

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON ROSH HASHANAH and SHABBOS SHUVA - 5758

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weekly@jer1.co.il \* TORAH WEEKLY \* Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas Ha'azinu We wish all our readers a Gemar Chasima Tova.

The following is a message from the Deans of Ohr Somayach: Dear Friend, On the eve of Rosh Hashanah, Jews traditionally wish one another: "May you be inscribed for a Good Year." To our Internet Subscribers - members of the Ohr Somayach family - we would like to personally offer this blessing to you and your loved ones. And as family, you can send a special greeting to the rest of the Ohr Somayach family, to Jews throughout the world, the countless thousands participating in Ohr Somayach programs in a dozen centers on five continents. You can wish a good year to over 680 students discovering their Jewish roots at our main campus in Jerusalem and to more than 600 Russian families in the redeveloping Jewish communities in Odessa... wherever the light of Ohr Somayach radiates, your blessing will shine forth. All it takes is your generous contribution to our Rosh Hashanah Campaign. Your encouragement will enable us to reach many thousands more and bring them back to their Torah, their land and their people. They are waiting to hear from you. Please send in your gift today and earn the heavenly reward of a good year filled with health, happiness and success. Ksiva V'chasim Tova, Rabbi Nota Schiller Ra bbi Mendel Weinbach P.S. Please send your generous gift \*today\*. Your gift will be translated into a good year for the tens of thousands more we can reach. Join us in meeting this historic challenge. 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem 91180, Israel tel 972-2-581-0315, fax 972-2-581-2890, e-mail rabbis@ohr.israel.net

Insights This is the first Shabbos of the year. It is the prototype, the blueprint for the whole year. Because of this, we must be especially careful to guard its sanctity. The Talmud tells us that if the Jewish People had kept the first Shabbos properly, no nation could have ruled over them. On Rosh Hashanah a new order is created for all the days of the year. Thus if the first Shabbos of the year is correctly observed, then the whole year follows suit. Man was created on Erev Shabbos, on Friday afternoon, in order that he could immediately enter straight into Shabbos. But before Shabbos came, Man had already sinned. Shabbos is an aid to teshuva. As our Sages teach (Berachos 37), a tzaddik gamur (completely righteous person) cannot stand in the place of a ba'al teshuva (someone who returns to Judaism). Tzaddikim uphold the world, as it says in Proverbs "The tzaddik is the foundation of the world," but "teshuva preceded the world" (Pesachim 54) so the level of the ba'al teshuva is before the world and above the world.

Just as the ba'al teshuva is before the world, and thus above it, so too Shabbos has a radiance which is higher than the seven days of the week -- a reflection of the world to come.

Sympathetic Vibration "Ha'azinu...." (32:1) Just as all the notes in a chord and all the voices and instruments in an orchestra blend together to form a single sound, so all creation sings in harmony to proclaim Hashem's Unity. The Parsha of Ha'azinu is written in the form of a song to remind the Jewish People that all creation resonates in harmony with their actions, whether for good or for bad.

Gardening - Jewish Style 1 "May My teaching drop like rain, may My utterance flow like the dew" (32:1) A violent storm. Winds howling. The rain lashes the ground. It seems as though the earth is being torn apart by the weather. And yet without this heavy downpour, nothing will grow properly. For if only the dew waters the ground, the heat of the sun will burn and shrivel the seeds. Only if heavy rains water the ground will the dew do its job of bringing forth the flowering blossoms. This is the way of Torah. If a person labors in the Jewish law, filling himself with the methodology and torrent of Talmudic logic, even though it may seem that he is struggling against a deluge, he will eventually bring forth strong and beautiful flowers. He may feel storm-driven and pounded by the rains. Nevertheless, the fruits of his labors will also include the esoteric parts of Torah, the `dew' of Aggadita. They will flower in his hands. However,

B'S'D' if he concerns himself only with the `dew' of the Torah, the Aggadita, then in the withering `sun,' the bright lights of secular cynicism, his Torah wisdom will wither and die, lacking the deep rain to nourish its roots.

Gardening - Jewish Style 2 "May my teaching fall like rain." The words of the Torah are like rain. Just as rain, when it falls, seems to leave no impression on the plants, and only later when the sun emerges from the clouds and shines on the earth do we see the results of the rain, so too are the words of the Torah. Even though at the time of hearing them their influence cannot be detected, nevertheless, in due course their effect becomes apparent.

Sources: o Shabbos Shuva - Sfas Emes o Sympathetic Vibration - Rabbi Gedalia Schorr o Gardening, Jewish Style 1 - based on the Netziv, as heard from Rabbi Pinchas Kanterowitz o Gardening, Jewish Style 2 - Rabbi Bunim M'Pshische Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1997 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

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TASHLICH Tashlich — "throwing or casting away" — is a custom which involves going to a body of water on the first afternoon of Rosh Hashanah and reciting the Tashlich prayer (see The ArtScroll Siddur, p. 770). If the first day is Shabbat Tashlich is postponed until the following day. If necessary, Tashlich may be done until Hoshanah Rabah. Insights:

1. Michah 7:19 He will again be merciful unto us; He will suppress our iniquities; And cast into the depths of the sea all their sins.

2. Shmot 34:7 Abundant in kindness, abundant in truth; preserver of kindness for thousands of generations.

3. Hagoon Rav Moshe Shapiro, shlita Action, thought and speech of humans have spiritual impact because we are created in the image of God. Spiritual effects are beyond the limitations of time-space. We ask God in His mercy to be uneven in His consideration of good and evil actions. Our mitzvot should be "preserved for thousands of generations" and our aveirot should be "cast into the depths of the sea."

4. Zohar Parshat Naso 131 When Avraham was taking Yitzchak to the Akeida the Satan created a deep, fast flowing river in the path of Avraham. Avraham waded into the river up to his neck and forded the stream in order to do the will of God. [Throughout the centuries the Jewish people have repeated the self-sacrifice of Avraham and Yitzchak and have braved fire and water to do the will of our Creator. We ask God to remember and count that merit of the Jewish people.]

5. Maharam Yaffe The fish in the river remind us that human life is as frail as a fish in the sea that can at any moment be caught in the fisherman's net.

6. Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah 3b Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel, "What is the meaning of the verse, 'And He made people like the fish of the sea?' Just as the fish of the sea die as soon as they leave the water so also when people separate themselves from the Torah and the mitzvot they die."

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mikra@torah.org P'shuto Shel Mikra Rosh haShanah: Avraham and the Day of Judgement An Analysis of the Torah Readings for Rosh haShanah by Yitzchak Etshalom

This shiur is dedicated to all of the "M'saymim" who completed the 7.5 year cycle of Daf Yomi this past Sunday - and have, of course, begun anew with the first chapter of B'rakhot. May haKadosh Barukh Hu bless them all with the strength to continue to learn and may the numbers of students within our boundaries increase a thousandfold!

1 THE TANNAIM: TWO OPINIONS The Mishnah (3rd or 4th chapter of Megillah - depending on which version you are looking at) lists the special Torah readings for each of the holidays and unique days during the year. Regarding Rosh haShanah, the Mishnah states: "On Rosh haShanah, we read "And on the seventh month, on the first of the month..." (Vayyikra 23:24 ff.)" The Bavli (Babylonian Talmud) cites a second Tannaitic opinion as to what should be read on that day (at this

time, there was still only one day of Rosh haShanah): On Rosh haShanah, we read "In the seventh month" (Vayyikra 23)... "others" say [we read] "and God remember Sarah" (B'reshet 21)... (BT Megillah 31a) The second alternative - to read about the story of Sarah's miraculous birth at the age of 90 - is a bit disarming of a choice. All of the other "special" readings focus around either the laws pertaining to that day (e.g. the Sukkot readings focus on the offerings of each day, as well as the full treatment of the calendar) or of an explicit historical reference (e.g. Pesach and the Exodus story). What connection is there between the story of Sarah's birthing Yitzchak at an advanced age and the "Day of Remembrance" (Rosh haShanah)? The conventional understanding is that the Sarah association is based on the Gemara in Rosh haShanah (11a), which states that both Sarah and Hannah were "remembered" on Rosh haShanah. (see, e.g., commentary of Ran to Megillah ad loc.) There are, however, several problems with this explanation - as will become clear when we look into the Gemara to discover the roots of our practice vis-a-vis the Torah reading on the two days of Rosh haShanah.

