



בסייד
NEW

1ST - 2ND OF TISHRI
OCT 3RD - OCT 4TH 2024
CANDLE LIGHTING 6:47PM
MOTSAE SHABBAT 7:47PM

ROSH HASHANA

RABBI DAVID ELMALEH



RENEWING OUR CONTRACT

FIGHTING OUR INNER FOE

EATING THE SIMANIM

SYNAGOGUE: 310 95TH STREET, SURFSIDE FL 33154

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General Hechal Shalom



ROSH HASHANAH

5785

At Hechal Shalom & Young Yisrael

Rosh Hashanah at Hechal Shalom & Young Israel* ראש השנה

Wednesday, October 2nd Erev Rosh Hashana	Selihot (Hechal Shalom)	5:40am/7:30am
	Shaharit	6:35am/8:10am
	Hatarat Nedarim (annulment of vows) *Please remember Eruv Tavshilin*	7:25am/9:00am
Candle Lighting: 6:47 pm	Minha followed by Arvit (Hechal Shalom)	6:50pm
Thursday, October 3rd 1 st Day Rosh Hashana	Shaharit Netz (at Young Israel Bet Midrash)	6:00am
	First Shofar	8:00am
	Regular Minyan (Hechal Shalom)	8:15am
	Shofar	11:30am
	Musaf	11:45am
	Shofar Blowing for Women & Children	1:00pm/6:00pm
	(Tashlich on 95 th & Bay Drive) Candle Lighting: <u>after</u> 7:39pm	Minha (Hechal Shalom) Arvit
Friday, October 4th 2 nd Day Rosh Hashana	Shaharit Netz (at Young Israel Bet Midrash)	6:00am
	First Shofar	8:00am
	Regular Minyan (Hechal Shalom)	8:15am
	Shofar	11:30am
	Musaf	11:45pm
	Shofar Blowing for Women & Children	1:00pm/6:30pm

Shabbat Shuba at Hechal Shalom/Or Oziel - שבת שובה

Friday, October 4th Candle Lighting: before 6:45pm	Minha	6:45pm
	Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat & Arvit.	
Saturday, October 5th Rabbenu Tam 8:15pm	Shaharit	6:15am/8:45am
	Shabbat Teshuba Shiur (Men and Women)	5:35pm
	Minha	6:20pm
	Followed by Seudat Shelishit, Arvit and Havdala	
	Shabbat Ends	7:45pm

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LEARNING OF THE MONTH

RENT DEDICATION:

We Would like to Wholeheartedly Thank our Dear Friends,

Mr. & Mrs. Dan Arev

For generously Donating the Rent of

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Wishing the 33154 Community a year that we can connect to and sanctify Hashems presence and glory and a year filled with all the blessings of the Torah Hakdosha.

With Love, Danielle and Dan Arev.

We truly appreciate it. In this Merit May Hashem Bless you & your Wonderful Family with all the Berachot in the Torah Amen

Dedicate a month of Limud

**In Honor of Someone, for the
Refua Shelema, or Leiluy Nishmat...**

**And Help YOUR Community
GROW!**

Weekly Inspiration

Renewing Our Contract

(Rabbi Eli J Mansour from iTorah)

Kabbalistic tradition teaches that everything which happens here in our world has its origins in the upper worlds. By the time an event unfolds here on earth, something had already occurred in the heavens that set this process into motion.

It occurred to me that this teaching may be applied to an event which we witness here in New York City each year – not coincidentally, in September, shortly before Rosh Hashanah, or around the time of Rosh Hashanah. I refer to the United Nations' General Assembly. Leaders of countries around the world come here and take the stage to rail against the world's only Jewish state. They stand up to fabricate lies and portray Israel as the cause of the world's problems.

The "heavenly" backdrop of this annual disgrace can be understood based on a teaching of Rav Shlomo Kluger (1785-1869) regarding the judgment that takes place on Rosh Hashanah. He writes that on Rosh Hashanah, not only is each individual judged for the coming year, but the entire Jewish Nation, too, is brought to trial as a single entity.

Rav Kluger explains that when Hashem disrupted the building of Migdal Babel, dividing mankind into seventy nations, he assigned an angel to each

nation. Every nation that was formed came under the supervision of an angel in the heavens. There is, however, one exception. As we read this Shabbat in Parashat Haazinu (32:9), "Ki Helek Hashem Amo, Yaakob Hebel Nahalato" – "His nation is G-d's portion; Yaakob is the territory apportioned to Him." Am Yisrael is under Hashem's direct protection and supervision. There is no angel assigned to the Jewish People, because G-d cares for us directly, as His "personal" portion. However, this special status needs to be earned. Following the sin of the golden calf, even after G-d accepted Moshe's plea not to annihilate Beneh Yisrael, He was not prepared to continue keeping them under His direct care. He told Moshe, "I am hereby sending an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the land I have prepared" (Shemot 23:20). The people had forfeited the privilege of G-d's direct care through their wrongdoing. Even then, though, Moshe successfully interceded on the people's behalf, and Hashem agreed to care for the nation directly.

Rav Kluger writes that each year, on Rosh Hashanah, the angels in heaven call for a new "election," for reassessing Am Yisrael's special stature. They question and challenge the Jewish Nation's right to Hashem's special care and protection. Like the speakers in the UN, they stand up and cast aspersions against us. They claim that we are not worthy of our unique relationship with Hashem.

