניות מעבירה האדם מדעת קונו.

וזה כוונת הנוסח 'זכרנו לחיים וכו' למענך וכו', דיש להבין פירושו של 'למענך', דבשבילו יתן לנו חיים וכו', והוא, כדי שנוכל לעשות רצונו, כי לא המתים ידללו י-ה, וכל זמן שהאדם חי יוכל לתקן עיוותו ולקנות את השלימות, וכאמרם ז"ל (אבות ד"י ז') "פה שעה אחת בתורה ומעשים טובים בעולם הזה מכל חיי עולם הבא' וכו". וכן ביאר **ב'בינה לעיתים'** (חלק א', דרוש ו' לשבת תשובה, ד"ה וגם אנחנו וכו'), "וגם אנחנו צאן מדעייתו, הלא כה יהיה מבטינו בשאלת החיים האלה, כי לאשר הזמן הזה הוא עת היאסף האדם בינו לבינו, לחשוב בעצמו כמה הוא חסר משלימותו, ויציא לתקן עיוותו, ולהרבות מצוות ומע"ט, ולא יוכל לעשות כן אלא כל ימי חיותו על הארמה, על כן נשאל החיים,

למען יהיה לנו זמן להתעסק במצוות ה' ולעבדו וכו', והסתכל איך אנו מרים כוונתנו זו בשאלתנו הראשונה על החיים, פתח שעד התפלה, באמדינו 'זכרנו לחיים מלך חפץ בחיים, וכתבנו בספר החיים למענך אלקים חיים', כאילו נאמר, הנה אנו מחלים פני אלקותך בכל תוקף, שתזכרנו ותכתבנו לחיים לאורך ימים, אך אין בקשתנו זו לצורך עצמנו, למה שנורע לנו מהתענוג והשמחה והטיבה ברבות ימינו עלי ארץ, אלא כל תכליתנו וכוונתנו היא לשם 'למענך וכו', כדי לעבדך ולעשות רצונך, שאין מקום לזה **אלא ע"י החיים וכו'**.

וכן כתב ב**פלא יועץ'** (סוף ערך ראש השנה), "וגם על חיי הגוף יכוון, שרוצה לחיות כדי לעבוד את בוראו ולהשלים תיקון נר"ן (-נפש רוח נשמה), שלא יהא צער וכעס להקב"ה בעבורו, ועל כוונה זו צריך לבקש מאד על חיי הגוף, כי "פה שעה אחת בתורה ומע"ט בעוה"ז מכל חיי העוה"ב', וזה יהיה כוונתו באומרו 'זכרנו לחיים וכו' למענך וכו'". ויכונו בורא עולם שנוכה לשנה טובה ברוחניות, וגם בגשמיות אשר תשמש את הרוחניות 'למענך אלהים חיים'.

7

One *Rosh Hashana*, when Cantor Belzer signaled Meir to begin a solo, Meir purposely sang a totally different portion of the liturgy. It ruined the entire rendition and Nisi became quite angry. However, to everyone’s surprise, the *Tolna Rebbe* signaled Meir to repeat the solo, even though it was totally wrong, and the *Rebbe* wept during his singing.

After the service was over, the *Rebbe* called young Meir over and told the youngster, “May you always sing these sacred songs, and may they be your salvation.”

Nisi Belzer could not contain the boisterous youngster, who grew up and gradually drifted away from *shul* choirs, and not long after that, *Torah* observance. He was musically gifted and he entered a conservatory of music. In time, young Meir became an outstanding opera star, and eventually married a non-Jewish woman. However, after many years of success under the bright lights, Meir’s fortunes declined. His wife divorced him, he became depressed, and his once dulcet voice lost its character. He realized that he was about to be released from the operatic group when he asked for one more chance to redeem himself at a concert. He strode onto the stage, and without even knowing why or how it happened, he suddenly belted out the cantorial liturgy of his youth, the very solo that the *Rebbe* had asked him to repeat many years earlier. The orchestra stopped playing and the curtain was promptly lowered, and Meir was shown the exit door.

