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Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim - Rosh Hashanah - Yom Hadin
כ"ח אלול/א'-ב' תשרי תשע"ג
פרק ה' ו' דאבות

התעצבנו
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים ע"ה

טוב התבלין

אתם נצבים היום כולכם לפני ה' אלקיכם וכו' (כס"ט) – "אל תאמר לכשאפנה אשנה שמה לא תפנה"

ועל זה הדרך פ' **הרמב"ן** ז"ל את הפסוק: "אם תעירו ואם תעוררו את האהבה עד שתחפץ". שכאשר מגיע אל האדם התעוררות באהבת הבורא ויראתו, אזי יראה תיכף לעשות איה מצוה, דהיינו שיראה להוציא את התעוררותו מן הכח אל הפועל, כי אחרת תפוג אהבתו ויראתו, ולא ישאר שום זכר מכל אותה התעוררות, והוא אמרו: 'עד שתחפץ' דהיינו חפץ וכלי - שיעשה כלי מהתעוררותו, שיהא מקום לברכה שתחול. ושמעתי פעם סיפור נפלא שהיה בישיבת וולוויץ באחד מתלמידי הישיבה שהיה נחשב מבין המצינים והמופלגים, שנשאל פעם באמצע סעודתו על איהה תוס' בש"ס, ולא ידע לענות. הבחור הוכה בהלם מוחלט, שכן לפי מייטב ידיעתו היה נראה לו שהוא כבר שולט היטב בכל נבכי התלמוד. ובכן, בלי אומר ודברים קם ממקומו כך באמצע סעודתו, ושירך את רגליו לעבר מקום צנוע בבית המדרש, ומיד התחיל בלימוד הש"ס מתוך התמדה עצומה ברצף בלתי מתואר, כך למשך תקופה ארוכה, עד שזכה לסיים את כל הש"ס ולדעת אותה על בוריה. וסיפור חביו שהיו נדים לאותה מעשה, שמרוב ההתלהבות וריתחא דאורייתא שאחו בו באותה שעה, לא התממהה אף לרגע, ושכח לגמרי שהוא עומד באמצע סעודתו, ואפ' ברכת המזון עדיין לא בירך... וכשסיפרו את המעשה לפני **הגאון ר' חיים שמואלביץ זצ"ל** העיר על כך במתק לשונו ואמר: אם כי בודאי שמבחינת ההלכה הרי עשה עוול בכך שהחסיר מלבדך ברכת המזון, אך זה ברור שבאם היה ממתין עוד מעט, ולא היה מוציא את התלהבותו מיד אל הפועל, הרי היה די במשך הזמן המועט ההוא שצטטן קצת מהתלהבותו הקיצונית, ועל כל פנים לא היה מגיע לידי כך שיתבודד למשך תקופה ארוכה כל כך להתנתק מכל הוויות העולם עד שיגמור את הש"ס.

והנה עיקר תכלית אלו הימים להמליך את שם השי"ת על כל העולם כולו, כמו שאנו אומרים בכל סדר התפילות של אלו הימים: "מלוך על כל העולם כולו בכבודך". וכמוכן שבראש ובראשונה צריך האדם לקבל את עול המלכות על עצמו. ומלכותא דרקינא כעין מלכותא דארעא, והן ידוע לכל בר דעת, שאם יעבור האדם על איהה חוק מחוקי המלכות ויובא לדין אצל השופט, לא יועילו לו שום הצטדקויות, אף אם יצליח לשכנע את השופט שלא ידע את חוקי המלוכה, ולא עוד, אלא שיבוא עליו בתביעה נוספת על כך שלא מילא את חובתו כאורח נאמן, ללמוד

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלטר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה
פלא המנוחה ע"ש - 5:47
הדלקת נרות לשבת - 6:48 *
זמן קריאת שמע/מ"א - 9:04
זמן קריאת שמע/הגר"א - 9:40
סוף זמן תפילה / הגר"א - 10:45
שקיעת החמה ליום השבת - 7:05
מוצג"ק צאצ"ב/ מעריב - 7:55
צאצ"ב/ לשיטת רבינו תם - 8:17
מי שטורק מוקדם אין לאחר מוטב עצם קבלת השבת [נשיאמר "בואי כלה"]

