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from: **Rabbi Kaganoff** <yymkaganoff@gmail.com> reply-to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com date: Wed, Aug 28, 2013 at 4:15 PM subject:

Eruv Tavshillin

With Rosh Hashana falling next week on Thursday and Friday, it is an appropriate time to review the laws of Eruv Tavshillin.

The Whys, Hows, and Whats of Eruv Tavshillin By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff
Question #1: Avrumie, who studies in a local yeshiva, asks me: "I will be eating my Yom Tov and Shabbos meals as a guest in different homes. Do I need to make my own eruv tavshillin?"

Question #2: Michal and Muttie are spending Rosh Hashanah near his Yeshiva and are invited out for all the meals. They have found an available apartment for Yom Tov, but do not intend to use the kitchen there at all. Someone told Muttie that, although he should make an eruv tavshillin, he should not recite a bracha when doing so. Is this the correct procedure?

Answer: With Rosh Hashana falling out on Thursday and Friday, and in chutz la'aretz also Sukkos and Shemini Atzeres/Simchas Torah, many people will be asking these or similar questions. In order to reply accurately to the above inquiries we need to investigate several aspects of this mitzvah that the Sages implemented – particularly, the whys, hows, and whats of eruv tavshillin.

WHY DO WE MAKE AN ERUV TAVSHILIN?

Although one may cook on Yom Tov, one may prepare food only for consumption on that Yom Tov. There is, however, one exceptional situation -- one may cook on a Friday Yom Tov for Shabbos, but only if one makes an eruv tavshillin the day before Yom Tov.

WHAT IS THE RECIPE FOR PRODUCING AN ERUV TAVSHILIN?

It is fairly easy to make an eruv tavshillin:

INGREDIENTS On Erev Yom Tov, set aside two prepared foods, one cooked and one baked, that one is not planning to eat on Yom Tov. Many people use a hard-boiled egg for the cooked item, but it is actually preferable to use something more significant (Mishnah Berurah 527:8). I personally use the gefilte fish that we will be eating at the Shabbos seudos.

PROCEDURE (Someone who includes people outside his family in his eruv, such as the rav of a community, adds an additional step at this point: He has someone who does not usually eat with him, whom we will call the zo'che, lift the food used for the eruv tavshillin four inches or more. By lifting the food, the zo'che acquires ownership in the eruv for those who will forget to make an eruv tavshillin. The zo'che then returns the food to the rav [Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 527:10-12 and commentaries]. I will soon explain what the zo'che's involvement accomplishes.)

One holds the eruv tavshillin, recites a bracha, Baruch Atta Hashem Elokeinu Melech haolam asher ki'deshanu bemitzvosav vetzivanu al mitzvas eruv, and declares:

This eruv permits us to bake, cook, wrap food to keep it hot, to kindle lights, and make all other food preparations on Yom Tov for Shabbos (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 527:12).

Those who include other people in their eruv, insert:

For ourselves and for all others who dwell in this city.

INSTRUCTIONS The foods that have now become the eruv tavshillin should not be consumed until one has completed all the Shabbos preparations.

YIELD The eruv tavshillin allows the members of this household to prepare food for Shabbos. The rav's eruv tavshillin will allow others who forgot an eruv tavshillin to prepare food, subject to the details we will soon learn.

WHAT DO I DO WITH THE ERUV?

After one has completed preparing everything for Shabbos, there is no requirement to do anything with the eruv, although it is preferable to use the challah as the second loaf for the first two meals of Shabbos and to eat the entire eruv tavshillin as part of the third meal of Shabbos (seudah shelishis) in order to use the mitzvah item (that is, the eruv tavshillin) for other mitzvos, in this case the three Shabbos meals (see Mishnah Berurah 527:48). (For the same reason, many set aside the lulav and hoshanas after Sukkos to use as fuel for baking matzos or burning the chometz.)

If someone mistakenly ate the eruv tavshillin before Shabbos, one may continue the Shabbos preparations as long as at least an olive-sized piece of the cooked item remains, even if the entire baked item was consumed. However, if less than an olive-sized piece of the cooked item remains, one may no longer continue cooking especially for Shabbos, and should ask a shaylah how to proceed (Shulchan Aruch 527:15).

FORGOT TO MAKE AN ERUV

Someone who fails to make an eruv tavshillin may not cook or bake on Yom Tov for Shabbos, and needs to ask a shaylah how to prepare his Shabbos meals (see Shulchan Aruch 527:20-22). The Rishonim dispute whether he may kindle lights on Yom Tov for Shabbos when he has no eruv tavshillin (Shulchan Aruch 527:19). This dispute will soon become significant to our discussion.

WHY DOES THE RAV INCLUDE OTHER PEOPLE IN HIS ERUV?

As mentioned above, someone who did not make an eruv tavshillin may not cook on Yom Tov for Shabbos. The Gemara narrates the following story:

Shmuel saw that someone was very sad on Yom Tov and asked him why. The man responded, "Because I neglected to make an eruv tavshillin, and therefore I will be unable to cook for Shabbos." Shmuel explained that the man could rely on Shmuel's eruv tavshillin.

The next year Yom Tov once more fell on Friday. Shmuel again noticed that the man was sad, and again the man mentioned that he had forgotten to make an eruv tavshillin. However, this time Shmuel advised him that since he had repeated the negligence, he would not be allowed to rely upon Shmuel's eruv (Beitzah 16b).

We see that the rav should include everyone in his city in his eruv tavshillin, lest someone forget to make an eruv, although everyone is required to create his/her own (Shulchan Aruch 527:7).

WHY DOES THE RAV HAND HIS ERUV TO SOMEONE ELSE?

A person must own or be a partner in the eruv tavshillin with which he fulfills this mitzvah. An eruv tavshillin automatically includes all regular members of this household, but how does it include other people? Having someone pick up the eruv tavshillin on their behalf makes them partial owners in this eruv tavshillin.

MUST I MAKE AN ERUV?

At this point, we can begin to analyze the two questions I mentioned at the beginning of the article. Let us begin by rephrasing Avrumie's question: "I will be eating my Yom Tov meals as a guest. Do I make an eruv tavshillin?"

Avrumie, Michal, and Muttie will not be cooking on Yom Tov; does that exempt them from eruv tavshillin, or must they make one anyway? Is eruv tavshillin merely a license to cook for Shabbos on Yom Tov and therefore someone not preparing food has no need for one, or is there a rabbinic requirement to make an eruv tavshillin even when one will not be cooking? Avrumie will not be preparing food for Shabbos, whereas Michal will only be kindling the Shabbos lights. I will discuss soon whether this distinction affects our question. In the interim, I will discuss Avrumie's situation by presenting two differing ways of understanding the function of eruv tavshillin, which I will describe as (A) matir, license or (B) chovah, obligation.

A. Matir According to this approach, eruv tavshillin functions solely to permit one to cook on Yom Tov for Shabbos, so that one who is not planning to cook on Yom Tov for Shabbos has no requirement to make an eruv tavshillin. This opinion compares eruv tavshillin to the mitzvah of shechitah. One is not required to shecht an animal; however, someone interested in converting a bird or animal into food must perform shechitah to make it kosher. Thus, shechitah is a matir; it permits one to eat the meat, but one is not required to shecht an animal if one does not want to

eat it. Similarly, eruv tavshillin permits one to cook for Shabbos, but one who does not intend to cook does not need to make an eruv.

Those following this approach will note that the other types of eruv (eruvei chatzeiros and eruvei techumim) are both types of matir that permit either carrying or traveling that is otherwise prohibited, and conclude that eruv tavshillin is similar to the other types of eruvim. According to this approach, Avrumie has no need for an eruv tavshillin since he has no intention to cook for Shabbos. We will discuss shortly whether Michal's kindling requires her to make an eruv tavshillin.

B. Chovah

On the other hand, one could argue that eruv tavshillin is different from the other two types of eruv, and is an obligatory act. This approach understands that Chazal created a rabbinic mitzvah requiring each individual or family to make an eruv tavshillin even if there is no intention to cook or bake on Yom Tov for Shabbos.

Why should eruv tavshillin be different from the other types of eruv? To answer this question we need to explain the reason for the rabbinic mitzvah called eruv tavshillin.

WHAT IS THE REASON FOR ERUV TAVSHILLIN?

The Gemara records a dispute discussing why Chazal introduced eruv tavshillin: Was it for the sake of honoring Shabbos, or for the sake of honoring Yom Tov (Beitzah 15b)?

A. For Shabbos According to the first opinion, that of Rava, Chazal instituted eruv tavshillin to guarantee that one not become so involved in the Yom Tov feasting that one forgets to prepare proper meals for Shabbos. The eruv tavshillin therefore serves as a "red flag": "Don't forget to also produce delicious repasts for Shabbos!"

B. For Yom Tov The other approach, that of Rav Ashi, contends that eruv tavshillin reinforces the sanctity of Yom Tov by emphasizing that without the eruv tavshillin one may not cook on Yom Tov, even for Shabbos. A person thereby realizes: if cooking on Yom Tov for Shabbos is forbidden without an eruv tavshillin, certainly one may not prepare food on Yom Tov for a subsequent weekday!

How does this dispute affect Avrumie, Michal and Muttie?

The basis for treating eruv tavshillin as a chovah, an obligation, and not merely a matir, is Rava's opinion that eruv tavshillin's purpose is to guarantee that one celebrates Shabbos properly. In other words, eruv tavshillin is to remind us to cook for Shabbos. Clearly, this is not a matir, but a chovah. In Rava's opinion, eruv tavshillin is similar to the rabbinic requirement of kindling lights before Shabbos to ensure that one does not sit in the dark. Even someone who enjoys sitting in the dark is required to kindle lights before Shabbos since this is not a matir but a chovah. Thus, according to Rava, Avrumie must make an eruv tavshillin (or be included in someone else's), even though he has no intention to cook, because eruv tavshillin is a requirement that Chazal placed on every individual to remind him to prepare appropriate meals for Shabbos.

DO WE FOLLOW RAVA'S APPROACH?

However, the halacha does not follow Rava's opinion but follows Rav Ashi's position, that the purpose of eruv tavshillin is for Yom Tov's honor. As noted above, Rav Ashi contended that the reason for eruv tavshillin is to guarantee that people realize that Yom Tov is so holy that one may not cook on it for weekday needs. According to this approach, one could argue that eruv tavshillin is simply a matir and that one who does not intend to cook for Shabbos need not make an eruv tavshillin, since if one is not cooking for Shabbos, it is unlikely that he will cook for the weekdays following Shabbos.

On the other hand, the usual assumption is that when the Gemara quotes two disputing opinions, the disagreement concerns only the one point mentioned and no other issues. Thus, once we have demonstrated that Rava contends that eruv tavshillin is mandatory, we should conclude either one of the following two points:

1. That the issue of whether eruv tavshillin is a matir or a chovah is itself the focal point of the dispute between Rav Ashi and Rava.

2. That Rav Ashi and Rava agree that eruv tavshillin is mandatory and not merely a matir.

The difficulty with the first approach is that we see no evidence that Rav Ashi considers eruv tavshillin to be only a matir. On the contrary, the Gemara maintains that the dispute between Rav Ashi and Rava is whether eruv tavshillin is for the honor of Yom Tov or of Shabbos. Since Rava must maintain that eruv tavshillin is a chovah, and the dispute between them concerns only whether eruv tavshillin is for the honor of Yom Tov or of Shabbos, we should infer that Rav Ashi agrees that eruv tavshillin is a chovah. This analysis would conclude that Avrumie, Michal and Muttie are all required to make an eruv tavshillin. However, notwithstanding this analysis, I have found no early source who states that eruv tavshillin is obligatory for someone who has no need to cook for Shabbos.

LITERATURE

Having discussed whether eruv tavshillin is a matir or a chovah we can now research whether the halachic literature produces any evidence supporting either side of this question. Analysis of the position of one recognized halachic authority demonstrates that he felt that eruv tavshillin is a matir, not a chovah.

The Maamar Mordechai, a respect commentary on the Shulchan Aruch, discusses the exact issue that I posed as Michal's shaylah:

Someone will not be cooking or baking on Yom Tov for Shabbos, but will need to kindle lights immediately before the entry of Shabbos. Does this person recite a bracha prior to making his/her eruv tavshillin?

The background to his question is the dispute of the Rishonim whether a person may kindle lights for Shabbos even if he did not make an eruv tavshillin. In other words, some Rishonim hold that an eruv tavshillin is necessary not only to permit cooking on Yom Tov, but also to permit any preparations for Shabbos.

The Maamar Mordechai (527:18) rules that since many authorities contend that kindling lights for Shabbos does not require an eruv tavshillin, someone not intending to cook for Shabbos should make an eruv tavshillin without reciting a bracha.

Implicit in the Maamar Mordechai's conclusion is that the purpose of eruv tavshillin is exclusively to permit cooking and baking on Yom Tov, and there is no independent requirement to make an eruv tavshillin. If the Maamar Mordechai feels that eruv tavshillin is a chovah and not merely a matir, the dispute whether or not one can kindle lights without an eruv tavshillin is irrelevant to reciting a bracha. Whether one needs the eruv tavshillin or not, one would recite a bracha for performing the mitzvah that Chazal instituted! Thus, the Maamar Mordechai clearly holds that eruv tavshillin is only a matir, and that one recites the bracha only if the matir is required.

However, the Maamar Mordechai's ruling is not obvious, even assuming that eruv tavshillin is only a matir and not a chovah. It is possible that one should recite a bracha on making the eruv tavshillin even if he has no intention to cook on Yom Tov, since the eruv permits him to cook should he choose to. Thus, the eruv tavshillin fulfilled its role as a matir in permitting him to cook, and for that alone he should be able to recite a bracha even if he has no intention to cook. Yet the Maamar Mordechai values the eruv tavshillin only if one intends to use it, whereas, if one does not intend to use it, it is considered purposeless and warrants no bracha. Thus, according to the Maamar Mordechai, Michal and Muttie should make an eruv tavshillin without a bracha.

I was asked this exact shaylah one year when the first day of Pesach occurred on Thursday. Those of us who live in Eretz Yisrael had no mitzvah of eruv tavshillin since, for us, Friday was not Yom Tov. However, we had several guests for Yom Tov who live in chutz la'aretz and observe two days of Yom Tov even while visiting Eretz Yisroel. For them, it was prohibited to cook on Yom Tov without an eruv tavshillin. I suggested that they make an eruv tavshillin with a bracha, but out of deference to the opinion of the Maamar Mordechai, instructed that those reciting a bracha should participate in the cooking for Shabbos that would transpire on Yom Tov at least in a small way. Of course, I suggest that those of you faced with the same shaylah as Avrumie, Michal or Muttie ask your own rav for direction. I would be curious to know whether he agrees with me and, if not, for what reason.