With no job and no home, Meir joined a group of vagrant mendicants who drifted from town to town. As it happened, one *Shabbos* he found himself in Tolna, the city of his youth. He joined the throng of *chassidim* who attended R’ Duvidl’s *Shabbos tish*, and of course, no one recognized the one-time child wonder. When the *Rebbe* asked someone to sing one of the *Shabbos* songs, as was his weekly custom, Meir’s voice suddenly called out, “I will sing!”

To the grumblers, the *Rebbe* said, “Let the man sing. Perhaps the singing will be the rectification for his errant ways.”

Meir began singing the liturgy which the *Rebbe* had asked him to repeat many years earlier, and both Meir and the *Rebbe* wept with the rendition. Only afterwards did a few of the older *chassidim* recall the incident with the young choir boy, and realized that the *Tolna Rebbe’s* words, “May this song be your salvation,” were prophetic.

Meir was reunited with his *Rebbe* who took him under his wing. He remained in Tolna and became a sincere *baal teshuva*. Shortly after that, he died, and R’ Duvid’l personally assumed the responsibility of saying *Kaddish* for him.

משל למת הדבר דומת

ובשופר גדול יתקע וקול דממה דקה ישמע ומלאכים יחפזון וחיל ורעדה יאחזון
(תננה תוקף)

משל: One year, the holy **Baal Shem Tov ZT”L** said to one of his senior disciples: “You will blow the *shofar* for us this *Rosh Hashana*. I want you to study all the *kavanos* (Kabbalistic meditations) that pertain to the *shofar*, so that you can focus on them while you do the blowing.”

The disciple, R’ Zev Kitzes, applied himself to the task with joy and trepidation: joy over the great privilege that had been accorded him, and trepidation over the immensity of the responsibility. He studied the Kabbalistic writings that discuss the great significance of the *shofar* and what its sounds achieve on the various levels of reality and in the various chambers of the soul. He also prepared a sheet of paper on which he noted the main points of each *kavanah*, so that he could refer to them when he blew the *shofar*.

Finally, the great moment arrived. It was the morning of *Rosh Hashana*, and R’ Zev stood at the *bima*, surrounded by a sea of *talis*-draped congregants. R’ Zev reached into his pocket, and his heart froze: the paper had disappeared! He distinctly remembered placing it there that morning, but now it was gone. Furiously, he searched his memory for what he had learned, but his distress over the lost notes seemed to have incapacitated his brain: his mind went totally blank! Tears of frustration filled his eyes. He had disappointed his master, who had entrusted him with this most sacred task. Now he must blow the *shofar* like a simple

horn, without any *kavanos*. Despairingly, R’ Zev had no choice but to blow the litany of sounds required by law without the intense concentration he had planned on. When he was finished, he walked back to his seat broken-hearted, all the while, avoiding his *Rebbe’s* gaze.

At the conclusion of the day’s prayers, the *Baal Shem Tov* made his way over to the corner where R’ Zev, sat sobbing under his *talis*. “That was a most extraordinary *shofar*-blowing we heard today!” said the *Baal Shem Tov*.

For a moment, R’ Zev did not know what to say. Finally, he cried, “But *Rebbe*, I let you and the entire congregation down. I did not blow the way you asked me to.”

במשל: “Let me explain to you what I asked,” said the *Baal Shem Tov* in a gentle tone. “In the King’s palace, there are numerous gates and entrance-ways, leading to numerous halls and chambers. Those in charge - the palace-keepers - maintain large rings containing many keys, each of which opens a different passageway. However, there is one key that fits all the locks, a ‘master key’ that opens all the doors. The *kavanos* are important. They are keys, each unlocking another door in our souls, each accessing another chamber in the supernal worlds. But there is one key that unlocks all doors, that opens up for us the innermost chambers of the divine palace. It is the key which allows us to soar straight up to heaven. That master key is a broken heart.”