רעיונות ופירושים לעורך את האדם לעבודת השי"ת והתחזקות באמונה ובשתון מאת

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A “TORAH” DAY
Laws and Customs for the Month of Tishrei (1)
Thirteen Middos HaRachamim. During the period of *Selichos*, *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, and *Yom Kippur* (and especially during *Neilah*), we recite time after time the thirteen attributes of *Hashem's* Divine Mercy. We recite these holy words as a means to bring down Divine mercy on us so that we may merit blessings for the new year. In the words of the text that we recite, we immediately follow these attributes with a request: *“Hashem) please forgive us for our deliberate sins, our unintentional sins and make us Your inheritance.”* The source for this is based on the *Gemara* in *Rosh Hashanah* ⁽¹⁾ that teaches that when *Moshe Rabbeinu* davened to *Hashem* to forgive the Jews who worshiped the *Egel Hazahav* (Golden Calf), *Hashem* showed him how we, His nation, are to daven in times of emergency for all generations to come. *Chazal* tell us that *Hashem* appeared to *Moshe Rabbeinu* as a *“עליו ציבור”* - One who leads the congregation in prayer, wrapped in a *Talis* and reciting the thirteen attributes of His mercy. It was at this time that He promised *Moshe Rabbeinu*, that whenever a group of *Yidden* will come together and recite these Divine attributes, the requests that are made along with them will not be returned *“empty handed.”* They might be fully or partially answered, but they will never be entirely ignored. **How Does it Work.** There are two opinions with regard to how this *tefillah* operates to create the exceptional time -

הלכה למעשה

הוא היה אומר

Chacham Rabbeinu Saadia Gaon ZT”L would say: *“The shofar foreshadows the jubilant proclamation of freedom, when Israel’s exiled and homeless are to return to the Holy Land. It calls us to believe in Israel’s deliverance at all times and under all circumstances.”*

R’ Chaim Volozhiner ZT”L (Nefesh HaChaim) would say: *“We pray, ‘And so, too, place fear of You upon all of Your works May they all form one group to fulfill Your Will with a full heart.’ We ask Hashem to bring out what is inside of us! The awe and fear of You that we know is justified - make it evident in our actions and our behavior, ‘כמו שידענו ה' אלקינו שהשלטן לפניך, for we know that the dominion is Yours!’ Deep down we recognize that You are the Almighty Who rules the world!”*

Chacham Azarya Figo ZT”L (Bina L’Itim) would say: *“Not every request that comes before a king is answered immediately and completely. Sometimes, the one making the request does not enjoy the king’s full favor. Sometimes, after the person leaves, the king will command one of his servants to attend to the matter. It is different if the person is beloved to the king. Then, in the king’s presence, he hears exactly what he wants to hear. His request is granted in full, through a royal order issued by the king. Such is our prayer: ‘In Your presence.’ - ‘לפניך Please do not turn us away from Your presence empty-handed.’ We want to be answered by means of a messenger who seems to be acting independently.” Hashem,*

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את כל חוקי המדינה ולדעת אותן על בוריים.

ואשר על כן, בימים אלו כאשר אנו עומדים וממליכים את שמו יתברך בעולם, שומה עלינו להתחזק בלימוד התורה, ובפרט בעניינם הנוגעים למעשה, וכבר מילתינו אמורות כמה וכמה פעמים, כי עצה

לקחי חיים ודגרי התעוררות נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

אתם נצבים היום כולכם לפני ה' אלקיכם ראשיכם שבטיכם זקניכם ושטריכם כל איש ישראל וגו' (כס-ט)

בעניין 'אדם נידון בראש השנה לפי מעשיו של אותה שעה'

לכאורה יש להבין, מדוע נאמר 'היום', הלא פשוט הוא שמדובר על אותו יום. וכתב רש"י (דברים כ"ט ט"ז), "ומדרש אגדה, למה נסמכה פרשת אתם נצבים לקללות, לפי ששמעו ישראל מאה קללות חסר שנים חוץ ממ"ט שבת"כ, הוריקו פניהם ואמרו מי יוכל לעמוד באלו, התחיל משה לפייסם, אתם נצבים היום, הרבה הכעסתם למקום ולא כילה אתכם, והרי אתם קיימים לפניו. **היום-כיום הזה שהוא קיים, והוא מאפיל ומאיר, כך האיר לכם, וכך עתיד להאיר לכם, והקללות והייסורים** מקיימין אתכם **ומצבינן אתכם לפניו**".

ויש ליישב באופן אחר, שנרמז כאן אודות **היום המיוחד** של ראש השנה, **שבו 'כל באי עולם** עוברים לפניו **לדין**, כבני מרון' (ר"ה ט"ז), ו**נצבים לפני ה'**.