THE HASHKFAH OF PREPARING FOOD ON YOM TOV

The Torah refers to the Yomim Tovim as Moed. Just as the word ohel moed refers to the tent in the desert which served as a meeting place between Hashem and the Jewish people, so too, a Moed is a meeting time between Hashem and the Jewish people (Hirsch, Vayikra 23:3 and Horeb). Unlike Shabbos when we refrain from all melacha activity, on Yom Tov the Torah permitted melacha activity that enhances the celebration of the Yom Tov as a Moed. Permitting the preparations of delicious, freshly prepared meals allows an even greater celebration of this unique meeting time with Hashem.

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subject: Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky - A Cry From the Soul

Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky A Cry From the Soul

The essence of Rosh Hashana is encapsulated in the phrase "Yom teruah ye'hi'ye lochem - a day of blowing of the shofar it will be for you." Chazal had a tradition that the word teruah refers to a broken sound similar to a cry. It is this tradition that is the source for the three different sounds of the shofar, the shevraim, the teruah, and the

shevraim-teruah, which correspond to different types of crying. What is it about a cry that becomes the central feature of Rosh Hashana?

Tears are a reflection of a person's innermost feelings. Similarly, a proper fulfillment of the mitzvah of tekias shofar emanates from the inside of one's soul. Mitzvos that are performed with different parts of the body express our desire to serve Hashem with those external parts. We dedicate our hands to Hashem by wearing tefillin and our mouths by reciting berachos, and yet the mitzvah of tekias shofar is different. We blow the shofar with our breath, symbolically drawing upon our innermost soul to perform this mitzvah. The word for breath, "nesh-ima", is related to the word for soul, "neshama". When we blow the shofar, we are dedicating the very essence of our souls to the service of Hashem.

It is this dimension of tekias shofar which represents our peni'mi'us - our internal self, rather than our chitzonius - our external appearance, that explains a certain phenomenon we find about the shofar. There are three major historical events associated with the shofar. First, akeidas Yitzchak culminated with a ram being brought as a korban instead of Yitzchak, and thus we prefer to use specifically a ram's horn for our mitzvah of tekias shofar, harkening back to that ram. Additionally, the beracha of zichronos concludes with a plea to Hashem to remember akeidas Yitzchak. The second time a shofar plays a prominent role is during matan Torah, and we refer to the shofar of Har Sinai throughout the beracha of shofros. Finally, the shofar associated with the future redemption is the culmination of the special berachos inserted into the musaf of Rosh Hashana. Besides a shofar, there is another unifying theme between these three events, and that is the prominent role of a donkey. Avraham and Yitzchak ride on a donkey on the way to the akeidah, Yetzias Mitzrayim, which began the process that culminates with matan Torah, begins with Moseh returning to Mitzrayim on a donkey to lead the Jewish People to freedom, and the era of redemption will begin with moshiach riding on a donkey. Why do the donkey and the shofar go hand in hand throughout our history?

A donkey is unique in that although it is a non-kosher animal, a first born donkey has sanctity and must be redeemed. Externally, a donkey seems very far removed from holiness, yet a donkey has an internal sanctity. A donkey and a shofar both symbolize our deepest innermost desires for holiness even if our external appearances and actions are not living up to that yearning.

As we approach Rosh Hashana, let us turn inward and draw inspiration from the shofar of the akeidah, Har Sinai, and Moshe. As we cry out our innermost feelings to Hashem on Rosh Hashana, let us focus on those feelings being desires for a life of kedusha. May we reconnect to the shofar of the akeidah, the sounds of Har Sinai and thereby merit to hear the sound of the shofar of moshiach in our days.

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Hilchos Uminhagei Rosh Hashana 5774

Rabbi Krakowski

(Tuesday, September 3rd, 2013) - See more at:

<http://www.theyeshivaworld.com/article.php?p=184243#sthash.cSvqfQTW.dpuf>

The following is meant as a convenient review of Halachos pertaining to Rosh Hashana. The Piskei Din for the most part are based purely on the Sugyos, Shulchan Aruch and Ramah, and the Mishna Berura, unless stated otherwise. They are based on my understanding of the aforementioned texts through the teachings of my Rebeim. As individual circumstances are often important in determining the psak in specific cases, and as there may be different approaches to some of the issues, one should always check with one's Rov first.

Rabbi Krakowski is the Rov Hamachshir for OU Kashrus in Eretz-Yisroel. He served as Rov of Kehilas Torah Vechessed. Rabbi Krakowski

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Erev Rosh Hashana:

1) Fasting Erev Rosh Hashana: Some people have a Minhag to fast on Erev Rosh Hashana.

a) A person does not have to accept the fast upon himself at Mincha the day before (as is necessary by other voluntary fasts), but rather can choose to fast upon awakening on Erev Rosh Hashana.

i) Nowadays many don't fast at all, but many of those who fast do so only until after Chatzos.

(1) If someone fasts until after davening Mincha, he should say "Aneinu" in the Mincha Shmonei Esrei.

ii) There are those that fast until close to the beginning of Rosh Hashana. They end their fast before Rosh Hashana so as not to come into the Yom-Tov fasting (as this may be forbidden).

b) Women do not fast on Erev Rosh Hashana.

c) As this fast isn't obligatory there is no need to educate (be Mechanech) children to fast.

2) There are those that are Noheg to go to Jewish cemeteries Erev Rosh Hashana.

a) If this is someone's Minhag, the person should go and be careful not to daven to the deceased but rather to Hashem in the zechus (merit) of the deceased.

i) There are those that maintain it is also alright to beseech the deceased to be meilitz yosher for them.

b) After going to the Kevarim the Minhag is to give Tzedaka.

c) If this is not one's Minhag, one should not start to do so.

3) We are noheg that men go to the mikvah Erev Rosh Hashana.

a) If one isn't noheg to do so, it may nevertheless be worth taking it on as there isn't any Halachik argument against it, and it is a highly accepted and widespread Minhag.

i) It is prohibited for fathers and sons to go to the Mikvah together; this includes the changing areas and any other areas in which there is no privacy. As this is not an issue of Kibud Av (respect for the father), but rather a matter of tznius (modesty/self-respect), the father is not at liberty to be 'mochel' (to forgo such privacy).

(1) If a father requires the assistance of a son then the son may come with him for the purpose of assisting his father (e.g. a father who is old or handicapped etc.).

ii) For the same reason, it is likewise prohibited for brothers-in-law to go to the Mikvah together.

b) As the reason for this minhag is to purify everyone even from doubt as to possible minor impurities (Tumas Keri), the issue of educating children who are not of age does not arise.

c) Taking into account both 3a and 3b above, young boys – especially those too young to go without their father's supervision – shouldn't be brought to the Mikvah. This applies not only to Erev Rosh Hashana, but to all other times as well.

d) When getting undressed before immersing in the mikva one should first remove their shirt/(undershirt) and then their underpants unless they are wearing a very long shirt that covers the mila (see Meseches Derech Eretz Rabba and Zuta).

e) If someone who has taken on the minhag of going to the Mikvah, cannot do so, that individual should try to pour 9 kabin of water upon himself (there is some argument among the authorities as to what this corresponds within our system of measures, but the equivalent of 8 gallons should suffice).

i) Some maintain that even if this water isn't contained within a vessel but rather comes from a steady stream such as a shower that it is sufficient.

(1) For Erev Rosh Hashana purposes one may be lenient, but for other purposes (such as burial preparations (Taharas Hameis) one should not.

1) The Gemorah tells us that "Simana Milsa" (symbolism works). In keeping with that dictum Chazal tell us that we should eat foods on the night of Rosh Hashana that have a positive connotation associated with them (and likewise not to eat things that have a negative connotation to them). These connotations may be caused by taste or name of the food.

a) There are many such foods mentioned in the Gemorah and more that are mentioned by the various Mefarshim and Poskim. The Mefarshim and Poskim also explain that we may create our own symbolic foods.

i) There is no right or wrong number of symbolic foods to eat. There is no obligation per say to eat any of these foods in particular, but the more the better.

As it is a matter of debate amongst the Mefarshim as to how symbolism works it is therefore crucial to say some sort of Yehi Ratzon upon eating these symbolic foods. Should one wish to introduce his own symbolic food, he should also create a Yehi Ratzon to go along with it. This may be done in any language.

b) As many of these foods (such as random fruits) are not generally consumed at the beginning of a meal (as an integral part of the meal) we must recite a bracha prior to eating them (even though we already made a Hamotzi).

i) If both Haetz and Haadama need to be recited Haetz should be recited first.

ii) Although personal preference is often a factor influencing which fruit we select to say the bracha on first, the situation here is different. Since we are eating these foods mainly for symbolic purposes, and not based on our personal preferences, we should make the Bracha on a Shivas Haminim (the Seven species of Israel) item first.

c) Most people are Noheg to dip Chalah in honey instead of salt.

i. Some Acharonim say that we should still place salt on the table during Hamotzi (this is because of lo tashbis melach...).

d) There are those who say, based on mystical sources (Al pi Kabbolah) that one should dip the Chalah in salt even if one dips it in honey.

e) Just as what we eat may have some sort of symbolic power – so too how we act and what we do can also have an impact on our new year.

Tekias Shofar (Shofar Blowing):

1) Biblically all men (above Bar Mitzva) are obligated to hear the sound of the Shofar.

a) Chazal tell us that all women accepted Tekias Shofar upon themselves and are therefore also required to hear Tekias Shofar.

2) Halachically speaking, although we blow the Tekios during Shmoneh Esrei [there are various Minhagim as to whether we do so during the silent Shmoneh Esrei or during the repetition (Chazoras Hashatz)] whether or not one has heard or said the brachos doesn't affect one's fulfillment of hearing the Shofar.

a) However, some of the Acharonim (see for instance the Pnei Yehoshua) maintain that it does affect one's (at least optimum) fulfillment of Tekias Shofar. Therefore it is best to try to listen to every word (and at least to answer amen to every Bracha) of the Shatz, or in Kehilos that blow during the silent Amida to keep up with the Shatz/Baal Toke'a.

i) If the above interferes with one's concentration on the davening, one need not worry about it.

b) Women do not need to hear Tekias Shofar with Shmoneh Esrei.

(1) If women are fulfilling their Tekias Shofar obligation by listening to someone blow the Shofar for them who has already fulfilled his own

obligation, this latter should not recite the bracha, but should rather let one of the women do so.

(2) If a man who already fulfilled his obligation is blowing for another male he may say the bracha. In such a case, it is preferable that the individual now fulfilling his obligation should recite the blessing – not the Toke'a. The Toke'a should, however, recite the blessing if he is helping an entire group to fulfill their obligation.

Tashlich:

1) Tashlich is a minhag and not an obligation (Chiyuv).

a) While it is preferable to do Tashlich on Rosh Hashana, one can also do so during the entire Aseres Yemei Teshuva (Ten Days of Repentance).

b) The preferred locale for Tashlich is a natural body of water.

i) There is an additional preference for saying Tashlich near a body of water in which there are fish. Fish, from a mystical (Kabalistic) perspective, are seen as protecting from the Ayin Horah.

(1) The Poskim are strongly opposed (for Halachik reasons) to throwing bread crumbs into the water on Yom-Tov.

c) In Yerushalayim the Minhag is to say Tashlich at the communal wells (even though they have already been sealed for many years).

d) It has been said (see Maaseh Rav) that The Vilna Gaon didn't go to say Tashlich. It isn't clear whether he didn't say Tashlich at all, or whether he simply didn't go to a body of water to say it (Reb Elya Ber Wachtogel).

i) If one cannot easily make it to a body of water to recite Tashlich it is recommended to say Tashlich wherever one happens to be.

ii) If someone won't be able to say Tashlich on a body of water on Rosh Hashana it is recommended to say Tashlich on Rosh Hashana anyway and then again during Aseres Yemei Teshuva, or until Hoshana Rabba (Rabbi Elya Ber Wachtogel Shlita – see earlier mention).

Second Night Rosh Hashana:

As Rosh Hashana is a two day Yom-Tov everywhere (even in Eretz-Yisroel) both days are considered by Chazal to be the same Yom-Tov – the Talmudic expression for this being 'yoma arichta' (the two days are seen Halachically as 'one long day'). The question therefore arises as to whether one should make a shehechianu in Kiddush the second night of Rosh Hashana. To remedy this concern the Poskim suggest that we either wear a new garment (one worthy of a shehechianu, i.e. an important garment of the sort bought infrequently) or have a new fruit worthy of a shehechianu (a fruit that one hasn't had for a long period of time and one is excited to have). If one doesn't have any such item a shehechianu should be recited anyway. Women lighting candles should also have in mind the new garment or fruit while reciting Shehechianu. If someone wore a new garment the first day and didn't make a shehechianu on it (for whatever reason), they then can recite a shehechianu on it the second night (if they are still wearing it). Contemporary Poskim have pointed out that there may be an issue of making a shehechianu on a fruit that is available all year round, and as nowadays most fruit are available all year round it is advisable to find a more exotic fruit. (YWN World Headquarters – NYC)

[Parshapotpourri] Parsha Potpourri by Oizer Alport - Rosh Hashana/Parshas Haazinu

Shema Yisrael Torah Network 6:49 PM (5 hours ago)

to **Potpourri** Rosh Hashana / Parshas Haazinu - Vol. 8, Issue 48
Compiled by **Rabbi Oizer Alport**

Boruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech Ha'Olam she'hechianu v'kiymanu v'higianu la'zman ha'zeh At the beginning of each Yom Tov, we recite the [Shehechianu] blessing, thanking Hashem for keeping us

alive and sustaining us to reach this holiday. However, Rav Pinchas Goldwasser suggests that the she'hechianu blessing that we say on Rosh Hashana is unique. He explains that as a person progresses through the year and recites the blessing with tremendous gratitude and enthusiasm on Sukkos, Chanuka, Purim, Pesach, and Shavuot, he has no way of shaking the doubt that he may not survive that year.

The fact that he survived to enjoy yet another holiday mandates a blessing expressing his appreciation, yet it provides no guarantee that he was sealed last Yom Kippur in the book of life. Sadly, we have all heard tragic stories of people dying just before Rosh Hashana, at which time it becomes clarified that they were inscribed in the book of death, just that they were given more time to enjoy their final year than others.

The moment at which it becomes retroactively revealed that a person's repentance last year was accepted and he merited to live another year is the night of Rosh Hashana. As the solemnity appropriate for the Day of Judgment descends upon a person with its onset, he may take inspiration from the simultaneous recognition that it is precisely the arrival of this awesome day which signals that he succeeded last year in the repentance upon which he is about to embark once again.

As a person returns home from shul and raises his cup to make Kiddush, it behooves him to reflect upon the mercy Hashem showed in granting him another year of life. This recognition should fill him with an unbelievable feeling of gratitude, and in the merit that he properly expresses his appreciation when he says the she'hechianu blessing, he should be able to do so once again next Rosh Hashana.