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

In June 1941, as the Nazi killing machine advanced toward the city of Telz, Lithuania, the famous *Telz Yeshivah* was divided into a number of groups who fled in all different directions. One group of forty-eight students made it as far as the Lithuanian-Russian border, before a majority of them - thirty-two students in all - had a change of heart, and turned back. The remaining sixteen boys continued onward and escaped over the border, hopping into the open boxcar of a freight train heading deep into the Russian hinterland, with little more than the clothes on their backs and a prayer on their lips. Unfortunately, those who went back didn’t survive the war.

During the six years of their miraculous survival in the Siberian wilderness - quite often they were forced to flee from the pursuing Russian Army and secret police - the group of sixteen made sure to set aside considerable time each day to study from a lone tractate of Talmud that they had with them. They also shared the one pair of *Tefillin* that they had brought along. Two of the leaders of the group, **R’ Chaim Stein ZT”L** and **Rabbi Meir Zelig Mann Z”L** of Cleveland, Ohio, were young twenty-year-old *bochurim* at the time. Rabbi Mann kept a meticulous diary of the day-to-day events, struggles, and miracles - and even a log of which page of the Talmud they studied. R’ Chaim also kept a diary in which he recounted the various *Torah* topics that the group studied each and every day, and exactly where and when they studied them. Both diaries are remarkable for their clear and precise detail, opening up a window into the lives of the *yeshivah* refugees on the run in the Siberian wasteland. Both diaries recount the following incident which occurred during their escape.

As *Rosh Hashana* was quickly approaching, the group became anxious, desperately hoping to fulfill the *mitzvah* of hearing the *shofar* blown on the holy day. Realistically speaking, though, they knew they had very little chance of obtaining such a prized object in the thick of the Siberian forest. Much prayer and *Torah* study, including reviewing *Hilchos Shofar* carefully, and readying themselves for the *mitzvah*, yielded results. Amazingly, on *Erev Rosh Hashana*, a Russian vagabond, peddling, among other things, ram horns, suddenly appeared in the forest. The excited boys bartered some of their valued stash of tobacco and obtained a set of horns. They then proceeded to boil one of the horns to help loosen the bone that is attached to the inside of the horn. This would allow the bone to slide out creating a usable *shofar*. To their utter dismay, the horn cracked during the procedure, thus invalidating the *shofar’s* use for the upcoming holiday.

They still had the other horn to work on. However, it was getting late; sunset and the start of *Rosh Hashana* was fast approaching and the stubborn bone would not budge!

It was a delicate procedure and it couldn’t be rushed. They had already ruined one horn. All afternoon they worked on the horn, and amongst some of the boys, despair was setting in. Finally, just mere moments before the holiday was to begin, Yisroel Meir Karnovitz, a member of the group, used a piercing iron to jar the bone loose. They hollowed out the inside of the horn, tested the *shofar* to see that it was in good condition, and thankfully found it to be working! These starving, deprived and forlorn teenagers, spontaneously joined hands in the darkening Russian forest and began to sing and dance, for they knew that wherever they were, *Hashem* would hear their *shofar* and answer their plea for life and survival.

The sequel to this story is told by R’ Meir Zelig’s son, Shmuel Yaakov. Sixty years later, in the *Telshe Yeshivah* in Wickliffe, Ohio, a young man approached R’ Meir Zelig several minutes before the *Yom Tov* of *Rosh Hashana* was to begin, and introduced himself as the grandson of R’ Yisroel Meir Karnovitz. R’ Meir Zelig was so taken aback when he realized that it was precisely sixty years to the day, to the hour, and to the very few minutes before sunset since the fateful moment that this young man’s grandfather had finished the procedure to ready the *shofar* for use in the Siberian wilderness!

By the way.... who was this mysterious horn peddler? Well, it seems that he was the same mysterious individual who boarded a railroad car R’ Chaim and Rabbi Mann were riding in to escape Russian authorities, and without any explanation, offered to sell them candles on the night of *Chanukah*. They sincerely believed it was *Eliyahu Hanavi*, who comes to aid the Jewish people in mysterious ways and who will be the one to herald the future Redemption with the sounding of the great *shofar* of *Moshiach*; may that day come speedily and in our days.