אלא שעדיין יש להבין, מדוע נרמז ראש השנה בלשון 'היום'. ויש ליישב, בהקדם דברי הגמרא (שם ט"ז), "ואמר רבי יצחק, אין דנין את האדם אלא לפי מעשיו של אותה שעה, שנאמר, כי שמע אלוקים אל קול הנער באשר הוא שם", ופירש רש"י, "של אותה שעה-ואפילו הוא עתיד להרשיע לאחר זמן. שנאמר באשר הוא שם-ומצינו בבראשית רבה, אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא, רבונו של עולם, מי שעתידיים בניו להמית את בניך בצמא, אתה מעלה לו באר וכו', שנאמר 'לקראת צמא התיו מים', שהיו מוציאים לקראת הגולים מיני מלוחים ונדודות נפוחים וכו', אמר להם, השעה צדיק הוא או רשע, אמרו לו צדיק, אמר להם, באשר הוא שם, איני דן את העולם אלא בשעתו".

ולפ"ז יש ליישב מדוע נרמז ראש השנה בלשון 'היום', שזה לרמז, שהעמידה לפני ה' לדין בראש השנה - 'אתם נצבים כולכם לפני ה' אלוקיכם', היא לפי המעשים של אותו היום - 'היום', ולא לפי הרשעות בעתיד.

והנה נאמר (דברים כ"א, פסוקים י"ח כ' וכ"א), "כי יהיה לאיש בן סורר ומורה וגו'....וזול וסובא....ורגמוהו כל אנשי עירו באבנים ומת וגו'", וכתב רש"י, "ובן סורר ומורה נהרג על שם סופר, הגיעה תורה לסוף דעתו, סוף שמכלה ממון אביו ומבקש לימודו ואינו מוצא, ועומד בפרשת דרכים ומלסטם הבריות, אמרה תורה ימות זכאי ואל ימות חייב", (ומקורו מגמרא סנהדרין ע"א).

והקשה **רבי אליהו מורחי** (דברים כ"א י"ח), "ובן סורר ומורה נהרג על שם סופו וכו', ואף על גב, דלגבי ישמעאל כשקנטרו עליו מלאכי השרת ואמרו 'רבונו של עולם, מי שעתיד להמית את בניך בצמא, אתה מעלה לו באר', השיבם 'באשר הוא שם'-לפי מעשיו של עכשיו הוא נידון, ולא לפי מה שהוא עתיד לעשות", (וא"כ, הכיצד הבן סורר ומורה נידון על שם מה שהוא עתיד לעשות).

ויישב, "שאני התם, שעדיין לא התחיל באותה עבירה של צמא, לא מיניה ולא מקצתיה, אבל הכא כבר התחיל רשעותו של העתיד, שהרי 'הגיעה תורה לסוף דעתו, סוף שמכלה ממון אביו ומבקש לימודו ואינו מוצא, ועומד בפרשת דרכים ומלסטם הבריות'".

והקשה **ה'גור אריה'** (אות י"ז) על דבריו, "וזה אינו, דבפרק קמא

טובה קמשמע לן לקבוע שיעור מיוחד בספר הנפלא "קיצור שלחן ערוך", אשר כשמו כן הוא, שכולל בתוכו את התמצית של כל ההלכות הנצרכות מידי ביומו ואף ביומי דפגרא. ויה"ר שנוכה להיכתב ולהיחתם בספרן של צדיקים גמורים אכ"ר.

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א מגיד מישרים בק"ק בית שמש

“Oh. That’s good,” said the dying man, “because I have no money.”

Again, R’ Schwab assured him, “Don’t even think about that. It costs nothing.”

Then, the man turned to the nurse and said, “Please leave us. I have to talk to the rabbi alone.” At that moment, he started to cough violently, and the nurse stayed to help him. But then he asked her again to leave.

When he was alone with R’ Schwab, he began telling over his life story. In a voice full of melancholy, he recalled how he had come from a religious family back in Vienna. Nevertheless, he gave up all his religious ties and lived a life without any restraints. He was fine with this until his son married a non-Jewish woman, and it was then that he realized that he had done wrong. Now, here he was, dying, and he wanted to say *Viduy*, to confess his sins.

Suddenly, he began to scream. He shouted out the name of *Hashem*. And then he spoke directly to *Hashem*: “I was the greatest sinner! I wasted my life! How can I appear before You?” It was so heart-rending. R’ Schwab would say that whenever he remembered it, he would tremble. Then the man started to cough violently again, and the nurse came in.

R’ Schwab tried to comfort him. “Please, please. Don’t get too excited. I’ll come again. You don’t have to tell me everything today. I’ll see you again tomorrow.”