Vatidor neder vatomer Hashem Tzevakos im ra'os sir'eh b'oni amasecha uz'chartani v'lo tishkach es amasecha v'nasatah l'amasecha zera anashim un'sativ L'Hashem kol y'mei chayav (Haftorah 1st day - Shmuel 1 1:11) An American Rabbi once visited Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach shortly before Rosh Hashana. Rav Shlomo Zalman asked him whether he had any congregants in difficult financial situations, to which the Rabbi sadly replied in the affirmative. Rav Shlomo Zalman then asked whether there were any wealthy members of the synagogue, to which the Rabbi again responded in the affirmative. Rav Shlomo Zalman continued, asking whether any of the down-on-their-luck congregants were as poor as the poorest beggars in Jerusalem or whether any of the rich congregants was a billionaire. The Rabbi, becoming confused, answered in the negative on both counts.

Rav Shlomo Zalman smiled and asked what would a member of the Forbes 500 think if he were seated on Rosh Hashana next to the poorest of the vagabonds and overheard him praying to become so wealthy in the coming year that that on the following Rosh Hashana, the billionaire would be working for him? The Rabbi, taking the bait, responded that a person making such ridiculous requests would be viewed as crazy.

Rav Shlomo Zalman disagreed strongly. On any other day of the year, such a far-fetched request would indeed be considered grossly inappropriate. On Rosh Hashana, however, the entire universe is being recreated for the upcoming year, and with nothing set in stone, the sky is the limit for our prayers. As proof, Rav Shlomo Zalman noted that the Medrash teaches that Chana was barren for 19 years prior to the birth of her son Shmuel. Although she surely beseeched Hashem daily to grant her a child, the Haftorah which we read on the first day of Rosh Hashana teaches that on Rosh Hashana she prayed for a special child: Zera anashim. Although this literally refers to a male child, the Gemora (Berachos 31b) understands it as a plea for a child who would be considered equal to Moshe and Aharon combined.

This would be quite a tall order even for a woman with a large family who had no difficulty conceiving, but for a woman who had suffered the anguish of being childless for almost 20 years, such a request seems absurd. Any other woman who had been barren for so long would be ecstatic just to conceive a healthy child. Why did Chana make such an unrealistic request?

Rav Shlomo Zalman explained that Chana understood that on Rosh Hashana, the only barriers to what we may ask for are self-imposed ones. She asked for a son who would lead the generation and after two decades of suffering, she merited to give birth to the great prophet Shmuel.

Rav Shlomo Zalman's message is relevant to each and every one of us. When we go to the synagogue on Rosh Hashana, we are surely cognizant of the tremendous import of the day, and we pray appropriately on behalf of ourselves and our loved ones. We pray for years of health and happiness, of spiritual and material blessing, and of joy and success for our family and friends. However, the scope of our requests has always been limited to what we considered reasonable and appropriate for our circumstances. This year, let us remember the lesson of Chana regarding the phenomenal power of the day and that for one who appreciates it and prays accordingly, the sky is literally the limit.

Haazinu HaShomayim v'adabeirah v'sishma ha'aretz imrei fi (32:1) In the beginning of Parshas Haazinu, the Medrash (Devorim Rabbah 10:1) cryptically asks whether it is permissible to treat somebody who is suffering from an earache on Shabbos. The Medrash answers that the Sages have taught that saving a person's life takes precedence over the desecration of Shabbos. What is the connection between this Medrash and Parshas Haazinu? Secondly, what is the intention of the Medrash, as earaches are generally not life-threatening, and the law that one may desecrate Shabbos to save a person's life is a more general rule not specific to earaches?

The Chasam Sofer explains the Medrash by noting that there is a legal dispute whether a person is permitted to confess his sins on Shabbos. Some maintain that it is permissible since it gives him pleasure to repent and atone for his transgressions, while others forbid it because the focus and emphasis on his misdeeds causes him anguish. Therefore, it is questionable whether it is permissible for somebody lecturing on Shabbos to rebuke the listeners. Even if he feels that they need to hear his reproof to inspire them to examine and improve their ways, doing so on Shabbos may be forbidden because it causes them pain.

However, on the Shabbos preceding Yom Kippur, commonly known as Shabbos Shuva, which has the power to rectify all of the Shabbosim of the previous year (Mishnah Berurah 603:2), the rebuke which the speaker gives is classified as pikuach nefesh (life-saving) and permissible according to all opinions. Proof to this may be brought from the fact that Tosefos writes (Menachos 30a d.h. mi'kan) that Moshe died at the time of Mincha on Shabbos. On his final day in this world, Moshe said the harsh words of rebuke contained in Parshas Haazinu. Because Moshe realized that this was his final opportunity to do so, he considered the admonishment to be pikuach nefesh which was allowable even on Shabbos.

We may now understand the true intention of the Medrash and its connection to Parshas Haazinu. In discussing a person whose ear hurts him, the Medrash doesn't refer to a medical ailment but rather to a person who suffers anguish upon hearing words of rebuke. The Medrash questions whether it is nevertheless permissible to "cure" him on Shabbos by giving him needed words of reproof. The Medrash answers that although this question is normally subject to a dispute, in a case of pikuach nefesh - such as on Shabbos Shuva, when Parshas Haazinu is often read - it is certainly allowed, with the proof coming from the rebuke given by Moshe on Shabbos which is contained within the parsha.

Al asher m'alter bi b'soch B'nei Yisroel b'Mei Merivas Kodosh Midbar Tzin al asher lo kidashtem osi b'soch B'nei Yisroel (32:51) As a result of Moshe's sin at Mei Meriva (the waters of strife), Hashem told him that he would die in the wilderness and wouldn't merit leading the Jews into the land of Israel. In explaining his actual sin, the Torah seems to give two explanations: Moshe trespassed against Hashem, and he also failed to sanctify Hashem's name among the Jewish people. What are the two different components of this sin, and in what way are they connected?

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avos (3:1) warns a person to remember that he will be required to give a din v'cheshbon - judgment and accounting - before Hashem, the King of Kings. As Chazal don't waste words or repeat themselves with unnecessary synonyms, a number of commentators question what is the difference between judgment and accounting?

The Vilna Gaon explains that din is what a person visualizes when he imagines the process of Divine justice; it is the punishment that a person will receive for his actions. As if that weren't scary enough, the Mishnah teaches us that a person must also give a cheshbon. He will additionally be punished for the opportunity cost of the sin, which is all of the good deeds which he could have accomplished with the time and resources that he invested in the sin.

The Meshech Chochmah explains that the Torah is emphasizing these same two concepts. It begins by stating Moshe's actual sin: he trespassed against Hashem by hitting the rock instead of speaking to it. Additionally, Rashi writes that had Moshe followed Hashem's orders and publicly demonstrated the rock bringing forth water at Hashem's verbal command, a tremendous sanctification of Hashem's name would have occurred. The Torah emphasizes that even the great Moshe had to give a din ????? and was punished not only for what he did, but also for what he had the potential to do.

The Meshech Chochmah (30:20) extends this explanation to the mitzvah of repenting on Yom Kippur in a most powerful way. The Gemora in Yoma (85b) teaches that if a person does proper teshuvah (repentance) on Yom Kippur, the combination of his teshuvah and the holiness of the day will atone even for very serious sins. If Yom Kippur passes without him repenting his actions, the day won't effect forgiveness even for the most minor of his sins.

As a result, the din which a person will have to give for neglecting the positive commandment of doing teshuvah on Yom Kippur is no more severe than for failing to perform any other positive commandment. However, the ????? for neglecting this "simple" mitzvah is greater than for virtually anything imaginable. Every sin which a person did over the past year could have been forgiven through his proper repentance, and the opportunity cost of not doing so is that every sin will now remain a blemish on his soul as a result of this one action, a cheshbon beyond anything we could possibly imagine.

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itzavim(Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20) Nitzavim-Vayelech 5773 Submit
GOOD MORNING! Rosh Hashana begins Wednesday evening,
September 4th! Many Jews all over the world are rushing to make sure that they have places reserved in their synagogues. I am reminded of the classic story of the person who had to deliver a very important message to a man in a synagogue on Rosh Hashana. The usher wouldn't let him in because he didn't have a ticket. "Please, I just need a moment to tell him the message!" "No way!" says the usher, "No ticket, no entrance!" "Please," begs the man, "I promise ... I won't pray!" If you need a place to pray and don't belong to a synagogue, ask your local Jewish Federation. Q & A: WHAT IS THE ESSENCE OF ROSH HASHANA AND HOW DO WE OBSERVE IT? Rosh Hashana is the Jewish New Year. Unlike the secular New Year which is celebrated in many parts of the "civilized" world by partying, drinking to excess and watching a little ball descend a tower in Time Square, the Jewish New Year is celebrated by reflecting upon the past, correcting one's mistakes, planning for the future, praying for a healthy and sweet year and celebrating with holiday meals. Rabbi Nachum Braverman writes, "On Rosh Hashana we make an accounting of our year and we pray repeatedly for life. How do we justify another year of life? What did we do with the last year? Has it been a time of growth, of insight and of caring for others? Did we make use of our time, or did we squander it?"

Has it truly been a year of life, or merely one of mindless activity? This is the time for evaluation and re-dedication. The Jewish process is called "teshuva," coming home -- recognizing our mistakes between ourselves and God as well as between ourselves and our fellow man and then correcting them." On Rosh Hashana we pray that we are inscribed in the Book of Life for life, for health, for sustenance. It is the Day of Judgment. Yet, we celebrate with festive meals with family and friends. How can we celebrate when our very lives hang in balance? Ultimately, we trust in the kindness and mercy of the Almighty ... that He knows our heart and our intentions and with love and knowledge of what is best for us, will accordingly grant us a good decree for the new year. It would seem to make more sense to have the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) before the Day of Judgment (Rosh Hashana). However, until we recognize our Creator and internalize the magnitude and consequences of our actions, we cannot truly seek to change ourselves or to seek atonement. That is why the three essential themes of Rosh Hashana are: Malchuyot (Kingship), Zichronot (Providence) and Shofrot (Revelation). The musaf (additional) prayer service is structured around these three themes. The Book of Our Heritage clarifies: In the Kingship section we acknowledge God's creation of all existence, His active supervision of the entire universe, and our acceptance of His eternal rule. It is our job on Rosh Hashana to make God our King. In the Providence section we proclaim our understanding that: 1) the Creator has a one on one relationship with every human being 2) God cares about what we do with our lives and sees and remembers everything 3) there are Divine consequences for our actions. In the Revelation section we accept the Torah as if it were given once again with thunder and lightning and mighty shofar blasts. We also await the final redemption which is to be heralded by the "shofar of the mashiach (messiah)." At the festive meal both nights of Rosh Hashana it is customary to dip the challah (special round bread for Rosh Hashana) as well as an apple, into honey symbolizing our hopes for a sweet year. There is a custom to eat various Symbolic Foods -- primarily fruits and vegetables -- each one preceded by a request. For instance, before eating a pomegranate, "May it be Your will ... that our merits increase like (the seeds of) a pomegranate." Many of the requests are based on "plays on words" between the name of the food and the request. Since these "plays on words" are lost on many who don't know Hebrew, there are those who have added their own requests. My favorite: before eating a raisin on a celery stick, "May it be Your will ... that I receive a raise in salary." Another custom is Tashlich, a symbolic casting off of transgressions. It is done after the Mincha, the afternoon prayers, on the first day of Rosh Hashana -- and on the second day when the first day of Rosh Hashana falls out on Shabbat. Remember -- these symbolic acts help you relate to what you need to do in life, to awaken your emotions and passions; they are not an end in themselves. It is worthwhile to get a copy of the Rosh Hashana Yom Kippur Survival Kit to get a better understanding of the holiday, the prayers, the prayer services and the opportunity that is afforded to you to grow in spirituality, to come closer to the Almighty, to perfect yourself and to perfect the world! It is available at your local Jewish bookstore, at JudaicaEnterprises.com or by calling toll-free 877-758-3242. For more insights -- aish.com/holidays .

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A Wordless Blast
By Harav Yehuda Amital zt"l

Adapted by Rav Yoel Amital Translated by Jonathan Ziring
 Remembrance before God
 Happy is the nation that knows the blast of the shofar. O Lord, they walk in the light of Your presence. (Tehillim 89:16)

The Torah does not explicitly command us to blow the shofar on Rosh Ha-Shana. Rather, the Torah says, "It shall be for you a day of shofar blowing" (Bamidbar 29:1) as well as "a holy convocation with a remembrance of shofar blasts" (Vayikra 23:24). The simple meaning of "a day of shofar blowing" is a day entirely characterized by the shofar blowing. The blow leaves its signature on the entire day. The Ramban explains in his commentary to the Torah that "a remembrance of shofar blasts" means that the Jews are remembered before God, as it says, "And you shall sound the trumpets... and it shall be for you a remembrance before God" (Bamidbar 10:10). In other words, the remembrance of the Jews before God on Rosh Ha-Shana is brought about by the shofar.

The Bach (to Tur OC 625) suggests that regarding the commandments of sukka, tefillin, and tzitzit, the rationales for the commandments are inseparable parts of their fulfillment. He notes that regarding tzitzit the Torah says, "so that [lema'an] you will remember" (Bamidbar 15:40); regarding tefillin it says, "so that [lema'an] God's Torah will be in your mouth" (Shemot 13:9); regarding sukka it says, "so that [lema'an] your generations will know that I caused you to dwell in sukkot" (Vayikra 23:43). In each case, understanding the rationale for the mitzva enables one to fulfill the commandment properly.

I believe the same is true regarding the blowing of the shofar. Both the blower and those hearing the shofar must keep in mind that by means of this mitzva, the Jewish people "remind" God and "are remembered" by God.

This understanding can resolve a question that the Ramban raised against Rashi. Rashi comments (Vayikra 23:24):

"Zikhron teru'a" – A remembrance of the verses of zikhronot and the verses of shofarot (in the Musaf prayer of Rosh Ha-shana).

The Ramban asked: How can this biblical verse be referring to the blessings of the Musaf prayer – are not these blessings a rabbinic (de-rabbanan) obligation? In light of the above, we can suggest that though mentioning the verses is a rabbinic rather than a biblical obligation, by saying the verses one fulfills the mitzvot of remembrance before God and "it shall be for you a remembrance of shofar blasts."

The Language of the Heart

Why does the Torah command us to be remembered before God specifically by means of the shofar blasts? Why should we speak with a language of symbols and sounds and not words (the way we tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt)? The answer is that the shofar expands and deepens the human voice. Man puts as much energy into the shofar as he can, and a sound far greater than his own emanates from the shofar.

The teki'a and teru'a blasts express more than words can. Regarding the receiving of the Torah, the verse says, "and the voice of the shofar became continuously stronger; Moshe would speak and God would respond with a voice" (Shemot 19:19); the ever-strengthening voice hinted at the endless proliferation of Torah throughout the generations.