**II THE GEMARA: THE "TWO DAYS" SOLUTION** The Gemara, in assessing how to "resolve" these two opinions, makes a startling statement. We would normally expect the Gemara to "compromise" and assign each of the readings to one of the days - let "the seventh month" reading take place on the first day and "God remembered Sarah" take place on the second day (or vice-versa). This is, by the way, exactly how the Gemara (ibid) resolved a dispute regarding the reading on Shavuot - now that there are two days (outside of Israel), we "fulfill" one opinion on the first day, and the other on the second day. Regarding Rosh haShanah, however, the Gemara does not take this "path of compromise": Now that there are two days, on the first day we follow the "others", on the next day, "And God tested Avraham..." (B'reshet 22) Where did the "Akedah" (binding of Yitzchak) story come from? Why is it suddenly introduced into the range of possible readings here? Keep in mind that the first two opinions were rendered by Tannaim - and it is highly unlikely and somewhat enigmatic for the Gemara to "overrule" a Tanna, especially when both opinions could have been maintained! Besides the difficulty with this Gemara, there is an additional problem with the "God remembered Sarah" reading, based on the way that we practice. The text of the Sarah-Yitzchak-Hagar-Yishma'el story is 21 verses long - which is enough for a complete reading, even if Rosh haShanah falls on Shabbat. Why then do we read the rest of Chapter 21 (vv. 22-34), detailing the covenant between Avraham and Avimelekh? What relevance does that story carry for Rosh haShanah? To sum up: We have two questions about the reading on Rosh haShanah: a) Why is the Tanna's opinion ignored in favor of the "Akedah" story? b) Why is the Avraham-Avimelekh story also read? To this, we could add a third question: c) What is the significance of the Akedah story to Rosh haShanah? (keep in mind that according to the Midrash, that terrifying event took place on the date that would eventually be Pesach - in the spring - and not in the fall). Regarding this final question, there is no question that the ram, brought in place of Yitzchak, is associated with Rosh haShanah (the Shofar) - but, again, is that enough to justify "overruling" the first Tanna (and the only opinion cited in our Mishnah) as regards the reading?

**III REEVALUATING THE "OTHERS" OPINION** We generally assume, as mentioned above, that the association between the story which begins with Sarah's miraculous conception and birth and Rosh haShanah lies at the beginning - in that she was "remembered" on Rosh haShanah. There is another way to understand the association - one that is not subject to the challenges raised above. If we understand the second Tannaic opinion ("others") as relating ONLY to the birth of Yitzchak - then, indeed, our questions stand. If, however, we understand the second opinion as relating to the entire narrative of the birth of Yitzchak, the covenant with Avimelekh and the culmination of Avraham's life - the Akedah, then we understand the "solution" of the Gemara: The first opinion is that we read from Vayyikra - a Halakchic section which details the laws of special times in our calendar - including (among others) the day of Rosh haShanah. In other words, the focus of the reading should be similar to that on other holidays - the "practice" of the day. The second opinion, contradictorily, is concerned that we read a piece of narrative - (Chapters 21 and 22 of B'reshet - later on we will address the significance of these two chapters). In other words, this opinion maintains that the focus of the reading should be on the "experience" of the day (i.e. narrative), rather than the "practice" of the day (i.e. legislative). The Gemara's solution was that, now that we have two days, we accept the second opinion and divide that reading into two parts - one for each day - so as to preserve the thematic continuity throughout the two-day holiday. This already answers the first question - why the first Tanna's opinion was ignored. There was no solution of "one day this, the other that" such as the Gemara effects for Shavuot. On Rosh haShanah, there is a basic dispute as to whether the reading should be legistically-oriented (Vayyikra) or narrative-oriented (B'reshet). Once the Halakchah decided in favor of the second opinion - that reading was simply split into two parts. Now, we have to address the other two questions, which can be combined into one mega-question: What is the relevance of these two chapters (and now, we have to include the story of Sarah's miraculous conception and birth) of B'reshet to Rosh haShanah?

**IV ROSH HASHANAH - THE INDIVIDUAL STANDS BEFORE GOD** Unlike the tenor of the rest of the holidays of Tishri - Yom haKippurim, Sukkot and Sh'mini Atzeret - Rosh haShanah seems to place the individual and his/her relationship with God at the core of the experience of the day. Even though we are crowning God, declaring Him to be King over "all that draw breath into their nostrils" (from the liturgy) - and this declaration is made as a community as well as by each individual - the sense of "judgement" which drives the day is focused on each person as he or she stands alone before the Creator. Note the Mishnah's statement about the day: On Rosh haShanah, they all pass before Him like "B'nei Maron" (Rosh haShanah 1:2; see the Gemara - Rosh haShanah 18a for the various interpretations of that phrase). The Gemara explains that this means (regardless of what the phrase specifically depicts) that each person passes before God - to be judged - as an individual. This is not the experience of Yom haKippurim, where, although each person confesses his sins before God in a private manner and does Teshuvah to the best of his ability, much of the focus of the day is on community (note the oft-repeated "Ki Anu Amekchah" which depicts the relationship between God and the Jewish people via various real-world analogues). It is certainly not the same experience as Sukkot - where the focus is almost totally on the community (and the agricultural seasons). Rosh haShanah literally "stands alone" as a time for individual reflection, introspection and solitude - where the individual stands before God in judgement. When we look through our history, we find that there was only one individual whose entire life calling approximated that which we experience on Rosh haShanah. Unlike Yitzchak, who was trained in the "way of God" by his father; unlike Ya'akov, who had two generations of righteousness and loyalty to God as

a model, Avraham was the true trail-blazer of our national (pre-)history. In order for him to succeed at his mission, he not only had to "ignore" his father's lessons (and those of his kinfolk), he had to actively get up and leave the entire environs of his youth (and middle age) and follow God's directive to a "Land that I will show you". If there is anyone whose life is a model for the Rosh haShanah experience, it is Avraham Avinu. This would help to explain an enigmatic phrase in the chapter of Thillim which is recited 7 times before the blasting of the Shofar (Ps. 47): "The great of the peoples are gathered together, the nation of the God of Avraham, for the guardians of the earth belong to God, He is greatly exalted." Why is God referred to as "the God of Avraham" in this chapter - which is otherwise devoted to God being crowned via the blast of the Shofar (see infra)? Again - it is Avraham's path of solitude and isolation which is the one we must attempt to walk through the Rosh haShanah experience - as will be explained below.

**V "ECHAD HAYAH AVRAHAM"** Although we will look at this in much greater detail in the upcoming shiurim on Sefer B'reshet (especially Parashat Lekh-L'kha and Parashat Vayera), a thumbnail sketch of Avraham's life is in order. Not only did Avraham have to leave his comfortable and familiar environs in order to receive God's blessing - but the demand for repeated isolation and separation from loved ones was the hallmark of his life. A brief chart will clarify this:

Chapter	Separation from...
12	Father's house, birthplace, land
12	Sarai (see Ramban here - it's fascinating!)
13	Lot
16	(temporarily) Hagar (carrying his seed)
[17	(you be the judge) B'rit Milah]
20	Sarah (again!)
21	Hagar & Yishma'el
22	(almost) Yitzchak

As you can see, every step of his life was marked by separation from family - from parents, from his wife (four times, counting Hagar twice), from children (twice - and nearly a third time) and from his beloved nephew. Note also that every one of these separations is accompanied by an increased blessing: (see 12:2-3; 13:2; 13:14-18; 16:10; 17:5-8; 20:14-16; 21:20; 22:17-18). In other words, it is when Avraham demonstrates this tragic heroism - the ability to leave everything near and dear for the sake of God and for His promise - that he succeeds. We can now understand why a segment of the life of Avraham is appropriate to read on Rosh haShanah (the 11 chapters which make up the bulk of the "Avraham narrative" comprises too much text for the purpose). Why then this part - why Chapter 21 (the birth of Yitzchak, the exile of Hagar and Yishma'el and the covenant with Avimelekh) and Chapter 22 (the Akedah)?