In fact, R’ Schwab did see him the next day, but not in the hospital. In the middle of the night the phone rang. “Can you come to a funeral? A man died and he was all alone, and there’s no one to take care of things on his behalf.”

It was this man; he had died that night. There was barely a *minyan* for his funeral and none of those who came knew him. But R’ Schwab insisted on delivering a eulogy. “I knew this man for only a day,” R’ Schwab said. “Whatever his life was like, I do not know entirely. But I know one thing: I know for a fact that he did a real *teshuvah*. I never saw a man do *teshuvah* with such sincerity.” Through this man, one could see what is meant by the power of *teshuvah*.

“*You (Hashem) will wait until the day of his death.*” *Hashem* waits for man to do *teshuvah*, and then He accepts it. Then, it is as if the man has done nothing wrong.

משל למח הדבר דומה

באין מליץ יושר מול מגיד פשע תגיד ליעקב דבר חק ומשפט וצדקנו במשפט (תפילה מוסף)

משל: On a bright summer’s afternoon, a father took his son to the local park to play. It was a big place with much debris lying about so the father instructed his son not to take off his shoes and go barefoot since he could get a thorn in his foot. The small child was only half listening and as soon as he was away from his father’s reach, he kicked off his shoes and began to run to the swings.

Well, of course, it was inevitable and soon the child came crying to his father that he got a thorn stuck in his foot. The father examined the wound and although at first it was hurting mightily, soon the pain subsided and the child stopped crying. The father, however, was afraid that his son’s foot might begin to swell and become infected, so with the use of a blade, he peeled away some of the skin around the thorn, and was therefore able to completely remove the thorn from his son’s foot.

This procedure was very painful and now the child was shrieking with greater intensity than when he first got the thorn. The father understood that these pains were really what was needed to heal him and he ignored the cries and did what needed to be done for his child’s benefit.

The next time he took his son to the park, the father reminded his son about what happened the last time he took off his shoes in the park. He vividly described the pain and suffering that the young boy felt as the thorn was being

removed from his foot and he made sure that the boy understood how painful it would be if they had to go through the whole ordeal again.

The father did not warn his son to avoid thorns or not to step on a thorn, because that wasn’t the most painful, and hence, memorable part of their outing. Rather, he recalled the source of the boy’s suffering; when the thorn was actually being removed. His father warned him with something which caused him suffering. However the truth is that the father was not afraid and worried about the removal of the thorn. He understood that this was just the cure.

ממשל: The holy **Mezeritcher Maggid, R’ Dov Ber ZT”L** explains that when it comes to avoiding sin, a person must fear the sin itself and not merely the punishment. Man only sees the suffering that his sin will bring him and thus he is afraid of it, but *Hashem* is more concerned that the man should avoid the sin altogether. *Hashem’s* “fear” is that we commit a sin - not the punishment for the sin, because this is a sign of His compassion. This is the cure. *Hashem* brings suffering to the sinner in order to purify him from the sin. Thus, the *Torah* tells us: “*What does Hashem your G-d ask of you? Only that you fear Hashem your G-d.*” (דברים י-יב) In other words your reason to have fear should be equal to the “fear” of the Almighty. And once we begin to fear the sin itself, we are clearly on our way to a complete *teshuvah*.



מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

תקעו בחודש שופר בכסה ליום חגנו כי חק לישראל הוא משפט לאלקי יעקב וגוי' (תהלים פא ד-ה)

The small Hungarian town of Munkacz was overshadowed by the large personality of the great **Munkatcher Rebbe, R’ Chaim Elazar Spira ZT”L**, widely referred to as the **Minchas Elazar** based on the name of his *sefer*. The *Rebbe* led his community and his *chassidim* with unsurpassed dignity for over twenty-five years and drew worldwide respect and honor for Munkacs. His keen understanding of Jewish as well as worldly matters drew thousands of people to his home where they sought his advice and blessings. Under his leadership, the Munkacs Jewish community grew by leaps and bounds and at the time of his death in 1937 over half of the town’s inhabitants were Jewish.

R’ Boruch Yehoshua Rabinovitch ZT”L was the son-in-law of the great *Minchas Elazar* and the father of the current *Munkatcher Rebbe, R’ Moshe Leib Rabinovitch Shlit’a*, who resides in Boro Park, NY. R’ Boruch and his wife lived in Warsaw, Poland, however, when his wife’s father, the *Minchas Elazar*, became ill and asked them to come back to Munkacs, they moved the entire family without hesitation and were wholly devoted to the *Munkatcher Rebbe*.

