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Please remember to prepare an Eruv Tavshilin on Erev Rosh Hashana

<http://www.star-k.org/kashrus/kk-mitzvos-eruv.htm>

Eruv Tavshilin

Rabbi Tzvi Rosen, Star-K Kashrus Administrator; Editor, Kashrus Kurrents

A fundamental difference between Yom Tov observance and Shabbos observance is the allowance of ochel nefesh, food preparation on Yom Tov. "Ach Asher Ye'ichel L'Chol Nefesh Hu Levado Ye'aseh Lachem..."¹ The Torah permits us to cook, bake, and prepare food on Yom Tov proper, in order to eat the prepared food on that day of Yom Tov. One is not permitted to prepare from one day of Yom Tov for the second day of Yom Tov or for after Yom Tov. This prohibition of hachana, of preparing from one day of Yom Tov to the next, presents a problem when the second day of Yom Tov falls out on Shabbos or when Shabbos follows a two day sequence of Yomim Tovim. Can one halachically prepare food on Yom Tov for the Shabbos Yom Tov or for Shabbos?

To deal with this issue our Rabbis instituted a procedure known as eruv tavshilin². The process of eruv tavshilin works in the following manner. On Erev Yom Tov, the head of the household, or his designee, should set aside a baked item such as bread or matzoh, and a cooked item such as meat, fish, or eggs (i.e. a food that is eaten along with bread). Each item should be at least the size of one kezayis, preferably the size of one beitzah. He or she should then recite the blessing of "Baruch...Al Mitzvas Eruv" and the proclamation, both found in the Siddur. This proclamation states that the cooked and baked items should permit us to continue baking, cooking, lighting a flame from an existing fire and do all the necessary preparations from Yom Tov proper to Shabbos. It is now viewed as though meal preparations for Shabbos have already begun before Yom Tov and Shabbos meal preparations may continue on Friday Yom Tov, Erev Shabbos.

Once done, the eruv covers all household members and guests.

The foods set aside for the eruv should be saved and may be eaten on Shabbos.

If one forgot to make an eruv tavshilin one should consult a competent Rabbinical authority for further instructions.

Footnotes: 1. Shmos 12:16 2. Orach Chaim 527

<http://www.ou.org/life/torah/rosh-hashanah-breath-life/>

from: Shabbat Shalom <info@ounetwork.org> reply-to: info@ounetwork.org date: Tue, Sep 23, 2014 at 8:55 PM subject: Shanah Tovah

On Rosh Hashanah, A Breath of Life

Britain's Former Chief **Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**

September 23, 2014

In the year that we are now parting with, 5774, it became dangerous once again to be a Jew. Israel, subject to sustained missile attack, discovered how hard it is to fight an asymmetric war against a terrorist group ruthless enough to place rocket launchers beside schools, hospitals and mosques. It found itself condemned by large sections of the world for performing the first duty of any state, namely to protect its citizens from danger and death.

Anti-Semitism returned to the streets of Europe. One hundred and twenty years after the Dreyfus trial, the cry "Death to the Jews" was heard again in

Paris. Seventy years after the Holocaust, the call of “Jews to the gas” was heard in the streets of Germany. There were times when it felt as if the ghost of a past we thought long dead had risen to haunt us. More times than was comfortable I heard Jews say, “For the first time in my life I feel afraid.”

Let us stay with those fears and confront them directly. We are not back in the 1930s. To the contrary, for the first time in the almost four thousand years of Jewish history, we have simultaneously independence and sovereignty in the land and state of Israel, and freedom and equality in the Diaspora. Israel is strong, extraordinarily so. The success of the Iron Dome missile defense was the latest in an astonishing line of technological advances — not just military but also agricultural, medical and commercial — designed to protect, save and enhance life.

Israel has lived with the disdain of the world for a very long time. Even the most lukewarm among us knows that it is infinitely preferable to have a state of Israel and the condemnation of the world than no Israel, no Jewish home, and have the sympathy of the world.

The unity Israel showed during the Gaza conflict was deeply moving. It reminded us that in a profound existential sense we remain one people. Whether or not we share a covenant of faith, we share a covenant of fate. That is a good state to be in as we face the Yamim Noraim, when we stand before God not just as individuals but as a people.

As for anti-Semitism, rarely has it been more self-evident that the hate that starts with Jews never ends with Jews. The most significant enemies of the Jews today are the enemies of freedom everywhere. Worldwide we may feel uncomfortable, anxious. But there are parts of the world where Christians are being butchered, beheaded, driven from their homes and living in terror.

As for Muslims, one prominent academic recently estimated that of the hundreds dying daily, at least 90 per cent were doing so at the hands of their fellow Muslims. Bahai are at risk. So are the Yazidis. So in other parts of the world are Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, and for that matter atheists. No historian looking back on our time will be tempted to call it the age of tolerance.

Which brings us back to the Yamim Noraim. There is a note of universality to the prayers on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur that we do not find on other festivals. On other festivals the key section of the Amidah begins, *Atah bechartanu mikol ha-amim*, “You chose us from among all the nations.” The emphasis is on Jewish singularity. On the Yamim Noraim the parallel prayer begins, “And so place the fear of Lord our God, over all that You have made... so that all of creation will worship You.” The emphasis is on human solidarity. And human solidarity is what the world needs right now.

One message resonates through these days: life. “Remember us for life, King who delights in life, and write us in the book of life for your sake, God of life.” We sometimes forget how radical this was when Judaism first entered the world. Egypt of the Pharaohs was obsessed with death. Life is full of suffering and pain. Death is where we join the gods. The great pyramids and temples were homages to death.

Anthropologists and social psychologists still argue today that the reason religion exists is because of people’s fear of death. Which makes it all the more remarkable that — despite our total and profound belief in *olam haba* and *tehiyat ha-metim*, life after death and the resurrection of the dead — there is almost nothing of this in most of the books of the Bible. It is an astonishing phenomenon. All of Kohelet’s cynicism and Job’s railing against injustice could have been answered in one sentence: “There is life after death.” Yet neither book explicitly says so.

To the contrary, King David said in a psalm we say daily: “What gain would there be if I died and went down to the grave? Can dust thank you? Can it declare your truth?”

Almost at the end of his life Moses turned to the next generation and said to them: “Choose life, so that you and your children may live.” We take this for granted, forgetting how relatively rare in the history of religion this is.

Why so? Why, if we believe the soul is immortal, that there is life after death and that this world is not all there is, do we not say so more often and more loudly? Because since civilization began, heaven has too often been

used as an excuse for injustice and violence down here on earth. What evil can you not commit if you believe you will be rewarded for it in the world to come? That is the logic of the terrorist and the suicide bomber. It is the logic of those who burned “heretics” at the stake in order, so they said, to save their immortal souls.

Against this horrific mindset the whole of Judaism is a protest. Justice and compassion have to be fought for in this life not the next. Judaism is not directed to fear of death. It is directed to a far more dangerous fear: fear of life with all its pain and disappointment and unpredictability. It is fear of life, not fear of death, that have led people to create totalitarian states and fundamentalist religions. Fear of life is ultimately fear of freedom. That is why fear of life takes the form of an assault against freedom.

Against that fear we say from the beginning of Ellul to Sukkot that monumental psalm of David: “The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom then shall I be afraid?” On Rosh Hashanah we blow the shofar, the one mitzvah we fulfill by the breath of life itself without needing any words. On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, the “anniversary of creation,” we read in the Torah and haftarah not about the birth of the universe but about the birth of Isaac to Sarah and Samuel to Hannah as if to say, one life is like a universe. One child is enough to show how vulnerable life is — a miracle to be protected and cherished. On Yom Kippur we wear the kittel, a shroud, as if to show that we are not afraid of death.

Never before have I felt so strongly that the world needs us to live this message, the message of the Torah that life is holy, that death defiles, and that terror in the name of God is a desecration of the name of God.

The state of Israel is the collective affirmation of the Jewish people, a mere three years after emerging from the valley of the shadow of death, that *Lo amut ki echyeh*, “I will not die but live.” Israel chose life. Its enemies chose the way of death. They even boasted, as did Osama bin Laden, that the love of death made them strong. It did not make them strong. It made them violent. Aggression is not strength; it is a profound self-consciousness of weakness. And the main victims of Islamist violence are Muslims. Hate destroys the hater.

Today it is not just Israel or Jews whose freedom is at risk. It is the whole of the Middle East, large parts of Africa and Asia, and much of Europe. Therefore let us approach the New Year with a real sense of human solidarity. Let us show, by the way we celebrate our faith, that God is to be found in life. The love of God is love of life. Let us take to heart King David’s insistence that faith is stronger than fear. No empire ever defeated the Jewish people, and no force ever will.

May God write us, our families, the people and State of Israel and Jews throughout the world, in the book of life. And may the day come when the righteous of all nations work together for the sake of freedom, peace and life.

<http://www.jewishpress.com/judaism/parsha/in-pursuit-of-righteousness/2014/09/23/0/>

In Pursuit Of Righteousness

By: Rabbi Joshua Rapps

Rav Soloveitchik on Chumash

September 23rd, 2014

The articles in this column are transcriptions and adaptations of shiurim by Rav Joseph Ber Soloveitchik, zt”l. The Rav’s unique perspective on Chumash permeated many of the shiurim and lectures he presented at various venues over a 40-plus-year period. His words add an important perspective that makes the Chumash in particular, and our tradition in general, vibrant and relevant to our generation.

Ramban quotes the Midrash Rabbi Nechuniah Ben Hakaneh that there are two different types of *tzedek* (righteousness). The Midrash says *im tadin atzmecha*, if you will judge yourself, a phrase that conveys Chazal’s message: self-judgment. The Mussar movement and mystics were of the

opinion that the haftoros read between Re'eh and Nitzavim refer to the Asseres Yemei Teshuva. In Re'eh, the foundation of bechirah, self-determination, is expressed, a sine qua non for repentance. Every year the month of Elul is heralded by Parshas Re'eh, where Hashem gives us two paths from which to choose: life and death. It is up to us to make our choice. We should interpret the command shoftim vshotrim titen lecha in two ways: provide judges to render decisions between litigants and provide judges to evaluate yourself, personally.

Im tadin atzmecha requires man to judge himself. Split yourself into two personae; one that acts as defendant, and the other to examine and judge yourself through kol she'arecha, all your gates. Gates, as egress points, are not exclusive to a city. Every individual has many gates representing sin and excuses for his actions. Adam sought a gate through which to escape his guilt, blaming Hashem and Eve for his sin.

Re'eh usually coincides with Shabbos Mevarchim Elul and Shoftim with the first Shabbos of Elul to enforce the concept of im tadin atzmecha. To choose life, you must examine your actions in the period preceding the Days of Awe as an unbiased stranger, and render your decision.

We must understand the redundant word tzedek in the verse tzedek tzedek tirdof. According to Ramban, tzedek means middas dino shel olam, the foundation that guides and maintains creation. This form of tzedek represents natural law that prevails throughout every corner of the universe. This kind of tzedek is what the mystics referred to as malchus – Hashem's revelation through the laws of nature, ratzon hakadmon, the primordial will prevailing throughout the universe.

The Baal Shem Tov said udevarcha nitzav bashamayim u'va'aretz means the physical world was created through the word yehi used in connection with creation. For example, yehi or means let there be light composed of specific natural and physical properties. Middas dino shel olam is malchus and Shechina, the revelation of the glory of Hashem through the consistent repetition of physical laws. Ratzon hakadmon requires the universe to obey the laws of nature, the consistent middas hadin, in the constant speed of light, the blooming of trees in spring and the withering of leaves in fall.

Ratzon kadmon instructs man to obey moral codes and laws. As we say in the Rosh Hashanah liturgy – Hashem bears the universe on His shoulders, so to say. It is the first form of tzedek representing yehi that maintains continuity and balance within creation.

The Midrash says that prior to creating man, Hashem consulted four attributes whether man should be created. Chesed and Tzedek advised that man should be created because he is capable of great things. Emes and Shalom advised that man not be created because of his proclivity to lie and squabble. Hashem resolved the dispute by hurling emes to the ground.

Why did Truth and Peace argue against creation? For man to be a complete ish emes, he cannot deviate one iota from the path of truth. Likewise, to be a complete ish shalom, he may not deviate from the path of peace. Man is capable of great sacrifices to preserve peace and harmony. However, it is impossible for man to simultaneously exemplify absolute emes and absolute shalom. Just as their faces are different, so to do their opinions differ. Reaching agreement between litigants derives from a desire to maintain peace. However, at its core, litigants' perspectives are mutually exclusive. The truth is either with me or with you. There is an aspect of sheker, falsehood, on the part of the person who would change his opinion. Likewise, if judges disagree and recommend arbitration, emes will not be realized.

Emes and Shalom argued against creation of man because one of them would always have to relent. If Hashem created man exemplifying the attribute of emes, people would be in constant conflict. So, Hashem resolved the dispute by separating emes from shalom. To guarantee harmony in this world, we must accept the principle of compromise as opposed to absolute emes.

However, for Hashem there is no inherent conflict between emes and shalom. Oseh shalom bimromav, Hashem who makes peace between

Michael and Gavriel, will ultimately bring peace upon Israel, a peace that no longer compromises between emes and shalom.

During the rebuilding of the Temple, the prophet Zechariah asked Hashem whether they should continue to observe the fast days established to commemorate the destruction of the First Temple. The reply was that these fast days will be days of joy in the future and the concluding words were ha'emes v'hashalom yihi'u. With the coming of Mashiach, emes and shalom will coexist amicably. Rambam (Hilchos Ta'anis) says that in the days of Mashiach all these fast days will be transformed into days of joy and uses the same terminology as the prophet.

Ramban describes the period of Mashiach as tzedek sheini, the second tzedek mentioned in the verse in Shoftim. Until then, we must rely on the former tzedek mentioned in that verse, one based on Choshen Mishpat. Tzedek tzedek tirdof l'ma'an tichyeh v'yarashta es ha'aretz means that we must pursue the first form of tzedek so we may inherit the land. Eretz means Malchus Hashem. While we cannot be content as we have not yet attained the period of ha'emes v'hashalom yihi'u, Hashem instructed us to live in the best manner possible prior to our reaching that stage, by following the Torah and our sages. Litigants and judges will reach perfection, the second tzedek, only in the days of Mashiach. Until then, we must practice judgment based on compromise between emes and shalom.

The period of tzedek sheini will usher in the realization of Elokim Nitzav BaAdas Kel, with complete access to Hashem. Hashem will make a circle for the righteous and we will fully realize Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu, with complete reconciliation between emes and shalom. Until then, Hashem entrusted frail, imperfect, guilty man to judge his fellow human beings, even though he may be as guilty or corrupt as the litigants he is judging.

Emes v'shalom shiftu b'sha'areichem, judge truth and peace in your gates. This refers to compromise, an imperfect form of justice, or tzedek rishon, the lower form of tzedek mentioned by Ramban. Until we attain tzedek sheini, the elevated tzedek, Hashem instructed man to be guided by his conscience, by reflective tzedek. It indicates man's imperfections, yet it is the only way to prevent constant conflict between litigants.