What would the High Holy days be like without an amazing story from **R’ Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev ZT”L**, who lived some two hundred years ago? His fame spread throughout Poland and the neighboring areas as a miracle-worker whose love of *Hashem*, His holy *Torah* and the Jewish people was unlimited.

So the Berditchev community was aghast when one year, on *Rosh Hashana*, as R’ Levi Yitzchok slowly walked up to the *bima* (podium) to begin the *Mussaf* prayers, he suddenly began weeping profusely and pulled a long braid of blond hair from his pocket. He held the lock of hair high in the air for several moments, and mumbled something. The congregation watched in great anticipation as the *Rav* finally laid the braid on the table before him, and began the *Tefilah*.

When he finished he was beaming with joy and later at the holiday meal, when one of his pupils got up the courage to

On behalf of thousands of Shomer Shabbos Jews - www.chickenforshabbos.com - The charity that simply feeds & clothes Shomer Shabbos Jews in Eretz Yisroel with zero overhead

ועקידת יצחק לזרעו היום ברחמים תזכור... (תפילת מוסף)

A large portion of the *avodah* of *Rosh Hashana* deals with *Zichronos* - Remembrances. What do we remember and what do we wish the Master of the World to recall? The *Akeidas Yitzchok* - the earth-shattering event that never quite took place in the days of our forefathers, Avraham and Yitzchok. It is interesting to note, that although volumes have been written on the profundity and sheer magnitude of the *Akeidah*, it would seem that there have been even greater acts of *mesiras nefesh* in the historical background of the Jewish nation. For example, *Moshe Rabbeinu* said, “*Erase me from Your book (the Torah),*” if *Hashem* would not take pity on the Jewish people and eradicate them. We have Chana, who watched as her seven sons were brutally killed before her very eyes, rather than bow to idols. The *Ger Tzedek*, Avraham ben Avraham, was burned at the stake rather than renounce his new-found religion. And the millions upon millions of “simple” Jews who underwent horrific upheavals in world history, sanctifying *Hashem’s* Name by making the ultimate sacrifice, both for themselves and their children. There have been so many awesome acts of devotion to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* and His *Torah* - too numerous to specifically identify - so why do we implore *Hashem* to only remember the *Akeidah*, more than any other act of *mesirus nefesh*?

The **Alter from Slabodka, R’ Nosson Tzvi Finkel ZT”L**, provides a clear understanding into the purpose of our *avodah* on *Rosh Hashana*. The *posuk* tells us that when Avraham Avinu went to the *Akeidah* with his son Yitzchok, “*He woke up early in the morning.*” (בראשית כב-ג) The sages derive from here the importance of *Zerizus*, rushing to the performance of a *mitzvah*. In fact, the whole reason why we do *Bris Milah* (circumcision) first thing in the morning is based on this action of our Patriarch Avraham.

But there is something greater, deeper, that we can learn from this *posuk*. Avraham woke up in the morning - which means he was sleeping! How could a father sleep the night before he knows he will kill his son? Can we fathom the level of emotion that must have been going through Avraham’s mind - how many incomprehensible and turbulent thoughts would be going through our minds the night before we would be required to do such an act? And yet, Avraham slept. Why? Because he didn’t doubt his mission, his *emunah* and faith in the word of the Almighty G-d was absolute! He knew that he was following the command of *Hashem* - no matter what. What was there to think about? Therefore, he had no reason to worry or fret and he could sleep the night before because he knew he was performing the will of *Hashem*.