Besides for the current *Rebbe*, R’ Moshe Leib, R’ Boruch had another son named Tzvi Nossan Dovid. R’ Boruch would often recall that his father-in-law loved this boy - his oldest grandson - in an “exaggerated way,” in part due to the fact that they had waited a long time to have that first child. He would play with and “spoil” the child, and Tzvi Nossan would happily sit on his grandfather’s lap at the many *tischen* and *Shabbos* gatherings.

The *Minchas Elazar* also served as the *Baal Tokea* (one who blows the *shofar*) in Munkacs and would prepare each year for this holy task by practicing well in advance. One year, towards the end of his life, the *Minchas Elazar* took his *shofar* on the first day of the month of *Elul* and tested it to see whether it was in good condition. His little grandson Tzvi was in the room and was visibly excited by the *shofar* and its sounds. When the *Rebbe* finished blowing, the young child wanted more and asked his *zeide* for just one more blast, to which his *zeide* gladly obliged. From then on, for the remainder of the month of *Elul*, this became a ritual; the *Rebbe* would blow the *shofar* one extra time each day for little Tzvi. On the day before *Rosh Hashanah*, Tzvi was there, awaiting his daily blast, but on this day, he was disappointed.

“Today is the day before *Rosh Hashanah*,” his grandfather explained. “Today we do not blow the *shofar*. Tomorrow morning, with *Hashem*’s help, we will blow the *shofar* in the synagogue for the whole congregation.”

The child did not comprehend the reasons. In fact, to his childish mind, he knew no reason. He began to kick and scream, “*Zeide, Zeide*. Just one blast! Just one more blast!” After a while, his grandfather softened at the sound of his favorite grandchild crying, and in an effort to appease him, he took the *shofar* and blew one single blast.

On *Rosh Hashanah*, the custom in Munkacs was that the *Rebbe* would address the congregation before blowing the *shofar*. That year, the *Minchas Elazar* stood up before the ark, opened it and said: “Master of the World, I have to repent. It is written that on the day before *Rosh Hashanah* one mustn’t blow the *shofar*, and yet I did.”

He began to sob uncontrollably and called out: “Master of the World, do you know why I transgressed this custom? It was because my young grandchild lay on the floor begging and crying that I should only blow one blast of the *shofar* for him. My heart melted, I couldn’t bear to watch him cry like that, so I blew once for him - even though I shouldn’t have.

“*Tatte*, how can you stand by and see how millions of Your children are down on the floor crying out to You, ‘*Tatte*, just one blast! Sound the blast of the great *shofar* which will herald the final Redemption!’? Even if the time is not right for it yet, even if the time for *Moshiach* has not yet arrived, Your children still cry out to You; how can You stand by idly?!”

R’ Boruch would cry as he recounted this story, and recalled how at that time the entire crowd cried along with the *Munkatcher Rebbe*. The sounding of the *shofar* was delayed, and for a long time they could not regain their composure as loud wailing was heard throughout the synagogue. That last year of the *Minchas Elazar*’s life, the blowing of the *shofar* was an event that was unparalleled in the annals of Munkacs *chassidim*.

וכל מאמינים שהוא יוצרם בבטן הכל יכול וכוללם יחד (תפילת מוסף)

In the *shtetl*, a grocer, by definition, was a G-d-fearing man who was knowledgeable in many areas of *Torah*, and also provided the daily food needs of his town, with honesty and integrity. Many *Gedolei Hador* were also “grocers” in the sense that they owned or managed a store while their heads, and their minds, were usually buried deep in the *seforim* they were learning or the *Tehillim* they were constantly reciting. Unlike the large supermarkets of today, with their impersonal aisles and massive checkout lines, the old-time groceries were small shops, where the proprietor knew every person and his family’s needs and necessities individually. In the early days of American Jewry, many of the small groceries that existed were similar to their European counterparts, and the “grocers” were truly *heileige yidden*.

he gave Adam his form. During the seventh hour He blew a living soul into the man and during the eighth hour He placed him in *Gan Eden*. During the ninth hour He commanded him not to eat from the עץ הדעת - Tree of Knowledge. During the tenth hour the man transgressed the command. During the eleventh hour the man was judged and during the twelfth hour “he emerged vindicated.”