The Baal HaTanya refers to tzedek tita'a (lower) as the expression of the will of Hashem through creation and natural law. It is an imperfect reflection of the tzedek ila'a (elevated). The righteous have always sought to experience the higher tzedek, the tzedek of tiferes, a synonym for emes, as it says Titen emes l'Yaakov. Yaakov's attribute is tiferes, blending the attributes of chesed (Abraham) and gevurah (Isaac). Va'yigbah Hashem Tzevakos bamishpat v'hakel Hakadosh nikdash b'tzedakah. Hashem elevates His system of justice on High Holidays, suspending the normal tzedek rishon of immutable natural laws, evaluating us through tzedek sheini, a system of justice beyond our comprehension. Im tematzeh omek hadin, if Hashem squeezes out the depths of judgment moving from tzedek rishon to tzedek sheini, we realize how inadequate we are on Judgment Day and dependent on the mercy of Hashem.

The chazzan beseeches Hashem prior to Mussaf to convert our misdeeds into merits, to grant life and peace, mentioning ha'emes v'hashalom yihi'u. On this day when You engage in elevated tzedek, wipe away our iniquities though we are not deserving. May this be the year that the code words for the coming of Mashiach, ha'emes v'hashalom yihi'u, will be realized.

About the Author: Rabbi Joshua Rapps attended the Rav's shiur at RIETS from 1977 through 1981 and is a musmach of Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yitzchak Elchanan. He and his wife Tziporah live in Edison, N.J. Rabbi Rapps can be contacted at ravtorah1@gmail.com

from: **Rabbi Yissocher Frand** <ryfrand@torah.org> to: ravfrand@torah.org date: Tue, Sep 23, 2014 at 7:05 PM subject: Rabbi Frand on Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly portion: CD #957, Coming Late for Tekias Shofar Good Year!

Blowing Shofar 'At The Time of Hiding'

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, the former Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisrael, wrote an autobiography, which in Hebrew is called "Al Tishlach Yadcha el ha'Naar" ("Do Not Raise A Hand Against the Boy" based on the pasuk in the incident of the Akeida [Bereshis 22:12]). In English, the autobiography is entitled "Out of the Depths". It tells the very compelling story of his life. Yisrael Meir Lau was liberated from Buchenwald when he was 5 years old. His brother saved him. It is a fascinating story. He writes that after he became the Chief Rabbi of Israel he went back to his father's shul in the Polish town of Piotrkow Trybunalski. His father had been Chief Rabbi of this town before the war. Both of his parents were killed in the Holocaust and now he came back as Chief Rabbi of Israel on the Shabbos before Tisha B'Av – Shabbos Chazon.

He records in his autobiography the sermon he delivered in that shul on Shabbos Chazon. He quoted the Medrash in Eicha that when the Master of the World destroyed the Beis HaMikdash, the prophet Yirmiyahu went to the Me'aras haMachpelah and "woke up" the Patriarchs that they should petition the Almighty on behalf of their children who suffered this tragedy.

Yirmiyahu woke up Avraham Avinu and washed Avraham's hands. Avraham came to the Ribono shel Olam and asked "Why is this happening to my children?" The Ribono shel Olam responded, "It is because your children have sinned and I will summon forth the 22 letters of the Aleph-Beis to testify against them."

The Aleph got up to testify and Avraham Avinu said to the Aleph, "Shame on you! How can you testify against Klal Yisrael? The Asseres HaDibros [Ten Commandments] begin with the letter Aleph (Anochi Hashem Elokecha). Was it not the Jewish people who unquestioningly accepted G-d's Torah on Sinai and said 'We will do and we will listen' (Na'aseh v'Nishma)?" The Medrash states that the Aleph became silent and walked away.

The letter Beis was then summoned to testify. Again Avraham asked, "Are you not ashamed to testify against the Jewish people? Does the Torah not begin with the letter Beis (Bereshis barah Elokim)? When G-d took the Torah and offered it to all the nations of the world, no nation was willing to accept it. They all wanted to know what was written in it. When they heard the contents of the Torah they each refused it. However, Klal Yisrael did not ask any questions. They said Na'aseh v'Nishma and accepted it." The Medrash says that the Beis kept quiet and could not testify against Klal Yisrael.

The Medrash continues that this is what happened with all the letters of the Aleph-Beis.

Rabbi Lau then quoted a thought in the name of his father-in-law, Rav Yitzchak Yedidya Frankel who was the Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv. Rav Frankel suggested a novel insight into a pasuk in Parshas Vayelech, interpreting it slightly differently than the normal interpretation: "And it will be at the end of days... and the Torah will be a witness for it will not be forgotten from the mouths of its offspring..." [Devarim 31:21] The simple reading of the pasuk is that the Torah will not be forgotten. However, Rav Yitzchak Yedidya Frankel said that Moshe is promising something else:

"I see with my spiritual eyes a picture that is different from the one that Avraham saw (in the aforementioned Medrash). Avraham asked the letters of the Torah to retract their testimony. I (Moshe Rabbeinu speaking) on the other hand, am begging the Torah to bear witness. This "Song", the song of our life will testify before the Ribono shel Olam bearing witness that it will not be forgotten by the nation's children. The Torah itself will testify that the Children of Israel did not forget it."

The Torah will tell how during the Holocaust, Jews ran to the forest to blow the Shofar, so as not to miss the mitzvah on Rosh HaShanah. Jews willingly gave up slices of bread for extended periods so that they could exchange them for potatoes for Pesach. They saved bits of margarine and rendered them into oil using a steaming tin of tea. They then poured the oil into the buttons of their striped uniforms to kindle the Chanukah candles, pulling threads from their sleeves for wicks. Since they were willing to do all of this,

did Avraham really need to ask the Torah to refrain from speaking? Rather, "Let this Song (itself) serve as a witness that the Torah would not be forgotten from the mouths of the nation's children even in the most trying of times and most excruciating of circumstances!"

I would like to give an example of this dedication to Torah under trying circumstances by sharing a story from the introduction to a Sefer called Shaylos U'Teshuvos Mekadshei HaShem (Responsa to those Who Sanctified G-d's Name) by Rav Tzvi Hirsch Meislisch, who spent his later years in Chicago but who spent the war years in a number of Concentration Camps. He was known as the Weitzener Rav.

Rav Meislisch tells about one Rosh HaShanah in Auschwitz. There were a bunch of young former Yeshiva students who were about to be cremated alive. They found out that Rabbi Meislisch had smuggled in a shofar. It was the first day of Rosh HaShanah, toward the end of the day. They bitterly begged that Rav Meislisch come into their cellblock and blow for them the 100 shofar blasts so that they might fulfill this mitzvah one last time. Rabbi Meislisch writes that he was deeply troubled. He did not know what to do, as such an act of defiance would certainly jeopardize his life if he were caught by the Nazis. To compound the dilemma, his young son Zalman Leib was begging him to please NOT risk his life by doing this, begging that he not be left an orphan because of his father's foolhardy action.

Rav Meislisch writes that he made a decision that he was not going to listen to his own son and was going to blow shofar for the Yeshiva students, come what may. He writes that if truth be told, his action was not in accordance with halachic principles (which would forbid even possible martyrdom for the sake of performing a positive commandment such as Tekias Shofar). Rav Meislisch states that he only took this action because he in any case did not expect to live long in Auschwitz and felt that under those circumstances perhaps normative Halacha prohibiting martyrdom in such a case did not fully apply. He decided to go into the block and blow shofar for them. He was about to blow shofar and they begged, "Rebbi, Rebbi have mercy. Please say words of spiritual arousal for us before you blow shofar." Let us imagine this! These are young boys who are about to die in a matter of hours and they insisted on hearing a "shmooze" before Shofar Blowing in Auschwitz!

Rabbi Meislisch expounded for them the pasuk "Blow shofar on the new month, at the 'time of hiding' on the day of our holiday" [Tehillim 81:4]. The simple interpretation of the phrase 'time of hiding' (b'keseh) refers to the fact that the moon is hidden at the start of the month. But he homiletically interpreted that they were in a time when G-d's Providence was hidden from them. They could not figure out why all this was happening to them. Nevertheless, he told them, "we need to have faith".

He gave them this "shmooze" and then he blew shofar. He writes that he recorded the story because he wanted the world to know forever the great mesiras nefesh [sacrifice for mitzvos] these young men demonstrated. Right before they were taken out to the crematorium, just as Rabbi Meislisch was about to leave the cellblock, one of the young men stood up and addressed his comrades: "The Rebbe gave us strength and he told us that we should never give up hope and we should always hope for the best; but we must also be prepared for the worst. For G-d's sake, dear brothers, let us not become confused and forget to cry out with great devotion and intensity at the last moment of our lives: Shma Yisrael!" They then all called out with great devotion and intensity "Shma Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad". Then another student got up and said "Let us all acknowledge the great self-sacrifice of the Rebbe for coming here to blow shofar for us. Let us all give him a blessing that in the merit of this action he be spared, make it out of here and go on to have a long and good and healthy life." Everyone shouted out at the top of their lungs "Amen v'Amen".

This is only part of the story. But this is what Rav Yedidya Frankel meant when he interpreted the pasuk in Parshas Vayelech "V'Haysa haShira haZos l'Ed" to mean that the Torah itself will bear witness to the fact that it was not forgotten from the mouths of the nation's children. Even in the worst of times, Klal Yisrael did not forget the Torah.

These stories describe mind-boggling levels of mesiras nefesh of great heroes of our people who lived not long ago. Let the mesiras nefesh of so many members of our people over all the generations be a source of merit for us all. When G-d remembers Akeidas Yitzchak on Rosh HaShanah, may He remember not only the mesiras nefesh of the Patriarchs but also of righteous anonymous young boys throughout the generations who are typified by the story recorded by the Weitzener Rav.

In such merit, may the Almighty bless us with a good year, a Kesivah v'Chasimah Tova. May we have peace and tranquility, and pride from our children. May He bring us the redeemer and final redemption, without having to endure any further suffering of 'Chevlei Moshiach' [birthpangs of the Messiah].

This week's write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissochar Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly Torah portion.

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HALOCHOS and BOSTONER MINHAGIM for the HIGH HOLY DAYS - CONGREGATION BAI PINCHAS NEW ENGLAND CHASSIDIC CENTER 1710 BEACON STREET BROOKLINE, MA 02445 Rosh Hashana Prepared as a community service by Grand Rabbi Levi Y. Horowitz The Bostoner Rebbe, zt'l

HATOROS K'LOLOS Found in the Bostoner Siddurim is done with a Minyan, 40 days prior to Rosh Hashanah, (20 Menachem Av.)

SELICHOS The first Selichos are recited usually on the Saturday evening before Rosh Hashanah, after midnight, followed by a Melavah Malkah. If possible, Mikvah is recommended prior to the first Selichos. During Selichos, the "Oshamnu" should be recited only once, although it appears in print three times. Birchah Hatorah is said before Selichos when you say Selichos in the morning. During Selichos, we say the "Vidui-Oshamnu", which appears in the plural to symbolize that all of Israel is one entity. If one Jew commits an Avayra - a transgression, we are all guilty of the sin. This, of course, stresses our mutual responsibility. During this period, it is customary to check out certain areas of observances, such as the Kashrus of Tefillin and Mezuzos. On the 25th day of Elul, and then for seven days, the chapter of creation beginning with Breishes is recited, so that on the second day of Rosh Hashanah the section of "Vayechulu" is said. Tradition has it, that the world was created on the 25th day of Elul.

L'DOVID HASHEM URI "L'Dovid Hashem Uri" is said twice daily, starting from the second of Rosh Chodesh Elul until the end of Shemini Atzeres. It is said after the "Shir Shel Yom" at Shacharis and before "Oleinu" at Mincha. EREV ROSH HASHANAH SELICHOS - Z'CHOR BRIS We begin earlier due to the many more Selichos recited. "Z'chor Bris", one of the prayers that is said on this morning, give these Selichos their title and character, its theme being the remembrance of the Bris (Covenant) of Abraham and the Akai-dah of Yitzchak. Being that we are so close to Rosh Hashanah, we emphasize these important points of defense. It is customary on Erev Rosh Hashanah to perform Hatoras N'dorim (nullification of vows.) This must be done before a so-called Bais Din of at least three men, but preferably ten. It is possible to nullify some of the vows affecting one's personal behavior, but not those which involve others. One who does not understand Hebrew should add the following statement to the Hebrew text: "The 'N'dorim' (vows) or Sh'vuos' (promises) which I have taken upon myself, and which is possible to nullify, I regret having taken upon myself as a 'Neder' (vow) or as a Sh'vuoh' (promise)." Following the nullification of the Bais Din he should add: "I hereby declare that if I make a vow in the future, It shall not take effect." This is done to start the new year clear of prior unintentional personal commitments. The Challos baked for Rosh Hashanah are formed in a round shape symbolic of the world that

will be standing in judgment. ERUV TAVSHILLIN If any Yom Tov commences either Thursday or Friday an "Eruv Tavshillin" is made on Erev Yom Tov so that one may cook on the Yom Tov for Shabbos. The "Eruv Tavshilin" consists of two food items, such as Challah and fish. If you cannot locate the Aramaic text in the Siddur, say the following in English: "By virtue of the "Eruv" be it permitted unto us to bake, cook, and warm up, kindle lights, (only from a continuous flame), on the day of a festival, all that is needed for the Sabbath, unto us and all who dwell in this city."

EREV ROSH HASHANAH On the first evening during Hadlokos Neiros, two Brochos are recited: "L'hadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov" and "Shehecheyonu". On the second evening, the same two Brochos are recited. When Rosh Hashanah commences Friday evening the two Brochos recited are: "L'Hadlik Ner Shel Shabbos V'Shel Yom Tov" and "Shehecheyonu." When saying the Brocho "Shecheyonu" during the Hadlokos Neiros and Kiddush on the second night of Rosh Hashanah, one should have in mind a new garment that he or she is wearing or a new fruit that is on the table. If only one new article is available for both Hadlokos Neiros and Kiddush, the candles should be lit directly before Kiddush and the new fruit eaten immediately following it. New fruits preferred for Shehecheyonu are fresh figs or pomegranates. The woman who says Shehecheyanu over her candles, if she makes Kiddush, she does not say it again. However, it is advisable that the candle lighting take place prior to the saying of Kiddush and eating of the new fruit.