The lesson of the *Akeidah* is that in order to fully accept the sovereignty of *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*, we must give

ourselves over to His will - no questions asked! The self-sacrifice of Avraham Avinu - and Yitzchok for that matter - was that they could do this act without the slightest reservation since they fully trusted *Hashem* and knew that what He asked was what they must do. Of course, there have been so many acts of sacrifice in our long and bloody history. Yet, can we say that they were performed with the same level of calm confidence and unwavering submission that Avraham and Yitzchok had? For this reason, on *Rosh Hashana*, the day we crown our king and accept upon ourselves the עול מלכות שמים - *Yoke of Heavenly Sovereignty*, we rely on the memory of the *Akeidah* for our salvation, reminding *Hashem* that it is to this awesome objective of absolute faith that we, the descendants of Avraham and Yitzchok Avinu, subscribe to forever. **(Heard from Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski Shlit’a)**

שובה ישראל עד ה’ אלקיך (הפטרה לשבת שובה, השע יד)

The role and function of the holy day of *Shabbos* incorporates two general components. A person must elevate himself to the glorified level of *Shabbos*, to its height of spirituality, מעין עולם הבא - a “taste” of the World to Come. Furthermore, one’s heart and soul must turn to *Hashem* on this holiest of days when we receive an additional soul (נשמה יתירה) from above. One must lift himself above the mundane and transform his entire essence into a spiritual being.

Teshuva - Repentance, on *Shabbos* is a result of this spiritual upliftment. In truth, every *Shabbos* provides us the opportunity to return to *Hashem*; how much more so on *Shabbos Shuva*, this very special *Shabbos* of Repentance.

R’ Dovid Kviat ZT”L (Succas Dovid) warns us that we must follow the words of *halacha* on this unique day of rest. **Chacham Rabbeinu Chaim Vital ZT”L** famously writes in the name of the **Ariza”l**, that each of the seven days of the week between *Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur* is an opportunity to regret our sins that were done on those days. It follows, therefore, that this *Shabbos* is a time to be especially careful with the laws of *Shabbos* and the *mitzvah* to make this day holy. By working on this, we may atone for our lack of respect or transgression of the *Shabbos* throughout the year. The *yetzer hara* (evil inclination) is aware of the great powers of this *Shabbos Shuva*, and he tempts us to speak about everyday matters and the like, even while praying. (This is a terrible sin, for our children watch us and learn that this is the correct way to pray!) We ask *Hashem* to “*seal the lips of those who prosecute against us.*” *Hashem* will answer us and “*seal his lips*” if we keep our mouths sealed from idle talk while praying. The world stands in the merit of those who refrain from speaking when tempted to do so.

As the High Holy days are upon us, and we hope and pray with all our hearts for a good and sweet year, it is imperative that we understand what it is that we are praying for. If not, we are likely to miss the point of the entire experience. If the preparation for *Pesach* is to scrub our homes and rid ourselves of *chometz* so that during the holiday we will be completely *chometz*-free, then the month of *Elul*, which is the preparation for *Rosh Hashana*, is the time to rid us of our sins so that we become sin-free, in order to receive a favorable judgment on the *Yom Hadin*.

But let us understand why we need to get rid of our sins in order to receive a favorable judgement and why *Elul* is the necessary preparation. "אלול" stands for, "*I am to my Beloved and my Beloved is to me.*" This is referring to our relationship with *Hashem*. If this is the preparation for judgment, then shouldn't *Elul* stand for, "*I am to my Judge and my Judge is to me*"? The answer is no because we must understand what the judgment is about. It's about LOVE. *Elul* is all about Love, *Rosh Hashana* is all about our love and loyalty to *Hashem* our King, *Yom Kippur* is all about *Hashem's* love for us as He cleanses and purifies our souls, and *Sukkos* is the reciprocal love, the ultimate love-relationship between the Jewish people and *Hashem*.

Like a husband and wife who sometimes disagree and cause estrangement and friction in their relationship, they need only to express their love to each other and the cold and distant feelings immediately turn into a warm and close

בראש השנה יכתבון

ימלך ה' לעולם אלקיך ציון לדור ודור הללו! ואתה קדוש וישוב תהלות ישראל ק-ל נא ... (תפלת ימים נוראים)

Our sages tell us that *Rosh Hashana* is not a day when we bombard *Hashem* with our "wish list" for the upcoming year. This holy day is not about what we need for the coming year, but how we can crown the Almighty as the King of all Kings. But what about *Teshuva*? Is it a day of *Teshuva*? On the one hand, we do not say *Selichos* and avoid all reference to sins on this day; on the other hand, we recite long supplications and blow the *shofar*, which is very much tied to *Teshuva*. And *Rosh Hashana* is also listed as the first two days of *Aseres Yimei Teshuva* (Ten Days of Repentance). So is it a day of *Teshuva* or is it just a day to coronate our King in the New Year?