A person who turns to God faces a dilemma. Generally, turning to God in prayer consists of using words. However, human language was created for dialogue between people, between one finite creature and another. There is something tragic about the fact that a person must use human language when turning to God. Human language limits, constricts, and distorts. It cannot express what is found in the chambers of our hearts. Human speech is fundamentally different from divine speech. God, after all, uttered "Remember the Sabbath" and "Keep the Sabbath" in one statement. This is an entirely different mode of expression than human speech; it is a completely different essence. The blast of the shofar solves the dilemma, at least to some degree.

Rav Saadya Gaon enumerates ten reasons for the blowing of the shofar, and they have been copied into some machzorim. We can study these reasons, ponder them, organize them, but do they really express what is in the depths of our hearts? In the heart, things are not set forth in an organized way. Images, feelings, and thoughts rage in our hearts and fill them! Sometimes, though not always, we succeed in arranging things in our intellect. However, in the heart, everything is mixed together: ancient memories of the creation of the world, the receiving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, the destruction of the Temple, the kingship of God, the fear of judgment, and the voices of the prophets. The heart is an entanglement of thoughts and feelings, and we have difficulty communicating the authentic message found in our innermost hearts. We are incapable of expressing this in words or organized speech. God gave us the commandment of shofar, and through it we communicate to God the feelings of our heart – "for You hear the voice of the shofar, and listen to its blast, and there is none like You" (Amida of Rosh Hashana).

The Cries of a Mother

The Talmud (Rosh Ha-shana 32b) derives from a verse regarding the mother of Sisera that the *teru'a* is the sound of a whimper. The obvious question is: What have we to do with the mother of Sisera? Can we really learn the laws of the shofar from the mother of that wicked man, the enemy of Israel? Rabbeinu Natan (Aruch 272) draws an even stronger connection, asserting that the one hundred shofar sounds blown on Rosh Ha-shana parallel the hundred whimpers of Sisera's mother.

Even within a culture that is wholly false and repugnant, a mother worries about her son. Nothing is more natural than that. Our matriarch Sara and Sisera's mother differ in innumerable ways. Nevertheless, there is point at which they meet. There is a common denominator between the hundred whimpers of Sisera's mother and the six cries that Sara uttered when she heard about the binding of her son Yitzchak (Vayikra Rabba 20:2). Both expressed the natural fear of a mother for her child. This is also the power of the shofar blasts that come from the depths of the heart.

The Shofar of the Akeida

The origin of the shofar is that ram caught in the thicket by its horns. It is astonishing that Avraham is silent during the entire akeida. Aside from word "Hinneini – Here I am" at the beginning of the episode (Bereishit 22:1), the instructions to his lads, and his answer to Yitzchak, "God will show for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son" (Bereishit 22:8), Avraham does not utter a word. And then, at the climax of the akeida, the angel tells him, "Do not lay your hand upon the lad!" (Bereishit 22:12). What passed through Avraham's heart at that moment? Where is the author, where is the poet who can describe it?! Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Levi (Kuzari 3:5) wrote that a righteous person should direct the power of his imagination to such lofty states such as the akeida, but we wonder: Where is the imagination rich enough to describe it?

Avraham seeks to express what is in his heart, but his power of speech fails him. Instead, "Avraham lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, a ram was caught in the thicket by its horns, and Avraham went and took the ram and brought it as a sacrifice instead of his son" (Bereishit 22:13). Avraham's glance towards the horns caught in the thicket is laden with unimaginably tense energy. We blow that same ram's horn, and thereby express the hidden thoughts and feelings that we cannot organize or put into words, "for You hear the voice of the shofar, and listen to its blast, and there is none like You."

The Human Dimension of Shofar

Based on a shiur by Harav Mosheh Lichtenstein

Translated by David Strauss

Enhance your deeds, do not break the covenant!
Heaven's enhancer shall heed your prayer,
Which pleases Him better than sacrifices. O holy One.
(from the Rosh Ha-shana liturgy)

I. The kingship of the Shofar

When we think about shofar blowing, we intuitively imagine a primal cry that breaches the boundaries of language and makes it unnecessary to spell out the message in clear-cut and precise terms.

The kingship of the shofar expresses the primeval aspects of our personalities and experiences. A striking echo of this idea is found in the midrash that likens the sound of the shofar to a maternal voice. Sisera's mother weeps over her dead son, giving voice to a natural sound, the wail of a mother that expresses far more than can be expressed in words, crying from the depths of the soul.

The shofar too sounds a cry that cannot be expressed in words; a broken sound that merges with the cry of nature; a sound that is rooted in the horn of a living creature. It is like the cry of an animal that senses that it is in immediate danger. The blast of the shofar breaches conscious, human existence.

This also finds expression in Halakha. As opposed to the mitzva of lulav and etrog, there are almost no laws dealing with the shofar. The Talmud dedicates an entire chapter to the ritual fitness of a lulav, etrog, hadas and arava, stating that any flaw – slight as it may be – is liable to render them unfit ("if its top was lopped off," "if its leaves became separated").

The Sages were stringent about the laws of an etrog to the extent that the Gemara in Sukka draws a comparison between it and a terefa, in that in both cases a "flaw" disqualifies the object of a mitzva. With regard to the mitzva of lulav and etrog, it is the "object" and its requisite beauty that seize our attention.

Regarding a shofar, on the other hand, there is almost no consideration of this issue. The mishna indeed speaks of "a shofar that was perforated," but according to most Rishonim, this hole does not create a flaw in the shofar, but rather in the

sound coming from it. The passage itself is complicated and we shall not discuss it in detail, but the basic principle is that if the hole interferes with the sound of the shofar, it is disqualified. The focus is upon the sound, rather than the shofar. Accordingly, if the hole does not affect the sound, the very fact that the object/shofar is blemished does not disturb us. Everything revolves around the sound coming out of the shofar, the physical object of the shofar in itself being insignificant. This is what emerges from the words of Tosafot (Rosh Ha-shana 27b, s.v. *nikav*) and the rest of the Rishonim.

II. The Rambam's position: "the mitzva is only to listen to the sound"

The Rambam writes as follows (Hilkhot Shofar 1:3):

At the outset, we should not blow a shofar [that was used for] idol worship. However, if one sounded it, one has fulfilled his obligation. [In contrast,] should one sound a shofar belonging to an apostate city, one has not fulfilled one's obligation. Concerning a stolen shofar: one who blows it fulfills his obligation, because the mitzva is only to listen to the sound, even though the listener does not touch [the shofar] or lift it up. The laws of theft do not apply to sound alone. Similarly, a shofar from a whole-burnt offering should not be sounded, but if one sounds it, he fulfills his obligation, because the laws of trespass do not apply with regard to sound alone. If you ask: But surely he has derived benefit from hearing [the shofar's] sound? - mitzvot were not given for our benefit. Based on this concept, a person who vows not to derive benefit from a shofar may use it to blow the blasts required to fulfill the mitzva. As opposed to a stolen lulav which is unfit for the mitzva, the Rambam rules that one who hears the blast of a stolen shofar has fulfilled his obligation, because the mitzva does not involve the object, i.e., the shofar itself, but only the sound that comes out from it.

III. The Ramban's position: The Shofar as an "enhanced" utensil

The Ramban adopted an approach that is entirely different, both from a halakhic and from a conceptual perspective.

In his derasha for Rosh Ha-shana, the Ramban discusses the various species of animals whose horns are fit for the mitzva of shofar, while relating to the position of the Tosafot on this issue. In the continuation, the Ramban writes as follows (Kitvei Ha-Ramban, p. 229):

With all of this, we have yet another difficulty with this mishna, according to the grammarians, for they say, and so it seems reasonable, that the word "shofar" refers to the finished instrument that can be used for blowing, whereas all the horns attached to the heads of animals are called "keren," and the term "shofar" applies not at all to attached horns, nor to whole horns before they are hollowed out. What disqualification then did they find in the horn of a cow from the verse, "and his horns are like the horns ('karnei') of a wild ox"? Surely that refers to an attached horn! And similarly a ram with its horns, and so all of them.

We see then that according to the Ramban, the disqualification of an attached horn lies in the fact that it has not been enhanced. He understands that the modification and enhancement (*shipur*) that the shofar undergoes is an important component in the fulfillment of the mitzva. This is also emphasized in what he says later:

And those that are scraped after they have been fashioned are called "shofar," in the sense of "By His wind the heavens were made fair ('shifra') (Iyov 26:13), that He stretched them like a tent.

The Ramban brings an example from the creation of the world, where God took the primeval matter and gave it form. That is to say: Something that is still in its natural state cannot be a shofar. Only material that underwent human "enhancement" can serve for the mitzva in a meaningful manner. Prior to that process, it is still a natural object.

According to the Ramban, the shofar does not symbolize a return to nature, nor does it give expression to some primeval stage. On the contrary, it expresses what is unique about man – his ability to change nature, to form a utensil out of natural materials. Man alters the purpose of the horn, from a horn that goes to an enhanced utensil that can produce music.

Accordingly, when the Ramban discusses the disqualification of a shofar that had been perforated, he approaches the issue from a totally different angle. He writes as follows (Kitvei Ha-Ramban, p. 235):

"A cracked shofar" means a shofar that was cracked along its entire length. And so explains Rashi. The reason that it is unfit is that it is not a shofar, but rather a broken shofar, for any broken utensil is excluded from the category of utensils, whether with respect to ritual impurity or any other matter.

The Ramban draws an interesting analogy between the laws governing the ritual impurity of utensils and the disqualification of a perforated shofar. As opposed to the position of the Tosafot cited above, the Ramban maintains that a cracked or perforated shofar is not disqualified because of the distorted sound that

comes out of it, but because of the blemish in the object itself. Just as a utensil that contracted ritual impurity becomes ritually pure when it breaks, since it is no longer a utensil and therefore returns to its original state as raw material, so too a shofar – if it is no longer a utensil, it is no longer "enhanced," and therefore it is unfit for the mitzva.

Iv. A shofar that was overlaid with gold

It is no surprise then that the Ramban explains the disqualification of "a shofar that was overlaid with gold" in similar fashion, and as opposed to the explanation of the Tosafot.

According to the Tosafot (27b, s.v. tzipahu mi-bi-fenim), if a person overlaid the inside of a shofar, it is unfit for use, "because there is no sound of a shofar, but only the sound of gold. And similarly, [it is unfit if he overlaid it] on the outside, since the sound has been changed." The emphasis here is on the sound of the shofar. It is not the change in the object that makes it unfit, but rather the change in the sound.

According to the Ramban, on the other hand (ibid., p. 236): "The reason that it is disqualified is that something intervenes between his mouth and the shofar." The person must be in direct physical contact with the object of the mitzva, and if there is anything intervening, he does not fulfill his obligation. This leads the Ramban to an additional conclusion: "It may be inferred from here that if he distanced the shofar from his mouth, and blew upon it and a blast emerged, it is disqualified."

Why is this so? Because there is no direct contact between his mouth and the shofar, even though the sound may be clear and strong. This stands in clear contrast to the viewpoint of the Ramban cited above, according to which: "Concerning a stolen shofar: one who blows it fulfills his obligation, because the mitzva is only to listen to the sound, even though the listener does not touch [the shofar] or lift it up. The laws of theft do not apply to sound alone."

V. A Shofar from an unclean animal

In another passage in his derasha (Kitvei Ha-Ramban, p. 232), the Ramban writes:

Even though we learned: "All shofars are fit," we must consider that of an unclean animal, from that which they said (Shabbat 28a): "For the sacred work none but the skin of a clean animal was declared fit." And here they said: "Since [the shofar] comes for a remembrance [before God], we consider it as being in the innermost chamber [of the Temple]." This requires further study.

The fact that the mishna merely states: "All shofars are fit," without any further qualification, implies that there is no problem to use the shofar of an unclean animal. The Ramban, on the other hand, compares the law of a shofar to the law governing tefilin and mezuzot, according to which "heavenly objects" must come from clean animals.

In light of his approach above, this is understandable: Since the essence of the mitzva depends on the "utensil," it is possible that not only objects with sanctity, e.g., tefilin and mezuzot, but all objects used for a mitzva must be made from a clean animal.

The Ramban regards the shofar as an instrument of man who improves upon nature and fashions utensils – not a person who unites with nature, but a person who conquers nature, enhances it, hollows out the animal's horn, and alters its purpose.

VI. A Shofar of Kingship

Various reasons have been given for the mitzva of shofar blowing. On the one hand, the shofar expresses "kingship." "With trumpets and the sound of a shofar make a joyful noise before the Lord, the king" (Tehillim 98:5). The connection between the shofar and kingship was already noted in early times, as in the famous passage in Rosh Ha-shana (16a):

Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, said: Pour out water before Me on Sukkot, so that your rains this year may be blessed. Also recite before Me on Rosh Ha-shana [texts making mention of] kingship, remembrance, and the shofar: kingship, so that you may proclaim Me king over you; remembrance, so that your remembrance may rise favorably before Me; and through what? Through the shofar.

As the Rishonim have explained, the last sentence, "And through what? Through the shofar," refers not only to the blessing of remembrance, but also to the blessing of kingship, that is to say: the shofar symbolizes the crowning of God as king over the entire world.

VII. The Shofar of Repentance

On the other hand, the shofar is also an expression of prayer and of repentance, as the Ramban writes in Hilkhot Teshuva (3:4):

Even though the sounding of the shofar on Rosh Ha-shana is a decree, it contains an allusion. It is as if [the shofar's call] is saying: Wake up you sleepy ones from your sleep, and you who slumber, arise. Inspect your deeds, repent, remember your Creator.

The shofar can be seen as directed both upwards and downwards. On the one hand, a person prays through the shofar and directs its sound heavenwards, "With trumpets and the sound of a shofar make a joyful noise before the Lord, the king." On the other hand, the shofar is directed downwards, toward man, helping him repent and raise his prayers to God.

In his novellae at the end of Rosh Ha-shana (34a), the Ritva discusses the wording of the blessing over the shofar, which seems to depend on the essence of the mitzva: Is the mitzva to "blow" the shofar or to "hear the sound of the shofar"? The Ritva writes as follows:

There are two questions here: Why is the formula not "concerning the blowing of the shofar" as is the case regarding the reading of the megilla, where we recite the blessing over the reading and not over the hearing? And furthermore: Why is it with the letter "lamed" ("li-teko'a," to blow) and not with the word "al" ("al teki'at shofar," concerning the blowing of the shofar), inasmuch as shofar blowing is possible by way of others, just like megilla reading, the blessing over which is with "al" for that reason? The answer to these questions: First, the essence of the mitzva is the hearing of the shofar, and the Torah intended that a person should stir himself to repent, and also that he should appease the attribute of justice on this day, so that if he blew [the shofar] but did not hear it, he did not fulfill his obligation.

According to the Ritva, the mitzva is to hear the sound of the shofar (in this he is in agreement with many other Rishonim). But he adds that there is a direct connection between the definition of the mitzva and its objective. The objective of the mitzva from a conceptual perspective has ramifications regarding its contents. Since the essence of the mitzva is that "a person should stir himself to repent," following the approach of the Ramban ("Wake up you sleepy ones from your sleep"), the substance of the mitzva is to hear the sound of the shofar.