EREV ROSH HASHANAH Following Maariv, the first night of Rosh Hashanah, it is customary to greet one another with the blessing: "L'Shona Tova Tekaseyvu V'Sechaseyemu L'Alter, L'Chaim Tovim, U'L'Shalom." May you be inscribed and sealed in the "Book of Life" for a good year immediately, a good life and peace. During the day we do not use this greeting as we hopefully assume that a favorable decision has been inscribed. Instead, we say "G'mar Chasima Tova." May you be sealed for a good year. This greeting is used until after Yom Kippur. Following Maariv, the first night of Rosh Hashanah, it is customary to greet one another with the blessing: "L'Shona Tova Tekaseyvu V'Sechaseyemu L'Alter, L'Chaim Tovim, U'L'Shalom." May you be inscribed and sealed in the "Book of Life" for a good year immediately, a good life and peace. During the day we do not use this greeting as we hopefully assume that a favorable decision has been inscribed. Instead, we say "G'mar Chasima Tova." May you be sealed for a good year. This greeting is used until after Yom Kippur. Many Rosh Hashanah actions symbolize our hopes for a good and sweet year. At the evening meal, on the first night of Rosh Hashanah, we dip the Motzi in honey instead of salt. You should then dip a second piece of Challah into salt. Immediately after the Motzi, you make the Brocha over the apple and dip it in honey and say the "Y'he Ratzone" after eating a piece. This is followed by the Brocha, "Borei Pri Ha'adomah" before eating the black-eyed beans, after which you say the "Y'he Ratzone." You then recite the "Y'he Ratzone" before you eat the leeks, spinach, dates, squash and fish head. You then proceed with the regular meal. You eat the same foods and say the "Y'hi Ratzones" on the second night, as well. The following is a precise list of the types of foods used and the proper Y'he Ratzone": "Y'HE RATZONE MILFONECHO HASHEM ELOKEYNU VELOKAI AVOSEYNU" - May it be thy will O L-rd our G-d and G-d of our Fathers -
 A. APPLE - 'SHETECHADESH OLEINU SHONAH TOVAH U'MISUKAH' To renew us for a good and sweet year.
 B. BLACK-EYED BEANS - 'SHEYIRBU ZICHUYOSEYNU' That our merits may be multiplied.
 C. LEEKS - 'SHEYICHROSU SONEYNU' That our enemies may be cut off.
 D. SPINACH - 'SHEYISTALKU SONEYNU' That our enemies may flee.
 E. DATES - 'SHEYITAMU SONEYNU' That our enemies may be confounded.

F. SQUASH - 'SHEYIKRAH ROA G'ZAR DINEYNU V'YIKORU LIFONECHO ZICHUYOSEYNU' That the evil decree may be torn up and our merits may be read before you.

G. FISH HEAD - 'SHENIHIYE L'ROSH V'LO L'ZONOV SHENIFRA V'NIRBE KED AGIM HALOLU SH'AIN AIN HORA SHOLETES BOHEM' should recite the Brochos themselves. That we may be the head and not the tail, that we may be fruitful and multiply as the fish over whom After the first meal we dip the Motzi in honey and salt from Rosh Hashanah through and including Shabbos Bereishis. During the Birchah Hamazon, you say two additional "Harachamons" (found in the Bostoner Siddur) beginning with Rosh Hashanah and ending on Shabbos Bereishis.

ROSH HASHANAH You may drink coffee in the morning before Shofar during the break, but you should not eat anything. Some people wear a Kitel on Rosh Hashanah. It is the Rebbe's, Shlita, Minhag to wear a Kitel on Rosh Hashanah. From the time the Brochos are said for Tekias Shofar until the conclusion of all the Tekios, including the Tekios after the Kaddish of the Amidah, it is forbidden to speak. Since women are responsible for preventing their children from disturbing others, the Tekios will be repeated immediately following Musaf for those who may have to speak to their children. Women who listen to Tekios Shofar at home should recite the Brochos themselves. The various names for our New Year emphasize a different aspect of the Yom Tov: ROSH HASHANAH - "The Beginning of the Year," is the day on which G-d completed creation (according to tradition.) YOM TERUAH - "The Day of the Sounding of the Ram's Horn." The Shofar sounds the call to T'shuva - Repentance. Its bent shape reminds us to bow before the Ribono Shel Olom. It brings back to memory, the ram offered instead of Yitzchak as a sacrifice, as well as Avraham's unconditional obedience to G-d, thus focusing our case before Hakodosh Boruch Hu of this Z'chus.

YOM HAZIKORON AND YOM HADIN - "The Day of Remembrance" and "The Day of Judgment." On this day, Hashem recalls all the actions of the past year and judges us accordingly. G-d, who made and knows the human heart, hears and answers those who cry to him. During Rosh Hashanah, it is advisable to omit the verses in the "Avinu Malkeynu" where the proclamation of personal sins or shortcomings is made. The Krias Hatorah consists of: First Day: Breishis (Genesis 21: 1-34 Haftorah - Samuel I: 1-2.10 Second Day: Breishis (Genesis 22: 1-24 Haftorah - Jeremiah 3: 12-30 On the first day, the stories of Hagar and Ishmael, also Hannah and Samuel are read, to show us that those who put faith in Hashem and pray to Him are remembered. On the second day, the Kriah brings to mind the Z'chus of Akaidus Yitzchak. The Haftorah reminds us of G-d's promise of "Geulah" - redemption. The Musaf of Rosh Hashanah is distinguished by its three basic sections-Malchiyos, Zichronos and Shofaros, each of which contains a special Brocha and ten P'sukim which carry out its theme. Malchiyos proclaims that Hashem is Lord of the Universe. Zichronos reminds us that G-d remembers and judges the actions and thoughts of man throughout their lives. Shofaros presents G-d as our ruler who revealed Himself on Har Sinai with the sound of the Shofar and will redeem us with the sound of the Shofar. When falling "Korim" during "Oleinu" on Rosh Hashanah, you should put something between your knees and the floor or carpeting, such as a piece of paper or cloth. We do "Korim" even on Shabbos on Rosh Hashanah. If the Minhag in your Shul is not to, you may do it in an inconspicuous place. For Kiddush - On both mornings of Rosh Hashanah we recite "Tiku Bachodesh." If Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbos recite the Pesukim - "V'shomru," "Al Keyn Bayrach" and "Tiku Bachodesh."

TASHLICH PROCESSION We go to a body of water to symbolically act out the Posuk, "You shall throw all the sins of Israel into the ocean." Thus impressing upon ourselves the importance of actually discarding our sins in deed, as well as in words. When the first day of Rosh Hashanah is on Shabbos, we say Tashlich on the second day.

ASERES YEMAI TESHUVAH You do not respond to the Shaliach Tzibur when he says "Mi Komocha" and "Zochraynu." T'ZOM GEDALIAH "Ovinu Malkeynu" may be recited without a Minyan. The congregaton recites the "U'Chsov" and "B'Sefer" before the reader. The congregation does not repeat "Zochreinu" and "Mi Chomochoh." If the additional paragraphs of Zochreinu, Mi'chomochoh, U'chsov and B'sefer have not been said, one does not have to repeat the Amidoh. One does repeat it if "Hamelech Hakodesh" was not said. If one cannot fast on T'zom Gedaliah due to weakness, it is good to say, "I hope this food will give me strength to fast on Yom Kippur." YUD GIMEL MIDOS This day is called Yud Gimel Midos because on this day during Selichos that important chapter is read. Those who could not go for Tashlich on Rosh Hashanah, do so on this day. EREV YOM KIPPUR Yom Kippur is known, especially to Chassidim, be the name Yom Hakodesh - The Holy Day, signifying it as the holiest day of the year. Even those who usually do not go to Mikvah do so on Erev Yom Kippur, which is part of Halochah. On Erev Yom Kippur during Mincha, at the conclusion of the regular Amidoh, the "Vidui" and "Al Chait" are said. Do the order of Kaporos as found in the Bostoner Siddur, if possible with fowl, for each member of the family. This may be done during the Aseros Yemay Teshuva, preferably at day break on Erev Yom Kippur. If it is not possible to use fowl, use money - \$3.00 for each member of the family (adding up to the numerical value of the word "Kapayre"). Change the words of the text from "this fowl shall go to its death" to "this money shall be for charity."

EREV YOM KIPPUR On Erev Yom Kippur, it is customary to make the shape of a ladder from dough to adorn the Challah, plus a piece of dough resembling a bird on top of it. The idea being that on Yom Kippur, we reach upward towards the heavens and the birds will bring our messages above. On Erev Yom Kippur, you put into the charity plates a minimum of 18 cents for each member of the family, or two or three times Chai, depending on your financial circumstances. For members of your family who may be with you at the Shul, give them the amount designated so that they can do this themselves. According to Rabbi Yitzchak Meir of Gur, the "Al Chait" and "Oshamnu" appear in alphabetical acrostic, otherwise we would never be able to complete the recitation of the catalogue of sins. After Mincha the Seudah is eaten. There is a special Mitzvah to eat plentifully on this day. Meat Kreplach should be eaten (if possible) on Erev Yom Kippur, on Hoshanah Rabbah and Purim. It is customary to wear white or light colored clothes on Yom Kippur, this applies to both men and women. Men usually wear a Kitel, which serves a dual purpose; reminding us to cleanse our soul, and also that the physical of this world is not eternal. The five abstentions pertaining to Yom Kippur are: (1) eating and drinking, (2) bathing and washing (except for removal of dirt from hands and eye lids, (3) cosmetic anointing, (4) donning of leather shoes, (5) marital relations.

CANDLE LIGHTING TIME During the lighting of the Yom Kippur candles, one recites two Brochos, "L'hadlik Ner Shel Yom HaKippurim" and "Shehecheyonu". When Yom Kippur begins on Friday evening, the Brochos recited are "L'hadlik Ner Shel Shabbos V'shel Yom HaKippurim" and "Shehecheyonu". It is customary for the father to bless the children immediately before going to Shul. It should serve as an awe-inspiring experience for the entire family circle. The father conveys a special Brocho to each child and his needs; the husband and wife also exchange blessings. On Erev Kippur it is customary to have two special lights. One is called a Neshama Light (candle), the other a health light (candle). For those who are fortunate to have parents, there is only one light prepared, that of health. REMEMBER - carrying is prohibited on Yom Kippur, unless there is an Eruv.

KOL NIDREI In Bagdad, before Kol Nidrei, the chazon calls out to the Congregation, "Sirs, forgive each other," and the congregation responds, "We have forgiven." In Brookline this is not done but the spirit of forgiving should be present. Some people personally ask forgiveness in making the rounds of wishing well at Shul just preceding Kol Nidrei. If one has hurt

another in the past, it is obligatory to ask forgiveness. Kol Nidrei is said in Aramaic, the language of Bavel, where it originated. It dates back to the Talmud and not to the Spanish Inquisition, mistakenly accepted by many, as its origin. When the "Shehecheyonu" is recited on Erev Yom Kippur by the Chazzan, the congregation shall also repeat it softly and then say "Amen" at the conclusion of the Brocha by the Chazzan. Please Note: Women are not to say the "Shehecheyonu" as they have already recited it at the kindling of the Yom Kippur candles. The "Vidui" is a requirement that applies to women, as well.

SHACHARIS - YOM KIPPUR On Yom Kippur morning, the Brocho of "She'oseh Li Kol T'zorkee" is not said, as this applies mainly to shoes. It should be said in the evening Motzoei Yom Kippur, after breaking the fast. If Yom Kippur falls on Shabbos, you do not say "Retsay Bimnuchasaynu" during the services. Whenever you mention "Yom Kippur" during the service, you say "Yom T'zom HaKippurim."

MUSAF - YOM KIPPUR The Avodah during Musaf is the most significant part of the Yom Kippur service. It is here that one finds, in complete detail, what happened during the service at the Bais Hamikdash. It is, therefore, very important that we concentrate during that service, and in recalling the past, express our longing for the restoration of the Bais Hamikdash and our complete dedication in the service of G-d. When falling Korim you should put something between your knees and the floor or carpeting, such as a paper or cloth. We do Korim even on Yom Kippur.

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A Treasury of Humility

By Harav Yehuda Amital zt"l

Translated by Kaeren Fish In the Selichot, we recount: It was You Who descended in the cloud of Your glory upon Mount Sinai and showed the ways of Your goodness to Moshe, Your servant. You revealed to him the ways of Your kindness and made known to him that You are a merciful and compassionate God, longsuffering and abundant in lovingkindness, greatly beneficent and directing the entire world with the attribute of mercy, as it is written: "And He said, I shall cause all My goodness to pass before you, and I shall proclaim the Name of God before you, and I shall be gracious to whom I shall be gracious, and show mercy to whom I shall show mercy" (Shemot 33:19). God promises Moshe that He will cause all His goodness to pass before him. What this means is that Moshe will be able to perceive, with his intellect, God's providence over the world and His attributes of mercy and kindness, and not just the names and descriptions given to them. God showed Moshe His guidance of all generations, and His constant mercy.

As part of the revelation of His control of the world, God also showed Moshe the reward in the World to Come. The midrash teaches: "And I shall be gracious to whom I shall be gracious" (Shemot 33:19) – At that time God showed [Moshe] all the treasuries of reward that await the righteous. He said to Him, "Master of the universe, to whom does all of this treasure belong?" [God] answered him, "To those who perform righteousness." "To whom does this [treasury] belong?" "To those who feed orphans," and so on, for each and every treasure. Eventually he saw one great treasure and asked, "To whom does this belong?" [God] told him, "Those who have [earned their reward] – I give them of that which is theirs; those who have not [earned any reward] – I give them for free, as it is written, 'I shall be gracious to whom I shall be gracious.'" (Midrash Tanchuma [Buber], Ki Tisa 16) The last treasury that Moshe sees is the treasury of free gifts – a treasury set aside for "those who have not," and to whom God gives "for free." The first time I read this midrash, I imagined tens of thousands of people standing at the gates of this treasury. Who would not want a free

reward? On second thought, however, the reality may be different. Perhaps the line at the gate of the free treasury is not so crowded. Very few Jews sporting kippot are there – after all, the treasury is meant for those "who have not," and we do not imagine that we fall into that category. Of what use is it to us? Suffice it to have a quick look at our literature and our media once in a while: the impression we get is one of self-satisfaction – how much we have, how spiritually and culturally rich we are! Those "who have not" must surely belong to some other sector; we are among those who "have." Such views are spreading in our community. Seemingly, there is some justification for this view: we study Torah, we put on tefillin, we observe Shabbat; in comparison with other communities, we are entitled to claim that we "have." However, it is specifically here that we must exercise humility and undertake genuine self-evaluation. Such humility is not only a virtue in itself, not only a trait that counters pride. It is also a fundamental precondition for any vidui, any confession, and in fact – for any prayer that is recited with genuine intent. A person who wishes to elevate himself, or even just change something within himself, not to remain in the same place, must be humble. Some people bring about truly revolutionary change in their lives, like Rabbi Eliezer ben Dordaya (Avoda Zara 17a), who came to the realization that "It depends only on me." But even smaller, easier, more modest changes require true humility. What is humility? Ramchal explains that it is the recognition that even if we possess intelligence, we should not be proud of that which is our "inborn nature": The factor that is responsible more than any other for a person's coming to feel self-important and proud is wisdom. This is so because wisdom is a superior quality of the person himself, a function of his most honored faculty, intelligence. But there is no sage who will not err and will not need to learn from the words of his friends and, very often, even from those of his disciples. How, then, can he pride himself in his wisdom? In truth, one who is possessed of an honest intelligence, even if he has managed to become a toweringly great sage, will see, when he looks into the matter, that there is no room at all for pride and self-importance. For a man of intelligence, one who knows more than others, acts only according to the dictates of his nature, as it is natural for a bird to fly, and as it is dictated for an ox to pull with his strength. One is wise only because his nature has led him to be so. (Mesillat Yescharim, chapter 22)[1]

