

The Weekly Farbrenging



למען ישמעו • נצבים תשפ"ה • 845
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

ROSH HASHANA

SOUNDING THE SHOFAR

The Baal Shem Tov explained the effect of the *shofar* by the following *mashal*: A king once decided to send his only son to a faraway land in order to benefit by broadening his experience. The prince set out from the royal palace loaded with gold and silver, but he frittered it all on the way to his distant destination and arrived there penniless. The local people, who had never heard of his father the king, laughed off his claims. Was this a prince?! Unable to bear the suffering any longer, the son decided to make the long trek homeward.

He finally arrived in his homeland, but he had been away for so long that he had even forgotten the local language. The poor tattered fellow tried motioning to the people around him that he was the son of their mighty king, but they mocked him and beat him.

Arriving at the palace gates, the son tried again but was ignored until, in utter despair, he cried aloud so that his father would hear him. The king recognized his son's voice, his love was aroused for him, and he came out to welcome him home.

Similarly, the King, Hashem, sends a *neshama*, his prince, down to this world to benefit by observing the Torah and fulfilling its *mitzvos*. However, when hankering after pleasures, the *neshama* loses all its wealth and arrives at a place where his Father, Hashem, is unknown. Moreover, the *neshama* forgets how things were Above, and in the long galus, even forgets its own 'language'. In desperation, it cries out by sounding the *shofar*, expressing regret for the past and determination for the future. This simple cry arouses Hashem's mercy: He shows His love for His only son and forgives him.

(כתר שם טוב, הוספות קצ"ד [בחדש])

Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev would tell the following *mashal*: A king once lost his way in the forest, until he met a man who directed him out of the forest and back to his palace. He rewarded the stranger richly and appointed him as a senior minister. Years later, that minister acted rebelliously and was sentenced to death, but the king granted him one last wish. The minister asked that both he and the king put on the clothing they had worn long ago, when he had rescued the king from the forest. This reminded the king of his indebtedness to this man, and he revoked the sentence.

Similarly, we willingly accepted the Torah from the King, Hashem, when all the other nations refused the offer. But since that time, like the minister, we have been rebellious by doing *aveiros*, and are therefore

fearful on Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment. So we sound the *shofar* to remind Hashem of Mattan Torah, when we accepted the Torah and made Hashem our king, and we express our renewed eagerness to crown Him once again. This *zechus* stands by us: Hashem forgives our *aveiros* and inscribes us immediately for a good life.

(המשך וזכה תרל"ז פרק ע')

Before Rosh Hashana תר"מ (1879) the Rebbe Maharash requested his *meshareis* to relay the following to the chassidim: "It is written that sounding the *shofar* is like the cry, 'Father, Father.' The main thing there is the cry."

That Rosh Hashanah, the entire village wept with remorse.

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 4)

CONSIDER

*What is the difference
between our connection to
HaShem expressed in the two
meshalim?
Why did the Chassidim prefer
to hear a maamar? What did
the Rebbe explain to them?*

The Baal Shem Tov would usually be present for *tekias shofar* together with his *talmidim*. One year he requested one of them, the *tzaddik* Reb Yaakov Yosef of Polonnoye, to take his place there, while the Baal Shem Tov himself sounded the *shofar* with the simple folk and the children. Those unsophisticated people cried out to Hashem, "Father in Heaven, have *rachmanus*!" And that had the greatest effect of all.

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 6)

DAVENING WITH FERVOR

On Rosh Hashana the Rebbeim would *daven* with much fervor and tears, particularly the first *maariv* which would extend for many hours. The Rebbe spoke of how every individual should take a lesson to some extent from the exceptional *davening* of the Rebbeim.

(סה"ש תשנ"ב ע' 13, הע' 19)

In the year תרמ"ז (1885), the Rebbe Rashab was in Yalta, Crimea, and *davened* in a little *shul* of Poilishe chassidim. On the night of Rosh Hashanah, he remained there to *daven* after everyone had left. The *shamash*, before going home, ordered the *goy* who cleaned the *shul* not to extinguish the light or lock the door. When the *shamash* finished his *seuda*, he felt guilty that he had left a *Yid*, a *talmid chochom*, alone in *shul*, so he returned to see what was happening. Upon arriving, he saw the *goy* standing in the foyer and crying bitterly.

The *goy* explained, "I'm used to hearing people praying with joyful songs – but here stood a man who was pouring out his soul. So how could I hold back from crying? I remembered all my problems: my uncle died, my cow died, my aged mother is sick, and I wanted to cry."

And when the *shamash* entered the *shul* itself and his eyes beheld the Rebbe Rashab *davening*, they too became fountains of tears.

(ספר המאמרים תשי"א ע' 90)

ACCEPTING HASHEM'S KINGSHIP

The activities of a person on Rosh Hashana impact his entire year, since Rosh Hashana is the head of the year. Therefore one should use one's time wisely on Rosh Hashana.

(שר"ע אדה"ז סי' תקפ"ג ע' ח)

The Frieddiker Rebbe writes: The main *avoda* of Rosh Hashanah is to accept *ol malchus shomayim*, the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, even for chassidim of stature, the *avoda* would be to simply say *Tehillim*, to sleep as little as possible, and to take care not to indulge in idle talk. In this they are like a servant whose service to his master leaves him not even one free moment, or like a son preoccupied with the joy of welcoming his father whom he has not seen for a whole year.

(אג"ק אדמו"ר הרי"צ, ח"י ע' 425)

One Rosh Hashanah, the sons of the *Tzemach Tzedek* and some other prominent chassidim asked him to deliver an additional *maamar* for them. He answered, "The people at large are saying *Tehillim*, and you are requesting *Chassidus*?! It is better to say *Tehillim*."