Since, on the first *Rosh Hashanah* in history, the first man was vindicated during the twelfth hour of the day, this very hour has become an opportune hour for all future generations. What is more, since the first *Rosh Hashanah* was Friday, the day before *Shabbos*, the end of the twelfth

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDOS

If someone were to tell you that a lion was running loose in your neighborhood would you be walking down the street carefree? Would you be concerned, nervous, or downright scared? Of course you would! You’d lock yourself in the house and anxiously await news that the danger has passed. Chances are that the lion is nowhere near your house or even your block - but the fact that there is a POSSIBILITY of danger, is the cause of tremendous fear, and extra protective measures. *Rabbosai*, we are only days before the great and awesome day of judgment. The day that we stand before the King of all Kings as our fate for the coming year is decided. Who will live and who will die? Who will be healthy and who will be sick? Who will live peacefully and who will suffer pain and grief? Our future hangs in the balance and what are we doing about it? Are we nervous? Are we anxious? Are we at all concerned? Or are we walking down the street carefree thinking about other matters entirely? Why? Why are we not shaking in fear in advance of the upcoming judgment?

The answer is that *Hashem* put this mentality specifically into the the creation in order to ensure that man has free choice. Originally, on the third day of the creation of the world, *Hashem* wanted the earth to produce “עץ פרי עושה פרי” - trees that taste like their fruit. But the earth did not follow the command of *Hashem* and produced “עץ עושה פרי” - trees that produce fruit with no connection to the taste of the tree itself. The **Maharal ZT”L** explains that in an ideal world (which is the world to come) we are in the situation of “עץ” “עץ פרי עושה פרי” and the reward (good taste) of a *mitzvah* is the *mitzvah* itself! The product of the *mitzvah* is the sweetness, the spiritual high that one feels when performing any command of *Hashem*. But, in this world, this could not be. We are living in a world of “עץ עושה פרי” where we don’t necessarily feel the connection and sweetness of a *mitzvah*. There is a spiritual disconnect between knowing and doing

hour was holier than the beginning of the twelfth hour. Accordingly, the end of the second half of the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* is unique. On this day, the closer it gets to the end of the twelfth hour, the more conducive it becomes for prayer’s acceptance so that we may “emerge vindicated.”

Since the Holy One Blessed be He said that the acceptance of the repentance of *Adam HaRishon*’s descendants would forever be connected to the acceptance of the first man’s own repentance, the end of the twelfth hour is truly the best time for *Tashlich*. It was then that the prosecuting voices that were raised against the first man were silenced and he emerged from judgment vindicated.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

what is right, and feeling connected and close to *Hashem*.

Perhaps *Hashem* originally commanded that we live in a world of “עץ פרי עושה פרי” in order to teach us that this should be our goal! This is not something that is a part of the creation but rather something that man must work on constantly. The earth does not produce this type of behavior but rather man must toil to take his intellectual knowledge and create from it an emotional reality.

R’ Yaakov Asher Sinclair Shlit’a explains that this is the *avodah* of *Rosh Hashanah*. The obvious fear that man experiences in every physical aspect of life is absent when the issue is spiritual. This is the greatest kindness of *Hashem* and the greatest challenge of man. We must inspire ourselves continually to experience true *yiras shamayim*, for if we automatically feel the trepidation of the judgment of our sins, or the absolutely Divine spiritual sweetness each time we perform a *mitzvah*, we would have no free choice to earn our share in the world to come!

This year when we dip the apple in the honey on the first night of *Rosh Hashanah*, let us reflect upon the message of the fruit trees. Although this world is not a place where the “*tree tastes like the fruit*” - a spiritual paradise where we feel the sweetness of a *mitzvah*, perhaps by dipping in the honey we are able to experience and internalize this sweetness, even just a small bit. Let us daven with all our hearts that we should merit to do the will of *Hashem* with all our hearts. Our *avodah* should not be merely an intellectual and robotic experience, but an emotional, passionate, vibrant and exciting expression of what is in our hearts. As we say in *Tashlich*, “*It is our desire to do Your will*.” May our excitement for *mitzvos* and yearning for closeness to *Hashem* make everything that is spiritual, as real to us as the lion that is running loose in the street. May all of *Klal Yisroel* be *gebentsched* with a good, sweet, happy, healthy and truly spiritual year.

בראש השנה יכתבון

ואתה תשוב ושמעת בקול ה' וכר' (נצבים ל-ח)

The sages tell us that the concept of *teshuvah* - repentance, was created before the world was formed (נדרים לט:). This is a very strange statement indeed! How could anything have been created before the world itself came into being?

R' Shimon Schwab ZT"l (Khal Adath Jeshurun) explains that when we speak of the creation of the world, we believe that it was formed יש מאין - a tangible reality out of nothing. This is possible only for the Almighty, with His infinite powers. No human being can ever create a brand new item out of thin air, no matter how great of a magician he is. Yet even science, which does not believe in a Creator, admits that first there was nothing, and then something appeared. The earlier conditions no longer prevailed.