In light of this, it is possible to explain also the idea of the "shofar of kingship," through which man, as it were, crowns God as king, not as a creature of nature, but as one who has been given control over nature - "Be fruitful, and multiply, replenish the earth, and subdue it." Man was given a certain power, and it is his task to create and rule the earth.

Kingship is generally perceived as a socio-political framework, in which there exists the artificial relationship between ruler and ruled. In contrast, prayer, repentance and the shofar express the abandonment of ordinary life and entry into a primeval and more natural world.

The Gemara in Rosh Ha-shana (26b) discusses the question whether the shofar blown on Rosh Ha-shana must be straight or curved. Rashi, ad loc., connects this to one's desired posture during prayer.

The Ramban, on the other hand, explains the viewpoint that the shofar must be straight in an entirely different manner: "So that our horn shall lifted up on Yom Tov." This is in opposition to other Rishonim who speak about man's duty to straighten the crookedness of his heart.

VIII. The Shofar in the mikdash

We saw earlier the two basic approaches to the essence of the shofar, whether it should be seen as a "utensil" with independent significance, or whether it should be regarded merely as a means for creating a sound.

In any event, there is a shofar that all agree is a utensil: the shofar in the Temple. The mishna states: "The shofar used on Rosh Ha-shana [in the Temple] was of an ibex's horn and straight, and its mouth was overlaid with gold, and there were two trumpets, one on each side of it." And the Gemara there states (Rosh Ha-shana 27a): "And when this was reported to the Sages they said: This was not the practice save only in the gates of the East and the Mount of the Temple." The source for this is:

"With trumpets and the sound of a shofar make a joyful noise before the Lord, the king" (Tehillim 98:5) - before the king, the Lord, we require trumpets and the sound of the shofar, but elsewhere not.

The shofar in the Temple was overlaid with gold, and like a trumpet it was a man-made "utensil," fashioned by him from a natural material. And from there the definition of the verse, "Make a joyful noise before the king, the Lord" - "in the gates of the courtyard," "in the Temple," whether we are dealing with the Temple in the plain sense, or with the Temple as a symbol for the community, the center of the Shekhina. There, the shofar is blasted in a different way.

The Ramban himself took this approach a step further. It is not clear whether according to the Gemara's conclusion the shofar blown in the Temple was straight or curved. According to the Ramban, the shofar blown in the Temple and

accompanied by trumpets was straight, whereas outside the Temple the shofar was curved. The shofar sounded in the Temple was a "shofar of kingship," directed toward heaven, and not a "shofar of repentance," directed at man here on earth. Therefore, the shofar was straight, similar to other shofars of kingship.

The straight shofar is more perfect as a "utensil," similar to the utensils used by the nations of the world to express "kingship." [As an aside, it should be noted that the Meshekh Chokhma took the opposite approach. According to him, it is precisely the shofar used in the Temple which had to be curved, for in its essence it is a "shofar of prayer," which maintains a connection to the sacrifices, rather than a "shofar of kingship," and it is the shofar used outside the Temple that is a "shofar of kingship."]

According to the Gemara, when Rosh Ha-shana falls on Shabbat, the shofar is only blown in a community setting, and not by individuals, for it is only in a communal setting that the "kingship" element of the shofar finds expression.

IX. "Rembemer THat which was caught by the horn, those who blow Before you today on the horn"

Going back to where we started, it may be proposed that a "shofar" expresses "shippur" (enhancement), man's task of perfecting the world. "Enhance your deeds, do not break the covenant!" means: The shofar is not only a wake-up call to repent, but also a call to "enhance" and repair the world, to make it a better place. If we do that, God will hear our prayers, for He too "enhanced heaven," improving on nature. When man engages in the task of improving the world, he becomes a partner to the eternal covenant made with God.

Alongside "enhance (shipru) your deeds" – improving the world by way of human action - we also say on the second day of Rosh Ha-shana: "Remember that which was caught by the horn, those who blow before You on the horn (keren)." We come before God both with a "keren" (horn), that is directed heavenward, and with a shofar, that is directed at man, and call upon Him to improve the world.

(This is a summary of a shiur delivered on 22 Elul 5763.)

from: **Rabbi Yitz Etshalom** <rebyitz@torah.org> reply-to: do-not-reply@torah.org to: mikra@torah.org date: Thu, Aug 29, 2013 at 10:30 AM subject: Mikra - Rosh haShana Mikra by Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom

Rosh haShana Psalm 47 I

INTRODUCTION

Although the custom of reciting Psalm 47 seven times before the sounding of the Shofar is a relatively new one, the custom is widespread, at least in Ashkenazi communities. The tradition of the Vilna Ga'on, not to recite Psalm 47 - is one major exception. In most congregations, this Psalm is repeated many times just before the climactic moment of T'kiat Shofar.

[regarding the recent spread of the custom: compare the two editions of the early 19th century Roedelheim Siddur; it only appears in the later one. This isn't to claim that there is no mention of this custom earlier than this period - R. Ya'akov Emden (d. 1776) included it in his Siddur as noted below - just that it wasn't nearly as universal within the Ashkenazi world until two centuries ago].

In spite of the recent spread of the custom, the association of this Psalm with Rosh haShanah is quite old. The Mishnah (Tamid, 7:1) records the various Psalms recited by the Levi'im in the Beit haMidash for each day of the week. Massechet Sofrim (19:2), a work from the Geonic period which records traditions from the Rabbinic period (and earlier), notes that Rosh haShanah has its own "Psalm of the day" - "O clap your hands, all you peoples" - i.e. Psalm 47.

In this brief essay, we will examine the Psalm, utilizing the analysis of its structure and unique linguistic and personality associations to suggest a reason for the propriety of this Psalm to the powerful moment of just preceding T'kiat Shofar. This will, hopefully, enable us to shed further light on the significance of this Mitzvah and the Day of Judgment - Rosh haShanah.

II

THE TEXT

This is as decent a translation as is available - but in our verse-by-verse examination, we'll comment on some of the equivokes and how they might best be rendered.

1) To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah. 2) clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to Elokim with the voice of triumph. 3) For Hashem Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.

4) He subdues peoples under us, and nations under our feet. 5) He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Ya'akov whom he loves. Selah. 6) Elokim has gone up with a shout, Hashem with the sound of a shofar. 7) Sing praises to Elokim, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. 8) For Elokim is the King of all the earth; sing a Maskil psalm. 9) Elokim reigns over the nations; Elokim sits on the throne of his holiness. 10) The nobles of the peoples are gathered together, the people of the God of Avraham; for the shields of the earth belong to Elokim; he is greatly exalted.

III

ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT

v. 1: To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

Although when we "recite" T'hilim we regularly read all of the words in every verse in the given Psalm or Psalms, some of the words are not properly part of the text. Many Psalms have superscriptions - some comprising one word (e.g. "liShlomoh" [#72], "l'David" [#27]) others containing two words (e.g. "Mizmor l'David" [#23], "l'David Mizmor" [#24], "Mizmor l'Asaph" [#79], "Shir haMa'a lot" [#120]), others three words (e.g. "Shir haMa'alot l'David" [#122], "laM'natze'ach Shir Mizmor" [#66]) and others making up an entire verse - such as ours.

These superscriptions may indicate authorship - such as "l'David" in Psalm 27 (which we will analyze in the next essay), or they may indicate a "dedication" (according to some Rishonim, that is the meaning of the superscription to #122 - "Shir haMa'alot l'David"). Another suggestion that has been raised relative to the various Psalms associated with the various Levite singers (e.g. B'nei Korah, Asaph, Heiman) is that these Psalms were either composed to be sung by these particular Levites or that these Levites composed the music, to accompany words written by David or another author.

Before assaying the superscription of our Psalm, it is prudent to note that the Korahide Psalms (those superscribed to B'nei Korah) are found in two series in T'hilim. Psalms 42, 44-49 form one series and 84-85,87-88 form a second series.

The first series, which is our direct concern, presents a sequence of ideas which has a rationale behind it. This rationale usually goes unnoticed (and unappreciated), as this Psalm (along with #48 - the Psalm for Monday and #49, recited at a house of mourning) is usually recited out of context. Nonetheless, the Rishonim generally view the meaning and setting of this Psalm as context-sensitive and, as such, it behooves us to get a sense of the thrust of the previous Psalms.

Ps. 42, the beginning of the series, is a song of longing for God: As the hart longs for water streams, so does my soul long for you, O God. (v. 2)

Ps. 44, the next in the series, (Ps. 43 seems to be a continuation or epilog of 42), is a painful dirge relating the terrible persecution felt by the people: You have given us like sheep to be eaten; and have scattered us among the nations. You sell Your people for nothing, and You do not ask for a high price. You make us a taunt to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision to those who are around us. (vv. 12-14)

Ps. 45 seems to be a wedding song, celebrating the wedding of the king to his beautiful bride. This suggests a reunification between God and His people: Daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor; at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir. Listen, O daughter, and consider, and incline your ear; forget your own people, and your father's house; And the king shall desire your beauty; bow to him because he is your lord. (vv. 10-12)

Ps. 46 is an exultation of Divine victory, representing a turnabout from the ideas expressed in Ps. 44:

Come, behold the works of Hashem, the desolations that He has made in the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; He burns the chariot in the fire. (vv. 9-10)

If we accept the theory (proposed by a number of the Rishonim; see, *inter alia*, Radak at 47:1) that this series of psalms should be understood in context, then our Psalm represents a prophetic paean to be sung subsequent to this great victory, prophesied in the works of several N'vi'im (e.g. Tzephaniah, Zekhariah).

The role of the Korahides is spelled out clearly in Chronicles:

And these are they whom David set over the service of song in the house of Hashem, after the ark rested there. And they ministered before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Shlomoh built the house of Hashem in Yerushalayim: and then they performed their duty according to their order. And these are the men who served and their sons. Of the sons of the K'hati: Heiman a singer, the son of Yo'el, the son of Sh'mu'el, the son of Elkanah, the son of Yeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah, the son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai, the son of Elkanah, the son of Yo'el, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah, the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Eviashaph, the son of Korah, the son of Yitz'har, the son of K'hat, the son of Levi, the son of Yisra'el. (Divrei HaYamim I 6:16-23)

We have a basic grasp of the identity of "B'nei Korah" - they were descendants of Korah who were appointed by David to be [Levite] musicians in the Beit haMikdash. We are not able to ascertain, however, which generation of B'nei Korah is intended in the superscription. Indeed, we may wonder whether the various psalms ascribed (or superscribed) to B'nei Korah are all using the same referents - perhaps there are different generations of Korahide musicians whose contributions to the Psalter are noted generically.

In addition, as asked above, do we maintain that these psalms were composed by the Korahides? Perhaps they were composed to be played or sung by the Korahides (in which case the specific author remains anonymous). One additional possibility, which we will revisit further on, is that the composition of the psalm predates the Korahides and they were inspired (or commissioned) to create and arrange music to accompany the lyrics. The final word of the superscription - Mizmor - indicates that the role of the Korahides may be related to the musical aspect, supporting either the second or third explanation.

v. 2: Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to Elokim with the voice of triumph.

The original of the first phrase ("clap your hands") is *Tiq'u Khaph* - which may also mean "join your hands". Either way, the simple intent of the text is a call to "all of the nations" (more on this later) to join hands and praise God. The curious turn of the phrase, however, appears only here, in Nachum (3:19) and in one much earlier reference - which we will revisit further on.

In any case, the odd phrasing for "clap hands" or "join hands" seems to be foreshadowing a later verse (v. 6) which explicitly mentions the Shofar. Note that the second stich - shout to Elokim - uses the relatively uncommon *Hari'u* (instead of the more usual *Ran'nu*, e.g.) - again an allusion to the Shofar. Indeed, the first verse allusions to both sounds of the Shofar - *T'qi'ah* and *T'ru'ah*, using those same words.

[note: the "middle sound" of the Shofar is referred to as a "T'ru'ah" in the Torah; Haza"l suggested that there are three ways to interpret this word, hence we have *Sh'varim-T'ru'ah*, *Sh'varim* and *T'ru'ah* as fulfilling all three options. See, however, R. Zerachiah haLevi's interpretation of R. Abbahu's ordinance (BT Rosh haShanah 34a) that we make all three types of T'ru'ah. (Sefer haMa'or, Rosh haShanah, 11a s.v. v'Nishtanu).]

The call to "all of the nations" is a bit difficult, given the general approach adopted by most Rishonim to view this psalm as prophetic and belonging to the postbellum period subsequent to the apocalyptic war of Gog uMagog. If that is the case, who are the nations who are being called here?

The general approach adopted by the commentators is to treat these nations as the remainder - those who have survived the cataclysm. This is a bit difficult, as the call goes to *Kol ha'Amim* - all of the nations. In addition, how are we to understand vv. 4-5, which highlight our trampling of nations and being given our inheritance by God? Has the audience switched? Are we "lording it over" the nations?

These questions will be revisited at the end of the essay, when we suggest an alternative approach to the entire psalm.

v. 3: For Hashem Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.

This is one of the two occurrences of Y-H-V-H in the psalm; that Name, which generally is understood to refer to God's compassion, is coupled with another cognomen - *Elyon*. We will turn our attention to this descriptive at the end of the essay. The Name of God which is used throughout the psalm is *Elokim*, the Name generally associated with judgment. R. Ya'akov Emden noted in his *Mahzor* that the propriety of reading this psalm on the Day of Judgment (*Rosh haShanah*) is rooted in the seven mentions of *Elokim*; in our terminology, we would refer to *Elokim* as the "leitwort" or *Milah Manhah* (key word) which helps to shape and define the underlying theme of the passage.

v. 4: He subdues peoples under us, and nations under our feet.

To whom is this passage addressed? We might propose that it is directed at the nations mentioned in v. 2 - but to what end? If these are the selfsame peoples whom we have subdued, what is the point of the statement? If we are referring to other nations who we have subjugated, again - what is the purpose of the statement, if not to scare the nations into voluntary subjugating themselves before us out of fear that they will meet the same fate?

v. 5: He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Ya'akov whom he loves. Selah.

It is unclear whether the first word *Yivhar* means "chooses" or "chose"; the latter is preferable, as there is no sense of ongoing selection of our inheritance found in *T'nakh* - however we may read that inheritance. The inheritance itself likely refers to *Eretz Yisra'el*, as that word is usually used in the context of Land (see, e.g. *T'hilim* 135:12, 136:21-22, 105:11).

What is "the pride of Ya'akov"? The Rishonim generally agree that the referent is the Beit haMikdash - such that the verse telescopes in from "inheritance" (the Land) to "pride of Ya'akov" (Beit haMikdash).