**VI RASHBAM AND THE AKEDAH** In order to understand the particular relevance of this section of the narrative to Rosh haShanah, we turn to an ancillary question posed by the Rishonim on the first verse of Chapter 22: It came to pass after these matters... This introduction seems to indicate not only a juxtaposition in time between the (upcoming) Akedah and the events just mentioned (the covenant with Avimelekh) - but also a causal relationship. To wit, it seems that the covenant had something to do with the Akedah. Rashbam (R. Sh'mu'el b. Me'ir, 12th century France) suggests that the Akedah was, indeed, a Divine (punitive) reaction to Avraham's signing of the covenant. His reasoning is that since the land of P'leshet (present day Ashdod south to Azzah) is part of the Land which God promised to give him, God was angry at Avraham for signing a pact of mutual non-aggression (which is either unnecessary or makes it impossible to properly take the Land.) Rashbam suggests, based on the Midrash, that the reason that we were later unsuccessful in wresting that part of the Land from the P'lishtim was due to this earlier covenant. I would like to suggest a slight variation on Rashbam's approach - which will also support the rationale for reading specifically these three sub-narratives on Rosh haShanah. Avraham's entire path was to be tread on alone; since he was truly "The Lonely Man of Faith". Every time that he tried to become attached to a family member, that loved one was (almost?) taken away - if not permanently, at least for a time. Now that Avraham and Sarah had their own child (and God approved of sending Hagar and Yishma'el away), it seems that Avraham started "banking on" his future. Note the wording of the covenant with Avimelekh: "Therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my offspring or with my grandchild..." (21:23 - these are Avimelekh's words). Since Avraham agreed to the oath, it seems clear that he (now) felt in a position to be able to make promises about the future and about future generations. This led to the Divine response of the Akedah - "You think that Yitzchak is yours, is so surely going to be here that you can make covenants and oaths regarding his loyalties???" asks God.; "Take your son, your only son, the one that you love....Yitzchak!" (22:2). The inspiration to be found in these lessons is a microcosm - and the apex - of Avraham's spiritual adventure. When he finally gained the beloved son of his old age with Sarah, he immediately was called to exile his other, beloved son (see Rashi on 22:2); when he felt confident that he could pinpoint the one through whom God's promises would be realized, he made an agreement and projected that son's future. At that point, God called him to reject that future and to place all of his faith in God - not in allies, not in this son or the other - but only in God. That lonely path, the one blazed for us by Avraham, is the one we must each walk when we face God on Yom haDin - the day of Judgement. We are doubly blessed: We have the reserves of Avraham's strength on which to draw to enable us to stand alone, if atremble, before the Throne on Remembrance Day. Our second blessing is that we are not confined to that path; as we leave the path less taken and join the communal "celebration" of Yom haKippurim, approximating Yitzchak's offering - and then join the entire House of Ya'akov in the Sukkah (hint: B'reshet 33:17).

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ROSH HASHANA -- AKAI DAT YITZCHAK (NEHAMA LEIBOWITZ)  
SINCE THE AKAI DA (BINDING OF ISAAC) THEME IS SO CENTRAL

TO ROSH HASHANA, WE HAVE DECIDED TO BEGIN WITH ANALYSIS OF THIS CRUCIAL STORY IN THE TORAH, WHICH IS ALSO THE TORAH READING OF THE SECOND DAY OF ROSH HASHANA.

AKEIDAT YITZHAK (Genesis 22)

PART ONE: The first issue we shall confront in this episode is a philosophical one: For what purpose does God, who knows all, put man to the test? Nahmanides (Gen. 22:1): Testing is, in my opinion, an opportunity for a person to exercise freedom of action; if he wants to do something he can do it, and if he does not want to do it he need not do it. With regard to the one being tested it is considered a test, but the Tester [God] is instructing him to act in a certain way so as to convert something from the potential to the actual, so that he can reap the reward of a good action and not merely that of a good intention. Maimonides (Guide 3:24): Know that the aim and meaning of all the trials mentioned in the Torah is to let people know what they ought to do or what they must believe. Accordingly, the notion of a trial consists, as it were, in a certain act being done, the purpose being not the accomplishment of that particular act but the latter's being a model to be imitated and followed. Thus the interpretation of its dictum: *ôTo know whether you do love* (Dt. 13:4) is not: In order that God should know that, for He already knew it; but the meaning resembles that of its dictum: *ôTo know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you* (Ex. 31:13), the meaning of which is: In order that the religious communities should know.

QUESTION 1: What is the difference between these two answers to the question of why God institutes a test? [Nehama preferred *ôone word* answers; here *it's optional*.] Maimonides: A test benefits all humanity (or: successive generations, including *ûin particular--our own*); Nahmanides: A test benefits the one being tested.

\* EXTRA: There are five other instances in the Torah of the use of the term *ôtest*: *ôthe manna* (Ex. 16:4 and Dt. 8:16); *the giving of the Torah* (Ex. 20:14); *the desert journey* (Dt. 8:2); and *false prophets* (Dt. 13:4). It would be interesting to apply the reasoning of Maimonides and Nahmanides to each of them, particularly the instance of the giving of the Torah. [Cf. Nahmanides commentary on Ex. 20:14.] Question: What kind of test consists of giving someone a valuable gift [i.e., the Torah]? Nehama's answer is that God can impose a test not only by causing us to suffer, but also by lavishing upon us unlimited goodness. She writes: In actuality, broad strata of Western society *ûincluding much of the population of the State of Israel* are undergoing the test of a high standard of living, an excess of leisure time, and a life which doesn't require great effort. Much has been written about this *ôtragedy* of excess leisure time and of the deterioration of morality in living the *ôgood life*.

\* QUESTION 2: According to each commentator: Why was Avraham given three days before carrying out God's directives? Maimonides: To insure that his actions would be viewed (by the intended audience) as thoughtful and deliberate, rather than coerced or unthinking. Nahmanides: To provide Avraham with adequate time to reflect on the test to insure that he would be acting entirely of his own free will.

\* QUESTION 3: Maimonides (in the continuation of the passage cited above) posits that Avraham proceeded to the Akeidah out of the sole desire to demonstrate the proper love and fear of God, and not in anticipation of any reward or in fear of any punishment. How does he presume to know that? ANSWER: It would appear that Maimonides reasoned as follows: Considering the value which Avraham presumably placed upon the life of Yitzhak, what reward could have replaced him and what punishment could be greater than his loss? \* PART TWO: The second issue we shall discuss, here, pertains to the text of the Akeidah, particularly to the language in which Avraham's instructions are couched. God's words to Avraham, here, are the last He ever addresses to him directly. Compare those words with the very first words He addressed to him, earlier (Gen. 12:1): Gen. 12:1 God said to Avraham: Go [LEKH LEKHA] from your country and from your birthplace and from your homestead to the land which I shall show you. Gen. 12:4 Avraham went as God had instructed him *à* Gen. 22:2 He said: Please take your son your only one whom you love, Isaac, and go [LEKH

LEKHA] to the Moriah country and offer him there as an OLAH upon the mountain which I shall show you. Gen. 22:3 Avraham rose early in the morning *à* and went to the place of which God had spoken.

QUESTION 4: In what ways are these passages similar, and how do they differ? ANSWER: The similarities are both linguistic and literary. The recurring language consists of the phrases *ôLEKH LEKHA*, *ô* and *ôwhich I shall show you*. *ô* The structural similarities are between the threefold instructions: country, birthplace, homestead // son, only son, beloved. On account of these striking similarities, many of the commentators assume that the former was the first test which God administered to Avraham, and the latter *ùthe last*. [According to a Mishnah in tractate Avot, there were ten such tests.] The difference is more difficult to articulate. Nehama, who preferred one word answers, would probably have been looking for: past and future. That is to say, in the *ôfirst test* Avraham was asked to sacrifice his past, while in the *ôlast test* he is asked to sacrifice his future.

\* Part Three: The final section deals with a Midrash which records a dialogue between Avraham and Satan as Satan attempts to prevent Avraham from carrying out his task. According to the Midrash TANHUMA (with some interpolations from the YALKUT SHIMEONI): Satan, disguised as an elderly man, intercepted him and asked where he was going. *ôTo pray*, *ô* he replied. Said he: *ôWhat need do you have to carry fire, a knife, and kindling?* *ô* He replied: *ôWe might tarry a day or two and slaughter meat to eat*. *ô* Said he: *ôOld man; wasn't I there when God told you to take your son [and sacrifice him]?* You *Ève* lost your mind. You have a son born to you when you were 100 years old and you *Ère* going to kill him? *ô* He replied: *ôFor that very reason*. *ô* Said he: *ôWere He to test you further, could you withstand it?* *ô* He replied: *ôHowever much*. *ô* Said he: *ôTomorrow He *Èll* accuse you of murder?* *ô* He replied: *ôFor that very reason*. *ô* When Satan saw that he could not convince him he turned into a great river right before them. Avraham unhesitatingly entered and the water reached his knees. He called to his servants to follow, and they, too, descended. When they reached the middle of the river, the water reached his neck. At that moment, Avraham looked up and called out to heaven: *ôLord of the universe: You have chosen me, appeared to me, and said to me: I am unique, and you are unique; by means of you shall My name become known throughout the world. Offer your son, Yitzhak, as an OLAH before Me. I did not procrastinate; I am even now engaged in fulfilling Your command, but the water has reached my neck. If I or Yitzhak were to drown, who would fulfill Your word?* *ô* God replied: *ôI swear that My name will be recognized as unique through your efforts*. *ô* Immediately, God roared at the spring, the river dried up, and they stood on dry land.