And the critical moment when we successfully refute this challenge is during the recitation of "Alenu Le'shabe'ah" during Musaf on Rosh Hashanah. In this prayer,

we express our boundless gratitude for not having been made like the other nations, "for they bow to vanity and nothingness, and pray to a G-d that does not deliver, whereas we kneel and bow before the King of the kings of kings..." We loudly, proudly, and confidently avow that we do not follow the other nations' customs and practices, that we do not embrace their beliefs, that we are fully and unwaveringly committed to Hashem, and resist the lures of the "vanity and nothingness" to which other peoples devote their time and attention. It is by resolutely proclaiming our loyalty to Hashem, and our refusal to go along with the beliefs, values, customs and lifestyles of the people around us, that we earn a renewal of our contract, so-to-speak, the continuation of our special relationship with Hashem. If we steadfastly commit to refrain from the "vanity and nothingness," from the practices of other peoples, then we earn our nation's special stature, our unique relationship with the King of the universe.

Reaching the Heavenly Throne, One Step at a Time

((Rabbi Eli Mansour))

In the famous final Mishna of Masechet Yoma, Rabbi Akiva presents two analogies for the purification achieved through the process of Teshuba. First, he cites the verse in the Book of Yehezkel (36:25) in which G-d proclaims, "I shall sprinkle upon you purifying waters, and you

shall be pure." Here, the purification of Teshuba is compared to the purifying Para Aduma waters, which are sprinkled on a person or object that had come in contact with a human corpse, in order to purify it. Then, Rabbi Akiba references a verse from the Book of Yirmiyahu (17:13), "Mikveh Yisrael Hashem" – "G-d is Israel's Mikveh'." In this verse, Teshuba is likened to immersion in a Mikveh.

Rav Yishak Elhanan Spektor of Kovno (1817-1896) explained that these two analogies represent two vastly different models of repentance.

A Mikveh purifies a person through the immersion of his or her entire body in the water. If even one strand of hair extends outside the water, the immersion is invalid. Immersion in a Mikveh, then, represents what we might call "180-degree Teshuba," where a person makes a complete about-face, swiftly transforming from a sinner to a righteous Sadik, "cleansing" himself or herself entirely, like one who immerses in the Mikveh waters.

The Para Aduma waters, by contrast, reach only a very small portion of the person's body. The person becomes pure by virtue of just part of his body receiving the purifying waters. This model, Rav Spektor explained, represents what we might call "four-degree Teshuba," repentance by taking small steps forward. Only a small portion of a person's conduct is improved – just like a small portion of a person's body comes in contact with the Para Aduma waters – but this suffices to bring a degree of purity.

I am familiar with a number of people who succeeded in following the Mikveh model of Teshuba, in completing

transforming themselves in a very short period of time, entirely changing their behavior. But for the vast majority of us, the more practical model of Teshuba is that of the sprinkling of the Para Aduma waters. Rarely does one succeed in making long-lasting changes in his or her behavior through a sudden overhaul. Permanent change occurs through small steps, making one simple change at a time.

For most of us, committing ourselves to never again speak Lashon Ha'ra is not practical. What we can do, however, is commit to eliminate Lashon Ha'ra from our conversations at the Shabbat table.

For most of us, it is not practical to commit to become proficient in the Talmud during the coming year. But we all can make a commitment to add a period of time each day, or least each week, for advanced Torah learning.

This is "small-step Teshuba," and for the vast majority of us, this is the way it should be done.

The Talmud teaches that Teshuba reaches the Kiseh Ha'kabod (heavenly throne). Rav Shimshon of Ostropoli (d. 1648) noted that if we write the letters of "Kiseh Ha'kabod" incrementally, starting with the letter Kaf, followed by Kaf-Samech, then Kaf-Samech-Alef, then Kaf-Samech-Alef-Heh, and so on, each time adding the next letter, all the letters combine for a total Gematria of 713 – the Gematria of the word "Teshuba." After making this observation, Rav Shimshon was asked why the phrase "Kiseh Ha'kabod" needs to be associated with the word "Teshuba" in such a convoluted way, by adding one letter at a time. He explained that this is precisely how Teshuba reaches the heavenly throne – incrementally, by taking one

small step followed by another small step.

If the notion of Teshuba seems frightening or intimidating, it is only because we think Teshuba means "immersing," making a complete transformation all at once. But there is also another model of Teshuba – making one small improvement at a time, which is something each and every one of us, without exception, is fully capable of.

Let us all choose one small step we can take to improve as we begin the new year, and this small step will then bring us closer to the heavenly throne, rendering us worthy of a happy, healthy year, Amen.

Fighting Our Inner Foe

(Rabbi Joey Haber iTorah.com)

One year on the second night of Rosh Hashanah, my son turned to me and said, "These *simanim*, the special foods we eat on Rosh Hashanah, are horrible!

"Don't we want to have a good year, a happy year? So why are we eating this terrible stuff????"

"Moshe," I said, "you have to understand – we're eating these things in order to destroy our enemies!"

"So let our enemies eat this!!!!" he protested.

"Moshe," I explained, "the enemy is us. We're eating these foods to destroy the enemy within ourselves."

When we pray on Rosh Hashanah for the demise of our enemies, we're not referring

only to Hamas, Hezbollah, and their ilk. We're referring also to ourselves, to the bad habits and negative impulses that are so often our worst and most destructive foes.

The *Hovot Ha'levavot*, in the *Sha'ar Ha'bitahon* section, teaches that there are three stages in the performance of any good deed: 1) the thought, or the inspiration, to perform the deed; 2) the decision to act upon that inspiration; 3) the actual execution.

There is a critical distinction, the *Hovot Ha'levavot* writes, between the first two stages and the third stage. The first two stages are entirely up to us. Hashem does not help us with this. It is up to us to want to do the right thing, and it is up to us to make the firm decision to follow up on this desire. Once we've taken these first two steps, then – *and only then!!!* – Hashem comes to help us perform the *mitzvah*, or to make the change in our lifestyle. We have to get the process started by deciding we want to do the right thing – and then we earn Hashem's help to actually do it.

The first of these three steps is pretty easy. We're all good people. We all sincerely want to do the right thing, to observe the *mitzvot*, to speak the right way, to be good spouses, parents, children and friends, to be the best version of ourselves. We all have the right values and the right idea of how we are supposed to live.