Ramchal's teaching goes to the heart of what we discussed above. If we are observant Jews because we were born into religious families and received a religious education, does this make us worthy of some sort of reward? Have we added anything of our own? Is all that we do not simply part of our "nature"? Someone who is born into a religious family, or a religious social environment, is not entitled to believe that he is assured a place in the Garden of Eden. If one has been fortunate enough to have such a background, then more is expected of him! In order to meet this expectation, Ramchal explains, one requires true humility. *** The Torah tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu was "exceedingly humble, more than any other person upon the face of the earth" (Bamidbar 12:3). Apparently, Moshe's humility expressed itself in the fact that he did not view himself as being greater than his brethren. He understood that he had been privileged to grow up in Pharaoh's palace, and to experience God's revelation at the burning bush. Had someone else been through all of this, Moshe thought, he surely would have been even greater than me! Such humility is a fundamental condition for Divine service. A psalm unto David: Lord, who shall sojourn in Your tent; who shall dwell in Your holy mountain? He who walks uprightly and acts justly, and speaks the truth in his heart. He who does not slander with his tongue, nor cause any evil to his fellow, nor take up a reproach against his neighbor. A vile person is despised by him, but he honors those who fear God; he swears to his own hurt and does not change. He does not lend out money with interest, nor take a bribe against the innocent; he who does these things will never be moved. (Tehillim 15:1-5) The Gemara (Makkot 24a) teaches that when Rabban Gamliel read this psalm, he would weep. Why? Did he ever lend money with interest? Did he not "walk uprightly and act justly"? The Gemara explains that Rabban Gamliel was indeed endowed with

fine attributes, but he did not develop these attributes to their fullest: he did not "walk uprightly" as Avraham did; he did not "act justly" as Abba Chilkiya did; he did not "speak the truth in his heart" as Rav Safra did, etc. Concerning this last comparison, Rashi elaborates: This is what happened: Rav Safra had a certain article that he was trying to sell. A person appeared before him while he was reciting the Shema, and said, "Give me that article for such-and-such sum." He did not answer, because he was in the midst of reciting the Shema. The buyer understood from this that he was unwilling to sell it for that price, so he said, "Give it to me for such-and-such amount more [than the original price]." After he had finished reciting the Shema, [Rav Safra] said to him, "Take it for the price you mentioned in the beginning, for I had intended to give it to you for that price." (Rashi, Makkot 24a) The story illustrates how far the matter may be taken. We are accustomed to viewing such concepts as justice, truth and uprightness in terms of the social norms of our own times and our environment. But what is actually required of us is the tears of Rabban Gamliel, who wept upon realizing that he did not sufficiently meet the criterion of "walking uprightly" and "acting justly." The Gemara goes on to say that Rabban Gamliel's colleagues tried to console him, pointing out that the concluding verse of the psalm does not read, "He who does all of these things," but rather "he who does these things" – meaning, he who possesses even one of these virtues. However, even this – the full and complete implementation of even one single virtue – is not something that the average person manages to achieve.

*** There is another aspect to humility, which pertains specifically to prayer. When we turn to God in prayer, it is important that we approach with humility, asking that He do whatever is right in His eyes, whatever He knows to be good, rather than asking Him to help us as we believe is right. The Yerushalmi relates concerning Bar Kokhba: When he would go out to battle, he would say: "Master of the universe – do not help us, and do not hinder us!" (Yerushalmi Ta'anit 5:5) Bar Kokhba told God, quite bluntly, to "stay out of things." He was completely sure of himself and his strategy in the battle against the Romans. He was so convinced of his power and assured victory that he believed that Divine intervention could only "mess things up," heaven forefend. A prayer such as that of Bar Kokhba is of no value. If we are praying, but at the same time completely certain that what we know, what we plan, and what we want is right, then we are not really praying but rather showing brazen insolence before God. When one isn't praying, it is generally good to have a clear approach to life, according to which one conducts himself and acts upon his environment. But when it comes to prayer, we must say, "Master of the universe – do what is right in Your eyes!" Do we really know what is truly good for Am Yisrael? Sometimes we attain something that we wanted very much, and we are certain that it is a positive achievement, but ultimately it turns out to be a great disappointment. On the other hand, it sometimes happens that a possibility that we had feared greatly becomes a reality, and turns out to be the best thing that could have happened. What appears to be the shorter road is often the longer one, while the seemingly longer road sometimes leads us to our destination more quickly. The humility discussed above must therefore find expression in our prayers before God. *** The history and development of Knesset Yisrael, and the history and development of the State of Israel, are not like those of other nations. Zekharia declares in his prophecy, So says the Lord of Hosts: Old men and old women will yet again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, each with his staff in his hand for old age. And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its streets. (Zekharia 8:4-5) What is so special about this prophecy? After all, the presence of boys and girls, old men and old women, is quite a normal phenomenon everywhere else in the world. However, the prophet continues and says: So says the Lord of Hosts: If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this nation in those days, it will also be marvelous in My own eyes, says the Lord of Hosts. (ibid., verse 6) This reality is truly marvelous! That which is altogether natural and banal in Switzerland, France or anywhere else in the world, is not natural for us. Our entire history shows

that Eretz Yisrael and Am Yisrael follow a marvelous and unique course. Therefore, we pray to God and tell Him that He knows what is best for Am Yisrael. We, for our part, pray with humility, and with the hope that God will hear our prayers. May it be God's will that we merit a good year, a year of life and peace, a year of spiritual awakening. May we be able to stand at the gates of the "treasury of free gifts" and say to God, "We have not"; may we pray with humility. Perhaps then God will grant us a spiritual awakening, and salvation for each individual and for the nation as a whole, and inscribe and seal us and all of Israel for a good year. <

<http://koltorah.org/ravj/ravj.htm>

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Eating Before Shofar Blowing by Rabbi Howard Jachter

Introduction The standard practice for many decades is that Yeshiva students partake of a light snack before Tekiat Shofar during the services conducted at Yeshivot. The motivation for this practice is the fact that Tefillah on Rosh Hashana in Yeshivot usually lasts until late in the afternoon. After the Tekiot have commenced, one may not engage in any Hefsek, such as conversation, until after the one hundred blasts of the Shofar have been sounded (Shulchan Aruch 592:3). Thus, the last opportunity to eat before the conclusion of the services is before Tekiat Shofar.

Many Halachic authorities (e.g. Rav Zvi Pesach Frank, Mikra'ei Kodosh Yamim Noraim 29 and Teshuvot Minchat Yitzchak 5:111) have sanctioned this practice and have endeavored to demonstrate its Halachic basis. However, some leading Rabbis have opposed this practice. For instance, Rav Aharon Lichtenstein does not partake of the snack before Tekiat Shofar in Yeshivat Har Etzion. Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin vociferously opposed this practice in his writings and communications with leading Rabbis. His grandson, Rav Yehuda Henkin, continues his grandfather's practice of vigorously opposing this practice (Teshuvot Bnei Anim 1:14-15). We will try to present both sides of this argument regarding the practice of Yeshivot.

Eating Before Performing Mitzvot The Mishna that appears on Sukkah 38a records the Halacha that if one began to eat on Sukkot before performing the Mitzva of Lulav, he must interrupt his meal and take the Lulav. The obvious implication of this rule is that one may not eat until he has taken the Lulav. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 652:2) codifies this rule.

This rule seems to apply to all Mitzvot due to concern that if one eats before performing the Mitzva he may forget to perform that Mitzva. For example, one may not eat a meal before he has recited Mincha (see Shabbat 9b and Shulchan Aruch O.C. 232:2-3). The Rama (O.C. 692:4) cites the Terumat Hadeshen (109) that one may not eat before the recitation of the Megilla even if he finds fasting difficult. In fact, Rav Hershel Schachter has suggested that this is the basis of the Ashkenazic practice for a couple not to eat on the day they marry. Thus, Rav Henkin argues that the practice of the Yeshivot is incorrect.

The Defense of the Teshuvot Hitorerut Teshuva Nevertheless, Poskim have endeavored to defend this practice. Rav Shimon Sofer (son of the Ktav Sofer) presents a defense in his Teshuvot Hitorerut Teshuva, responsum 225. He notes that the Mishna, Gemara, and Shulchan Aruch never explicitly record a prohibition to eat before hearing Tekiat Shofar. He suggests that there is no prohibition to eat before Tekiat Shofar because the concern that one may forget to blow the Shofar is not relevant. This is because the fear of Hashem's judgment pervades the mood on Rosh Hashana, and we will certainly not forget to blow Shofar. We say in the Piyut, ????? ?????, we seek to "entice" Hashem to judge us mercifully by blowing the Shofar. We will certainly not forget to use our most potent "defense mechanism" on the day that Hashem judges us.

A precedent for this approach is the ruling that one may read a Machzor by candlelight on Yom Kippur night. Reading by candlelight is forbidden every other Shabbat and Yom Tov lest one come to adjust the light. The Shulchan

Aruch (O.C. 275:8) records the accepted practice that this rabbinical prohibition does not apply on Yom Kippur night because, "the fear of Yom Kippur is upon them."

Those who criticize the practice of the Yeshivot point out an ancient source that appears to forbid eating before Shofar blowing. The Tosefta (Shabbat 1:4) states that one must interrupt to hear Shofar blowing. The Magen Avraham (O.C.692:7) and the Mishna Berura (692:15) both understand the Tosefta to be speaking about the obligation to interrupt eating if he has yet to hear Tekiat Shofar. However, Rav Yehuda Amital (in a lecture in which he defended the practice of the Yeshivot - including Yeshivat Har Etzion - summarized in Daf Keshet 1:416-418) endeavors to demonstrate that the Tosefta is speaking about the obligation for even the most devout and committed Torah scholars to interrupt their studies to hear Shofar blowing.

Teshuvot Hitorerut Teshuva presents another reason why Chazal did not forbid eating before Tekiat Shofar. He notes that the Mishna and Gemara (Rosh Hashana 30b) indicate that during the era when the Sanhedrin established the calendar based on witnesses' sightings of the moon, they would not blow Shofar until witnesses came to testify that they sighted the "new moon." The witnesses most often would not appear until the latter part of the day. The Hitorerut Teshuva argues that Chazal did not impose a prohibition to eat until Tekiat Shofar because it would constitute too great a burden to require everyone to wait until the end of the day to eat. Rav Amital notes that although this argument is quite creative, it does appear to be somewhat far-fetched.

Snacking Before Performing a Mitzva The Mishna Berura writes both in the context of the prohibition to eat before taking the Lulav (652:7) and reading the Megila (692:16) that in case of great need one may snack before performing these Mitzvot. Rav Moshe Shternbuch (Moadim U'zmanim 1:4) argues that there is a great need for every Yeshiva student to eat before Shofar blowing. Rav Shternbuch points out that there is an obligation to rejoice somewhat on Rosh Hashana (see Rambam Hilchot Chanuka 3:6 and Mishna Berura 597:1). In fact, the Shulchan Aruch (O.C.597:1) writes that "we eat, drink, rejoice, and do not fast on Rosh Hashana." Rav Shternbuch argues that one can hardly rejoice on Rosh Hashana if he does not eat anything until the late afternoon. Moreover, there is a prohibition to fast past Chatzot (midday) on Shabbat and Yom Tov (Shulchan Aruch 288:1 and Mishna Berura 529:1). Thus, he argues that there exists a great need to partake of a light snack before Tekiat Shofar to avoid violating this prohibition.

One should note that the Halacha rigorously defines snacking. The Shulchan Aruch (232:3) writes that snacking is considered consuming bread less than "the size of an egg." The Mishna Berura (232:34-35) adds that consuming pasta or cake less than the size of four eggs is also considered snacking (see Mishna Berura 168:24). The Mishna Berura adds that an unlimited amount of fruit and non-alcoholic beverage is still considered just "a snack."

Rav Yehuda Henkin's Responses Rav Yehuda Henkin responds that the Mishna Berura (597:2) rules that there is no prohibition to fast on Rosh Hashana until Chatzot, unlike Shabbat and Yom Tov. Rav Henkin also argues that partaking of a snack is permitted only for individuals who have a unique need to eat before Tekiat Shofar, not an entire Yeshiva population. He cites the Teshuvot Chatam Sofer (Yoreh Deah 7) who permitted an epileptic to partake of a snack before Shofar blowing because doctors advised him that not eating for a prolonged period may cause him to have a seizure. This responsum indicates that only in an extraordinary situation does Halacha sanction snacking before Tekiat Shofar. Moreover, Rav Shternbuch notes that some prominent Acharonim forbid snacking before performing a Mitzva. These include Rav Akiva Eiger, the Bait Meir, and the Mateh Efraim.

Rav Henkin goes as far as to say that if it is necessary for one to eat before the conclusion of services on Rosh Hashana he should eat after the first group of Shofar blasts (the Tekiot D'meyushav, in which the individual

fulfills his basic obligation to hear Tekiat Shofar). He reasons that even though the Shulchan Aruch rules that one may not talk from the beginning of Tekiat Shofar until all one hundred blasts have been sounded, this is only forbidden by a Gaonic ruling. Rav Henkin argues that it is preferable to violate a Gaonic ruling than to violate a rule that appears in the Gemara. In addition, Rav Henkin marshals many Rishonim who do not subscribe to the Gaonic ruling.

Conclusion We see that there is a Halachic basis for the practice of Yeshiva students to eat before Tekiat Shofar. However, we also see that the arguments defending the practice are debatable, and we can appreciate the position of those who do not snack before Tekiat Shofar.

http://download.yutorah.org/2012/1053/Rosh_Hashanah_To-Go_-_5773_Rabbi_Schwartz.pdf

The Minhag of Not Sleeping on Rosh HaShana Rabbi Ezra Schwartz

RIETS Class of 2001, (Yadin Yadin, 2008) Rosh Yeshiva and Bochein, RIETS Rabbi, Mount Sinai Jewish Center, New York, NY

Much of the material for this article was gleaned from two excellent articles in the journal *Ohr Yisrael*. Rabbi Gedalia Oberlander's *Issur Sheina B'Rosh HaShana* (volume 25 page 176-187) and Rabbi Eliezer Brodt's *Issur haSheina b'Rosh HaShana* (volume 29 pages 146-163)

We do many things on Rosh HaShana that are intended to serve as a good omen. We enjoy apples dipped in honey, eat various simanim (symbols) and partake in luscious meals to demonstrate that we are beginning the New Year in an auspicious manner. Most of us find great meaning and enjoyment when we partake in the simanim of Rosh HaShana. There is one minhag of Rosh HaShana however, that many find to be difficult if not oppressive. RAMA (ca. 1530-1572) teaches that one should not sleep on Rosh HaShana.