QUESTION 5: Reread the text *ùthrough v. 10* and compare it with the Midrash: What motivated the Midrash? Where in the text of the Torah (particularly vss. 7-8) can the Midrash claim support for its literary inventions? ANSWER: The Midrash appears to be struck by the way Avraham set out blithely to slaughter Yitzhak without reservation. Satan's recriminations constitute the literary representation of Avraham's conscience, and pose the very doubts we, too, can well imagine that Avraham would have had. What the Midrash adds to the Torah narrative is the psychological, motivational, element which is not obvious there. [How the structure and content of this Biblical narrative can nevertheless provide insight into the thoughts and motivations of its characters, is discussed by Nehama in *ôStudies in Bereishit*, pp. 196-198 of the English edition.] The textual basis rests in the interrupted nature of the Torah narrative. In vss. 7-8, as Yitzhak inquires about the purpose of their journey and Avraham replies, the word *ôhe said* (VAYOMER) recurs 5 times. The effect of this staccato tempo introduces a note of hesitation which *ùMidrashically* *ù*hints at the pangs of conscience. Finally, there is an alternation there between the common nouns, father and son, and the proper names, Avraham and Yitzhak. In Nehama's own words: When we reach the awful moment in the dialogue when Avraham must decide whether to reveal, to conceal, or to allude, then-- in order to express his hesitation and the anxiety of the moment-- it is written: *ôAVRAHAM*

ohr@virtual.co.il (Ohr Somayach) \* PARSHA Q&A \* In-Depth Questions on the Parsha and Rashi's commentary. Parshas Ha'azinu We wish all our readers a Gemar Chasima Tova.

Parsha Questions 1. What is so special about the heavens and the earth that Moshe chooses them as witnesses? 2. Why is the Torah compared to rain? 3. In what way is Hashem "faithful without injustice?" (32:4) 4. Why is Hashem called a "Tzaddik"? 5. How many floods did Hashem bring upon the world? 6. Which group of people does the Torah call "fathers"? Cite an example. 7. Why did Hashem separate the peoples of the world into exactly 70 nations? 8. Why is the merit of the Jewish People's ancestry called a "rope"? 9. How is Hashem's behavior toward the Jewish People similar to an eagle's behavior toward its offspring? 10. Hashem says regarding punishment of the Jewish People "I will spend my arrows on them" (32:23).

What is the positive aspect of this punishment? 11. How does the idea of "chillul Hashem" not allow the nations to destroy the Jewish People? 12. What will happen to the nations that conquer the Jewish People? 13. When Hashem overturns a nation that persecutes the Jewish People, His attribute of Mercy is "replaced" by which attribute? 14. When Hashem punishes the heathen nations, for whose sins does He exact punishment? 15. How will Hashem's punishment change the way the nations view the Jewish People? 16. On what day was Ha'azinu taught to the Jewish People? 17. In verse 32:44 Yehoshua is called Hoshea. Why? 18. In verse 32:47 what does "it is not empty from you" mean? 19. Why did Hashem tell Moshe that he would die a similar death to that of his brother Aaron? 20. If Moshe had spoken to the rock rather than striking it, what would the Jewish People have learned?

Bonus QUESTION: Rashi states that Hashem "pays" the righteous for their mitzvos in the World to Come, whereas he "pays" the wicked for their mitzvos in this world (32:4). But since Hashem is just, why is it that an evil person is rewarded only in this world, even if he did a perfect mitzvah?

I Did Not Know That! The Torah is often compared to "water." In 32:2, the Torah is likened to rain, dew, light rain, and showers, corresponding to the four types of students in the fifth chapter of Pirkei Avos. One who is quick to learn and quick to forget, one who is slow to learn and slow to forget, one who is slow to learn but quick to forget, and one who is quick to learn but slow to forget. Ba'al HaTurim

Recommended Reading List Ramban 32:1 Biblical Witnesses 32:16 The Rebuke of Ha'azinu 32:40 The Testimony of Ha'azinu Sforno 32:2 Waters of the Torah 32:13 Purpose of Eretz Yisrael 32:19 Purpose of Galus 32:27 Salvation of Dispersion

Answers to this Week's Questions All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated 1. 32:1 - They endure forever. 2. 32:2 - Just as rain gives life and promotes growth, so too does the Torah. 3. 32:4 - He is "faithful" and rewards the righteous, and He is "without injustice" and rewards even the wicked for any good deeds. 4. 32:4 - Everyone will agree that his judgments are righteous. 5. 32:7 - Two. The first was in the generation of Enosh the grandson of Adam, and the second was in the time of Noach. 6. 32:7 - The Prophets are called "fathers". When Eliyahu was leaving this world, his student Elisha called after him, "My father, my father" (Melachim II 2:12). 7. 32:8 - Corresponding to the 70 Bnei Yisrael who entered Egypt. 8. 32:9 - Their merit is "woven from" the merits of the Avos. 9. 32:12 - He is merciful by waking them gently, hovering over them, and carrying them on His wings. 10. 32:23 - "The arrows will be spent" implies that the supply of arrows will come to an end, but the Jewish People will not. 11. 32:27 - The nations would attribute their success to their own might and to the might of their own gods. Hashem would not allow His name to be desecrated through the complete annihilation of His people. 12. 32:35 - They will eventually be punished. 13. 32:41 - His attribute of Justice. 14. 32:42 - For their own sins, and the sins of their ancestors. 15. 32:43 - They will view the Jewish People as praiseworthy for cleaving to Hashem. 16. 32:44 - The Shabbos on which Moshe died, and Yehoshua took over as leader. 17. 32:44 - To indicate that although he was the leader of the Jewish People, he still maintained a humble bearing. 18. 32:47 - That you will receive reward for studying Torah, and that there is

nothing meaningless in the Torah. 19. 32:50 - Because Moshe wanted this. 20. 32:51 - If the rock had produced water without being struck, then the Jewish People would have reasoned that if a rock, which receives no reward or punishment, obeys Hashem's commands, all the more so they should too.

Bonus ANSWER: The mitzvos performed by a righteous person reflect his essence, while his sins are secondary. The sins of a wicked person reflect his essence, while his good deeds are secondary. Hashem rewards or punishes a person for his essence in the World to Come, and for what is secondary, He rewards or punishes in this world. Gur Aryeh Written and Compiled by Rabbi Reuven Subar General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1997 Ohr Somayach Int'l

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torah@lubavitch.chabad.org B"H The Chassidic Dimension Adaptation of Likutei Sichos by Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson on the weekly Torah Portion W-2

Accepting G-d's Torah, Kingdom and Yoke Rashi explains the phrase "He found them in a desert region," to mean that G-d found the Jewish people to be "faithful to Him in the desert, for they took upon themselves His Torah, kingdom and yoke." Why does Rashi specify three things with regard to the acceptance of the Torah -- His Torah, kingdom and yoke? Why not simply state -- as he does in other places -- that the Jewish people accepted G-d's Torah? Also, "kingdom" and "yoke" are seemingly one and the same, as the commonplace expression, "the yoke of [the heavenly] kingdom" would seem to imply. Why does Rashi divide them into two? Rashi's commentary on "He found them..." is a continuation to his remarks on the previous verses, where he explains that the sinful nations were not destroyed because "His nation" was to descend from them. Rashi goes on to state that "His nation" refers to Ya'akov, who had threefold merit: his own, that of his father Yitzchak and his grandfather Avraham. However, Ya'akov was only one individual; how can he be referred to as a nation? Rashi therefore goes on to explain that the present verse, "He found them..." continues the theme of the previous verse: Ya'akov's threefold merit extended to his children, the entire Jewish nation, for we have the threefold merit of accepting "His Torah, kingdom and yoke." The explanation is as follows: "His Torah" is something that can be understood by the intellect. Thus, even the performance of mitzvos that is part of "accepting His Torah" does not stress the acceptance of G-d's decrees, but rather of those commandments that can be apprehended by the individual performing them. The individual's acceptance of G-d's "kingdom," however, does include acceptance of G-d's decrees, for this is like accepting a king even if one does not understand his reasoning. Accepting G-d's yoke, however, is much more profound: Not only do we accept the King's decrees, but we subsume our very beings to Him; His yoke is constantly upon us. Herein lies the superiority of accepting His yoke over accepting His kingdom: Mere acceptance of kingdom does not negate the private life of the individual. This is similar to subjects accepting a physical king, whose power only extends to those matters directly related to the kingdom. Accepting "His yoke," however, is similar to a slave's commitment to his master, having no personal life at all, for his master's yoke is forever upon him. These three things were accepted by the Jewish people at Sinai: They not only undertook to obey the dictates of the Torah and to accept G-d's kingdom, but they also accepted His Yoke, to be eternally subservient to Him. This also explains the connection between these three things and the Patriarchs Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov, for each of the Patriarchs distinguished himself with one of these three qualities: The distinguishing factor of Ya'akov was his study of Torah -- "He sat in the tents [of study] of Shem and Eiver." Avraham, on the other hand, distinguished himself in making G-d's kingship over the entire world known to all. The bearing of a yoke with no sense of personal freedom at all was the distinguishing quality of Yitzchak, in line with the explanation of Rashi that his binding upon the altar conferred upon him the sanctity of a sacred offering wholly dedicated to G-d. The revelation of this sacred threefold

quality within the Jewish people at the time they accepted the Torah was, however, of a temporary nature. It will be fully and eternally revealed with the speedy coming of our righteous Moshiach. Based on Likkutei Sichos, Ha'azinu 5749

weekly-halacha@torah.org WEEKLY-HALACHA SELECTED  
HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS HA'AZINU-SHABBOS  
SHUVAH