The problem that we have – the "enemy" that we face within ourselves – is in regard to the second step. It is so hard to make the firm the decision to change, to tell ourselves: **"I am going to do this no matter**

what. Nothing will stand in my way. Nothing is stopping me. I am resolute, and I am determined, and I am going to make this change."

And the reason why this is so hard is that we like the wrong things we do.

People find it hard to stop speaking *lashon ha'ra* because they enjoy the thrill of gossip.

People find it hard to close their businesses on Shabbat because they enjoy that income.

People find it hard to avoid anger because they enjoy the feeling of power that they experience when they scream at people.

People find it hard to put down their phones and stop wasting time because they enjoy wasting time on their phones.

People find it hard to go to shul in the morning because they enjoy sleeping in.

Everyone has some bad habit that they can't kick because they just enjoy it too much.

This enjoyment is the "enemy" that we are trying to fight during this time of year.

We need to remember that we are strong enough to fight this enemy. We have the power to overcome these challenges.

As we head into Rosh Hashanah and the *Aseret Yemeh Teshuvah* (Ten Days of Repentance), let us commit to wage this battle, to make the firm decision to change, and we will then earn Hashem's assistance in making these changes and living our best lives.

Rosh HaShana: The Custom of Eating Symbolic Foods

(By: Rabbi Yehudah Prero)

The Gemara in the tractate of Keritut (6a) states "Abaye said 'Now that you have said that an omen is significant, at the beginning of each year, each person should accustom himself to eat gourds, fenugreek, leeks, beets and dates...'" Because of this Gemara, it is a custom to eat these listed foods, as well as other foods, which represent good things. (We will soon explore how exactly these foods are representative of good things.) The issue that must first be addressed is why do we "indulge" in omens at the beginning of the year, on Rosh HaShana? As we will soon see, there are many, many different omens and customs. Why do we eat these foods on this occasion?

The goal of these omens is to act as a reminder. By eating all of these foods that have positive connotations, a person realizes that now is the time he needs to be asking for these good things, because now is the time he is being judged. As soon as the person realizes that now is the time that he is being judged, he will realize that omens alone will not be enough for his salvation, and that repentance is needed. Therefore, eating these omens, which are a reminder that now is the time for repentance, is

extremely appropriate for Rosh HaShana.

Another reason given for why we eat these "omens" has to do with the "spirit" of the holiday of Rosh HaShana. If one looks over the prayers on Rosh HaShana, one will find that the basic theme is one of proclaiming the kingship and greatness of Hashem. Although Rosh HaShana is the day on which we are being judged, we do not make requests for sustenance, health, long life, etc.. We instead demonstrate how we have accepted Hashem as our king, and that we will listen to Him and follow His dictates.

Yet, asking Hashem for one's needs really is not so far out of the realm of proclaiming the kingship of Hashem. By asking Hashem for our needs, we vividly illustrate the fact that Hashem is our superior, and that we depend on Him for everything. In reality, if we asked Hashem for our needs, it would demonstrate how we are the subjects of Hashem, and that we have accepted Him as our king.

In order to reconcile these two realities, we have the omens. By eating these omens (and with some, saying the accompanying liturgy), we are covertly asking Hashem for our needs. We do not want to do such blatantly, as that is not in the strict spirit of the day. However, as it does demonstrate that we have accepted Hashem as our king, and today is the day we are being judged, we "ask" Hashem that we be remembered for a good year in a fashion that is not outwardly a request.

Eating the Simanim (Symbolic Foods)

The minhag is to eat the simanim in the following order: apple in honey or sugar, leek (karti), Swiss chard or spinach (salqa), dates (temarim), pumpkin or squash (qara), sesame seeds or beans (rubya), fish or sheep's head (rosh kebes or rosh dagim), and pomegranate (rimon) or olives from the new crop only on the second night.

Other Moroccan traditions include adding some or all of the following:

Sesame seeds - "Yehi rason milefanekha... sheyirbu zekhuyotenu keshumshumin."

Chickpeas - "Yehi rason sheyikbeshu rahamekha et 'oz apekha me'alenu ume'al kol 'amekha bet Yisrael, vetefen elenu berahamim, ushfokh hamatekha el hagoyim asher lo yeda'ukha ve'al mamlakhot asher beshimkha lo qara-u."

Broad beans - "Yehi rason sheyipelu oyebekha vesone-ekha vekhol mebaqshé ra'atenu, tipol 'alehem emata vafahad bighdol zero'akha yidemu ka-abe. Vetismokh nefilatenu, kedikhtib somekh Ado-nai lekhol hanofelim, vezozef lekhol hakefufim."

Lung- "Re-e na be'oniyenu, veriba ribenu ughalenu geula shelema uqroba lema'an shemekha, veba-er 'enenu bim-or Toratekha."

Turnips - "Yehi rason sheyilafetu oyebekha vesone-ekha vekhol mebaqshé ra'atenu veyilafetu orehot darkam, ya'alu betohu veyiabedu. Lama panekha tastir, tishkah 'onyenu velahasenu."

Some eat the simanim directly after Qidush, before hamosi, while some do so after hamosi. Everyone should follow his family's *minhag*, and one who does not have a *minhag* should eat the simanim after *hamosj*.

Ribi Yisma^h 'Obadia of Sfrou would first say Qidush, then make "Boré peri ha'es" and eat one of the seven species of Yisrael (ie. a date) - all while having in mind to include all types of ha'es that would follow - he would then make "Boré peri ha-adama" and eat a corresponding vegetable while having in mind to include all types of ha-adama that were yet to be served. Finally, he would eat a bit of sugar and say shehakol on it, once more having in mind to include all types of shekakol that he would be eating during the seder. After this he would wash his hands and make hamosi, and only after would he begin the seder with apple dipped in honey.