This, too, is the wonder of *teshuvah*. If someone fully and sincerely repents, then *Hashem* considers it as if the crime had never been done. Instead of "יֵשׁ מֵאֵין" - a new circumstance of sin, we have "אֵין מֵיֵשׁ" - nothing is left of that circumstance. The *Baal Teshuvah* turns the "ש" of the crime into an "אין" - a negation of an act that has already taken place. So in this sense, *teshuvah* was created before the formation of the world. Because *teshuvah* returns conditions to where they were before the Creation, to the status of אין. The misdeed is considered null and void.

This is the great miracle of *teshuvah*. One who truly performs *teshuvah* says *Viduy* and demonstrates that he is sincere about being ashamed of his actions and will never repeat them. Then *Hashem* forgives him, and wipes out the fact of the action. Of course, if a person sinned because of lack of knowledge, and then became aware of his obligations, it is easier for him to do *teshuvah* than if he did the action deliberately. And if someone sinned because his desires overcame him, it is easier for him to repent than for someone who sinned spitefully and rebelliously. Yet, no matter what prompted his wrongdoing, anyone can do *teshuvah*, for there is no limit to repentance.

מלך על כל העולם כולו בכבודך ... (תפילת ראש השנה)

Many *meforshim* are bothered by the redundancy of the words "כול" and "כר" for essentially they mean the same thing. **R' Zev Leff Shlit'a** offers an explanation: Perhaps the connotation is, "*Rule over all (כל) the world*" - over each person individually, while at the same time, *Hashem* should rule over the entire world completely (כול) as a collective unit, since both aspects are necessary for perfection.

We know that the ten days of Repentance beginning with *Rosh Hashanah* are days devoted to *teshuvah*, and both the individual and the *Klal* must make amends during this heightened period of time. However, the **Rambam**

informs us that *Yom Kippur* is the deadline for *teshuvah* for both the individual and the community. There is an aspect of *teshuvah* as an individual and another aspect of *teshuvah* as a community. On *Yom Kippur* we renew our covenant with *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* on an individual and personal basis, while at the same time we also reunite into a *Klal* to renew our collective covenant with *Hashem*.

Thus, everyone is judged on the essence of his personal makeup. The word "אני" - "I" is spelled *alef, nun, yud*. The *alef* - numerically one - represents the individual. The *yud* - numerically ten - represents a minyan (*tzibbur*), the community. The *nun* - numerically fifty - represents the fifty gates of wisdom and purity that are necessary to merge and connect the *alef* - the individual - into the *yud* - the *tzibbur*.

The merit of being part of a unified *tzibbur* is immeasurable. **R' Chaim Shmuelevitz ZT"l**, related the story of how Elisha asked the *Shunamis* if perhaps he could speak to the king for her in appreciation of her efforts on his behalf. The **Zohar** interprets this story as follows: it was *Rosh Hashanah* and the "king" whom Elisha was referring to was none other than the King of all Kings, *Hashem Yisborach*. Elisha offered to devote a portion of his *Rosh Hashanah* prayers to this woman's needs. Yet how does the *Shunamis* respond? "ברוך עמי אנכי ישבת" (מלכים ב ד-ג) - I prefer not to be singled out, but rather to be viewed as part of the community, for the merit of the *Klal* is immeasurable, even greater than the intense merit of the prayers of Elisha.

The **Alter from Kelm, R' Simchah Zissel Ziv ZT"l** used to post a notice on the entrance to the *Talmud Torah* of Kelm on *Rosh Chodesh Elul*. It reminded those who entered that the best way to merit a good judgment was to be a person who benefited and was needed by others. Then one's judgment was not limited to his own meager merit, but had to take into consideration the merit of all whom he benefited and who depended on him. (**Festivals of Life**)

ותשלך במצולות ים כל חסאתינו וגו' (מכה ז-ט)

The **Arizal** writes that the best time for *Tashlich* is on the first day of *Rosh Hashanah*, after *mincha*, just before sunset. According to the **Chid'a, Chacham Chaim Y.D. Azulai ZT"l**, this is based on the *Medrash* which discusses the sequence of events on the day the Almighty created the first man. It was *Rosh Hashanah*, during the first hour of the day, that the Almighty thought to create mankind. During the second hour He consulted the angels. During the third hour He gathered up the dust of the earth out of which He would form *Adam HaRishon*. During the fourth hour He mixed the dust with water. During the fifth hour He considered the design of this unique creation, and during the sixth hour