By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

#### PAS YISRAEL IN ASERES YEMEI TESHUVAH

**THE BASIC BACKGROUND** - As part of their overall strategy to guard the Jewish people from assimilating among the nations of the world, our Sages decreed against eating [kosher] bread that was baked by a non-Jew. This edict was one of several which served to limit social interaction between Jews and non-Jews. Thus non-Jewish wine, oil, bread, and cooked foods were all declared off-limits for the Jew(1). Since bread is so much more of a dietary staple than wine and other cooked foods - indeed, the Rabbis call it chaye nefesh, the vital element of the diet - the decree against non-Jewish bread was not as widely accepted as the decrees against other foods(2). Consequently, in many communities where quality Jewish baked bread was not easily available, it became customary to eat pas palter, which is [kosher] bread that is baked in non-Jewish bakeries. The rationale behind allowing pas palter is that eating bread that was baked in a non-Jewish bakery does not lead to mingling and socializing with non-Jews(3). Although eating pas palter became commonplace and was endorsed by the leading authorities of the day, it was not universally accepted. Indeed, as soon as Jewish baked bread was available, the Rabbinical decree against pas palter was reinstated in many communities, and non-Jewish bread was not an option. Only Jewish baked bread, called pas yisrael, was allowed. Thus, depending upon the locale, this Rabbinical decree was observed in varying degrees: Some communities adhered to it strictly - not allowing any pas palter at all(4). Others allowed pas palter to be eaten even when pas yisrael was available(5). Others allowed pas palter to be eaten only when pas yisroel of the same quality was not available(6). Even today, when pas yisrael is available almost everywhere, there are still many communities who rely on the custom of yesteryear and allow the consumption of pas palter, especially when pas yisrael of similar quality is not available(7). The Shulchan Aruch(8) rules, however, that during aseres yemei teshuvah everyone should be careful to eat only pas yisrael(9). There are several reasons - all inter-related - for this halachah: a) So that we conduct ourselves with an extra measure of purity during these Days of Awe(10); b) To serve as a reminder of the unique status of these days(11); c) To beseech Hashem not to judge us stringently, just as we have adopted a practice which is not strictly required of us(12). The following rules, therefore, apply to those who observe the halachos of pas yisrael all year round and for everyone during aseres yemei teshuvah. [Note: The following rules pertain only to the prohibition of eating items which were baked by a non-Jew. There exists another Rabbinic prohibition, called Bishul akum, which prohibits eating any "important" food item (important enough to be served at a dinner for dignitaries) that was cooked [or roasted] by a non-Jew. Thus, there may be items which are not included in the prohibition of pas yisroel, but are still forbidden to eat because of bishul akum, provided that they are "important" enough to be classified as such.]

**IF PAS YISRAEL IS NOT AVAILABLE:** If pas yisrael is available within an 18 minute drive from one's house, he should drive there and purchase it. If pas yisrael is not available within that distance, one should bake his own bread or assist a non-Jew in the baking process. If one is on the road, he should travel ahead another 72 minutes in order to obtain pas yisrael. If pas yisrael is not available within those distances and one cannot bake his own bread, then he may eat pas palter(13).

**WHICH FOODS ARE INCLUDED IN THE REQUIREMENT OF PAS YISRAEL?** Only bread made from the five species of grain are included

in this prohibition. Rice bread and corn bread are exempt from both pas yisrael(14) and bishul yisrael(15). "Bread" includes any food over which one would recite ha-Motzi if he were to make a meal (kevius seudah) consisting of that food(16). Thus, all breads, cakes, cookies, crackers, pretzels, etc., are included in the category of bread(17). Pasta, flat pancakes, crepe-like blintzes, farfel, soup croutons, doughnuts, etc., are not considered "bread", and need not meet the requirements of pas yisrael(18). Many poskim hold that pure mezonos cereals [whose raw batter rises like bread], e.g., Cheerios, Grape Nuts, Wheat Chex, are also required to be pas yisrael(19).

**THE BAKING PROCESS:** There are three halachic phases in the bread-baking process: a) pre-heating the oven; b) placing the dough into the oven; c) regulating and adjusting the temperature. The halachah is that if a Jew was involved in any one of these three phases, even if he merely adjusted the temperature by a few degrees, the bread is considered pas yisrael(20). But if a Jew was not involved in any of the phases of baking, the bread is prohibited. Ironically, in the atypical case when dough is prepared by a Jew but baked by a non-Jew, the halachah is more stringent, and the leniency of pas palter does not apply(21).

**FACTORY PRODUCTION:** There is a minority view that tends to hold that factories which produce foods on an assembly line, in a process which is totally different from the one used in standard bakeries, were not included in the prohibition of pas palter(22). The majority of contemporary poskim do not accept this leniency(23).

**QUESTION:** It often happens during aseres yemei teshuvah that one forgets and prepares a dish containing pas palter (e.g., chicken or fish with bread crumbs, an ice cream dessert with cookie crumbs). May such a food be eaten during aseres yemei teshuvah? **ANSWER:** If the pas palter is recognizable, as it is in the above cases, it is prohibited. If the pas palter is not recognizable, e.g., it dissolves or all visible pas palter is removed, it is permitted, as long as pas palter is not the majority ingredient. [There is no requirement of shishim for this prohibition to be bateil(24).]

**FOOTNOTES:** 1 Since the edict was issued to prevent intermarriage, it would seem that bread baked by non-observant Jews should be permissible (Pischei Teshuvah Y.D. 112:1; Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:45-46). Many leading poskim disagree and prohibit bread baked by non-observant Jews (see Chasam Sofer Y.D. 120; Maharam Shick O.C. 281; Avnei Nezer Y.D. 92; Chazon Ish Y.D. 49 -7; Darkei Teshuvah 113:15; Minchas Yitzchak 1:10; 3:73). Nowadays, however, when the vast majority of non-observant Jews are ignorant of Jewish Law and are halachically classified as tinokos shenishbu, their bread is permitted (Chazon Ish Y.D. 1:6; 2: and other poskim). 2 According to the Yerushalmi, this decree was officially rescinded by a later beis din because of the hardships it posed to daily living. 3 Some communities went as far as permitting home-baked bread, too, when absolutely no other bread was available, see Rama Y.D. 112:8. 4 Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 112:2; Pri Chodosh; Aruch ha-Shulchan. 5 Rama Y.D. 112:2. 6 Shach 112:9. 7 Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:33; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (Madrich Kashruth, Orthodox Union, 1996, pg. 90). See Mishnah Berurah 242:6 who states that even those who eat pas palter all week long should preferably not do so on Shabbos and Yom Tov. This is one of the reasons why it became customary for women to bake their own challah for Shabbos and Yom Tov - Magen Avraham 242:4. 8 O.C. 603:1. 9 From the way the halachah is presented in Shulchan Aruch and Mishnah Berurah, it sounds as if it is a requirement. [See also Teshuvos Nachalas Shivah 72 who rules that is an absolute obligation.] Chaye Adam 143:1 and Aruch ha-Shulchan, though, quote this halachah as the "proper" thing to do, not as an obligation 10 In Talmudic times, everyone was careful not to allow their food to become impure (chullin b'taharah) during aseres yemei teshuvah - Tur quoting the Yerushalmi (Shabbos 3:3). 11 Levush O.C. 603. 12 Chaye Adam 143:1; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 130:2. 13 See Chochmas Adam 65:4; Pischei Teshuvah Y.D. 112:; Mishnah Berurah 603:1; Beir Halachah 163:1; Aruch ha-Shulchan Y.D. 112:18. 14 Y.D. 112:1 and Aruch ha-Shulchan - since they are not from the five species of grain. 15 Since they are not "important" enough to be served at a dinner for dignitaries - see Shach 113:1 and Chochmas Adam 65:1. 16 For more details as to what exactly constitutes kevius seudah, see Discussion to Parashas Eikev 5757. 17 Rama Y.D. 112:6, Pri Chodosh and Aruch ha-Shulchan 31. 18 Some of these items, however, depending on how they are prepared, may be considered "important" foods and may be prohibited because of bishul akum. 19 Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 192. 20 Y.D. 112:10. Some rabbonim suggest that a Jew turning on an electric light-bulb installed inside a gas oven is sufficient involvement in the baking process, since the heat generated by the bulb is considered as aiding the baking process. Harav S.Y. Elyashiv, though, does not agree with this leniency (Madrich Kashruth, Orthodox Union, 1996, pg. 98.) 21 Y.D. 112:11, as explained by Shach 7, Taz 7, Pri Megadim, Chochmas Adam 65:6 and Avnei Nezer 95-8. See, however, Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:45 who takes a more lenient approach. 22 An oral ruling rendered by Harav M. Feinstein (quoted in the Torah Journal Mesorah, vol. 1. In Igros Moshe Y.D. 4:48 he quotes a similar ruling but maintains that although this is not a clear heter, we need not object to those who rely on it since it is a Rabbinical prohibition. 23 Shevet ha-Levi 6:108-6 quoting the Chazon Ish; Minchas Yitzchak 3:26-6; 3:72; Debrecener Rav (quoted in Pischei Halachah, pg. 117); Harav P.E. Falk (Am ha-Torah, vol. 3. # 12). Some poskim accept this leniency when it is combined with other doubtful situations. 24 Y.D. 112:14.