The correct time to say the "Yehi rason" prayer for each food is after saying the berakha on the food and before eating it; this is not an interruption because it serves the purpose of eating the food.

The prevalent custom of Tangiers was to only eat these foods on the first night of Rosh HaShana while some would eat them on both nights.

My Near Miss

(By Slovie Jungreis-Wolff
@aish.com)

We each have our own personal call of the shofar. This was mine.

I was on my way to pick up my grandchildren for a fun day in the park. As the light turned green, I crossed a large boulevard, excited to have time together with my little ones.

Looking out my window to the right, I could not comprehend what I was seeing. A car was hurtling towards me. He was speeding through the red light, straight into my passenger side.

“Oh my G-d!” I screamed.

I heard the crunch of colliding metal as the car crashed into me. My car swirled around and I felt myself being lifted above the ground. I don't know how long it took for me to land on the other side of the boulevard, facing the opposite direction from which I had come.

There was a burning smell. The airbags had released. A voice called out from the speaker in my dashboard. “Hello? Are you okay? Do you require an ambulance?”

I had no idea. It felt surreal...as if I was watching the scene but this could not be possibly happening to me.

I opened my car door with trembling fingers and tried to stand.

“Hey!” someone shouted. “Are you all right? You spun around, three or four times. That was crazy!”

My legs were wobbly. I blinked in the sunlight. *Thank You G-d, I*

am alive! No cuts or bruises. I didn't hit another car, a pole or hydrant. How was that even possible? I called my husband to help me. The car was completely totaled. I was still processing, trying to get the words out as we spoke. I think I was speaking gibberish. Next, I called 911 and waited for the police to arrive. I could not even cry. It was too raw.

Hours later, I was still shaky. Tears would come and go. I was imagining all the “what ifs”, how jolting and painful they were.

I decided to go for a walk. I needed to feel my breath, the warmth of the sun, and the gentle breeze on my face.

Many thoughts came into my head. Scenes from my life. Hopes and dreams. Countless things I'd still like to do. The faces of those I love and care for.

Is there a person with whom I need to share my feelings, make peace with, or have a final conversation to create closure and harmony? Because if not now, when?

And then there was this jolt: Is there anyone in my life I need to call? Is there a person with whom I need to share my feelings, make peace with, or have a final conversation to create closure and harmony?

Because if not now, when?

Who knows what tomorrow may bring?

Though months have passed since the accident, I'm still holding onto the emotions of that day. Especially now as the High Holidays, a time for reflection and introspection, approaches.

First, the gratitude I have each morning and each evening as I take my first and last breaths of the day. Thank You G-d for my very life. It's easy to forget that our time here is not to be taken

for granted. Love is fragile. Time is limited. How easy it is to get lost in the mundane, sleep through life, and lose the music that makes our souls sing.

Sure, there are challenges and pain. We have suffered greatly this past year. But that makes our moments here more precious. The hug of a child, laughter with a friend, sharing dreams and even heartbreak with a partner brings us to a place of comfort. How awful to wake up one day with regret for all the time that has been wasted.

Before the shofar is blown on Rosh Hashanah a blessing is said. “*Lishmoa Kol Shofar* – to hear the sound of the shofar.” The wisdom is waiting for each of us to contemplate. It is not about blowing the shofar; it's about being in the moment and *listening* to the sound that is surrounding you.

Do we hear the people in our lives? Do we listen with our hearts? Do we open ourselves up to the pain of our people?

There is incredible anguish and despair in the world. Our mission is to recognize the sounds of sorrow that surround us, and then ask ourselves: what can I do to make a difference?

When I walked out of my bashed-up car, my personal shofar was blowing.

We each have our own call of the shofar. The question is: are we listening?

The First Night of Rosh Hashana

(Dailyhalacha)

Halachot from the Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909) in Parashat Nisavim concerning the first night of Rosh Hashana

Foods:

One should avoid sour foods on Rosh Hashana. Therefore, lemon flavors should not be used. If the pomegranate, which is customarily eaten on the first night of Rosh Hashana, is tart, sugar should be added. In general, one should not eat fruits that are not fully ripe.

It is fitting to eat choice cuts of meat and sweet foods as a good Siman (omen). One should not indulge and eat to his full satiation. Rather, he should merely taste from each of the different foods. Also, he should drink pleasant beverages. This is based on the Pasuk in Ezra that says Ezra instructed the people to eat fatty foods, drink sweet beverages and send gifts to those who do not have.

Anger:

One should be especially careful not to get angry on Rosh Hashana. Of course, this a terrible P'gam (flaw) throughout the year, all the more so, it is a dire omen for the new year if one gets angry on Rosh Hashana. On the first night of Rosh Hashana, the table should be set by the time the husband comes home from Shul. This is considered a good sign for the new year. However, if he comes home and sees that the table is not ready, he should not get into an argument with his wife. He should be patient and not hold it

against her, even in his heart.

The Tikun and Kiddush:

Before Kiddush, there are a number of Pesukim and passages recited. He opens with P'Tach Eliyahu, and then says the Pasuk "V'Noach Masa Hen" and "VaYizra Yishak" (Bereshit 26:12) twelve times. Then he says "Ki Imha M'kor Haim" (Tehilim 36:10) ten times. This is followed by "Or Zarua La'Sadik" (Tehilim 97:11) seventeen times and "V'Amartem Koh L'Hai" (Shmuel I 25:6) ten times. After that he says "Tachel Shana U'Birkoteha" (Begin the New Year and its blessings) and then he stands and makes the Kiddush. Much of this is recorded in the Machzorim.

On both nights of Rosh Hashana, the Beracha of Shehecheyanu is recited. If one has a new fruit, which mandates a Shehecheyanu, he should put it on the table on the second night. The Ben Ish Hai's custom was to repeat the entire Seder of Rosh Hashana on the second night as well. Those who want to follow this practice, may do so.