There are those who are careful not to eat nuts on Rosh HaShana since the Hebrew word for nut, *egoz*, has the same numeric value as the word *cheit* - sin. Additionally, our practice is not to sleep on Rosh HaShana and this is a proper practice. Rama Orach Chaim 583:2

Source RAMA was not the first to note that it is improper to sleep on Rosh HaShana. Rav Yehoshua ibn Shu'ib (ca. 1280-1340) a student of the Rashba in his *derasha* for Rosh HaShana quotes a Yerushalmi that it is forbidden to sleep on Rosh HaShana. Although it is highly unlikely that RAMA was in possession of the *derashot* of ibn Shu'ib,¹⁷ the same Yerushalmi is cited by RAMA in his *Darkei Moshe* as the source for the prohibition to sleep on Rosh HaShana:

The Yerushalmi in Rosh HaShana teaches that one who sleeps on Rosh HaShana will have sleepy *mazal*. Therefore we are careful not to sleep on Rosh HaShana.¹⁸ *Darkei Moshe Orach Chaim 583*

Many have noted, however, that this Yerushalmi does not appear in the versions of Yerushalmi that we possess. It is entirely possible that it was found in the Yerushalmi on *Kodshim* which is missing, or the Yerushalmi on *Nidda* that is incomplete. Alternatively, some suggest that Rishonim refer to *Midrashim* that originate in Eretz Yisrael as Yerushalmi.¹⁹ A further suggestion posits that there was a book which many Rishonim drew upon titled the *Sefer haYerushalmi* and when citations are quoted from a Yerushalmi that we do not have, they originate in this work.²⁰

Scope of and Reasons for the Practice Whatever the source of the custom or prohibition not to sleep on Rosh HaShana is, it is worth noting the scope of this injunction. The simple reading of all the early sources is that the prohibition extends all day.²¹ Some contend that the practice only applies in the morning of Rosh HaShana; in the afternoon however it is permissible to sleep.²² Although there were some who woke at dawn (*alot hashachar*) so as not to sleep during any of the daylight on Rosh HaShana, common practice is to continue one's sleep after day break.²³ *Chayei Adam* states that one should sit down to learn after lunch; if he or she feels tired they may put their heads down to sleep a bit. Many understand that *Chayei Adam* is permitting one to sleep at the table but not in a bed. Many cite *Noheg Katzon Yosef* that

the minhag applies only on the first day of Rosh HaShana, not on the second day.²⁴

BACH notes that one who reads the derashot of R' Yehoshua ibn Shuiv carefully will notice three separate reasons for the practice not to sleep on Rosh HaShana. The first reason mentioned is based on the Rambam's famous comment (Hilchot Shofar 3:4) that the shofar of Rosh HaShana is meant to wake us from our slumber so that we do teshuva. One who sleeps is clearly oblivious to the meaning of the shofar. The other reasons cited are that it is improper to sleep while one's deeds are being investigated. Shaat hadin (the moment of judgment) is not an appropriate time to catch some z's. Finally, sleep implies laziness, an attribute that is very far from the ideal we try to portray on Rosh HaShana.

It would seem that those who adopt the first reason should not sleep all day on Rosh HaShana, as the entire day is termed (Bamidbar 29:1) yom teruah (a day of blowing the shofar) in the Torah. Those who adopt the second reason, that it is improper to sleep at the time of din, would be permitted to sleep after midday, since at that time the din is less intense. The practice to continue sleeping beyond daybreak adopts the third approach. One can argue that only going to sleep falls under the category of laziness; one who remains asleep is tired, not lazy. According to all the above-mentioned reasons, sleeping at night is permitted, since it is not the time of shofar or the time of din and sleeping at night is the way of the world and most certainly does not convey laziness.

Those Who Slept on Rosh HaShana

In addition to the Arizal and Chayei Adam who minimize the scope of the practice not to sleep on Rosh HaShana, there were those who slept regularly and completely disregarded this practice. BACH cites that Maharam of Rottenburg (1215-1293) slept on Rosh HaShana.²⁵

MAHARAM was accustomed to sleeping as he did on other holidays. BACH Orach Chaim 597

It is possible that MAHARAM slept because he did not have the Yerushalmi that is cited as the source of this practice. Alternatively, it is possible that he slept based on an understanding of how simanim work on Rosh HaShana.

The Gemara in Horiyut notes: Now that we say that simanim are significant a person should be careful to see 26 gourds, leeks and beets on Rosh HaShana. Horiyut 12a

Meiri asks a thought provoking question, why are the simanim not forbidden as forms of nichush, sorcery? After all, ordinarily Jews do not seek omens. He answers that the simanim are permitted since they are intended to inspire us to act properly. And so that we do not stumble into the forbidden territory of nichush, the rabbis instituted that one should recite statements that inspire teshuva, may our merits be read etc. Beit Habechirah, Horiyut 12a

Effectively, Meiri is suggesting that absent a yehi ratzon, a prayer to inspire proper behavior, a siman is dangerously close to nichush. Yehi ratzon prayers are only recited on positive simanim, they were not and could not be instituted for negative simanim such as not eating nuts and not sleeping on Rosh HaShana. Perhaps this is why the same Maharam of Rottenburg that BACH cites as not adhering to the practice of not sleeping on Rosh HaShana, is quoted by Kol Bo as not refraining from eating any food on Rosh HaShana.

Maharam was also careful to keep the simanim (eating gourds, cabbage and beets). However, he was not particular to refrain from eating garlic, nuts or any food item. Kol Bo 64

Although MAHARAM eagerly embraced the positive simanim, he refrained from the negative simanim of not sleeping and not eating nuts out of concern that they would constitute nichush.

from: Shabbat Shalom <info@ounetwork.org> reply-to: info@ounetwork.org date: Tue, Sep 23, 2014 at 8:55 PM subject: Shanah Tovah

Jonah and ISIS

Rabbi Eliyahu Safran

Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness has come up before me. But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Jaffa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish... – Jonah 1:1-3

Is there a more singular, better known or more beloved prophet than Jonah? In him, we recognize both the humanity in greatness and the greatness in human frailty. Called by the Lord to speak to the people of Nineveh of their wickedness, Jonah does not rise to the great challenge of godliness like some Hollywood hero. Instead, he responds with the fullness of human frailty; that is, he tries to avoid the call by fleeing.

But it is not his resistance to his calling that makes him unique. For a Hebrew prophet to resist the call of the Lord is *di rigueur* in our tradition. Even Moses, the greatest prophet of all, tried to “beg off” from the call, suggesting that perhaps his brother Aaron was more suited to the task. No, trying to refuse the role of prophet is not unique to Jonah. What is unique to him and his calling is that he is the one and only Hebrew prophet that was called to preach to the Gentiles of the world!

One might think that this universal calling might diminish him in the eyes of the Jewish people. After all, why should we concern ourselves with the failings of the Gentiles; we have more than enough failings of our own! Yet, his prophecy and story, a mere forty-eight verses in length, is publicly chanted throughout the Jewish world during the most sacred hours of the year, on Yom Kippur afternoon. So valued are his words that there are Jews who donate thousands and tens of thousands of dollars to their synagogues or other charities just to have the privilege of chanting this most renowned of hafarot—Maftir Yonah.

Jonah's words capture the fullness of Yom Kippur's message – that God is the Supreme judge of all. He judges each individual and each nation, Hebrew and Gentile.

At first glance, this message of absolute judgment seems harsh and frightening. After all, we all cherish our secrets, our sins that we would not want to have anyone know. Yet, as we learn from Jonah's experience, there is no place to protect those secrets, no place to escape, not even in the belly of a whale beneath the surface of the sea! Jonah could not hide from God any more than Adam could in the Garden.

While God's judgment can seem relentless, it is tempered by optimism and hope. That is, ultimately, the message that Jonah is sent to convey – even to the sinners of Nineveh. There is hope! There is another breath of air to breathe and, with it, the spark of teshuva to be ignited. Yes, God judges but His judgment is that of a loving father who longs only for his child's quick and safe return.

God awaits man to perform teshuva – return. God longs for man to come home to His embrace. Judgment and embrace – this is the tension of God's message and of Jonah's prophecy. Maya Bernstein's words capture this tension, “. . . between the cities of Nineveh and Tarshish, land and sea, sleep and wakefulness, up and down, an embracing of God and an evasion of God, an embracing of mission and an evasion of mission, good and bad, compassion and detestation, desire for mercy, desire for truth, Jews and non-Jews.”

One cannot hide from God's judgment but, ultimately, the prophet's message is a positive one. God awaits! But who would want to step into the “lion's den” of sin and iniquity to deliver that message? Who today would walk into the boardroom of our self-described “masters of the universe” and deliver the message that, for all their millions and billions of dollars, they too must answer to God? Who will carry the Yom Kippur message to the world, that there is no escape and time is short; your day will arrive and your fate will be sealed?

For a Hebrew prophet to deliver this message to the Jews is overwhelming enough. But to carry it to the Gentiles? Particularly to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, to the very people responsible for expelling the Ten Tribes? How

could poor Jonah tell these people that Nineveh was doomed lest they repent?

That Jonah was reluctant is an understatement. So determined was he to avoid this calling that he had the sailors throw him overboard so that they might be saved and he would not have to face His God. But God ensures that he survives. He has a mission to fulfill and there is no escape from one's life mission.

So, brought back from the belly of the whale, he goes to Nineveh and, still hesitant and resistant, staggering only one-third of the way into the city, never approaching the king, he manages to utter five words to the city, "Od arbaim yom v'Nineveh neepachet" – forty days more and Nineveh will be overturned.

* * *

Jonah fled. He hid. He sought his own destruction. But to no avail. No one and no thing, not the wind, the kikayon plant, the sea, the whale or a prophet is beyond God's control. Ultimately, Jonah delivers God's message – which is not the destruction of the city but its salvation. God's message is mercy. Come to me. Repent. Repent and you will be saved.

To Jonah's astonishment, Nineveh listened! Nineveh repented. If Nineveh can repent, repentance and return is available to every one! As God bestows mercy on Nineveh, He makes His mercy to all clear, "Would I accept the repentance of the people of Nineveh, and not yours?"

Was Jonah pleased with Nineveh's redemption? Hardly. How could Assyria be forgiven? What of Israel who had not heeded to the prophets' warnings? Jonah begged God to take his own soul so that he would be spared seeing Israel's destruction. Disgusted, he left Nineveh and went to seek some peace, solitude and shelter under the shade of a great kikayon tree.

The tree's shade, protecting him from the harsh sun, made him well aware of God's compassion but then, God sent a worm to eat through the tree and kill it. How Jonah mourned for the tree and for his own relief! Now, he had no sanctuary from the awful sun beating down on him.

Why did God do such a thing, send a worm to kill the tree? To teach Jonah a further lesson about His mercy. Jonah had taken pity upon, "...a kikayon for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow... shall I not take pity on Nineveh, that great city in which there are more than 120 thousand people who do not know their right hand from their left, and many beasts as well?"

All deserve the opportunity to repent. Jonah perhaps could not fathom God's mercy in this regard. After all, all sins must be paid for. But understanding how God calculates the price was beyond him for, as Pikei DeRabbi Eliezer notes, Jonah is the child who Elijah revived in Kings 1:17. There was an absolute purity to him, breathed into him by God's most eminent emissary.

* * *

The prophet Jonah, through his message and his humanity became a symbol to all of God's mercy and our own conflicted humanness. Jonah is the son of Amitai, a name derived from *emet*, truth. Truth, like God's judgment, can seem harsh and unforgiving. But Jonah's own name is derived from the Hebrew word for "dove". Like the dove saved from Noah's flood, Jonah was saved from a watery tomb.

We cannot fathom God's judgment or mercy. We can only take heart in knowing that He "pardons and forgives"; that He is "the gracious One who repeatedly forgives." In the Shmoneh Esrei blessing asking for forgiveness we refer to God as our Father, reminding God, the Tur explains, that a father does more than punish, He forgives, loves and guides His child. He shows the child the way to return. This is the lesson that God insists Jonah convey to mankind for all time, even to Nineveh.

Is it any wonder then that Jonah is held in such regard?

We embrace his humanness, his weakness, even as we cling to the message he delivered. All mankind is called to *teshuvah*. All mankind can seek God's mercy.

To destroy Jonah's tomb is to rail against God's mercy and message. And yet, that is exactly what the Islamists ISIS did. As the Gaza fighting drew the

attention of the world, distracting our thoughts from other areas of the world while Israel did battle against ISIS's fellow Islamists, Hamas, ISIS cut large swaths of violence and destruction in Iraq and Syria. However, more cruel than their medieval beheadings; than their crucifixion of children and denigration of women, destroying Jonah's tomb seeks to destroy the hope that God brings to the hopeless. That the tomb had been located in Mosul, the modern name for Nineveh, adds poignancy and irony to the wickedness of these people. Even more, it is good to bear in mind that Jonah's tomb was a shrine to Muslims as well as others.

Certainly, ISIS would have preferred to have killed the prophet than just his tomb, but even these murderous barbarians cannot destroy God's message and hope.

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu Safran is an educator, author and lecturer. He can be reached at...

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The Experience of Rosh HaShana

by R. David Brofsky, excerpted from *Hilkhos Mo'adim: Understanding the Laws of the Festivals*

Rosh HaShana in Tanakh

Rosh HaShana, as it appears in Scripture, is somewhat mysterious. The Torah commands:

And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, it shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall do no servile work; it shall be a day of *terua* for you. (Num. 29:1)

While the celebration of Rosh HaShana does not entail the pilgrimage component of the other festivals, it shares an *issur melakha*, the prohibition of labor, as well as the title of "mikra kodesh." The uniqueness of Rosh HaShana seems to lie in its being a "yom *terua*," a "day of *terua*," the ululating sound that is variously described in Scripture as emanating from the shofar, trumpets, or human throats. Similarly, the Torah teaches elsewhere:

And God spoke to Moshe, saying: "Speak to the Israelites, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, it shall be a solemn rest for you, a *terua* memorial, a holy convocation. You shall do no servile work, and you shall bring a fire-offering to God." (Lev. 23:23–25)

Here, too, Rosh HaShana is described by the term "terua." While our sages understand this to refer to the mitzva of shofar, the Torah uses the term to describe the day itself. In what way does "terua" characterize the day? What does blowing a shofar or trumpet symbolize?

Throughout Tanakh, we can identify two distinct, yet apparently contradictory descriptions of these sounds, and thus, of Rosh HaShana itself. On the one hand, the prophet Zephaniah describes the horrors that will befall the Jewish people as follows:

Hark...the great day of God is near; it is near and hastens greatly, the sound of the day of God, wherein the mighty man cries bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of waste and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of shofar and *terua*, against the fortified cities, and against the high towers. (Zeph. 1:10, 14–16)

The terms "shofar" and "terua" are clearly employed here to depict alarm and distress. Similarly, Amos describes the blowing of the shofar and the people's response: "Shall a shofar be blown in the city, and the people not tremble? Shall evil befall a city, and God has not done it?" (Amos 3:6) Indeed, when the Jewish people go out to war, they are commanded to make this sound:

And when you go to war in your land against the adversary that oppresses you, then you shall sound a *terua* with the trumpets; and you shall be remembered before Lord your God, and you shall be saved from your enemies. (Num. 10:9)

These verses strongly imply that “a day of *terua*” is a day of alarm, crisis, and distress.

On the other hand, the trumpets are also sounded on festive days, as the very next verse in Numbers notes:

And on the day of your joy, and on your appointed seasons, and on your new moons, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt-offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; and they shall be for you as a memorial before your God: I am Lord your God. (Num. 10:10)

Similarly, we find the following description of Ezra’s joyous reading of the Torah on Rosh HaShana:

And Ezra the Priest brought the Torah before the congregation, both men and women, and all that could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.... And Nechemia, who was the governor, and Ezra the Priest, the Scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; neither mourn nor weep!” For all the people were weeping, as they heard the words of the Torah. Then he said to them, “Go on your way. Eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our God; do not be sad, for God’s gladness is your strength.” So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, “Hold your peace, for the day is holy; do not be sad.” And all the people went their way to eat, to drink, to send portions, and to make great joy; because they had understood the words that were said to them. (Nech 8:2, 9–12)

Nechemia commands the people to overcome their grief over their failure to keep the Torah. Instead, it is time to celebrate, because “this day,” Rosh HaShana, “is holy to our God.”

In summary, Tanakh portrays Rosh HaShana as both “a day of *terua*” – of fear and apprehension – and a day of great joy.