**ON A PERSONAL NOTE:** As we come to the end of 5757, Rabbi Neustadt and I would like to

express our feelings to all of our readers and supporters. The past year has been one of tremendous growth and development for the WEEKLY HALACHA shiur. This would not have been possible without our solid base of readers. Your feedback and comments have helped to develop this into a vibrant and stimulating series. A special yasher koach goes to Rabbi Yaakov Menken and all the members of Project Genesis. Their constant involvement with the series to help ensure that it reaches all of our readers in a timely fashion does not go unnoticed. May all of you continue to prosper and be successful in your dissemination of Torah knowledge. Wishing all of you a k'siva v'chasima tova. Jeffrey Gross Director of the WEEKLY-HALACHA L'zchus Hayered Doniel Meir ben Hinda Weekly-Halacha. Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Project Genesis, Inc. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Hayered Doniel Meir ben Hinda. Weekly sponsorships are available - please mail to jgross@torah.org. The series is distributed by the Harbotzas Torah Division of Congregation Shomre Shabbos, 1801 South Taylor Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118 HaRav Yisroel Grumer, Marah D'Asra

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Peninim on the Torah Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Hebrew Academy of Cleveland Parshas Haazinu

May my teachings drop like the rain, may my utterance flow like the dew. (32:2) Moshe hoped that the words of the Torah would penetrate the nation as rain and dew penetrate the earth. Moshe was essentially comparing Torah to water. Water imbues the earth, softening it, nourishing the soil to provide the seed with the proper environment for growth. So, too, does Torah permeate an individual, refining him, preparing him so that Torah will have a greater effect on his life. Horav Eliyahu Meier Bloch, zl, notes that the similarity between water and Torah is even more profound. Water seeps into every particle of the earth. Likewise, Torah enters into every corner of a person's neshamah, soul, transforming the individual's entire personality. Torah is different from other forms of study. It is not simply an educational endeavor which challenges and hones the mind. Torah is absorbed into one's entire body. One who studies Torah as the word of Hashem, experiences an educational process which purifies and elevates his entire psyche. Torah is kedushah, a holiness that emanates from Hashem. This kedushah sanctifies its student, so that he becomes literally a cheftzah, object, of Torah.

Horav Bloch observes that the Torah's text and subject matter is not written as an abstract book of philosophy, history, or law. It is written, rather, as a narrative so that the reader can experience the events taking place in the story. We do not simply read about others, we actually live the Torah! We are in the homes of the Patriarchs; we cross the sea with Bnei Yisrael; we stand together with them at Har Sinai accepting the Torah. We study the Oral Law, the Talmud, and the codes in the same manner. We do not merely read what Rav and Abaya say; it is as if we are in the Bais Medrash as their students. Torah learning is an interactive experience. It all depends on our attitude. Our approach to Torah study determines the extent of its penetration into our neshamos. This concept of Torah study is entirely different from any other kind of educational experience. Thus, the Torah is called Toras Chaim, the living Torah. The Rock--Perfect is His work, for all His paths are justice. (32:4)

Hashem's judgment is meticulous and fair. Our inability to comprehend His justice is not a reason to disdain those areas of Heavenly justice to which we do not relate well. Hashem has reasons for every Heavenly act and decree. Most are not within our scope of comprehension. Therefore, we need emunah, faith. We are to trust in Hashem that everything He does is good--even though we do not necessarily understand His decree. Life is all part of one great continuum. Everyone has his "day in court." We are not on this world long enough to see or comprehend everything that occurs. We accept Divine justice with a deep trust in Hashem. To paraphrase Horav Chaim Brisker, zl, "Faith begins where human reason ends." Yet, we have questions that challenge our faith. We encounter difficulties in life, both of a personal and national nature, which we accept with faith in the Almighty. Horav Chaim Vital, zl, writes that if a person could open the Gates of Heaven and perceive its deepest secrets, he would clearly perceive the great benefit he will receive as a result of his hardships. Indeed, when Iyov found out that he was actually a gilgul, reincarnation, of Terach, Avroham Avinu's father, he immediately became silent and accepted Hashem's judgment. He realized that he had the responsibility to atone for and correct the spiritual damage which Terach's idol worship caused.

Yalkut Lekach Tov cites a compelling Midrash that gives us insight into the foundation of Hashem's decrees. The Midrash relates that when the Jews in Egypt could no longer produce the daily quota of bricks, Pharaoh decreed that their small children be built into the walls to replace the missing bricks. Can we imagine the heartbreak of such a cruel decree? Yet, we have no idea why Hashem issued this decree. Moshe Rabbeinu implored Hashem, beseeching Him with prayers for compassion that He rescind this decree. Hashem relented, instructing Moshe to save one child and see what would become of his future life. Moshe immediately rescued a little child that had already been built into the mortar. Years passed and the little child, who was named Micha, grew up. This child was the one who retrieved the gold plate with the words "Alei Shur" inscribed on it, which Moshe had thrown into the Nile River to locate Yosef HaTzaddik's coffin. When Moshe was "late" in returning from Har Sinai, this same Micha threw the gold plate into the fire, creating the Golden Calf!

Moshe Rabbeinu questioned Hashem's decree. After much prayer, he succeeded in altering the course of events. Moshe's act of mercy catalyzed a chain of events which resulted in the greatest sin of the Jewish People--the Golden Calf. We have no idea of the countless tragedies that have befallen us as a result of the Chet Ha'eigel, the sin of the Golden Calf. Indeed, we are taught that the Golden Calf is the partial cause of every calamity that has befallen the Jewish People! This is the result of misplaced compassion, of questioning the Almighty. Hashem is all merciful, the source of compassion. Due to our limited perception, we are hindered from comprehending this truth. If we could only know the root cause of every decree, we would see the true compassion behind them. Hashem's ways are perfect. It is our vision which is myopic. At times it seems that regardless of our conviction, our faith notwithstanding, Hashem seems to impede every step. Indeed, it becomes like a challenge, "How much can you handle before you give in?" This is Hashem's way of demonstrating to us that no power can take away our ability to love Him. Ahavas Hashem is innate within the Jew. While some individuals attempt to conceal it, each neshamah has in it a minute component which emanates from Hashem. We and Hashem are one! He tests us to see if we are prone to sever that relationship. We have the power to persevere--if we only have the motivation.

There is a very poignant story told over by Horav Eziel Tauber, Shlita, which emphasizes how Hashem challenges our resolve and commitment--knowing fully well our ability to sustain our belief in Him. The Marranos were Spanish Jews who had publicly converted to Christianity under the threat of death. They maintained, however, a clandestine commitment to Hashem and His Torah. If they were discovered, death in the most cruel manner was imminent. The story relates that one distinguished Marrano family, who secretly observed Torah and mitzvos, was about to be investigated. A friend of theirs had forewarned them of their fate. They decided to take their chances and attempt to escape. They managed to flee empty-handed, wandering for weeks until they found their way to a refugee camp in Morocco. The conditions in the camp were terrible at best; poverty, sickness, and depression pervaded, but at least they were with others like themselves.