The custom is to study the Mishna of Rosh Hashana, one chapter at each of the four meals. One should have intent that each of the four chapter corresponds to one of the four letters of the divine name ADoNaI. The study should not be rushed. It is also customary to read the passage from the Zohar HaKadosh, which is brought in the Machzorim.

Mikveh:

If the woman's Mikveh night is on Rosh Hashana, she should immerse, and they should be together. It is "Hasidut Shel Shtut" (foolish piety) to abstain on her Mikveh night. Even if it is not the night of the Mikveh, if one sees that his desire for his wife is aroused, he may be with her, in

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order to avoid distraction during the prayers of this holy day. In either case, one should ensure that he immerses in the Mikveh the next day before Tefila, so that he prays with holiness and purity.

If One Cannot Hear the Beracha Over the Shofar

Before the sounding of the Shofar, the Hazan recites the Beracha, "Baruch... Asher Kideshanu Be'misvotav Ve'sivanu Li'shmoa Kol Shofar," and the congregation answers "Amen." The congregation should not answer "Baruch Hu U'baruch Shemo" during the Beracha, because anytime one hears a Beracha in order to fulfill his obligation to recite it, he may not answer "Baruch Hu U'baruch Shemo." If a person suspects that he will not hear every word of the Beracha, such as if he has a hearing impairment or his seat is far away from the Teba, then he should recite the Beracha by himself as the Hazan recites the Beracha. The Halachic authorities debate the question of whether a person in such a case should answer "Amen" to the Hazan's Beracha if he finishes his Beracha before the Hazan. For example, if a person sits far away from the Hazan and thus suspects that he might not hear each word of the Beracha, and so he recites the Beracha on his own, and after completing the Beracha he suddenly hears the Hazan recite, "Li'shmoa Kol Shofar," does he answer "Amen"? Hacham Ovadia Yosef, in his Yabia Omer (8:20:4), rules that one may not answer "Amen" in such a case, as this would

constitute a "Hefsek" (unlawful interruption) between the Beracha and the Misva. Once one recites a Beracha over a Misva, he must immediately proceed to perform the Misva, and thus after reciting the Beracha over the Misva of Shofar, one must then sound or hear the Shofar without any interruption. Hacham Ovadia draws an analogy to one who recites Kiddush quietly to himself while the head of the household recites Kiddush (such as if he is afraid he might not hear every word), and after finishing his Beracha he hears the head of the household finish his Beracha. Clearly, one should not answer "Amen" to another Beracha after reciting Kiddush before he drinks his wine. By the same token, one who recites the Beracha over the Shofar may not make any interruption – including answering "Amen" to the Hazan's Beracha – before fulfilling the Misva by hearing the Shofar sound. Nevertheless, Hacham Ovadia adds, if one mistakenly answered "Amen" to the Hazan's Beracha, he has nevertheless fulfilled his requirement and does not have to repeat the Beracha. Since the Hazan's Beracha also relates to the Misva of Shofar, we may, after the fact, consider the "Amen" response germane to the Misva such that it does not constitute a Hefsek. But from the outset, one should ensure not to recite "Amen" to the Hazan's Beracha in such a case, and simply wait silently for the sounding of the Shofar. This ruling is codified in Yalkut Yosef (p. 172; listen to audio recording for precise citation). Summary: If one suspects that he will not hear every word of the Hazan's Beracha over the Shofar, he should recite the Beracha by himself and then wait silently for the sounding of the Shofar. He should not answer "Amen" if he

hears the conclusion of the Hazan's Beracha.

A New Beginning

(Rabbi David Ashear I Torah.org)

There are many lessons that our Rabbis learn from the case of the rebellious son, *בן סורר ומורה* – the wicked son, which apply to Rosh Hashanah.

One of them is that Hashem judges a person based on the direction that he's headed in more than on what he has done in the past year.

Another one is that the *בן סורר ומורה* can only be sentenced to his harsh punishment if he committed the crimes in the first three months since he turned thirteen. And that is precisely why the Torah deals with him so harshly. He just turned Bar Mitzvah. Here he is just starting a new beginning and the first things he does are totally against the Torah.

There is something special about a new beginning. We are supposed to feel like we have an opportunity to do everything right from the start.

These are the feelings we are supposed to have now with Rosh Hashanah upon us. Even if we haven't been the best we could be, now we have a new chance to do things right from the start.

One of the best places to begin with is right in our own homes. There is so much pain that people are experiencing all over the world. At least let us do what we can to make our homes places of happiness. We can resolve to give our spouses the attention and warmth that they need to be happy in marriage. We can go out of our way to be

sweeter and more patient. A home with *shalom bayit* is a place where the Shechina dwells. Every little improvement goes a long way.

I read a story that a man from Bnei B'rak told about himself. It was late one Erev Rosh Hashanah, and he was planning to walk with his family to the other side of Bnei Brak to eat the meal with his wife's family. He told his family how important it was for them to be on time so that he wouldn't be late to the first *Arbit* of the new year.

However, as it often happens, his wife needed extra time to get ready and he was watching the clock and getting more anxious by the minute. Eventually, he saw that he was definitely going to be late to *Arbit*. Inside, he was so angry. His wife knew it was Rosh Hashanah and how important it was for him to be on time for shul. His patience had reached its limit. And then, finally they were off.

As they were walking, he found himself debating whether or not to express his disappointment and frustration to his wife. He said to himself, "Would Hashem want me to vent to my wife now? Or would He rather me treat her with respect, patience and empathy? Was she really trying to make me late or did she just get caught up in things that were important to her?" With that, he decided the best thing he could do to serve Hashem at that moment would be to stay quiet. So he took a deep breath and spoke to his wife as if everything was completely fine.

They walked at a nice pace, without her feeling pressured, and had a nice conversation along the way. Indeed, he arrived to shul late and prayed the best he could under the circumstances.