R' Moshe Shmuel Shapiro ZT"l says that indeed *Rosh Hashana* is a day of *Teshuva*, but a special kind of *Teshuva*. On *Yom Kippur* we spend the entire day repenting for each and every one of our *aveiros*; not so on *Rosh Hashana*. The **Rambam** says that the blast of the

connection. *Hashem*, our Beloved Husband, Father, King, Protector, Judge, is really everything to us - and what is it that He wants from us? He wants our hearts, He wants our closeness and our LOVE. For this reason *Teshuvah* is so important. It is not that we are afraid of a harsh judgment, scared to incur *Hashem's* wrath upon us. That is not why we do *Teshuvah*. We repent for our sins so that they will be erased in order to remove the barriers that are caused by our sins so that we can truly be close to *Hashem*. This is why *Teshuvah* out of fear removes the sin. It breaks the barrier between us and *Hashem*, but *Teshuvah* out of LOVE actually turns the sin into a *mitzvah*, for we have not only removed the barrier, we have truly created a bond of love with *Hashem*. That is the power of a *mitzvah* and that is the purpose of *Teshuvah*. In fact, this is the purpose of life.

R' Yechezkel Sarna ZT"l writes that years ago people came close to *Hashem* first through fear, and then through love. But in our generation we must concentrate ONLY ON LOVE. We must solidify our relationship with *Hashem* by opening our eyes to see His goodness in our lives and by accepting what He gives us with happiness. When we feel His love to us and express our love to Him, He joyously covers our sins with love, as it says, על כל "פשעים תכסה באהבה". And then, on the great day of judgment, with a burst of His abundant love, *Hashem* will sign and seal His beloved people - *Klal Yisroel* - in the book of life, filled with a year of joy, success, good health, *parnassah*, *nachas*, *gezunt* (נפץ)... and so much love!

shofar is to awaken us from our slumber and remind us that *Hashem* is our creator and we mustn't sleep through life indulging in all the wasteful pleasures of this world. We need to peer deeply into our hearts and change our outlook. Whereas *Yom Kippur* is the time to repent for all our actual sins, *Rosh Hashana* is when we repair our character and our outlook on life. We need to repent for our anger, hatred, jealousy, greed, lust, desire, and so on, says the **Rambam** (*Teshuva* 7:3). *Rosh Hashana* is a day to reflect on the year that was and to chart a course for the New Year. Once we've made that change over the next ten days, we can then focus on the details. We assess the actual damage and make repairs.

On *Rosh Hashana* we don't need *Viduy* and all the outward manifestations of *Teshuva*. We need deep and honest contemplation. We need to recognize who is the Boss, who created the world, and what our job is. This is our *Teshuva* on the first day of the year and we begin by crowning our King and pointing our eyes and thoughts towards him.

ask him what had happened, he explained. "Weeks before *Yom Tov*, I had a foreboding feeling that the coming year would be one filled with destruction, misery and unspeakable tragedies for the Jewish people. I spoke with some *Rabbanim* and they agreed with my assessment, especially **R' Boruch'l of Mezibuz**. We were very worried and we agreed to devote all our energies, day and night, to fasting and prayer. Try as we did, nothing seemed to help. It was obvious that it was out of our hands. The Jewish people needed a miracle of great salvation."

R' Levi Yitzchok looked off into the distance, his eyes aflame. "Yesterday, the day before *Rosh Hashana*, I could not sit still. I was restless and I feared for the harsh decrees that were soon to come. I needed to go outside and so I left my house and began to walk. My feet took me to the poorest section of town, where I walked aimlessly along until I noticed a house in the Jewish section that seemed to be calling to me. Without knowing why, I knocked on the door and a woman answered, but when she saw me she almost fainted. She began moaning and weeping uncontrollably as though she had been fearing my arrival. It took her quite some time to settle down. Finally, she sat down, stopped crying and began to speak.