Suddenly, one day, the camp was hit with the plague. Death was everywhere. Within a few weeks, the proud parents were crushed by the loss of all of their children. To escape the fiery death of the auto-de-fe, only to die from a dread disease, was a crushing blow, both emotionally and spiritually. Yet, their emunah in Hashem remained resolute. The parents remained as strong as they could under the circumstances and accepted their fate. Then finally one day the wife, who had accompanied her husband as the shadow of death hung ominously in their midst, herself succumbed to the plague.

The husband and father was left alone in a cruel world. He was now bereft of his life's partner and the children who represented his future. Yet, he did not fall apart. He did not give up his Yiddishkeit. Instead, with unparalleled faith in Hashem, he lifted up his eyes to Heaven and said, "Ribbono Shel Olam, I know that all along You have been challenging me to see if I will cease to love You, if I will relinquish my faith in You, to see if I would break from the pressure. Hashem, what is left for You to take away from me? What more

can You do to me to break me away from You?

"When they forced us into Christianity, we remained committed to you. While we lived in constant fear, our devotion to you never waned. When we had the choice of accepting certain death, or running away so that we could continue living and serving You, we chose life. Then You tested us with our children. First one died, and we continued to believe. Then, one by one all of our beautiful children died--and we still maintained our faith. You could not shake us. Then You took my wife. I am now left without my family. What else can You use to destroy me?"

"The way I look at it", he continued, "only two things are left for You to take from me. One is my life; the other is my faith in You. If You want my life, take it, since it really is not mine anyway--it is Yours. If You want my faith, however, if You want to break the love that I have for You--that, Ribbono Shel Olam, You cannot have. No, not even the Almighty can shake my love and faith. They are mine--and only mine. I will never give them up!"

The lesson is clear. Nothing can take away our ability to love Hashem. That is the essence of a Jew. Surely, everyone faces situations in life in which he asks, "What does Hashem want from me? How much can I take?"

Why does He challenge me so?" Hashem is clearly engaging us--testing us--only to teach us this lesson. Regardless of how many years pass, or how distant one has become from Hashem, the Jew is really never far away. "Kudsha Brich Hu V'Yisrael Chad Hu" - We are one with Hashem. We can never separate ourselves from Him. ... Peninim on the Torah is in its 7th year of publication. The first three years have been published in book form. The third volume is available at your local book seller or directly from Rabbi Scheinbaum. He can be contacted at 216-321-5838 ext. 165. Shema Yisrael Torah Network <http://www.shemayisrael.co.il>

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daf-hashavua@shamash.org Nizavim-Vayelech 5757/1997 - Rosh Hashanah 5758/1997 U N I T E D S Y N A G O G U E - L O N D O N (O) Shabbat ends in London at 19:51

L'Shanah Tova Tikotavu by The Chief Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks

There is a moment which echoes through the ages like the theme-song of Jewish destiny. The scene: the banks of the Jordan. The time: Moses' last days. For forty years he has led a fractious, often rebellious people through the desert. He is within sight of death. Around him is the next generation who, unlike him, will cross the Jordan and enter the promised land.

That is the scene at the beginning of Nitzavim. What message does he have for the future? First, that the covenant between G-d and Israel was not for that time only but for all time. He gathers the people together to renew the commitment their parents made at Sinai. He adds: "I am making this covenant and its oath not only with you who are standing with us today in the presence of the Lord our G-d but also with those who are not with us today." Between G-d and Israel there would be an everlasting bond. It would be passed on from parents to children across the generations in an unbroken chain that would defy the normal laws of the decline and fall of civilizations. The people of the Torah would be the people of eternity.

Second, things would not go smoothly for the Jewish people. Moses correctly foresaw that the quarrels and rebellions in the desert were not a passing phenomenon in Jewish life. They would be a source of grief long into the future. At critical moments, the Jewish people would lose touch with its calling. It would be tempted by the idols of the age - any age. It would assimilate, or fragment into sects and factions, and be divided when it most needed to hold together. Always at the crossroads of great empires, Israel would suffer defeats. It would be forced into exile. The land that once flowed with milk and honey would lie desolate while its people wandered the face of the earth in search of a home.

But - third and most surprising of all - Israel would return. Having foreseen the nightmare, Moses foresaw the dream. Here is his vision, in words spoken more than three thousand years ago: "When all these things befall you - the blessing and the curse that I have set before you - and you take them to heart amidst the various nations to which the L-d your G-d has banished you, and you return to the L-d your G-d, and you and your

children heed His command with all your heart and all your soul, just as I enjoin upon you this day, then the L-d your G-d will bring you back from captivity and take you back in love... Even if you have been scattered to the most distant land under the heavens from there the L-d your G-d will gather you and bring you back."

These words are dazzling in their sheer improbability. The exodus from Egypt was extraordinary enough. No people had ever before been led collectively from slavery to freedom. Now Moses prophesies that an event yet more remarkable would happen in the future. Israel would be exiled again. It would suffer more than in Egypt. Yet it would keep its identity, its singularity and its hope, and it would one day return to its land. These things do not happen. Exiled peoples assimilate and disappear. They never return. Yet Moses said that the Jewish people would be different. However obstinate they were in defying G-d when things went well, they would be equally obstinate in being loyal to Him when things went badly. They would come back to G-d, and eventually to their land.

We are about to begin the "Ten days of Teshuvah". Teshuvah, usually translated as "repentance", actually means "return". What does it signify? Where, in the Torah, do we find the source of the command "to return"? This question exercised the great minds of the Jewish Middle Ages, and led to a fundamental difference of approach between its two outstanding sages, Maimonides (Rambam) and Nachmanides (Ramban).

For Maimonides, Teshuvah derives from the institution of vidui, "confession". In biblical times, when people transgressed, there were various prescribed penalties - in some cases a sacrifice, in others a punishment, in others payment of compensation. In each case, the penalty restored the moral balance of society. It did not in itself secure atonement until the wrongdoer "confessed", that is, admitted his wrongdoing. (We still do this on Yom Kippur and other penitential days). Confession implies that we acknowledge that we acted wrongly and dedicate ourselves not to do so again. This, for Maimonides, is the verbal expression of a mental process that we call Teshuvah. Teshuvah means recognising that we have drifted from the right path and we are now "returning" to it.

For Nachmanides, though, the command of Teshuvah derived from a quite different source. It was to be found in Moses' vision on the banks of the Jordan. The people of Israel would drift away from the covenant. They would go into exile. But there, far from home, they would hear the voice of G-d calling them to come back - to their faith and to their land. Teshuvah is this process of return.

For Maimonides, Teshuvah is primarily about the individual. We know what he means. Each year in the synagogue on the Days of Awe we feel addressed as individuals by G-d. We reflect on the past year. We think of the things we did wrong - the times we neglected our religious duties, the times we upset other people, the harm we did, the good we failed to do. We apologise and set ourselves to do better in the future. That is Teshuvah according to Maimonides, and it is a central feature of Jewish spirituality. But there are rare moments in Jewish history when we catch a glimpse of what Nachmanides had in mind. Teshuvah is not just about individuals. It is also something that affects the Jewish people as a whole. Collectively we experienced exile. So one day, promised Moses, we would collectively experience return.

And this century, after almost two thousand years, it has happened. Moses' prophecy has begun to come true. We have just recalled the hundredth anniversary of the First Zionist Congress, the beginning of the return to Zion, when Theodor Herzl challenged the Jewish people with the words, "If you will it, it is no dream." Later in the course of 5758 we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the State of Israel, the collective rebirth of the Jewish people as a sovereign nation in its own land. These events have no parallel in the history of any other nation. This year we give thanks to G-d that what our ancestors prayed for, we have witnessed.

But we have only begun. The Jewish people has returned to its land. It has not yet collectively returned to its faith - not when one young Jew in two is drifting away, marrying out and breaking the chain of continuity that has lasted for a hundred generations. This year let us hear the call. Israel is

not only a land. It is a people and its vocation. That vocation - to be an example to others of what it is to "perfect the world under the sovereignty of G-d" by the lives we lead, the homes we build and the communities we create - is still stunning in its majesty. Jewish life, with its love of the family, its passion for education, its unique sense of collective responsibility, its ability to sanctify the ordinary details of life and make them radiate with the Divine presence, is even today, after four thousand years, the most beautiful of all ways of living. To recapture its grandeur and make its flame burn in the hearts of the next generation, so that we witness a return not only to our land but to our faith - that is the collective challenge of Teshuvah today.