On the corner of 16th avenue and 48th street in Boro Park, was just such a grocery and the proprietor was just such a grocer. His name was Mr. Kerpel, and many people will remember him for his kindness, his pleasant countenance and disposition, and the jokes he would playfully tell the children on their way to school. It was well-known that Mr. Kerpel would open his shop early in the morning, put the newly baked bread out on display and make sure the fresh milk was available. Then, he would leave his store - unguarded and unattended - to daven in a nearby shul and learn *Torah* for a few hours. When customers would go into his grocery to buy food, they would write their names on a small black board inside the shop, detailing how many loaves of bread they took and how many bottles of milk. At some later time, when Mr. Kerpel would come back into his store, the people would pay him for what they took. His honesty and good cheer was unmatched, and in this manner, he made a living to support his own family.

Mr. Kerpel was also a *chazzan*, with a beautiful voice that he used to sing out the praises of *Hashem*. As he sat in his shop and recited *Tehillim* daily, he would chant these songs and the customers would not just shop, but also be entertained by his musical melodies. When the *Yamim Noraim* came, he would daven for the *amud* each year in a shul on the West Side of Manhattan. The heart and soul that he put into his *tefillos* were legendary and many people would come special to the West Side just to hear his davening.

There was a man who lived in Manhattan, who was married for quite a few years and was unfortunately not blessed with children. Hours upon hours of prayer were spent, *berachos* from *Gedolim* and appointments with doctors were conducted but after many years of marriage, the couple was still bereft. The man had heard of the holy grocer from Boro Park and knew that he davened on *Rosh Hashanah* in a shul close to his home. He decided to daven there one year and ask Mr. Kerpel to have him in mind during his *tefillos* and perhaps he will merit a *yeshua* (salvation).

He approached Mr. Kerpel early in the morning on *Rosh Hashanah* and told him of his difficulty. He requested that as the *Shaliach Tzibbur*, the one who was leading the prayers and bringing the entire congregation closer to the Almighty, he should keep him and his wife in mind, so that they merit to have children in the future.

Mr. Kerpel, a man with a heart as wide and expansive as a canyon, nodded silently in assent. After a moment, he looked at the distraught man and said, "I will have you in mind during my prayers. But do me this one favor. When I get up to the *piyut* of '*Vechol Maaminim*' please come up and stand by my side." The man agreed to do as he was asked.

During *Mussaf*, Mr. Kerpel held the congregation spell-bound with the force of his prayers. It seemed that he put a "little extra" into the davening this year. As he reached the *piyut* of "*Vechol Maaminim*," he noticed that the man had come up to stand by his side. Slowly, line by line, Mr. Kerpel sang out the words in the *machzor*. When he came to the words: "*Vechol Maaminim shehu Yotzrom Babaten*" ("And everyone believes that He [*Hashem*] creates them [children] in the womb"), he gave out an unearthly cry, a groan that emanated from the inner purity of his soul, and in one motion he collapsed into a dead faint!

Volunteers rushed to his side, using smelling salts and other means to awaken him, and in due time, Mr. Kerpel came to. Without even uttering a word, he stood right back up, and continued davening from the exact spot where he had left off! It appeared as if he hadn't even realized that he had fainted!

To the joy and astonishment of the childless couple, within that very same year, a beautiful set of twins was born - a bundle of joy that came down to this earth due to the heartfelt *tefillos* of the "simple" grocer from Boro Park!

ועד יום מותו תחכה לו אם ישוב מיד תקבלו וגו' (תפילת מוסף לימים נוראים)

In the mid-1930's, as the Nazi threat in Germany became more pronounced and real, **R' Shimon Schwab ZT"l** made contact with the American Orthodox leader **Rabbi Dr. Leo Jung**, and informed him of his wish to emigrate to that country. Rabbi Jung, in turn, got in touch with a community called Shearith Yisrael in Baltimore, who was looking for a spiritual leader. R' Schwab traveled to the United States, and after a trial period the community elected him as their rabbi. Thus, the entire Schwab family was able to apply for visas and escape the Holocaust.

In Baltimore, R' Schwab became a local leader of Orthodoxy, hosting the annual conference of Agudath Israel several years after his arrival and helping to create one of the first Jewish school for girls, the Bais Yaakov in Baltimore.

As part of his rabbinic duties, R' Schwab was often called upon by terminally ill patients, to tend to their bedside and listen to their final confessions. He recalled one incident when he was called to visit a Jewish man who was in a hospital, dying of tuberculosis. The first thing he said when R' Schwab came into his room was, "Rabbi, how much do you charge?" The Rabbi smiled and patiently answered, "Not to worry. I never charge anything."