While that incident eventually receded to the back of his mind, he noticed something interesting as the year began to unfold. He was enjoying success in all areas on a level that he never experienced. It was so out of the ordinary that it struck him. He was waiting for his *mazal* to run out, but it continued throughout the year.

He thought long and hard why he may have been *zocheh* to success on such a profound level, but he really didn't have a good answer. He had a typical year before, spiritually, with basically the same strong points and imperfections as usual. The only thing that he could think of was the self-control and patience that he displayed towards his wife on the night of Rosh Hashanah.

We can never know for sure, but we do know how valuable it is to perfect our *middot* and overcome our inclinations to get angry, especially when it comes to our spouses. May Hashem help us start off the new year the right way and help us become the people that we are capable of becoming.

Kidz Corner

Rosh Hashanah

(Torah Tots)

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We can never grow tired of repeating the wonderful stories of our sages and their pious deeds. It is through their devout and holy behavior that we hope to be inspired to emulate them. Therefore, in the *zechut* (merit) of repeating these stories (*V'Shinantam L'Vanecha*) we pray that we will all enjoy a year

of peace, good health and happiness.)

Rabi Pinchas and Rabi Chilkayahu said in the name of Rabi Simone: 'At this time of year all the angels assemble before G-d and ask Him, 'L-rd of the Universe, when is Rosh

Hashanah?' G-d replies 'Let us ask the earthly court and we will abide by their decision. "

Rabi Hoshai taught: If the earthly court decreed that today is Rosh Hashanah, G-d then commands the angels to call the Heavenly Court in session. He orders the prosecutor and the defendant to be ready to start trial. "For My children on earth have decreed that this day is Rosh Hashanah," says G-d.

If the earthy court has decided Rosh Hashanah should be postponed to the following day because of a leap year, then G-d orders the Heavenly Court to postpone its sessions to the following day. Why? Because a "decree issued by Israel is considered as law by the G-d of Jacob."

Three Books Opened on Judgment Day

Rabi Kruspadai said in the name of Rabi Yohanon: "Three Heavenly books are opened on Rosh Hashanah. One book is for the recording of the righteous, one book for the middle-of-the-way people and one book for the evil people. On the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the righteous are immediately inscribed for life and happiness. The evil people are inscribed for a year of misery or death and the middle-of-the-way people are held in abeyance until Yom Kippur. If they repent and they deserve it then they are inscribed for life; otherwise they are sentenced to death."

La Paracha En Français

Apprécier les luttres intérieures

(Yonathan Gefen – Torah-box)

À l'approche des *Yamim Nora'im* (Jours Redoutables), l'individu peut avoir tendance à ressentir un peu de désespoir. Chaque année, il s'efforce de faire *Téchouva*, de se rapprocher d'Hachem, d'améliorer ses *Middot* ou ses relations interpersonnelles, de développer son étude de la Torah, ou autres domaines. Pourtant, après une brève période d'inspiration, il refait les mêmes erreurs et constate les mêmes faiblesses, à chaque fois. Bien sûr, il faut viser un changement réaliste et durable. Mais le sentiment de désespoir qui accompagne les échecs peut être plus dommageable encore que l'échec lui-même.

Afin d'apaiser ces sentiments, sans pour autant éliminer le besoin d'un véritable changement, rapportons une idée évoquée dans le *Séfer Abir Yossef* écrit par Rav Eliah Méir Wachtfogel. La *Guémara* de Chabbath précise que les habitants de Sodome étaient les plus sereins au monde. La *Tossefta* ajoute que c'est la raison pour laquelle Loth alla y vivre ; il fit le tour de toutes les nations et constata qu'à Sodome, l'ambiance était la plus paisible.

Pourquoi les habitants de Sodome étaient-ils si sereins ? Nous savons qu'ils étaient très cruels et égoïstes — des traits de

caractère qui ne semblent pas bien corrélés avec la sérénité. Rav Wachtfogel affirme, à propos de la *Ménou'hat Hanéfech*, que Loth vivait auparavant avec une autre personne qui personnifiait bien cette qualité — Avraham Avinou. Loth vit en Avraham un homme en paix avec lui-même, libre et satisfait de la vie.

Comment Avraham a-t-il pu atteindre une telle sérénité ? La plupart des gens vivent sous tension constante entre leur corps (*Gouf*) et leur âme (*Néchama*) : le corps a certains désirs et objectifs, et l'âme a des objectifs très différents, souvent contradictoires. C'est une bataille constante entre les deux forces — dès lors que la *Néchama* entre en la personne, elle devient malheureuse, parce qu'elle méprise la bassesse physique du '*Olam Hazé* et aspire à l'existence spirituelle du '*Olam Haba*. Le corps, quant à lui, souhaite assouvir les plaisirs physiques de la vie et n'a aucune envie de s'élever vers les Cieux.

C'est une bataille et une tension qui existent chez tout être humain. C'est pourquoi la grande majorité des gens ne sont pas calmes, sereins et satisfaits. L'individu se sent et agit tantôt plus spirituellement et tantôt plus physiquement. Par ailleurs, il peut avoir un comportement différent s'il est à la synagogue ou à la maison d'étude et s'il est au travail.

Avraham Avinou a résolu le problème — il était totalement spirituel. Il consacra sa vie à parfaire sa *Néchama* et n'avait aucune attirance pour les plaisirs matériels. Par conséquent, il n'y avait pas de tension, ce qui signifiait qu'il vivait dans un état constant de sérénité.