One philological note is called for here - regarding the word *Ga'on*. In modern Hebrew, the word has taken on the meaning of "genius" - but in *T'nakh* the word has no association with mental acuity. The root G'H means "pride" - such that the Song at the Sea begins *Ashirah laShem ki Ga'oh Ga'ah* - for He has demonstrated His power.

(The word was never used as an honorific until the 8th century in Bavel, when the heads of the Academies at Sura and Pumbedita were given the title, e.g. "G'on Sura", to wit: "The pride of Sura". The title fell out of use with the death of R. Hai Ga'on in 1038. No one was graced with this descriptive until R. Eliyahu Kramer of Vilna (d. 1797) who was, indeed, the pride of Vilnius and was therefore known as "der Vilner Ga'on"; since his fame was principally associated with his incredible mental powers, the title became associated with genius.)

Others suggest that "the pride of Ya'akov" refers to the mountains of Israel, building on a topographical image and following the lead of "our inheritance" in the first stich. The suggestion has even been raised that "the pride of Ya'akov" means the monarchy - which is appealing due to

the association with Ga'on (see above) but is otherwise difficult to sustain due to the lack of contextual support.

One challenge posed to all three of these interpretations is the use of "Ya'akov" here - why is this patriarch's name associated with any of these (Beit haMikdash, mountains or monarchy)? Several defenses have been proposed, but none is very appealing.

One final question regarding the second stich; what is it that God loves? Does God love Ya'akov or "the pride of Ya'akov"? The word Asher is ambiguous and allows for a variety of approaches.

The final word here, Selah, is not properly part of the text but is some sort of a musical notation, the specific meaning of which has been lost to us.

v. 6: Elokim has gone up with a shout, Hashem with the sound of a shofar.

As we will demonstrate further down, this verse is clearly the central verse in the psalm; even within our liturgical context, it is singled out for inclusion among those verses recited by the Ba'al T'ki'ah just before the actual sounding of the Shofar. In this one verse, both Names of God are used, forming a perfect inclusio with the first verse (#2) which alluded to both Shofar-sounds. S'forno explains the use of both Names of God - both within the context of the Shofar - as indicating the great distinction between our lot during the Messianic era and that experienced by those nations. While God has greatly ascended, triumphing over the nations amidst the sound of the Shofar, He compassionately gathers us together to the same sound.

We should note that the opening word here, 'Alah, has the same root as the relatively uncommon Divine cognomen used above in v. 3 ('Elyon) - and is the same as the final word in the psalm - Na'alah. This root, therefore, forms a kind of "bookend/bookmark", at the beginning, middle and end of the psalm. This structural observation calls for analysis - which will come further down.

Note that the tone of the psalm has subtly shifted - from addressing an audience (whether parochial or global) to descriptive and laudatory.

v. 7: Sing praises to Elokim, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

Like several other verses, this is a perfect parallel, where stich A parallels stich B, substituting Malkeinu for Elokim. The tone of the psalm has changed, again addressing an audience who are exhorted to sing - an exhortation which is evidently fleshed out in the next verse. Combined with the word Mizmor in the superscription and the synonymous Rinah in v. 2, the root ZMR appears seven times in this psalm, producing another leitwort. Put together, the two "key words" in this psalm result in the notion - "sing to Elokim" - which is the thrust of vv. 7-8.

One final note regarding the audience - if this verse is addressed to the global audience of vv. 2-3, then what are we to make of the possessive Malkenu? Have these nations become subjects of the one True King? Or should this audience be understood to be purely Yisra'elite?

v. 8: For Elokim is the King of all the earth; sing a Maskil psalm.

The sentiment expressed in v. 3 is repeated here, after which the audience is exhorted Zamru Maskil. This last phrase is confusing and has led to a number of interpretations. Some suggest that Maskil is, like Selah, a musical notation; alternatively, it may be a type of instrument or, as indicated by the translation here, a particular type of musical composition. The Me'iri suggests that the call to compose a Maskil - psalm stands in contradistinction to the clapping (or joining) of hands called for in v. 2; this action takes wisdom and sophistication.

v. 9: Elokim reigns over the nations; Elokim sits on the throne of his holiness.

This verse, again, reiterates the notion expressed in v. 3 & 8 - but what are we to make of the coronation scene described here?

v. 10: The nobles of the peoples are gathered together, the people of the God of Avraham; for the shields of the earth belong to Elokim; he is greatly exalted.

This final verse describes a mass gathering of world leaders, ostensibly to give homage to God. What are we to make of the identification of God as "the God of Avraham"? Why the sudden mention of "the shields of the earth"? Indeed, this final verse presents us with several interpretive challenges; as God's transcendent nature ("greatly exalted") is juxtaposed with His immanence ("the shields of the earth"). How are we to understand this coda?

IV

STRUCTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Sh'mu'el Cohen, writing in Beit Mikra in 1992, presented an interesting analysis of the structure of this psalm which enhances our understanding of the themes at play here.

He notes that the psalm is made up of 5 "verses", made up of a total of 9 p'sukim. They follow a common pattern, in which two p'sukim combine to form a couplet which is made up of one pasuk which is a parallelism and a second which expands that idea in one complex thought. This is true for verses 1,2,4 and 5 - the middle verse stands alone and is comprised of only pasuk - : Elokim has gone up with a shout, Hashem with the sound of a shofar, the central verse in the psalm.

The first couplet, for example, exhorts the nations to clap their hands and (=) shout before God (1st pasuk)...because He is the great noble King. The second couplet notes that He has caused us to subjugate nations and (=) peoples under our feet. This is followed by the statement of the Divine selection of our inheritance and pride.

Cohen develops his analysis in great detail, reproduction of which is beyond the space allotment of this essay. The interested reader is directed to the Hebrew version or an English rendition, published in JBQ in 1995. (#23,4 pp. 258-264).

V CONTEXT CONSIDERATIONS

R. Yehudah Shaviv (Megadim 9, pp. 70-80) presented a cogent analysis of the psalm - one which we will not use save for a mention of one introductory comment relating to the context within which the psalm was composed. Shaviv suggests that this psalm, besides its prophetic/apocalyptic aspect, would have served quite neatly as a psalm of thanksgiving for the Yehoshuan wars of conquest - notably the miraculous victory in Yericho. He pointed to the lack of any song of praise for these wars and suggested that perhaps this psalm (and others?) was originally composed for that purpose and later included in the psalter. This would support the notion that the Korahides were commissioned with the task of composing the musical accompaniment to this age-old psalm.

Psalm 47 (Part 2)

VI LINGUISTIC ALLUSIONS

In Shaviv's article, he points to the odd phrase which opens the psalm: Tiqu' Khaf and notes that they evoke a phrase which is totally dissimilar in context and meaning but is morphologically related:

And Ya'akov was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Ya'akov's thigh was out of joint (va'Teqa' Kaf), as he wrestled with him. (B'resheet 32:25-26)

This interaction, as we learn later on, involved Ya'akov and a heavenly being - who evidently represented and foreshadowed his upcoming tete-a-tete with brother Esav. Haza"l express this by describing this being as the angelic minister of Esav.

Picking up on this observation of Shaviv's, I'd like to suggest an approach to the psalm which resolves some of the questions we raised and adds another connection between the psalm and the sounding of the Shofar.

To begin with, who are the "nations" addressed in the opening line? In addition, there are three terms used in this psalm to indicate "nations" - 'Amim, L'umim and Goyyim. Why the variations?

A perusal of several passages in B'resheet presents us with a startling possibility:

• And God said to Avraham, As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give you a son also of her; and I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people (Malkhei 'Amim) shall be of her (17:15-16). Who are the "people" who issued from Sarah? Yitzhak - which leads us to Ya'akov and Esav, each of whom is blessed with kings of their peoples (note B'resheet 36).

• And Hashem said to her, Two nations (Goyyim) are in your womb, and two peoples (L'umim) shall be separated from your bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. (25:23)

• Therefore God give you of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine; Let people ('Amim) serve you, and nations (L'umim) bow down to you; be lord over your brothers, and let your mother's sons bow down to you; cursed be every one who curses you, and blessed be he who blesses you. (27:28-29)

Ya'akov and Esav are called 'Amim, L'umim and Goyyim - the same three which appear throughout our psalm.

If chapter 47 is, as we propose, a psalm of victory over Esav, we now understand the "reparation" involved in Tiq'u Khaf, as Ya'akov's children order/exhort Esav's children to complete the circle opened up those many years ago in Nahal Yabok when Ya'akov's hip was pulled out of its joint - now, instead of separation, the hands are brought together.

This being the case, we now understand the mention of "the pride of Ya'akov" in v. 5 - it is the ultimate claim of ownership over our inheritance, that among all of Avraham's children, his inheritance belongs to Ya'akov (and, by implication, to Yitzhak). The phrase Asher Ahev now becomes clear - it is not "the pride of Ya'akov" that He loves, rather Ya'akov himself, as we explicitly read at the beginning of the prophecy of Malakhi:

The burden of the word of Hashem to Yisra'el by Malakhi. I have loved you, says Hashem. Yet you say, How have you loved us? Was not Esav Ya'akov's brother? says Hashem; yet I loved Ya'akov, And I hated Esav... (1:1-3)

This psalm, rather than global in scope, is a prophetic call for that day of victory over Esav, as prophesied by Ovadiah:

And saviors shall ascend Mount Tziyyon to judge the Mount of Esav; and the kingdom shall be Hashem's. (Ovadiah 21)

There are two other puzzles in this psalm which are now resolved. Since this entire scene involves the children of Avraham exclusively, the people who gather - the "nobles of the people" - are the nation of the God of Avraham, since they are all his descendants. We also understand that this scene is reminiscent of the first time that Avraham's mission began to be realized - to be a source of blessing for the entire world (B'resheet 12:3):

And Melchizedek king of Shalem brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Avram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God the Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand... (B'resheet 14:18-20)

Malkizedek is called a priest of Elyon, and that is how he blesses both God and Avraham. Since our psalm evokes this image, the same cognomen is used, and marked at the beginning, middle and end of the psalm as noted above.

The final question is the ascendance to God's throne - but, armed with our Esav-connection, we can answer that, as well.

The first victory over Amalek was memorialized by Mosheh with an altar which he called Yad al Kes Y-H - (Sh'mot 17:16). Rashi, following

the Midrash, notes that both the "throne" (Kisei) and God's Name (Y-H) are truncated. His comment is: God's Name and His Throne are incomplete until the seed of Amalek is wiped out. (Rashi ad loc.). Now that Esav stands before our God, giving praise and responding to the sound of the Shofar (with which they should have a unique association among all the nations, due to our common father Yitzhak and his unique association with the Shofar...), Amalek is obviously no more. As such, God ascends to His Throne and is received as Malkenu by all of Yitzhak's children. (note that Yishma'el is nowhere to be seen...)

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Halakhah and Minhag in Nusah Hatefillah

Author: Rabbi Gedalia Dov Schwartz

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The diversity of Jewish communities in different parts of the world has had its effect on the application of halakhah and the establishment of minhagim particular to each community. Especially in the matter of customs relating to the nusah and modes of prayer there are many distinct differences. We are all aware of the main streams of nusah known as Ashkenaz and Sephard and the reality that even in these two divisions there are nuances and changes that are ascribed to the different groups of each respective general nusah.

Oftimes a hazzan is caught in the center of controversy over proper nusah or sequence of tefillot and even in the matter of traditional tunes acceptable to the congregation. During the course of this article an attempt will be made to give some guidelines and insights relating to minhag regarding niggunim in their traditional forms and whether changes are permitted to be made.

The major source cited by Poskim regarding the fixing of the norms of tefillah is from the Talmud Yerushalmi (Eruv. III, 9.), "Rabbi Yose sent and wrote to them (i.e. to the people dwelling in the Diaspora), although they (Le. the sages in the land of Israel) wrote to you the order of the prayers of the holidays, do not change the custom of your fathers whose souls repose in place." This is the version cited by the Haga'ot Maimoniot (Seder Tefillot Kol Hashanah, 5) and the Magen Avraham 68. However, another version reads: "... although they wrote to you the order of the holidays do not change the custom of your fathers, etc."

In this textual change the meaning refers to the observance of the two days of Yom Tov outside of Eretz Yisrael. This textual variance is extremely important due to the divergent opinions which arose concerning the possibility of changing from one nusah to the other. This divergence is pointed out by the Gaon R. Yisroel of Shklov, one of the great talmidim of the Vilna Gaon, in his work Pe'at Hashulhan. (Hilkhot Eretz Yisrael III, 31.) He cites the responsum of R. Shmuel Demedina of Salonika (She'eilot u-Teshuvot Marashdom, Orach Hayyim, 35.) who ruled that any community may change its nusah of tefillah if the majority so desires because the prohibition of Shinui Minhag only applies to the category of issur, that is, prohibitory laws etc., and not in regard to such

a category as tefillah. Consequently he ruled that the Ashkenazic community in Salonika may change to Sephard if the majority of its constituents are in favor of the change. Yisroel of Shklov comments that according to the version in Yerushalmi that prohibits the change in the mode of prayer, this ruling is not acceptable. He quotes the aforementioned Magen Avraham and the Ari Hakadosh who were opposed to any change based primarily on the Yerushalmi, especially since the Haga'ot Maimoniot mentions the text as restricting any change in prayers. The Pe'at Hashulhan attributes Meharashdom's decision to allow such a change because he must have had the version proscribing any change in the status of the two days of Yom Tov in the Diaspora. It is interesting to note that R. Menachem Hame'iri of the thirteenth century preceded R. Shmuel Demedina in stating that there is no prohibitory regulation for changing the nusah of tefillot for the individual, and publicly if the minhag was different he should not pray differently than the tzibbur, implying that if it was the will of the congregation to change, they could. (Teshuvat Hame'iri, Magen Avot, II.)

However, since the Magen Avraham also mentions in his above statement that the verses one says in the piyyutim should be sung in the matter one sings the kerovot (I.e. the piyyutim chanted in the Amidah), he is indicating that he is including within the context of not changing any nusah that one should not change the tune also. This inclusion of niggun as part of the rules prohibiting shinui or change in nusah is in keeping with the clearly stated ruling of the Maharil cited by Rema, (Orah Hayyim 619,1.) "One must not change from the custom of the city even in regard to the melodies and piyyutim that are recited there." However, the Magen Avraham comments on the Maharil, saying that such a change should not be made because the change of tune will "confuse the congregation." It would seem from this observation of the Magen Avraham on the Maharil's ruling that if the tzibbur were not confused or upset by any change in niggun by the hazzan, there would not be any restriction.

This raises the question on the Magen Avraham himself who has accepted the version of the Yerushalmi, as mentioned, rigorously opposing any change in tefillot. Perhaps the Magen Avraham interprets the Yerushalmi as meaning that if one is certain about the minhag of his forefathers then he is not permitted to deviate, but if there is uncertainty then it would be permissible. Thus, in communities where doubt and even prevailing ignorance as to the mode of prayer exists as to any definite tradition, changes would be acceptable as long as no violation of halakhah takes place and there are no consequences of bilbul da'at hakahal (confusion in the congregation). (Cf. Teshuvat Minhat Eliezer I, 11, for a novel interpretation of the Yerushalmi and an extensive discussion of changes from Ashkenaz to Sephard, etc.)