Hallel and Simchat Yom Tov on Rosh HaShana

The uncertainty regarding whether Rosh HaShana is a day of alarm and distress or one of happiness and joy continues in the halakhic literature. The Gemara instructs us to recite Hallel on the festivals and the eight days of Chanukka. The Gemara then questions why Hallel is not mandated on other special days, such as Rosh Chodesh, Chol HaMo’ed Pesach, and Purim. Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur seem to meet the requirements for Hallel; they are “appointed seasons” with a prohibition of labor. Why are they excluded?

R. Abbahu said: Is it seemly for the King to be sitting on His Throne of Judgment, with the Books of Life and Death open before Him, while the people sing joyful praises to Him? (Arakhin 10b)

From the fact that the Gemara asks why Hallel is not recited on Rosh HaShana, it seems to assume that it would certainly be appropriate, if not obligatory, to recite the joyous prayer of Hallel on Rosh HaShana. The Gemara’s answer, however, is somewhat unclear. Does the Gemara intend to deny Rosh HaShana any aspect of joy or happiness, or merely to temper it by omitting Hallel? Interestingly, Rambam writes:

However, we do not recite Hallel on Rosh HaShana and Yom HaKippurim, as they are days of repentance, fear, and dread, not days of excessive joy. ((Hilkhot Megilla and Chanukka 3:6.))

Rambam describes Rosh HaShana as a day of repentance, characterized by “fear and dread,” yet he still implies that there is some mitzva to rejoice.

Indeed, the Rishonim disagree as to whether the mitzva of simchat Yom Tov, the command to rejoice on the festivals, applies to Rosh HaShana. The Torah instructs, “*Vesamachta bechagekha*” – “And you shall rejoice on your holiday” (Deut. 16:14). Is this mitzva limited to the consumption of the *shalmei simcha*, the joyous peace-offerings brought on the *Shalosh Regalim* (the Three Pilgrimage Festivals) for the purpose of rejoicing, in which case it would not apply to Rosh HaShana, or does it extend to other expressions of happiness as well?

Tosafot assume that the obligation of simchat Yom Tov may only be fulfilled through the consumption of *shalmei simcha*. The obligation to rejoice on the festivals nowadays, in the absence of the Temple, must be

rabbinic in nature. ((Tosafot, Mo’ed Katan 14, s.v. *aseh deyachid*.) On the other hand, Rambam writes:

A person is obligated to rejoice on these days – he, his children, his wife, his grandchildren, and all those who have joined his family – as the Torah states, “And you shall rejoice on your holiday.” Even though the Torah is referring to the obligation to offer and consume peace-offerings (the *shalmei simcha*), included in this obligation to rejoice is for a person and his entire family to rejoice in the manner that is appropriate for him. How is this practiced? One distributes parched grain, nuts, and delicacies to the children. One purchases, depending on what he can afford, clothes and beautiful jewelry for the women in the family. The men eat meat and drink wine, as there is no rejoicing without meat and wine. ((Hilkhot Yom Tov 6:17–18.))

Rambam expands the parameters of the mitzva of simchat Yom Tov to include other expressions of joy as well. Clearly, Tosafot cannot maintain that the obligation to rejoice on festivals applies to Rosh HaShana, when there is no obligation to offer *shalmei simcha*. Rambam, however, who expands the definition of simchat Yom Tov, might apply this mitzva to Rosh HaShana. Indeed, as we saw above, he describes Rosh HaShana as a day without excessive happiness, but with happiness, nonetheless. Furthermore, he implies elsewhere ((Ibid.)) that the mitzva applies to festivals other than Pesach and Sukkot, seemingly referring to Shavuot, Rosh HaShana, and Yom Kippur.

Rabbi Aryeh Leib ben Asher Gunzberg (1695–1785) discusses this issue in his *Shaagat Aryeh*, ((Sha’agat Aryeh 102.)) concluding that there must be a mitzva of simchat Yom Tov on Rosh HaShana since one is allowed to perform certain types of labor necessary for producing food (“*okhel nefesh*”) on Rosh HaShana. If not for the commandment to rejoice, he assumes, it would be prohibited to cook on Rosh HaShana.

Mourning on Rosh HaShana

The Mishna discusses which holidays preempt the first seven (*shiva*) and first thirty days (*sheloshim*) of mourning observed after the burial of a close relative (Mo’ed Katan 19a). The Chakhamim and Rabban Gamliel dispute whether only the *Shalosh Regalim* cancel *shiva*, or if Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur do so as well.

Rabbi Achai Gaon explains that Rabban Gamliel, who rules that “Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur are akin to the festivals,” maintains that the commandment of simchat Yom Tov also applies on these days. Rabbi Achai Gaon clearly assumes that it is the mitzvato rejoice that cancels *shiva*. ((She’iltot, Parashat Chayei Sara 15.))

Ramban derives from the verse in Nechemia cited above that there is “*simcha* and a prohibition to be sad” on Rosh HaShana, and the observances of *shiva* and *sheloshim* are thus put to an end by Rosh HaShana. ((Ramban, Mo’ed Katan 24b.)) The Shulchan Arukh rules in accordance with Rabban Gamliel; Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur cancel *shiva* and *sheloshim*. ((Shulchan Arukh, Yoreh De’ah 399:6. Rabbi Soloveitchik addresses this issue as well in his *Shiurim LeZekher Abba Mori*.)

Fasting on Rosh HaShana

The halakhic ambivalence toward the nature of Rosh HaShana is found once again regarding one’s demeanor while eating on the holiday. The Shulchan Arukh writes:

They eat, drink, and rejoice, and they do not fast on Rosh HaShana and Shabbat Shuvah. However, they should not eat to satiety, in order that they not become lightheaded – “that the fear of God should be upon their faces”. ((Ibid., Orach Chaim 597:1.))

The Mishna Berura explains that although Rosh HaShana is a “day of judgment,” the commandment of *simcha* obligates one to eat and drink, as stated in Nechemia. ((Mishna Berura 597:1.))

Rema, ((Rema, Orach Chaim 597:3.)) however, cites the *Terumat HaDeshen*, ((*Terumat HaDeshen* 245.)) who asserts that some consider it “a mitzvato fast on Rosh HaShana.” Magen Avraham, in his introductory comments to this chapter, cites Bach, who relates that Maharshal would not eat fish on Rosh HaShana, as he especially enjoyed this dish and he wished

to restrict himself in some way. Magen Avraham also cites a discussion regarding the propriety of eating meat and wearing festive clothing on Rosh HaShana.

In opposition to this opinion, the Mordekhai ((Mordekhai, Rosh HaShana 708.)) cites Rabbi Nachshon Gaon, who prohibits fasting on Rosh HaShana due to its inherent simcha, and Taz ((Taz, Orach Chaim 597:1.)) and Mishna Berura ((Mishna Berura 597:12.)) concur.

Tefilla on Rosh HaShana

The question of the nature and experience of Rosh HaShana may also impact upon the text and recitation of the day's prayers. Rosh ((Rosh, Rosh HaShana 4:14.)) and his son, the Baal HaTur, ((Tur, Orach Chaim 582.)) record different customs regarding the text of the Shemoneh Esreh and Kiddush of Rosh HaShana. They cite Rabbi Sar-Shalom, Rabbi Paltoi Gaon, and Rabbi Shmuel ben Chofni, who report that in the two major Babylonian yeshivas, the standard Shalosh Regalim formula was recited on Rosh HaShana, thanking God for giving us "mo'adim lesimcha, chagim uzemanim lesasson" – "appointed seasons for rejoicing, holidays and times for jubilation." Tur concludes, however, that the custom is in accordance with Rabbi Hai Gaon, who omits the references to simcha. Clearly, these scholars are debating the very nature of Rosh HaShana.

Interestingly, the posekim also discuss the manner in which one should pray on Rosh HaShana. The Kitzur Shulchan Arukh, for example, records that some are accustomed to praying the silent prayers of Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur while bowed, with their heads lowered. He personally recommends praying upright, with a "bent heart and with tears." ((Kitzur Shulchan Arukh 129:2.))

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef also discusses this issue: should one pray with happiness and elation, or out of "fear of judgment," while crying? ((Yechave Da'at 2:69.)) He cites Rabbi Chaim Vital, who testifies that the Arizal would cry during his Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur prayers. Alternatively, he notes that the Vilna Gaon maintains that one should not cry during the prayers on Rosh HaShana and that the cantor should lead the prayers with a traditional festival melody. ((Maase Rav 207.)) Rabbi Yosef concludes that one who is naturally overcome by tears may cry, but one should not bring himself to weep; rather, one should pray with happiness and great focus.

Conclusion

Rosh HaShana surely emerges as a confusing holiday. From the Sages to the later Acharonim, our greatest minds have grappled with its nature and experience. It would seem that this confusion is no accident. In fact, all service of God, as King David relates, reflects this dialectic. In his Tehillim, we find both, "Serve God with joy; come before His presence with singing" (Ps. 100:2) and "Serve God with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (2:11). Midrash Tehillim asks:

"Serve God with joy" – another verse says, "Serve God with fear." If with joy, how is it with fear? And if with fear, how is it with joy? ((Midrash Tehillim 100, s.v. ivdu.))

The Midrash records different resolutions to this quandary. R. Acha suggests that one should serve God in this world with fear in order to reach the next world with happiness. Similarly, R. Aivu distinguishes between tefilla, during which joy is the primary feeling, and other activities, during which fear dominates. The Midrash suggests another type of solution as well: "With joy" – is it possible without fear as well? The verse therefore teaches, "with fear." In other words, joy and fear do not necessarily contradict each other; rather, they are crucial and complementary components of our service of God.

Rosh HaShana is "yom harat olam," "the day of the world's creation," during which we coronate God as King over humanity. Standing before God and accepting upon ourselves His service inspires not only feelings of fear and trepidation, but feelings of joy and happiness as well. These seemingly contradictory feelings are natural for one who truly experiences and internalizes Rosh HaShana, setting the proper tone for the entire year, during which our service of God vacillates between simcha and yira, and at times is

even made up of both. ((I heard this analysis in 1992 from Rabbi Michael Rosensweig.))

from: **TorahWeb** <torahweb@torahweb.org> to: weeklydt@torahweb2.org date: Mon, Sep 22, 2014 at 8:46 PM

Rabbi Yakov Haber

The Shofar: External and Internal

One of the major focal points of the prayer service on Rosh HaShana is the mussaf amida containing blessings with the three themes of malchiyos, zichronos and shofaros. The Talmud (Rosh HaShana 34b) tells us that HKB"H tells us: "Recite before me malchiyos, zichronos and shofaros: Malchiyos - so that you shall coronate me as your King. Zichronos - so that your remembrance comes before me for the good. And with what? With the shofar." Notably, even though each theme has its own beracha the Talmud seems to explain the reason for the first two berachot directly. The third beracha is mentioned only in a secondary way - "With what? With the shofar." This seems to be an explanation of why we blow the shofar. Why isn't the purpose of the beracha of shofaros more explicitly stated?

Furthermore, when we analyze the text of the three berachos, we see that the first, concerning malchiyos, clearly focuses on coronating Hashem as our King. The second clearly focuses on G-d remembering our actions. The third, though, focuses on G-d revealing His presence in the world starting at Har Sinai. Why doesn't the Gemara spell out this theme rather than just vaguely referencing the shofar?

In addition, each beracha contains three verses from the Torah, three from Tehillim, and three from Nevi'im. In the beracha of shofaros, which, as mentioned, focuses on Revelation, the first three pesukim from the Torah focus on the Revelation of Sinai punctuated by the sound of the shofar. The last three highlight the Revelation of the final redemption also accentuated by shofar blasts. But the middle three p'sukim from Tehillim do not seem to focus on Revelation. One verse speaks of the shofar on Rosh HaShana, "tik'u bachodesh shofar bakesseh l'yom chageinu." One speaks of G-d being elevated with the shofar, "alah Elokim bitru'ah, Hashem b'kol shofar." The final ones of this section, taken from the last psalm, speak of many musical instruments being used to praise Hashem including shofar. How are these verses related and how do they relate to the general theme of Revelation?

Rav Soloveitchik (Yemei Zikaron, "AleI T'eina, v'Kosnos Or") beautifully explains that the pesukim from Tehillim focus on the revelation of Hashem on Rosh HaShana itself. G-d reveals himself to the penitent encouraging him, embracing him, awaiting his return. Elsewhere, (seen in Nifla'os HaRav) Rav Soloveitchik explains that the Torah's statement of "us'machtem lifnei Hashem Elokeichem" indicates that true joy occurs only when in the presence of G-d. The fear of judgment of Rosh HaShana eliminates the ability to recite Hallel which would ordinarily reflect this joy (Arachin 10b). Nonetheless, a hidden Hallel is indeed recited through the verses from the last mizmor of Tehillim indicating all the instruments including the shofar being used to praise Hashem. According to the Rav, then, all of the pesukim do indeed focus on the theme of Revelation.

Based on this idea, perhaps we can answer our other questions as well. The Gemara states "Bameh? Bashofar!" Perhaps the Gemara is referring to both the blessings of malchiyos and zichronos. How are we to coronate G-d? How are we to assure that Hashem remembers us l'tova? The Gemara answers: with the shofar! The shofar represents G-d's revelation to us. But this revelation was not only to be punctuated in the historical record at its endpoints - at Har Sinai at the beginning of Jewish national history and at the Final Redemption, the last stage of Jewish history. It is also a constant one on both the national and individual levels. G-d constantly reveals himself to us in our lives by exercising His Divine providence over us. His constant knowledge of every, even minute, aspect of our lives, constantly monitoring, modifying, and re-creating all of our life pathways reflect His constant intense connection to us. To be sure, the intensity of the connection to HKB"H depends on our spiritual level, but Hashem's connection to everyone

is a given. How are we to coronate G-d, to recognize Him as the ruler of not only the world but also to realize that the entire purpose of our existence is to connect to Him? How are we to assure that we are remembered for the good before the Heavenly court? Bashofar, through being aware of G-d's constant presence in our lives. Not to get caught up in the *havlei haz'man* which tend to numb ourselves to this awareness of G-d's presence in our lives. The shofar wakes us up (Rambam *Hichos Teshuva*), breaks down the barriers (*Michtav Me'Eliyahu* as per the shofar of Yericho) and allows us to start on our journey to return.

The Haftorah for Shabbos Shuva begins "Shuva Yisrael ad Hashem Elokecha - Return Israel to Hashem, your G-d!" Rather than viewing the return as a journey toward G-d, perhaps we can characterize this as a return inward to that which is already there, to G-d's constant connection to us which we are not taking full advantage of. May we all "re-sign" on the *b'ris* with HKB"H on Rosh HaShana and may the awareness of His constant presence carry us through a sweet new year!

http://www.ou.org/jewish_action/09/2014/readings-yamim-noraim/
Readings for the Yamim Noraim by JA Mag | September 8, 2014 in Books With Rosh Hashanah approaching, we asked leading thinkers and educators to share with us their favorite books or seforim they rely on to help prepare for the holiness and awe of the day.

Charlie Harary, Esq.

As told to Bayla Sheva Brenner

What inspires me the most are different pieces from modern-day *ba'alei machshavah* that focus on the greatness of man. They emphasize that the Yamim Noraim is less of a time for us to feel terrible about ourselves and more of a time to recognize the inner greatness that is within us and how to tap into that—less fear and more awe.