Loth enviait la sérénité d'Avraham, mais il avait un problème — il était loin de se

soucier uniquement de ses désirs spirituels. Il convoitait toujours les plaisirs de la chair. Par conséquent, il se tourna vers les seules autres personnes qui vivaient avec une grande sérénité — les habitants de Sodome qui, à l'instar d'Avraham, ne menaient aucun conflit entre leur corps et leur âme. À une différence près : leur *Ménou'hat Hanéfech* était diamétralement opposée à celle d'Avraham. Ils étaient totalement engloutis par les plaisirs physiques, au point que leur âme était complètement ignorée. Par conséquent, ils ne ressentaient aucune tension entre les désirs de leur *Gouf* et ceux de leur *Néchama* puisque le corps avait gagné la bataille. Ils choisirent d'oublier complètement leur *Néchama* et se focalisèrent uniquement sur leurs besoins et leurs désirs corporels. C'est un choix terrible, mais il génère la sérénité. Il n'y a plus de tension. Loth a donc choisi Sodome — c'était l'endroit le plus paisible et le plus satisfait du monde et il lui était alors possible d'imiter cette sorte de sérénité.

Bien que la plupart des gens n'en viennent pas à ignorer complètement leur âme, il peut arriver qu'une personne vive dans un état d'ignorance béate, parfaitement inconscient du fait que sa vie est mal gérée, parce que son bien-être spirituel est négligé.

Par exemple, le fait d'utiliser la technologie moderne de manière appropriée est un sujet très pertinent dans la génération actuelle. Une personne peut être littéralement accaparée par son téléphone ou tout autre support technologique, sans même réaliser que cela nuit à sa vie de diverses façons — cela peut l'éloigner d'Hachem, nuire à son étude de la Torah, à ses relations interpersonnelles, etc. Si la personne ne voit même pas le

problème, alors elle continuera sereinement dans cette voie, et elle a peu d'espoir de rédemption. Cette personne est paisible, mais en réalité, elle imite la sérénité de Sodome, et non celle d'Avraham Avinou. Par ailleurs, même en étant véritablement « accro » à son téléphone, si elle réalise au moins les problèmes que cela entraîne, elle éprouvera une certaine culpabilité quand elle utilisera son téléphone au lieu d'étudier ou de passer du temps avec sa famille. La culpabilité peut être hostile si elle conduit au désespoir, mais d'un autre côté, elle prouve que l'individu est au moins sujet à une lutte intérieure entre les désirs de son âme et ceux de son corps.

Quand une personne sait qu'elle est en lutte et que, par conséquent, elle manque de sérénité, elle a toujours l'espoir de tourner la page et de reprendre le contrôle de sa vie. De plus, ces luttes mènent à la grandeur. On a une fâcheuse tendance à penser que les *Guédolim* sont nés avec un niveau angélique, qu'ils sont un paradigme de perfection, que leur niveau fut atteint tout naturellement.

À ce propos, Rav Its'hak Hutner écrivit une lettre à un jeune homme, pris au piège par le *Yetser Hara'*, ayant trébuché et s'en sentant très coupable. Rav Hutner l'encouragea à se répéter que toutes les grandes figures de notre peuple avaient rencontré des défis similaires et qu'elles devinrent illustres, parce qu'elles s'étaient battues pour les surmonter. Il ajouta que les domaines de lutte sont justement ceux où l'on peut atteindre les plus hauts niveaux et provoquer la plus grande sanctification du Nom Divin. Rav Tsadok Hachohen écrit aussi que là où l'individu échoue, il peut par la suite grandir et c'est en rectifiant

cette faiblesse particulière qu'il atteint son but unique dans le monde.

Cela nous enseigne deux choses: premièrement, une personne ne doit pas désespérer, même si elle sent qu'elle échoue à maintes reprises, et deuxièmement, que sa lutte est en fait la clé de sa grandeur.

Puissions-nous mériter d'apprécier nos luttes intérieures et de grandir à travers elles.

Reflexion Semanal

Elegir la Vida por Sobre la Muerte

(Por Rav Yonathan Gefen)

Perspectivas de la Torá prácticas para la vida.

"He puesto delante de ti la vida y lo bueno, y la muerte y lo malo¹... He puesto la vida y la muerte delante de ti, la bendición y la maldición; elegirás la vida, para que tú y tu descendencia vivan"².

La Torá nos dice que D-os nos dio una clara opción, la posibilidad de elegir entre la vida y lo bueno, o la muerte y lo malo, y que esta elección es la base de nuestra capacidad para servir a Dios eficientemente.

Sin embargo, pareciera haber una dificultad en la forma en que está redactado el versículo: la Torá dice que hay dos elecciones, una entre lo bueno y lo malo, y la otra entre la vida y la muerte. Al darnos esas opciones, es evidente que tenemos la capacidad y la inclinación para elegir cualquiera de esas direcciones.

Respecto al bien y al mal, la dicotomía se entiende con facilidad: en muchas ocasiones, una persona tendrá una fuerte tentación de elegir lo que la Torá define como 'malo', porque a veces la elección equivocada parece ser la que nos brindará más felicidad y satisfacción. Entonces, la Torá nos dice que enfrentamos constantemente una batalla de libre albedrío para elegir entre el bien y el mal.

Mucho más difícil de entender es que la Torá nos diga que hay otra elección: entre la vida y la muerte. Esto implica que una persona tiene una inclinación real hacia elegir la muerte por sobre la vida. Pero, con seguridad, a nadie le resulta difícil elegir la vida por sobre la muerte, ¡nadie, en su sano juicio, está tentado a elegir la muerte! En consecuencia, ¿por qué la elección entre la vida y la muerte es tan difícil?

Rav Nóaj Weinberg, de bendita memoria, explica que cuando la Torá habla de 'muerte', no implica solamente la condición de no estar vivo, sino que nos advierte contra lo que la muerte representa. Para entender esto, debemos desarrollar nuestra comprensión de lo opuesto: vida. Cuando la Torá habla de vida, no se refiere meramente a respirar, sino que 'vida' es el proceso de crecimiento en el servicio Divino y en las características personales.