However, where a change of niggun for example, would cause upheaval, then the words of Maharil and Magen Avraham would apply to all services and not necessarily for Yamim Nora'im, since the primary sources do not differentiate in regard to any particular season. Tangential to this, may I mention an interesting incident which happened to the Ga'on and Tzaddik Reb Zalman Bardn of Yerushalayim of blessed memory, who, once, while attending a Shabbat Minhah tefillah in a shul that had no regular hazzan, heard someone davening as the sheliach tzibbur using a chant that had no relationship whatsoever with the known niggun for the Shabbat Minhah. After waiting for the hazzan to finish, he left the shul and entered another shul to hear the repetition of the Amidah in the traditional mode. He went so far as to say that the "niggun of Shabbat should not be the niggun of the weekdays"! (Paraphrasing the statement of: "Your speech on Shabbat should not be for weekday speech"). (Shabo 113; Macy Nulman apprised me of this excerpt from Eliyahu Kitov's Hassidim and Anshe Ma'aseh, Sefer Revi'i, p. 160.) This would perhaps be an example of an aspect of bilbul da'at hakahal because of the reaction incurred.

As to the type of niggun introduced into prayer that would not cause any bilbul da'at hakahal, it definitely cannot be one that is identified with any non Jewish worship. This is clearly prohibited by many Poskim (Darkhay Teshuvah, Yoreh De'ab 142,27 citing several sources.)

Even a tune that, although not connected to any non-Jewish worship, but is recognizable as belonging to a prevailing non-Jewish culture, would not be acceptable. This would be indicated as improper, especially in the synagogue, based on the Talmud's criticism of Elisha ben Abuya or "Acher" as constantly singing Greek tunes, even when not in the synagogue. (Hag. 15b, viz. Rashi also.)

If a shul is faced with the question of engaging a cantor who does not know the traditional niggunim, known as scarbova nusah, if the makeup of the congregation is such that they will accept the prayer leadership of such a hazzan and if there is no controversy regarding his being engaged, then it would be permissible to do so.

The principle of merutzah lekahal (acceptable to the community) is enumerated by the Rema (Orah Hayyim 581,1.) regarding the qualifications of a sheli'ah tzibbur, although he may not meet the high standards of piety and sincerity demanded for this position. Disputes over this must be avoided. (Cf. Mishneh Berurah, ibid., 11.) It is most interesting to note that in the enumeration of conditions pertaining to a sheli'ah tzibbur, the emphasis is placed on the individual's piety, sincerity, and Torah knowledge and no mention is made of knowledge of niggunim or musical inflection. (Eleph Hamagen to Matteh Ephra'im 581,54.)

However, knowledgeable congregations should seek the combination of piety and a mastering of traditional musical nusah which is part of the spiritual fabric of tefillah, particularly on the Yamim Nora'im. The absence of these hallowed niggunim during the davening would be unthinkable to any worshiper who has an inbred affinity for the feelings and stirrings of the heart, rendered by the proper nusah. Just as the Avodah in the Bet Hamikdash was accompanied by a certain order of shir or music, primarily vocal. (Ar. 11a.) so must our Avodah in the synagogue maintain a proper contact and order of shir, of niggun and nusah as we, in our way, make our offerings of prayer.

from: Rabbi Kaganoff <ymkaganoff@gmail.com> reply-to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com date: Sun, Sep 1, 2013 at 2:50 PM subject: tashlich attached

Appreciating Tashlich By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Question #1: As a child, I remember being told that tashlich was our annual opportunity to throw away all our sins into the water. What is behind this custom?
Question #2: Someone once told me that tashlich alludes to the 13 middos of Hashem's mercy. How do these middos correspond?

Answer: Both of these questions revolve around developing a deeper understanding of the custom of reciting tashlich on Rosh Hashanah. Let us research the sources and halachos of this minhag, and comprehend the lessons that we should learn while observing it. The earliest mention of tashlich of which I am aware is in the writings of the Maharil, who lived in Germany during the late Fourteenth Century, and others of his generation (Minhagei Rosh Hashanah #9). He mentions the custom of going on Rosh Hashanah to the ocean or rivers that contain fish in order to "throw our sins into the depths of the sea," vesashlich bintzulos yam kol chatosom. We should note that in the verse upon which this is based (Micha 7:19), it is not we, but Hashem, who is casting our iniquities into the sea. This is important, because tashlich does not mean that we have now successfully thrown away our sins. It is the realization that only by doing teshuvah will Hashem throw away our sins. Others cite a different biblical source for tashlich, from the verse in Nechemiah (8:1): "On the first day of the seventh month [which is, of course, Rosh Hashanah], all the people gathered together, as one, to the street that was before the gate of the water" (Rav Reuven Margulies, cited in Piskei Teshuvos 583: footnote 48). Tashlich is recorded by the Rama and the Arizal, and has, of course, become standard practice. It is interesting to note that the earliest sources for tashlich are all Ashkenazic authors, and later the custom spread to Sefardic communities. For example, Rav Chaim Vital (Sha'ar Hakavanos, quoted by Kaf Hachayim 583:30) writes, "The custom practiced by the Ashkenazim, which they call 'tashlich,' to go on the first day of Rosh Hashanah

after Mincha, slightly before sunset, to the Mediterranean Sea or to a spring is a proper custom. It is preferable to do this outside the city, stand on the seashore or alongside the spring, and recite three times, 'Mi Keil Kamocha...' (Micha 7:18-20)."

Is it a Good Omen? The Rama, both in Darkei Moshe and in his glosses to Shulchan Aruch, cites the custom of tashlich in what appears to be an unusual place. We would have expected that he mention tashlich as part of the discussion concerning what to do after Rosh Hashanah morning davening, which is found in Chapter 596 of Orach Chayim, or, alternatively, together with the laws of Rosh Hashanah Mincha, which are found in Chapter 598. Indeed, we find other authorities who discuss the rules of tashlich in both of these places. However, the Rama mentions the custom of tashlich earlier, in Chapter 583, where the Tur and Shulchan Aruch record the custom, mentioned in the Gemara, of eating special foods on the night of Rosh Hashanah as a good omen, a siman tov, for the coming year. Why did the Rama insert the practice of tashlich in a place that is out of chronological order? It appears that the Rama includes tashlich in the chapter of good omens for the New Year because the main reason for the custom of tashlich is its powerful symbolism. One can certainly explain why, according to the Rama, there is a preference to recite tashlich near a river, ocean, or other source that contains fish, since they are a sign of prosperity without ayin hora.

A Different Reason The Gra, in his notes to this Rama, presents a different reason for the custom, the reason to which the Maharil himself alluded. The Gra quotes the Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni #99): If Avraham could see the place of the Akeidah, why did it take him three days to get there? The answer is that the Satan first attempted to dissuade Avraham from going. When the Satan realized that this plan would not be successful, the Satan tried a different tactic, and made himself into a large river that would be impossible to pass... Avraham continued on [accompanied by Yitzchak and the two lads] until the river was up to their necks. Avraham then lifted his eyes heavenward, saying, "Master of all worlds, you revealed yourself to me and said, 'I am the only One, and you are the only one. Make the entire world know about My name and bring your son as an olah.' I did not question your words, nor did I delay fulfilling them. Now we are drowning. If my son Yitzchak drowns, how will I guarantee that Your unity be known?" Immediately, Hashem scolded the Satan, who left. According to this approach, tashlich is a reminder of the tremendous mesiras nefesh of Avraham Avinu. This should make us internalize the message repeated daily in Shema -- to love Hashem with all our being, even to sacrifice our lives for Hashem because we love Him so. Developing this quality of Ahavas Hashem is certainly one of the main goals of Rosh Hashanah. Thus, according to the Gra, tashlich is primarily an educational lesson.

A Fishy Place However, according to the Gra's approach, there is no apparent reason for reciting tashlich near a water source containing fish, a preference mentioned in most early sources. We may also note that the first reason I mentioned, that we want Hashem to wash away our sins as we do teshuvah, should also not require that the water contain fish. However, there are many other reasons for reciting tashlich at a water source that contains fish. For example, the Levush explains that we should see ourselves as fish caught in a net. This comparison should encourage us to do teshuvah and to take the Yomim Nora'im more seriously. Here is another reason why tashlich should preferably be recited at a water source containing fish: Fish, living their lives concealed under water, are not exposed to ayin hora; we, also, hope not to be exposed to ayin hora (Elyah Zuta).

Must it be Fishy? Notwithstanding the various reasons to explain saying tashlich at a place populated by fish, the Magen Avraham (583:5) emphasizes that whereas the Maharil wrote to say tashlich at a river with live fish, the Arizal implies that it is equally acceptable to say tashlich at a well, even one that contains no fish. I will explain more about this shortly.

Outside the City The Arizal (quoted by Magen Avraham 583:5) emphasizes that it is preferable to go to a water source outside the city. Based on the Midrashic source cited above, we can understand that our traveling is an attempt to reenact, in our own small way, the tribulations that Avraham Avinu underwent on his way to performing the incredible mitzvah of the akeidah. I quoted earlier Rav Chayim Vital, the main disciple of the Arizal, who writes that one should recite tashlich at the seashore or next to a spring. Going to the Mediterranean or some other sea is certainly hinted at in the verse asking Hashem to throw all one's sins into the depths of the sea, implying that one is close enough to throw something into the water. However, not all gedolei Yisrael followed this practice of being next to the body of water when they recited tashlich; they were satisfied with having the water in sight. For example, it is recorded that the Chasam Sofer went to a high place from where he could see the Danube River running through his hometown of Pressburg (today known as Bratislava). Anyone who has been in Yerushalayim for Rosh Hashanah has probably noted that because there is no flowing river near the

city, tashlich is recited in interesting places, such as near mikvaos and alongside buckets of water. For some time, Yerushalayim has been without any natural source of water, something unusual for any old city. The custom of reciting tashlich alongside a mikvah or a water cistern in Yerushalayim is already mentioned by the Kaf Hachayim (583:30), who reports that it is acceptable to recite tashlich even next to an empty water cistern! He explains that tashlich is only an allusion, and the main "water" we mean to convey our message is the "yam ha'elyon." Obviously, he is alluding to a kabbalistic reason for tashlich. In contemporary Yerushalayim, where I live, the most common practice is to recite tashlich alongside small backyard fish ponds stocked with a few inexpensive fish from a pet store. I assume that in the time of the Kaf Hachayim, there were few pet stores in Yerushalayim, and the scarcity of both drinkable water and adequate living quarters did not allow for backyard fish ponds.

Feeding the Fish The Maharil is emphatic that one should not take bread to tashlich on Rosh Hashanah to feed the fish. Apparently, this custom of feeding crumbs or bread to the fish was observed over six hundred years ago, despite the opposition of most halachic authorities. What is wrong with feeding the fish? It is forbidden to feed any animals, birds or fish on Yom Tov that are not dependent on you (see, for example, Rashi, Beitza 23b).

Crumb Carrying Some authorities quote an additional reason for prohibiting putting bread into the river on Yom Tov. Carrying is permitted on Yom Tov only for items that fulfill some Yom Tov need. Since fish in the sea are not dependent on us for nourishment, carrying in a public domain to feed them desecrates Yom Tov (Mateh Efrayim 598:5).

Instead of Feeding the Fish Some authorities describe a different practice that does not desecrate Yom Tov: while reciting the word "tashlich," one should empty out the dirt that one finds in the hems of one's garment into the water, hinting at casting away our sins. With this act, we should accept doing teshuvah wholeheartedly (Likkutei Mahariach; Kaf Hachayim; see Mateh Efrayim 598:4). Some sources quote, in the name of the Arizal, that one should only shake out the dust on the tzitzis of one's talis koton (Likkutei Mahariach, cited by Piskei Teshuvos 583:footnote 50). Obviously, according to this Arizal, women cannot fulfill this part of the custom.

Women and Tashlich Many authorities are strongly opposed to women going to tashlich altogether (Elef Hamagein 598:7). On the holy day of Rosh Hashanah, there should be no intermingling of the genders, and better that the men not see women. If women want to go to tashlich, the best approach to avoid this problem is that introduced by my Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Ruderman, that women go to tashlich before Mincha, and men after.

The Structure of Tashlich The main part of tashlich is to recite three verses from Micha that allude to the thirteen attributes of Hashem's kindness. Thus, to understand tashlich well, we should understand the concept of the thirteen attributes. After the Jewish People sinned when we worshipped the Eigel Hazahav, the Golden Calf, Hashem taught Moshe to use these thirteen attributes of His kindness to achieve absolution. Rabbi Yochanan said: "Were it not for the fact that the Torah itself wrote this, it would be impossible to say it. The Torah teaches that Hashem wrapped Himself in a talis like a chazzan and demonstrated to Moshe the order of prayer. Hashem told Moshe: "Whenever the Jews sin, they should perform this order and I will forgive them" (Rosh Hashanah 17b). Rabbi Yochanan noted that the anthropomorphism of his own statement is rather shocking, and without scriptural proof, we would refrain from repeating it. Nevertheless, the Torah compelled us to say that Hashem revealed to Moshe a means for pardoning our iniquities. According to the Maharal, Moshe asked Hashem to elucidate, to the extent that a human can comprehend, how Hashem deals with the world in mercy. Hashem did, indeed, enlighten Moshe, enabling him to implore for forgiveness for the Jewish people, and teaching him how to lead the Jews in prayer (Chiddushei Aggados, Rosh Hashanah 17b s.v. Melameid).

A Word about Attributes What exactly are the thirteen attributes? For that matter, can we attribute personality characteristics to Hashem? To quote Rabbeinu Bachyei: Although we no longer know how to beseech, nor do we properly understand the power of the thirteen attributes and how they connect to Hashem's mercy, we still know that the attributes of mercy plead on our behalf, since this is what Hashem promised. Today, when we are without a kohein gadol to atone for our sins and without a mizbei'ach on which to offer korbanos and no Beis Hamikdash in which to pray, we have left only our prayers and these thirteen attributes (Kad Hakemach, Kippurim 2).

Who Knows Thirteen? The Torah says: Hashem, Hashem, is a merciful and gracious G-d, slow to anger, full of kindness and truth. He preserves kindness for thousands of generations by forgiving sins whether they are intentional, rebellious or negligent; and He forgives (Shemos 34:6-7). There are many opinions among the halachic authorities exactly how to calculate the thirteen merciful attributes of

Hashem. The most commonly quoted approach is that of Rabbeinu Tam, who counts each of the three mentions of Hashem's name at the beginning of the passage, Hashem, Hashem, and Keil, as a separate attribute. However, it is important to note that the Arizal counted the thirteen merciful attributes in a different way. Whereas Rabbeinu Tam counted Hashem, Hashem, Keil as three different attributes, the Arizal does not count the first two Names (Hashem, Hashem). Thus, the first attribute mentioned by the verse is Keil. To compensate for the loss of two attributes in the count of thirteen, the Arizal reaches thirteen by dividing each of the phrases *erech apayim* and *notzeir chesed la'alafim* into two different attributes, whereas, according to Rabbeinu Tam's count, each of these phrases counts as only one attribute.