The *Tzemach Tzedek* himself was seen saying *Tehillim* throughout the second night, his eyes flowing with tears. Even as he waited to say the *maamar* on the second day of *Yom-Tov*, he murmured words of *Tehillim*.

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 10)

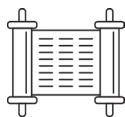
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ROSH HASHANAH APPLE

Why is Minhag Chabad to recite the Yehi Ratzon on the apple between the bracha and eating?

On the first night of Rosh Hashanah, after eating at least a *kezayis* of challah (to minimize the interruption between kiddush and the meal¹), we begin the meal by eating an apple in honey. We recite *ha'eitz* on the apple, but the *bracha acharona* is covered by *birkas hamazon*.

In his Shulchan Aruch, the Alter Rebbe writes that the Yehi Ratzon should be recited after eating some of the apple.² This follows the view of the Magen Avraham, considering the Yehi Ratzon a *hefsek* between the bracha and eating. Yet, the *minhag Chabad*, as seen by the Rebbeim and recorded by the Rebbe in Hayom Yom, is to recite the Yehi Ratzon between the *bracha* and eating the apple.³

In another context, the Divrei Nechemia writes that in his youth, the Alter Rebbe was more hesitant to disagree with the accepted later *poskim*, especially the Magen Avraham. Yet later on, after reaching greater heights in his Torah knowledge, he took more liberty to form independent views and relied more on the views of the *mekubalim*.⁴

Likewise, says the Rebbe, it would seem that the Alter Rebbe himself shifted his opinion after writing his Shulchan Aruch. Especially since there are *ruchniyus* reasons to preface the Yehi Ratzon before eating, and even the Magen Avraham agrees that it's not a *hefsek b'dieved* since it's relevant to the eating.

The Rebbe explains that by reciting the Yehi Ratzon directly after the bracha of *ha'eitz*, it can function as a *bracha hasemucha lachaverta*, with the bracha's opening applying to the Yehi Ratzon as well. And because our *nusach* of the Yehi Ratzon omits Hashem's name, it's considered a direct continuation of the bracha and doesn't constitute a *hefsek*.⁵

1. אג"ק ח"ג ע' רט.
2. שו"ע י"ד סי' תקפ"ג ס"ג.
3. היום יום א' תשרי. ולהעיר מ"ש אדה"ז בסידורו שלכאו' יש לפרש
4. דברי נחמיה או"ח רסכ"א.
5. ראה בארוכה אג"ק ח"ג ע' ק"מ. התקשרות גל' תקמ"ז ע' 10.

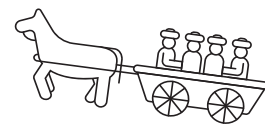
לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

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Our Heroes



R. LEIB BATLAN

R. Leib Zelikand was a chossid of the Alter Rebbe, the Mittlerer Rebbe, and the Tzemach Tzedek. He taught the Tzemach Tzedek in his youth for a short time, and then served as the Rov of Vilkomir, and later as Rov of Dvinsk for 40 years. He was nicknamed "Batlan" because he was completely removed from all worldly matters and solely devoted to Torah. A renowned *gaon*, he knew all of Shas as if he had just learned it. R. Leib's *teshuvos* are published in *Zecher Yehudah*, which includes correspondence with the Tzemach Tzedek. He passed away in the year 5618.

When R. Leib came to the Mittlerer Rebbe for the first time, the Rebbe instructed him to learn Tanya and Imrei Bina. R. Leib learned them both for an entire year, and he came back to the Rebbe with a list of questions in Imrei Bina.

The Rebbe told him, "I didn't write Imrei Bina with such exactitude like my father wrote Tanya, calculating every *vav*. Learn the Imrei Bina five times over and then you will understand it."

(שמו"ס ח"א ע' 74)

R. Leib's son was a wealthy contractor who supplied items and built buildings for the Czar's army. Once, he constructed large barracks in Dvinsk, and the Czar himself came to see it. While touring the complex, the Czar pointed to one of the walls and told the contractor that it was built crooked and could fall. Taken aback, R. Leib's son replied that it's perfectly straight and structurally sound. The Czar looked at him angrily and told his soldiers to put him in prison.

R. Leib had the practice to learn in a room in shul all week long and return home only on Shabbos. Hearing that her son was thrown in prison by the wicked Czar Nikolai, R. Leib's wife ran to the shul and told him what happened. R. Leib wasn't fazed, and he continued learning as if nothing happened.

After the Czar left the city, he sent back a messenger to release the Jew immediately. Knowing that it was unusual, the officers asked him why he rushed to release the Jew. The Czar related how he had once arrested a general and forgotten about him, only to find him in prison two years later. On this occasion, he couldn't take his mind off this Jew, and he took it as a sign to release him.

(לקו"ס דפ"ח ע' 485)

A Moment with The Rebbe

לזכר נשמת מרת חוה לאה בת ר' שמשון הכהן ע"ה



THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

Reb Berel Gurevitch was trapped behind the Iron Curtain long after most chassidim had left. When he finally managed to leave Russia, in the late 5720's, he wasted no time in making his way to Rebbe.

At his first *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked Reb Berel to relate all that had transpired back in Russia. Reb Berel unloaded his heart, sharing with the Rebbe the details of his suffering for Yiddishkeit and his harrowing experiences in the Soviet gulag.

After hearing all the details attentively,

the Rebbe posed a question:

"Are you ready to forgive the Yid that *massered* (tattled) on you?"

Reb Berel was taken aback. But he immediately caught his composure and said, "Yes, I am willing to forgive him."

"Good," the Rebbe replied. "If so, the years that you sat will not be counted..."

Indeed, Reb Berel lived a remarkably long life.

(As heard from Rabbi Yosef Mishulovin - Detroit)