Estar vivo significa enfrentar cara a cara los desafíos que presenta la vida y utilizarlos para convertirnos en mejores personas. En consecuencia, elegir la 'muerte' implica evitar estos desafíos, eligiendo escapar de las difíciles 'oportunidades de crecimiento' que enfrentamos en la vida. La muerte es la elección de comodidad en lugar de esfuerzo, de una vida fácil en lugar de una vida llena de desafío y

crecimiento. Con este entendimiento, es fácil comprender por qué elegir la vida por sobre la muerte es una elección sumamente difícil.

Es importante notar que elegir la muerte no se limita únicamente al fracaso en la observancia de las *mitzvot*. Una persona puede observar la Torá y, al mismo tiempo, elegir la muerte. Si no se esfuerza para mejorar y no lucha contra su *íétzer hará* (inclinación negativa), elige la opción más cómoda, equivalente a una forma de muerte. Lo que da miedo es que puede que la persona no sea consciente de qué elige y que viva su vida en "piloto automático". Si nunca se exige para desarrollar aún más su relación con Dios, para rezar más de corazón, para ser un mejor marido o padre, etc. está eligiendo la opción más cómoda.

En un nivel un poco más profundo, la elección entre comodidad y desafío es, de hecho, la elección entre identificarse con el cuerpo o con el alma. La vida es una lucha constante entre estas dos fuerzas contradictorias, que tiran en direcciones opuestas. El cuerpo desea volver a la tierra, de donde viene; esto se manifiesta en un deseo de estar acostado, de descansar y experimentar placeres disfrutables y cómodos. En contraste, el alma quiere volver al cielo, donde se originó; este impulso es representado por un deseo de expandirse y crecer. Así, cada persona se enfrenta constantemente a estas dos fuerzas que tiran en direcciones opuestas. En la parashá de esta semana, la Torá nos dice que, para tener éxito en este mundo, debemos elegir la vida.

Esta enseñanza es particularmente apta ahora, que nos acercamos a Rosh HaShaná. En estos días sagrados no sólo somos

juzgados por nuestra observancia de *Mitzvot* específicas, sino que también hay un juicio global: ¿Cuáles son los objetivos de nuestra vida? ¿Qué es importante para nosotros? La elección entre vivir una vida esencialmente cómoda (incluso si lo hacemos de una forma religiosa) y esforzarnos para materializar nuestro potencial es un elemento esencial de Rosh HaShaná; define gran parte de lo que es importante para nosotros.

Nahalot

Sarah Imenu

The 1st of Tishri

Only four women are called Matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah (Berachot 16b). At first, she was a princess to her people, then she became a princess to the whole world (Berachot 13a).

Avraham and Sarah were proselytes (Bamidbar Rabbah 8:9).

All the proselytes and the G-d-fearing people in the world descended from those who suckled Sarah's milk.

The letter yud of Sarai which was removed from her name stood and cried for many years until Yehoshua ben Nun came and G-d added it to his name (Sanhedrin 107a).

The letter yud flew before the throne of the Holy One, Blessed is

He, and said, "Master of the Universe, have You taken me out of the name of the righteous Sarah because I am the smallest of the letters?" The Holy One, blessed is He, replied, "In the past you were at the end of a woman's name, now I shall place you at the beginning of a man's name: Yehoshua" (Bereishit Rabbah 47:1). The yud whose numerical value is ten that the Holy One, Blessed is He, took from the name of the Matriarch Sarah was divided. Half (i.e., one whose value is five), was given to Sarah when her name was changed, and half the other to Abraham when his name was changed. (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 2:6).

All Sarah's years passed in gladness and joy (Lekach Tov, Bereishit 23:1).

Thirty-seven years, from the day Yitzchak (Isaac) was born until the moment he was bound on the altar, were years of "life" for Sarah. (Genesis 23:1) (Zohar 1:123a).

Avimelech cursed Sarah, and the curse was fulfilled in her descendant. It is written, "Let it be for you and eye-covering" (Genesis 20:16). He said to her, "Since you covered the fact that Avraham was your husband and thereby you caused me all this grief, may you have sons whose eyes are covered." This was fulfilled in her son, as it is written, When Yitzchak become old, his eyesight dimmed (ibid. 27:1)

Avimelech gave her a royal garment and made her a noblewoman, so that no man would ever approach her. All would hear that she was a queen and would fear her (Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Vayeira 27).

Avram said, "See, now I know that you are a woman of beautiful appearance" (Genesis 12:11). From here you learn that until then

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he had not known of his wife's beauty, as is common for other husbands (Eitz Yosef) (Tanchuma Lech Lecha 5).

Her Righteousness Who are the seven prophetesses? Sarah, Miriam, Devorah, Channah, Avigail, Chuldah, and Esther (Megillah 14a). Ischah (Genesis 11:29) is Sarah. Why then was she called Ischah (from the word, gaze)? Because she could see things through Divine Inspiration (Megillah 14a).

We do not find that the Omnipresent spoke directly with any woman except for Sarah (Yerushalmi Sotah 7:1).

The Holy One, Blessed is He, spoke to all other righteous women through an angel, but to Sarah He spoke through Divine communication (Lekach Tov, Bereishit 23:1). At the age of one hundred, she was like a twenty-year-old (i.e., without any sins deserving of heavenly punishment, for at the age of twenty, one-first becomes subject to heavenly punishment) (Bereishit Rabbah 58:1).

The hymn Eishet Chayil, "An Accomplished Woman" (Proverbs 31), was said about the Matriarch Sarah, from aleph to tav (Shocher Tov 112:1).

The Matriarch Sarah was exceedingly modest (Bava Metzia 87a). The Patriarch Avraham confounded the views of people and brought them under the wings of the Divine Presence (i.e., he converted them). Sarah did the same (Avos d'Rabbi Natan 12:8).

Avraham and Sarah prepared a place of immersion for all, he for men and she for women (Zohar 1:102b).

May the merit of the tzaddeket Sarah Imenu protect us all, Amen.



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