I read Nesivos Shalom by Rabbi Sholom Noach Berezovsky, the Slonimer Rebbe. I actually keep a quote from the sefer in my pocket throughout the holiday. It changes the way one views the three books that are opened at this time. There's the Book of Life, into which the righteous are automatically entered; the Book of Death, into which the wicked are automatically entered and the book in which the *beinonim* (neither completely wicked nor completely righteous) are inscribed until they're judged on Yom Kippur. If the ultimate goal is just to be a *beinoni*, that's not very motivating for me.

The Nesivos Shalom speaks about how we can actually write ourselves into the book of our choice. It states: "If a person accepts upon himself that he wants to fulfill his mission here in this world and fix what needs to be fixed, then he is writing himself into the Book of Life." The purpose-driven life is the righteous life. Whether you're a big rabbi or an attorney, you could look at your life and say, "This year is going to be filled with more purpose." That awareness puts you in the good book. ...

Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein

If procrastination is a sin, then writing this piece is just going to increase my teshuvah debt by the time you read this. I can't decide what to learn! Here's my dilemma: I just don't respond well to much of contemporary musar. That's not a good thing. I'm jealous of those who can listen to presentations and walk away feeling genuinely inspired. My training, personality and history of encounters with giants of the previous generation all conspire against my reacting the same way. Unless a musar talk contains some creativity or genuine new insight, it leaves me flat. In self-defense, I will point to the introduction to Rav Kook's *Ein Ayah*, which openly makes the claim that people really involved in learning are often dismissive of musar aimed solely at pulling on the heartstrings. Their cerebral nature demands that it engage and exercise the brain as well.

That leaves me with two choices. I can go to classics of the Rishonim (medieval commentators), because the profundity, precision and brevity with which they write inevitably turns reading any passage into a head trip, at least in part. That was the route I took last year, when I did a slow reading of "Sha'ar Cheshbon HaNefesh" in *Chovos Halevavos*, by Rabbeinu Bachya

ibn Paquda. It has us take stock of ideas and arguments that we overlook too often in our relationship with Hashem. In a sense, that is the entire purpose of the Yamim Noraim, so it seemed like a good choice.

Or I can turn to more recent works, at least those that insist on looking at primary sources on a deeper level. Rav Hutner's *Pachad Yitzchak* works for me on any yom tov. Increasingly, *Asufas Ma'arachos* by Rav Chaim Yaakov Goldvicht, the founding rosh yeshivah of Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh, does the same. The *sichos* of Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl, former rav of the Old City of Jerusalem, have done the trick in the past. In a very different style—but having great impact at the time—are sections of Rabbi Chaim Friedlander's *Sifsei Chaim* that parse the Yamim Noraim davening, line by line.

Chances are, however, that I will succumb to the desire to feel something directly tugging at the heartstrings. If so, I will turn to the reliable sefer that marries heart to mind particularly successfully: *Nesivos Shalom* by the Slonimer Rebbe. Specifically I will look for topics in *avodas Hashem* from among the many offerings, and choose the ones I am most in need of shoring up.

It could be a long Elul. ...

Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

As told to Bayla Sheva Brenner

As a teacher, I spend a lot of time preparing for classes; it's also my private preparation for the Yamim Noraim. I have to go through many books until I find what I feel will be suitable for my students. I look for fundamental ideas that show the yom tov in a new light.

I usually go to Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch's writings; *Ohr Gedalyahu* (Light of Gedalyahu) by Rabbi Gedalya Schorr; Rav Chaim Friedlander's work *Sifsei Chaim* and *Shem MiShmuel*, by Rabbi Shmuel Bornstein, the second Sochatchover Rebbe. These sources give insights into the holiday on a deep level that is inspiring, as well as practical and relevant. And they help you approach the holiday from a fresh angle.

Rav Hirsch, for example, speaks about the Jewish calendar, pointing out that there are two beginnings of the Jewish year. Tishrei marks the beginning of our natural reality [when the world came into existence], and Nisan marks the spiritual beginning, when the Jewish people came into being. A life that reflects Tishrei, the first beginning, is likened to one who concentrates only on physicality throughout his life. He'll have times of joy and pleasure (spring and summer), but when it comes to the end of his life, there's only winter—there's nothing left, only death; nothing eternal.

The other Jewish year, Nisan, starts in the spring and ends in the spring. This reflects the individual whose life is focused primarily on spirituality. Although he may experience difficulties (fall and winter), in the end his world blossoms again, bringing renewed life. When you live a spiritual life, you are connecting to eternity.

I look for textual sources that are profound and change your way of thinking, material that provides fresh, elevating insights. I seek seforim that offer a different outlook on the holiday—and on life.

from: Ozer Alport <oalport@optonline.net>

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subject: Parsha Potpourri - Rosh Hashana/Haazinu

לז"נ יוכבד בת צבי מתתיהו הלוי ז"ל לז"נ הרב מיכל בן ניסן ז"ל

Parsha Potpourri

Rosh Hashana / Parshas Haazinu – Vol. 9, Issue 52

Compiled by Rabbi Ozer Alport

בראש השנה כל באי העולם עוברים לפניו כבני מרון (משנה ראש השנה א:ב)

Rosh Hashana is the beginning of a ten-day period known as the *Aseres Y'mei Teshuva* (Ten Days of Repentance). The Gemora (Rosh Hashana 18a) teaches that Hashem is particularly close to us during this time, and it is therefore an auspicious time to repent for our sins. In addition, the *Noda BiYehuda* suggests that this period has another unique ability, namely that if a person's transgressions are so great and include sins which

can only be forgiven through death, we would think that his repentance during that period will not help him because he is too far gone. However, even though it is true that his misdeeds might be so great that his teshuvah might not be able to help him, nevertheless it may be able to save the entire world.

The Rambam writes (Hilchos Teshuvah 3:2) that just as each individual is judged based on whether they have done more mitzvos or more sins, so too is each nation judged, and so too the entire world. In light of this, it is possible that even after this wicked individual does teshuvah, he is still judged as possessing more sins than mitzvos and should be sentenced to die in the upcoming year. However, during this time the entire world is being judged as well, and it is possible that the entire world together with all of this person's sins was considered just more than 50% wicked, but his repentance, even though it is insufficient to save him, could be enough to take away his transgressions from the accounting of the entire world and switch the world from being destroyed to being saved.

Although that will certainly be beneficial for the rest of the world, we would think that it's too late for him. At the end of the day, his sins are still greater than his mitzvos, and because the Rambam writes that Hashem first judges each individual, then each nation, and only the entire world at the end, we would think that even though he managed to save the entire world, his fate was long-ago sealed to die for his sins. However, the Noda BiYehuda posits that even though this person is in fact deserving of death, the fact that his teshuvah managed to save the entire world will cause his own personal decree to be changed to life as well, explaining that even if his judgment was already signed and sealed for death and even if Hashem sealed it with an oath, his contribution to saving the entire world is enough to tear up his own decree and save him.

His proof for this fascinating claim is an episode in Sefer Shmuel in which Shaul swore in the name of Hashem that whoever was singled out by a Heavenly lottery that he conducted to determine who had committed a certain sin would be put to death, even if it was his own son Yonason (Shmuel I 14:39). After the lots indeed confirmed that Yonason was the sinner, Shaul again repeated his death sentence together with the oath (14:44). In response, the rest of the nation pointed out that even though Yonason had violated Shaul's command and was in fact deserving of being killed for doing so according to the strict letter of the law, he had one redeeming point: his actions had saved the entire nation from the Philistines, and as such, it wasn't right that he should be punished for his sin (14:45). In response, Shaul accepted their argument to annul Yonason's death sentence even though it included an oath, and so too concludes the Noda BiYehuda will Hashem do for somebody whose repentance is able to save the world during the Aseres Y'mei Teshuvah.

ולו שתי נשים שם אחת חנה ושם השנית פננה יהיה לפננה ילדים ולחנה אין ילדים (הפטרה - שמואל א 1:2)

The Haftorah which is read on the first day of Rosh Hashana tells the story of the birth of the prophet Shmuel to the heretofore barren Chana. It begins by telling us that Elkanah had two wives, Chana and Penina. However, the Medrash (Pesikta Rabbasi 43) teaches that originally, Elkanah only married Chana. After they were married for ten years without having any children, Chana suggested that Elkanah should marry another wife in the hopes that this would enable her to conceive a child, an idea that she learned from Sorah, who similarly suggested that Avrohom marry Hagar after they were married for ten years without having any children. At that point, Elkanah married Penina and went on to have ten children with her, but Chana unfortunately remained barren.

On a deeper level, the Arizal writes that Chana was a gilgul (reincarnation) of Sorah, and the Rema MiPano adds that Elkanah was a gilgul of Lemech. Lemech had two wives, Adah and Tzilah (Bereishis 4:19). Rashi explains that the practice in those times was to have one wife for the purpose of reproducing and having children and one wife to remain beautiful and satisfy him. In order to ensure that the second wife did not become

pregnant, she would drink a potion which rendered her unable to conceive. The child-bearing wife was not respected or treated well relative to the attractive, barren wife, who was loved and cherished by the husband. In the case of Lemech, Adah was the wife who was designated to bear children, and Tzilah was the beautiful wife who was to be sterilized.

The Rema MiPano writes that Chana was also a gilgul of Tzilah, as the name Tzilah means shade and connotes that she was supposed to live in her husband's shadow and remain barren without children. Similarly, the name Chana is derived from the Hebrew word חונה, which means to rest next to something. Penina was a reincarnation of Lemech's other wife, Adah. Just as the word Adah is connected to the Hebrew word עדי, which refers to a jewel or precious gem, so too Penina means pearl.

Just as Lemech loved Tzilah, so too did Elkanah love Chana, and because Lemech gave Tzilah a drink which was intended to render her sterile, Chana suffered for 19 long years without any children. The Mishbetzos Zahav adds that this fascinating piece of information is alluded to by the fact that the Haftorah does not state ויקח לו שתי נשים – And Elkanah married two women – as is customary, but rather, וולו שתי נשים – He had two wives – which hints to the fact that they had previously been married to him.

עד עקרה ילדה שבעה (הפטרה יום א' - שמואל א 2:5)

The Haftorah concludes with a beautiful song of praise, in which Chana thanked Hashem after giving birth to Shmuel. She thanked Hashem for the fact that she used to be barren, and now she was going to give birth to seven children. The difficulty with this is that Chana did not give birth to seven children. The Navi explicitly says (2:21) that she had a total of five children, three sons and two daughters. How could Chana thank Hashem for giving her seven children if she only had five?

Rashi explains that each time that Chana gave birth to a child, two of Penina's children died. After the birth of Chana's first four children, eight of Penina's ten kids had died and she was left with only two. When Chana was pregnant with her fifth child, Penina realized that she was being punished for the pain she caused to Chana when she was barren through her insensitive comments, so she begged her for forgiveness and asked her to forgive her so that she wouldn't be punished further, and her two remaining children would survive. Chana did in fact forgive her, and Penina's two living children were unharmed. Because they were only alive due to Chana's forgiveness, in a sense they owed their lives to her and were considered her children, and this is what Chana was referring to when she thanked Hashem for giving her seven, five of her own plus two of Penina's.

The obvious difficulty with this explanation is: Why did it take Penina so long to realize what was going on? Every time Chana gave birth, two of her children died. This exact process repeated itself four times. Didn't it occur to Penina what was happening? The Mishbetzos Zahav explains based on the teaching of the Gemora (Bava Basra 16a) that although Penina constantly afflicted Chana by reminding her of her tragic plight, her intentions in doing so were לשם שמים (for the sake of Heaven), as she wanted to arouse Chana's intense painful emotions so that she would beseech Hashem for a child with so much fervor and concentration that her prayers would be answered.

In light of this Gemora, the Mishbetzos Zahav explains that when a person does something for the sake of Heaven, he is so convinced that it must be a mitzvah that it does not even occur to him that while his intentions might be in the right place, his actions may be grossly mistaken. Along these lines, the Alter of Kelm advised people to be careful of the biggest danger – לשם שמים. For this reason, it took the tragic deaths of eight of Penina's ten children before it even occurred to her that the reason for all her unfathomable suffering might be her לשם שמים affliction of Chana many years earlier.

האזינו השמים ואדברה ותשמע הארץ אמרי פי (32:1)

Just before the conclusion of the Shofros section of the Rosh Hashana Mussaf prayers, we praise Hashem **כי אתה שומע קול שופר ומאזין** – You hear the sound of the shofar and listen closely to the teruah, and there is none like You. This line is difficult to understand for many reasons. Why do we change from discussing the shofar to mentioning the sound that it makes (teruah)? Secondly, why do we switch the verb used to refer to Hashem's listening from **שומע** to **מאזין**? Finally, what is the unique praise which we offer Hashem – stating that there is none comparable to Him – for the simple act of listening to the shofar?

The Medrash Tanchuma (Haazinu 2) notes that while Moshe said **האזינו** to the Heavens and **תשמע** to the earth in our verse, a similar verse said by the prophet Yeshaya (1:2) switches the verbs. The Medrash explains that **האזינו** is applicable when addressing a subject that is close to the speaker, while **תשמע** is used when the listener is farther away. Because Moshe received the Torah, he was closer to the Heavens and spoke to them using the verb **האזינו** while employing **תשמע** to address the more distant earth. Yeshaya was based on earth, so he reversed the verbs.

In the introduction to his commentary on Shulchan Aruch, the Pri Megadim (אגרת שנייה אות ס') writes that the shofar symbolizes the pure sound of the righteous, while the whimpering teruah represents the cry of the sinner who regrets his errant ways. One would assume that although Hashem will listen to both of them, He prefers to be closer to the pious man who never sinned. However, the Gemora in Berachos (34b) teaches that in the place where ba'alei teshuvah (repentant sinners) stand, even the most righteous tzaddikim are unable to stand.

With this introduction, the Pri Megadim brilliantly explains the line in the prayer with which we began. Chazal specifically tailored their verb usage to indicate that while Hashem hears (שומע) the voice of the tzaddik, He listens from an even closer place to the cries of the ba'al teshuvah. It is for this willingness to draw closer to the ba'al teshuvah than to even the most pious individual that we laud Hashem and proclaim **ואין דומה לך** – there is none comparable to You.

ראו עתה כי אני הוא ואין אלהים עמדי (32:39)

In the middle of discussing Jewish national history, Moshe digressed to proclaim, “See *now* that I (Hashem) am He, and there is no other god with Me.” Why does Moshe interrupt his discourse to make this declaration specifically at this point? Further, why did Moshe emphasize that you should see *now* that I am Hashem and there are no other powers besides Me, as if to imply that something occurred which clarified this point?

The Vilna Gaon brilliantly answers these questions. The mystical work Megaleh Amukos writes that there are 955 ascending levels in the Heavens. Although the majority of them contain various types of celestial angels, the upper 55 levels are empty of anything but Hashem's Divine Glory. This is alluded to by the verse (10:14) **הן לד' אלקיך** – they (the Heavens and the earth) belong to Hashem your G-d. The numerical value of the word **הן** is 55, hinting to the fact that although the entire Creation belongs to Hashem, the upper 55 levels of the Heavens are exclusively His.