"She told me a tragic story. She and her parents had lived on land rented from the local *Poritz* (Baron). They managed to pay the rent and eke out a meager living by milking cows and selling the milk and cheese to nearby farmers, but things were not easy. Then, when she was sixteen years old, tragedy struck. Her parents fell ill and several months later they both passed away. Suddenly, she was alone with no money and diminished prospects. All this time, there had been little income so there were many debts to repay, and she was soon facing the prospect of losing her home as well.

"With little choice, she turned to the *Poritz* himself to plead her case. Perhaps he would show mercy to her plight and allow her some time to get back on her feet. But the moment she was ushered into the *Poritz's* palatial estate, she knew something was wrong. As soon as he saw her, he transformed into an animal right before her very eyes. He began to snort lustfully and his face became flush with passion as he stood up and rushed towards her. Frightened, she withdrew and retreated to the door, preparing to run away. At that precise moment, the *Poritz* got hold of himself and changed his tune. He stood back now, relaxing his posture. Slowly, he sat down in his armchair and explained to her in as soothing a voice he could muster, how he was offering her luxury and comfort with servants and excitement instead of being a lowly Jewess with no future. He pointed out to her that all of the young ladies in the town would jump at such an offer; how fortunate she was to have found favor in his eyes. All he asked for was her hand in marriage"

R' Levi Yitzchok's face contorted with pain. "The young girl had stopped running when the *Poritz* had calmed down and she listened to his offer. But she was not interested. She was a proud Jew and he was a lustful beast. Without another word, she turned on her heels and began to walk away. When it was obvious to the *Poritz* that she was not impressed with his suggestions, he stood up and said, 'Wait, please don't leave. At least allow me to touch your hair. Just one caress and I will waive your debts and give you the next three years rent at half price.' And saying this, he suddenly stepped forward and, as she turned her head away from him, he grabbed her hair in his two hands lustfully.

"Disgusted, she bolted out the door. She ran and ran until she could run no more. When she finally reached her dilapidated hovel, she felt so humiliated that she was not able to sleep all that night. The next morning instead of cashing in on the *Poritz's* promise, she took a scissors, cut off her hair, packed a bag and ran off, never to return again. She found a job in a different city as a housemaid and worked for several years until she got married. This was several years ago. Last year, her husband passed away and she felt that perhaps the foul caress of the *Poritz* had something to do with it."

R' Levi Yitzchok continued, "After she finished telling me her story yesterday, I assured her that this was certainly not true and asked her anxiously if perhaps she still had some of her shorn hair with her. She gave me a lock of her hair. This morning, before beginning the *Mussaf* prayer, I held it up and wept before *Hashem*. 'Master of the Universe,' I said, 'If You have any doubt who Your people are, then just look at this lock of hair. A poor, orphan girl gave up a life of fortune and comfort, in order to be Your servant! Now, *Hashem*, You must have mercy on us and be our King!'"

Beaming from ear to ear, R' Levi Yitzchok announced, "And it worked! The heavenly decree has been annulled!"

ויבא משה וידבר את כל דברי השירה הזאת באזני העם וכו' (האזינו לב-מד)

It was well known that the *Rebbe* of *Tolna*, **R' Duvid'l Twerski ZT"l**, was very fond of music. Not only did he have a beautiful voice, but he enjoyed and appreciated listening to singers who understood the art of music. Many of the most renowned cantors of the day would visit the *Tolna* court, and regale the *Rebbe* with their cantorial masterpieces.

The famous cantor, Nisi Belzer, occasionally led the *tefillos* in *Tolna*. In Nisi Belzer's choir was a young boy by the name of Meir, who had been orphaned from his father, a devoted *Tolna chassid*, at an early age. Meir was very musical and had an unusually sweet voice, and Cantor Belzer relied on him for major solo renditions. However, Meir had a wild streak, and as happens all too often with orphans lacking a father to discipline them, he was quite the mischievous lad.