Micha's Thirteen Attributes The kabbalistic sources explain that the three verses of Micha that form the basic structure of tashlich also allude to the thirteen attributes of Hashem. For many years, I tried to figure out how the verses in Micha correspond to the thirteen attributes until I discovered that this allusion follows the Arizal's approach to the thirteen attributes. Many *machzorim* have this method of counting the thirteen attributes noted by placing the word from Moshe's original prayer above the corresponding attributes in the verse from Micha.

What do I do? At this point, I want to return to the above-quoted Talmudic source that explains the power of the thirteen attributes and note a very important point: Hashem told Moshe: "Whenever the Jews sin, they should perform this order and I will forgive them." The Hebrew word that I have translated as "perform" is *yaasu*, which means that the Jews must do something, definitely more than just reading the words. If all that is required is to read these words, the Gemara should have said simply: They should read these words. Obviously, action, which always speaks louder than words, is required to fulfill these instructions and accomplish automatic atonement. What does the Gemara mean?

Emulate Hashem The commandment to emulate Hashem may be the most important of the 613 mitzvos. To quote the Gemara: Just as Hashem is gracious and merciful, so should you become gracious and merciful (Shabbos 133b). Hashem told Moshe: Whenever the Jews perform this order, I will forgive them. He meant that when we act towards one another with the same qualities of *rachamim* as does Hashem, He forgives us. Reciting the thirteen attributes of Hashem's mercy is the first step towards making ourselves merciful, emulating Hashem's ways. *Yaasu* means that by emulating Hashem's kindness and His tolerance, by accepting people who annoy and harm us, we become His G-dly People! This sounds great in theory. What does it mean in practice? Here are several examples, all taken from the sefer *Tomer Devorah*, to help us comprehend what our job is: 1. Whenever someone does something wrong, Hashem is at that very moment providing all the needs of the offender. This is a tremendous amount of forbearance that Hashem demonstrates. Our mitzvah is to train ourselves to be equally accepting of those who annoy and wrong us. 2. We should appreciate the extent to which Hashem considers the Jews to be His People, and identify with the needs of each Jew on a corresponding level. 3. Hashem waits with infinite patience for the sinner to do teshuvah, always confident in this person's ability to repent and change. While Hashem is waiting, He continues to provide the sinner with all his needs. Similarly, we should not stand on ceremony, waiting for someone who wronged us to apologize. 4. When a person does teshuvah after sinning, Hashem loves him more than He loved him before he sinned. As the Gemara states: In a place where *baalei teshuvah* stand, complete *tzadikim* are unable to stand. Therefore if someone wronged me and now wants to make amends, I must befriend him and accept him at a greater level than I had previously. All of these ideas are included when we observe the mitzvah of tashlich. We should read the verses and think how we can emulate Hashem's kindness, by demonstrating the same acts of kindness that He performs to His creations.

Conclusion There are so many beautiful lessons to learn from observing this old minhag. We should be careful to observe this practice in the spirit of the day, and, by internalizing these lessons, may we and all klal Yisrael merit a *kesivah vachasimah tovah*.

[Rav Kook List] Rosh Hashanah: The Call of the Great Shofar
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Rosh Hashanah: The Call of the Great Shofar Rav Kook delivered the following sermon in Jerusalem's Old City on Rosh Hashanah 1933. It was a time of mixed tidings. On the one hand, ominous news of Hitler's reign in Germany became more troubling with each passing day. On the other hand, the Jewish community in Eretz Yisrael was flourishing. Immigration from central Europe was increasing, bringing educated

immigrants with needed skills and financial means. It seemed that the footsteps of redemption could be heard.

We say in our daily prayers, "Sound the great shofar for our freedom, and raise the banner to bring our exiles together."

What is the significance of this "great shofar"?

Three Shofars

There are three types of shofars that may be blown on Rosh Hashanah. The optimal shofar is the horn of a ram. If a ram's horn is not available, then the horn of any kosher animal other than a cow may be used. And if a kosher shofar is not available, then one may blow on the horn of any animal, even one which is not kosher. When using a horn from a non-kosher animal, however, no blessing is recited.

These three shofars of Rosh Hashanah correspond to three "Shofars of Redemption," three Divine calls summoning the Jewish people to be redeemed and to redeem their land.

The preferred Shofar of Redemption is the Divine call that awakens and inspires the people with holy motivations, through faith in God and the unique mission of the people of Israel. This elevated awakening corresponds to the ram's horn, a horn that recalls Abraham's supreme love of God and dedication in *Akeidah Yitzchak*, the Binding of Isaac. It was the call of this shofar, with its holy vision of heavenly Jerusalem united with earthly Jerusalem, that inspired Nachmanides, Rabbi Yehuda HaLevy, Rabbi Ovadia of Bartenura, the students of the Vilna Gaon, and the disciples of the Baal Shem Tov to ascend to Eretz Yisrael. It is for this "great shofar," an awakening of spiritual greatness and idealism, that we fervently pray.

There exists a second Shofar of Redemption, a less optimal form of awakening. This shofar calls out to the Jewish people to return to their homeland, to the land where our ancestors, our prophets and our kings, once lived. It beckons us to live as a free people, to raise our families in a Jewish country and a Jewish culture. This is a kosher shofar, albeit not a great shofar like the first type of awakening. We may still recite a *brachah* over this shofar.

There is, however, a third type of shofar. (At this point in the sermon, Rav Kook burst out in tears.) The least desirable shofar comes from the horn of an unclean animal. This shofar corresponds to the wake-up call that comes from the persecutions of anti-Semitic nations, warning the Jews to escape while they still can and flee to their own land. Enemies force the Jewish people to be redeemed, blasting the trumpets of war, bombarding them with deafening threats of harassment and torment, giving them no respite. The shofar of unclean beasts is thus transformed into a Shofar of Redemption.

Whoever failed to hear the calls of the first two shofars will be forced to listen to the call of this last shofar. Over this shofar, however, no blessing is recited. "One does not recite a blessing over a cup of affliction" (*Berachot* 51b).

The Great Shofar

We pray that we will be redeemed by the "great shofar." We do not wish to be awakened by the calamitous call of the shofar of persecution, nor by the mediocre shofar of ordinary national aspirations. We yearn for the shofar that is suitable for a holy nation, the shofar of spiritual greatness and true freedom. We await the shofar blasts of complete redemption, the sacred call inspiring the Jewish people with the holy ideals of Jerusalem and Mount Moriah:

"On that day a great shofar will be blown, and the lost from the land of Assyria and the dispersed from the land of Egypt will come and bow down to God in the holy mountain in Jerusalem." (Isaiah 27:13) (Silver from the Land of Israel. Adapted from *Mo'adei HaRe'iyah*, pp. 67-70)

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Chanah the Revolutionary and Our New Year by Rabbi Chaim Jachter

The Haftarah for the first day of Rosh HaShanah describes the birth of Shmuel to Elkanah and his wife Chanah, who had been childless for many years (Shmuel I Perek 1). This parallels the story discussed in the day's Torah reading, about Sarah giving birth to Yitzchak after many years of childlessness. Chazal (Megillah 31a) teach that these readings are chosen since both Sarah and Chanah (as well as Rachel) conceived on Rosh HaShanah (Rosh HaShanah 11a).

During one of her annual pilgrimages to Shiloh, the site of the Mishkan, Chanah tearfully and quietly davened to Hashem to bless her with a son, promising to dedicate him to His service. Eli the Kohein Gadol saw her whispering, and berated her, thinking that she was a drunkard. After hearing Chanah's explanation, that she had been whispering in prayer, Eli blessed her that Hashem should grant her request.

Chanah conceived and gave birth to a son whom she called Shmuel. Once the child was weaned, she brought him to Shiloh and entrusted him to the care of Eli.

The Haftarah ends with Chanah's prayer, wherein she thanks Hashem for granting her wish, extols His greatness, exhorts the people not to be haughty or arrogant, and prophesies regarding the Messianic redemption (the beginning of Shmuel I Perek 2).

Chanah the Revolutionary

Most regard this story as a pleasant story about a pleasant woman who achieved her lifelong aspiration through heartfelt prayer, making it appropriate reading for Rosh HaShanah when we pour out our hearts to Hashem in Tefilah. However, I suggest that Chanah should be viewed as a revolutionary figure who, with subtlety, transforms not only her life but the life of her nation with her Tefilah and vision. I seek to uncover eight manners in which the mild-mannered and modest Chanah acts as nothing less than a revolutionary. I acknowledge the debt owed to the Da'at Mikra commentary to Sefer Shmuel, my congregants at Congregation Sha'arei Orach (the Sephardic Congregation of Teaneck), and my students at Torah Academy of Bergen County, who shared their insights that help me formulate this essay.

At the outset of the story we find Chanah dissatisfied with the status quo of infertility, unlike her husband who attempts to convince her to be content with life as is (Pesukim 7-8). Chanah's dissatisfaction with her own less than ideal life reflects her discontent with the current situation of the Jewish People. The Jewish People live in Eretz Yisrael but must bow to the rule of the powerful Pelishtim, the Mishkan is managed by the two corrupt sons of Eli, Chofni and Pinchas, and the Jewish People have no central leader to prod the Jewish People to attempt to improve their lot. Elkanah's passive acceptance of the less than satisfactory personal situation reflects his and most of nation's complacency with and unwillingness to confront the serious problems facing them.

New Religious Models for Tefillah, Nezirut and Challenging the Kohein Gadol

Before Chanah we find instances of people in Tanach either praying to Hashem in times of difficulty or uttering Nedarim to Hashem promising improved behavior should Hashem rescue them from their predicament. Chanah is the first to combine the two by praying and making an oath to dedicate the child to Hashem. Nedarim and Tefilah each have spiritual advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, when making a Neder, one does offer something to Hashem; however, one treats Hashem as an "equal" in a certain sense, since one may be seen as striking a "deal" with God. Tefilah, by contrast, does not offer Hashem anything but does express our recognition of Hashem as our superior. Recognizing this reality, Chanah introduces a combination of Neder-Tefilah so as to marshal the advantages of both.

This revolution in Tefilah stands in addition to the well-known change of Chanah introducing silent Tefilah[1]. Additionally, Chanah did not cower under Eli's misguided criticism. Instead, she respectfully but firmly rejected his suspicions (and may have offered some implicit criticism of Eli as well (see Berachot 31b)).

Similarly, conventional Nezirut involves the Nazir refraining from grape products, contact with dead bodies, and cutting of hair. Chanah, however, promises that she will be given a child, the child will be dedicated to Hashem, and his hair will not be cut (Pasuk 11). Chazal conclude (Nazir 9:5) that Shmuel was a Nazir; however, he was classified a unique Nazir, one whose restrictions apply only to haircutting. This is typical behavior for Chanah – out of the box, unconventional, and breaking new ground.

The Implementation of Chanah's Promise

Pesukim 21-23 present a conflict between Chanah and Elkanah regarding the implementation of the Neder after Hashem granted Chanah her greatest wish. Elkanah thought the baby should be brought to the Mishkan immediately as he interpreted Chanah's promise to dedicate the child for his entire life in a narrow

and literal manner. Chanah, of course, was willing to think out of the box and interpret the promise in a more flexible and reasonable manner, to apply only after the child has been weaned.

After Shmuel's birth, (Pesukim 25-28) Chanah again had to politely but firmly insist on Shmuel's place in the Mishkan, over Eli's objections (the objection may have possibly stemmed from the fact that Shmuel was not a Kohein).

Chanah's Thank You Tefillah

Chanah's revolutionary side finds its greatest expression in her thank you Tefilah of Perek 2. She speaks of kings of Israel and she speaks of the defeat of enemy armies. Many are bothered: How are an anointed king and a victorious army at all relevant in a Tefilah that appears to serve simply as a thank you to Hashem for granting Chanah a child?

One answer given is that in addition to praising Hashem, Chanah posits a new vision for the Jewish people. Chanah couples her personal redemption with the redemption of the Jews of her time. She articulates a vision of an anointed one (2:10), asking at a time when the Jews had been without a king for more than 300 years. This vision was realized, as her son anointed two kings of Israel, Shaul HaMelech and David HaMelech.

The vision of military victories is also part of Chanah's vision for the future. She foresees the Jews freeing themselves from Pelishtim rule, a persistent problem during the events described later in Sefer Shmuel I. Indeed, Shmuel initiated the movement to free us from the Pelishtim in Perek 7 and the two kings he anointed placed removing the Pelishtim as a high priority (see Shmuel I 14:52 and Shmuel II Perakim 5 and 6). Shmuel and his two kings brought about the transition from the Mishkan to the Beit HaMikdash and the introduction of successful kingdoms in Israel. However, Shmuel and his two protégés were merely implementing the vision articulated by Chanah, Shmuel's mother.

While others were content with the status quo, Chanah saw that things could be better for herself and for her people. With that, we can conclude, as does the Da'at Mikra to Sefer Shmuel, that Chanah drafts and presents the blueprint for all that occurs Sefer Shmuel already in the first chapter (and somewhat in the beginning of the second chapter as well). While Shmuel, David, and even Shaul deserve great accolades for their accomplishments, it all began with Chanah's vision.

Implications for Rosh HaShanah

Viewed from this perspective, Chanah serves as a role model for the type of introspection that is appropriate for Rosh HaShanah. We should not be satisfied with that which is less than ideal in our individual and communal lives. We should identify that which needs improvement and formulate a plan as to how we will go about planning how we are to improve in the coming year.

Our improved lives over the next year must begin with a vision. That vision should be developed on Rosh HaShanah in the same manner in which Chanah developed a vision for the Jewish People's future at the beginning of Sefer Shmuel. New paradigms should be willing to be considered as we begin to reinvent ourselves on Rosh HaShanah in the same manner as Chanah reinvented the Jewish People with her willingness to break free from the status quo.

Conclusion

It is most interesting that while men brought about the great changes of Sefer Shmuel, the move from Shofetim to kings, Mishkan to the beginning of the Mikdash, and corrupt rule to righteous leadership, a modest woman was the mastermind of this entire enterprise. Chanah, in her subtle, motherly, and feminine manner was the true revolutionary that freed us from the self-imposed shackles imposed by people with limited vision for their families and the Jewish People. May we all merit to be freed from the shackles and barriers that prevent our spiritual growth.

[1] Chanah was, observe Chazal (Berachot 31b), the first to address Hashem as Tzevakot (see Pasuk 11).