The Vilna Gaon explains that with each successive verse of the book of Devorim that Moshe taught, his soul ascended to the next level of the Heavens, concluding with the 955th verse, through which he merited reaching the greatest heights possible and from which there was nowhere further to ascend. As Moshe spoke each verse and ascended through the levels, he encountered loftier celestial beings, yet there was nary a level which was completely devoid of them.

The verse with which we began is the 901st verse in the book of Devorim. As Moshe prepared to say it, he looked around and examined the celestial level he had just reached and noticed that for the first time in his ascent, he had reached a place completely empty of any being other than Hashem's Divine Presence. He couldn't help but exclaim that although it hadn't been visibly apparent in the lower levels, *now* – from his new vantage point – it was quite clear to see that Hashem is One, and there are no other powers with Him.

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from: **Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin's Parsha List**

<ohrtorahstone@otsny.org> reply-to: ohrtorahstone@otsny.org date: Tue, Sep 23, 2014 at 8:25 AM subject: Shabbat Shalom: Rosh Hashana 5775

Shabbat Shalom: Rosh Hashana 5775

In memory of Harry Sher, 2 Tishrei Remembered by the Charif family of Sydney, Australia

Efrat, Israel – What is the essence of our faith, the purpose for which the Jewish people have been placed in the world? Fascinatingly enough, the answer is to be found within the central prayer of our Rosh Hashana liturgy: the three blessings, uniquely found within the Additional (Musaf) prayer of Rosh Hashana, of Malchuyot (kingship), Zichronot (remembrances) and Shofarot. These blessings are each punctuated by the sounds of the shofar and, according to the 14th century theologian Rabbi Yosef Albo as well as the 19th-century Franz Rosenzweig, contain the essence of our faith.

The first of these blessings, Malchuyot, begins with the more familiar Alenu prayer. This prayer teaches that the God whom we now accept as the one Lord of the Universe, the God of love, morality and peace, will eventually be accepted by the entire world.

This axiom of our religion, this prophecy of the ultimate endgame, is especially comforting in the face of the dangerous global village in which we live, a global village in which the specter of nuclear proliferation looms.

This blessing affirms that it is the God of compassionate, righteousness and moral justice who will eventually emerge supreme over the totalitarian trinity of Nazi fascism, Stalinist Communism and Islamic fundamentalism. Our broken world will eventually be perfected under the Kingship of the God of righteousness; through the teachings of Abraham “all the families of the Earth will be blessed” (Gen. 12:3) with a world of peace.

The second blessing, Zichronot, which is a Hebrew term for history, opens with: “You remember the activities from the beginning of the world, and you are mindful of the deeds [or the potential functions, from the Hebrew tafkid] of every creature from earliest times.”

Here is a ringing declaration of faith in the process of history; the clear sense that historical time is on the side of humanity, and that individuals and nations have a unique role to play in the cumulative march of history toward redemption. Israel alone of the nations of the world enjoys a special relationship with God, a covenant which ensures its eternity and defines its mission as the messenger of ethical monotheism to all of humanity.

This blessing guarantees that there is an overarching purpose to history, which is not a cyclical, repetitive cycle leading nowhere, but rather a linear pathway leading to peace. Redemption will come about in the fullness of historic time as a result of the cumulative merits of all preceding generations.

How will we carry out our covenantal task of imparting our message to the world? This is told to us by the third blessing, Shofarot, which reminds us of the revelation at Sinai, the 613 commandments which God presented to Israel and the seven commandments of morality, centering around “Thou shalt not murder,” which God presented to the world.

Maimonides, the great codifier of Jewish law, insists that just as God commanded Moses to bequeath 613 commandments to Israel, “similarly did He command Moses to coerce the nations of the world to accept the seven laws of morality” (Laws of Kings 8:10).

This is an immensely significant message, especially in our postmodern, relativistic, “everything goes” society, which denies any absolute concept of morality.

“Situation ethics” dominates our conventional wisdom, and the most heinous crime can become transformed into a sacred act “when seen from the perpetrator's point of view.” (Hence a suicide bomber who murders innocent children is called a “freedom fighter.”) Shofarot tells us that the Seven Laws of Morality which must be accepted by the nations are not options, but

absolutes, since – especially in our global village – the lives of all humanity hang in the balance of their acceptance.

Hence the Rosh Hashana Musaf Amida teaches that the nation of Israel must and will teach fundamental morality, or ethical monotheism, to all the nations of the world. Only when this message is accepted, when “this Torah comes forth from Zion and the word of God from Jerusalem,” only then will “nation not lift up sword against nation and humanity not learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4) and “everyone will sit under his vineyard and fig tree and no one will have reason to fear” (Micah 4:4).

Each of these blessings is punctuated by the shofar sounding. After God’s kingship we sound the shofar, the means by which the king in the ancient world was crowned. Take note: It is we, the Jewish people, who must bring God down into this world and crown Him.

After Zichronot, we sound the shofar as a reminder of the aborted sacrifice of Isaac in favor of the ram whose horns were caught in the thicket. Isaac, the future of the Jewish people, was slated for slaughter, but was set free.

The shofar sound after Zichronot reminds us that the Jews will continue to live despite exile and persecution.

We must live so that we may remain God’s witnesses and “a light unto the nations of the world” (Isaiah 42:6).

Finally, we sound the shofar after Shofarot since the method by which we must reach out to the world is by teaching our Torah – a teaching revealed at Sinai amid the sounds of the shofar.

And it will ultimately be that when the Almighty Himself will sound the shofar that all of the dispersed will return to Israel, the Temple will be rebuilt and the nations will come to learn from us to beat their swords into plowshares and to live together in peace

Shabbat Shalom and Shana Tova!

<http://www.shemaisrael.com/parsha/chrysler/archives/haazinu74.htm>

Thoughts on the Weekly Parshah

by **HaRav Eliezer Chrysler**

Midei Shabbos B'Shabbato

Parshas Ha'azinu (Shuvah)

Chilul Hashem (Adapted from the Meshech Chochmah)

"Repent O Yisrael, unto Hashem your G-d, for you have stumbled in your sin" (Hoshe'a 14:2).

The Chilul Hashem that ensues from a sin that is performed in public (i.e. ten people), is infinitely worse than the sin itself. As proof, the Meshech Chochmah cites a Gemara in Chagigah (16a), which instructs someone who cannot control his urge to sin, to go to a location where he is unknown and sin there (though this is not to be taken as a mandate to sin in private - see Tosfos there).

Bearing in mind the Gemara in Bava Kama, which considers a Ganav, who steals on the quiet, worse than a Gazlan who steals openly, inasmuch as, unlike the latter, he shames G-d by displaying more fear of people than of Him - one would think that it would be preferable for him to sin in his home town where he is known (better to be a Gazlan than to be a Ganav). Yet the Gemara prefers the option of sinning where he is not known, to eliminate the Chilul Hashem. Generally, a sin is judged in accordance with the effort that the perpetrator puts into it and to the extent of the benefits that he gains from it. Not so Chilul Hashem, which has no atonement apart from death, irrespective of whether he sinned on purpose or inadvertently (Kidushin 60a). This is because unlike other sins, the sin is not the result of what it does to the sinner, but rather the harm that it causes to G-d's honour, which is magnified manifold when it is perpetrated in front of others.

This can be compared to someone who murders be'shogeg. In spite of the fact that he meant no harm, the Torah obligates him to flee to a city of refuge, to escape the vengeance of the next of kin, who is duty-bound to avenge his murdered relative. Because, the author explains, when all's said and done, the victim is dead. The circumstances are therefore of no

consequence. Likewise, he says, Chilul Hashem can have no atonement other than death - because G-d's Holy Name has been denigrated in the eyes of those who witness it, irrespective of the severity of the sin, and notwithstanding the fact that the perpetrator sinned unintentionally.

* And he explains the Gemara in Yuma (22b) in the same manner. The Gemara there comments how King Shaul lost the throne after committing only one sin (keeping Agag alive), whilst King David retained his, in spite of having committed two (organizing the death of Uriyah ha'Chiti and arranging the census of Yisrael). There too, he attributes the distinction there to the fact that whereas David's two sins were performed away from the public eye, that of Shaul was done publicly. And where there is Chilul Hashem, there can be no reprieve, and the punishment follows swiftly.

* Finally, when a person has sinned, the case involves prosecutors and a defence counsel, who fight out the issues, and the defendant's innocence or guilt depends on the outcome of their battle. Not so when the honour of the king is at stake. There the matter is placed before the king and he alone decides whether or not to pardon the defendant.

And so it is with the Heavenly Court, which works along the same principle as the one on earth. When a person appears before the Beis Din shel Ma'alah, his innocence or guilt is determined by prosecuting and defending angels, who will, among other things, examine his Teshuvah, and thereby decide his fate. Not so when the defendant has committed Chilul Hashem. Then his fate lies in the hands of G-d alone. Consequently his Teshuvah must be so strong that it can pierce the heavens and sway the heart of the King of Kings.

Hence the Navi writes "Repent O Yisrael, unto Hashem your G-d, for you have stumbled in your sin". When you do Teshuvah, he is telling Yisrael, make sure that it is deep and sincere so that it pierces the heavens and reaches G-d's throne, because not only did you sin, but you sinned publicly, thereby creating a Chilul Hashem. And if your Teshuvah does not reach G-d's throne, no celestial defence counsel will be able to help you.

Indeed, the people in the era of the first Churban, to whom the current prophecy is addressed, were guilty of performing abominations unabashedly, in large groups and in the presence of one another, as described by the Navi Yechezkel.

* * *

HEAVEN & EARTH "Pay attention (Ha'azinu) O Heaven, and I will speak, and let the earth hear (ve'sishma) the words of my mouth" (32:1)

Moshe used the expression of 'ha'azana' regarding the heaven, and 'shemi'ah' regarding the earth, whereas Yeshayah (in the opening paragraph of his Seifer) reverses them, when he writes "Listen, Oh heaven and pay attention, earth!"

The Da'as Zekeinim mi'Ba'alei Tosfos explains that this is because one tends to use the term 'Ha'azana' when speaking to someone who is geographically close to you, and 'Shemi'ah' to someone who is further away. Hence Moshe, who was closer to the heaven than he was to the earth, addressed the heaven with the word "Ha'azinu", and the earth, with the word "ve'sishma", whereas Yeshayah, who, notwithstanding his greatness, was closer to the earth than he was to the heaven, addressed the heaven with the word "Shim'u, and the earth with "Ha'azini".

Rashi in Yeshayah however, attributes the change to the rules of eidus (testimony, the role that heaven and earth were being called upon to fulfil), as the Pasuk wrote earlier (30:19), with relation to the current Parshah "I have called as witnesses today the heaven and earth". By the rules of eidus, the testimony of the two witnesses must match. Consequently, following Moshe's invitation to testify, it would have transpired that the heaven had been called to 'pay attention', and the earth to 'listen', and their testimony would have been disqualified. That is why Yeshayah called upon the heaven to 'listen', and the earth to 'pay attention', thereby placing the two testimonies on a par with one another.

The author then cites the Medrash, which extrapolated from the words of both Moshe and Yeshayah that the hosts of heaven exceed those of the earth, since both addressed the earth in the singular ("ve'sishma" & "Ha'azini"), and the heaven in the plural ("Ha'azinu" & "Shim'u").

Perhaps, he finally suggests, that is why the heaven is called "Shamayim", in the plural.

Interestingly, both Moshe and Yeshayah addressed the heaven first, following in the footsteps of their Creator, who created "the heaven (first) and (then) the earth". Presumably, this is in deference to G-d's throne, which is situated in the heaven, or/and to the superior spiritual nature of the celestial beings.

* Rashi already points out that Moshe deliberately called the heaven and the earth as witnesses that G-d had warned Yisrael of the consequences of their actions (for better or for worse), because they were guaranteed to be available to testify when the time came to reward or punish Yisrael (something that he could not say about himself).

And what's more, he explains, if Yisrael are worthy, they (heaven and earth) will be able to reward them, and to punish them in the event of their guilt. For so the Torah writes (in Zecharyah) "The vine will give its fruit, the land, its produce and the heaven, its dew" (should they prove worthy), and, in the second paragraph of the Sh'ma " ... He will close the heaven and there will be no rain, and the land will not yield its produce" (and only then "You will perish quickly at the hand of the enemy, [Sifri] - in keeping with the Pasuk in Shoftim [17:7] "The hand of the witnesses shall strike them first ..."). The Rosh in the name of the Medrash adds that Yisrael also sinned by the heaven and the earth, as the Pasuk states in Yirmiyah "And the women knead dough to make pastries in honour of the Queen of Heaven" & in Hoshe'a "their altars are like heaps upon the furrows of the field". And moreover, they are destined to be comforted by the heaven and the earth, as the Navi writes in Yeshayah "Because, just as the new heaven and the new earth that I will make will endure before Me, says Hashem, so too, will your offspring and your name endure!"

* * *

Parshah Pearls Masters of Our Own Destiny

"The Rock whose work is perfect ... " (32:4).

Sh'lomoh ha'Melech wrote in Koheles (7:29) "G-d made man straight, and it is they who seek many calculations". What he meant was that one should not for one moment think, that G-d made him crooked, of a devious nature and that he cannot therefore help sinning as that is the way G-d created him. So the Pasuk informs us in no uncertain terms that G-d created us straight, and that we are responsible for all our devious calculations. We sin of our own choosing, and let no-one say that he is the victim of his preconceived personality.

*

To Render Obscene " ... and they angered the Rock of their Salvation by performing obscene acts" (32:15).

See Targum and Rashi.

The Meshch Chochmah however, translates the Pasuk as " ... they rendered the Rock of their Salvation obscene".

The people who went astray after idolatry, he explains, would justify their disgusting deeds by attributing them to the Torah's command (in an attempt to cover up their sins by turning them into Mitzvos). In effect, of course, they were merely adding the desecration of G-d's Name to their list of sins. In any event, whoever would hear their words would accuse the writer of such a book of being obscene (ke'Vayachol), and that is what the Pasuk is referring to.

And he concludes that this was the modus operandi of the Tzedokim, the Miynim and other similar groups.

* * *

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BA'AL HA'TURIM "My words will flow like dew (ka'tal)" (32:2).

The word ka'Tal also appears in Hoshe'a (14:6) "I will be like dew to Yisrael".

The Torah is like dew (a symbol of life) for Yisrael only, the Ba'al ha'Turim explains. But for the nations of the world it has the opposite effect.

Chazal explain that not only did the nations of the world decline to receive the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvos at Har Sinai, they were even incapable of keeping the seven basic Mitzvos that they already had.

Hence Yisrael's declaration of "Na'aseh ve'Nishma" served to highlight the gentile deficiency of the gentile nations. That is why, as the author concludes, from Sinai G-d declared the money of the nations Hefker (regarding certain monetary issues, as the Gemara explains in Bava Kama 35a).

The Gemara there, based on the Pasuk in Chavakuk (3:6) "He saw (how the nations were unable to keep their seven Mitzvos) and declared the property of the nations Hefker", explains the Pasuk with reference to two specific halachos: 1. If the ox of a Jew gores the ox of a gentile, he is exempt from paying; 2. If the ox of a gentile (even a shor tam, that did not previously gore three times) gores the ox of a Jew, he is obligated to pay in full (even though a fellow Jew would only have to pay for half the damage).

* * *