Eruv Tavshilin (see Singer's p.615) by Bernard Koschland - Editor, Daf Hashavua When Yom Tov falls on Thursday and Friday, or the first day on Friday, an Eruv Tavshilin is prepared and the brachah recited on Erev Yom Tov. A roll, small challah or matzah together with something cooked, e.g. a hard-boiled egg, fish, etc., is set aside, the brachah and the declaration following are recited. The declaration may be said in the language understandable to the person if Aramaic is not understood (Kitzur), though Singers provides a translation. The purpose of Eruv Tavshilin is to allow preparation for Shabbat, it also serves as a reminder of the separate kedushot (sanctities) of Shabbat and Yom Tov. This year, an Eruv Tavshilin must also be prepared for Erev Sukkot and Erev Shemini Atzeret in order to be able to cook on Yom Tov for Shabbat. The bread is used for Lechem Mishneh (one of the two loaves) during the Shabbat day and the egg, etc, is also eaten. If one forgets Eruv Tavshilin, then one may say it on the Thursday (1st day of Yom Tov); this is based on the assumption that where there are two days of Yom Tov, there is a doubt which one was the actual day. However on Rosh Hashanah the sanctity of both days is equal - there is no question of doubt. Hence one cannot say it on the Thursday, as this year. (Rabbi Zevin, Ha-moa'adim Behalachah). If one forgets completely, one may rely on the Eruv being said by others in the town. The word Eruv means "mixed" and, according to Rambam, is borrowed from the phrase Eruv Chazerot, where "courtyards are mixed", to permit carrying where several residences lead on to a common "courtyard", e.g. a block of flats. According to the Ravad (R. Abraham ben David of Posquieres, 12th century), the Eruv mixes the requirements of Shabbat with those of Yom Tov. Eruv is also used in connection with carrying in a large area, e.g. Barnet, and also for going beyond the Shabbat limit of distance.

SHEHECHEYANU The equal sanctity of the Rosh Hashanah impinges on whether one should say shehecheyanu on the second night for lighting the candles and kiddush, as well as for the shofar on the second day; there is a difference of view among our poskim. Thus the minhag to place a "new" fruit on the table on the second evening for kiddush (in addition to the apple), and which is then eaten that night. The baal tokea should, if possible, wear a new garment (Kitzur Shuchan Aruch).

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ys-parasha@jer1.co.il Dear Friends, In honor of the Yamim Noraim, this Shabbat I'm sending Rav Moshe Tzuriel's shiur about this weeks special Haftara. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a Ktiva v'Chatima Tova. Aaron Weiss YESHIVAT SHA'ALVIM CHODESH B'CHODSHO

Tishrei: Shabbos Shuva by Rav Moshe Tzuriel Many people refer to the Shabbos occurring during the Ten Days of Repentance by the name of: "Shabbos Teshuva". This is a mistake. Its true name is: "Shabbos Shuva" due to the Haftara reading that Shabbos morning, beginning "Shuva Yisrael" (Hosea 14). What is the difference? After all, isn't the idea the same? The answer is that by using the proper appellation, the reference is to studying the Haftara and analyzing well its implications. By reading each word and pondering its depths, we shall certainly rejuvenate our spiritual energies. Verse one: "Shuva Israel - the name we are called is not "Jacob", which refers to a lower level of spirituality (see Malbim on Isaiah 9 verse 7, "word explanations"). The prophet here reminds us that we are of a much more elevated status, we are Israel. As the Ari Z"l comments: The five Hebrew letters of "Yisrael" are to be re-arranged: "Li Rosh" I have high mental caliber! This demands our being worthy of our name! Verse 2: "Repent unto G-d your Lord". Our Sages comment that repentance reaches out unto the heavenly throne ( Yoma 86a). What does that mean? Certainly it is not meant solely as vivid poetry! Chazal teach in Midrash Tanna D'vei Eliahu 31: How G-d longs and yearns for our repentance! Much more than a wife waits for the return of her husband (See Bereshis 3 verse 16) and more than a father awaits his son (see David's attitude towards his errant son Absalom - Shmuel II 19/1-5). Although his rebellious son had no compunctions in killing his father, nevertheless David shrieked "better that I die than my son" (19/1). Even more so does G-d love us with infinite, undiminished love. This divine trait is His heavenly throne. We cannot disappoint Him! Verse three: "Take words and return to G-d". Our sages say that fasting, or any sort of

self-flagellation, is unnecessary, perhaps also undesirable since it deflects the true direction to be taken. G-d wants "words" - the recanting, to confess one's sins, to utter our regrets (Rambam Hilchos Teshuva Chap. I Para. 1). The Hebrew word for "confession" is "vidui" -from the etymological root "yoda", to acknowledge. The gist of repentance is that the sinner should fully well know where his misconception was, just what caused his slip. This is a step in proper re-education, in understanding well how to mold his future. "Vekach Tov" - Rabbi Kook (in his Rosh Hashana book "Meoros HaRiya") says that by virtue of repentance one's mitzvos are acceptable unto G-d. The Rambam (Hilchos Teshuva Chap 7, para. 6,7), mentioning our text "Shuva Israel", writes: Previously the sinner was abominable, despised and deferred. But now he is beloved and cherished. Until now his prayers remained unanswered, unhonored. But from now on they are regarded highly. Until now his mitzvos were rejected and sullied. But now, they are joyfully accepted. Rav Kook says that this is the meaning of our verse "kach tov". One must first weed out wild growths, before expecting satisfaction from his garden. As Jeremiah said, "fallow out the wild weeds, don't seed the ground upon it's thorns and briars (Chap 4, verse three). So too, the "Messilas Yeshorim" placed the chapter on "Z'hirus" (negating sins) before "Z'rizus" (committing mitzvos). Verse four reminds us: "The land of Syria will not avail us. . ." At that period, the misled political leaders of the Jewish people relied on foreign monarchies. Instead of establishing an independent Kingdom, free of international entanglements, they willingly subdued themselves to the great powers of that age. The result, of course, was the disruption of the Jewish State. So Hosea the prophet reminds us, "better your ways, be more righteous". This will save you from national extinction, not your treaties with gentile powers. Say not that you rely on your weapons, "your handiwork". See too Isaiah Chap 22 verse 11 who rebukes the Jews: "You dug a moat around the city, so to prevent gentile attack, but you did not pay due attention to G-d's influence (see Rashi's words there). Verse five says: "I will heal their errant actions, I love their voluntary repentance." "Voluntary since it is initiated before affliction, before divine retribution or punishment. Verse six: "I will be as the dew unto Israel". Rabbi Zadok of Lublin remarks that unlike rain drops, nobody notices the fall of the dew. One awakes in the morning and suddenly finds the grass wet, the ground moist. So too, G-d's act of rescue is seen not during its productive stages, but at its culmination, at its wonderful result. "Therefore, Israel will blossom as a rose!". The rose grows on a hedge of thorns, yet, despite being pierced by the winds beating the thorns against the rose petals, the rose overcomes. "It's roots will be deep and invincible as the cedars of Lebanon". Verse seven and eight: Israel's aroma, its scent, will be far-reaching. This is an analogy to Israel's influence the world over. >From far east to far west, Israel's influence will be similar to pollen, traveling great distances due to beneficent breezes. "Yelchu Yonkosav" - their branches will be vast, Israel's influence will be universal. In truth, who taught the world monotheism, if not Israel? Who inculcated the moral code, if not Israel? Verse ten: "He who is wise will consider the above mentioned points, he will understand and know thoroughly, for G-d's ways are full of integrity. The righteous ones fulfill G-d's expectations, but fools trip and fall". That is, when Israel suffers tribulations, the wise and prudent learn from these trials to better their ways, but the wicked become only worse. They become more obstinate. This is the purpose of our reading this Haftara the Shabbos before Yom Kippur. May we all be wise to study and implement its teachings. Shana Tova, Ktiva v'Chatima Tova

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yh-e-about@jer1.co.il Yeshivat Har Etzion SPECIAL ROSH HASHANA PACKAGE PART 1 ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH DEDICATED BY RABBI JEFFREY KOBRIN AND HIS WIFE MICHELLE IN HONOR OF THE BIRTH OF THEIR DAUGHTER, YAIRA CHAYA. Yeshivat Har Etzion joins in wishing Rabbi Jeffrey ('92) and Michelle Kobrin, as well as the grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Kobrin, a warm mazal tov on the birth of Yaira Chaya. May you raise her to Torah, chuppa and ma'asim tovim!



The VBM extends a yasher koach to all those who are finishing the seven-year cycle of Daf Yomi today. Cheilchim le-oraita! ..

#### EATING BEFORE HEARING THE SHOFAR

Based on a shiur by Harav Yehuda Amital Translated by Zev Jacobson In many communities there is a custom to make kiddush and have something to eat before hearing teki'at shofar (the blowing of the shofar) on Rosh Ha-shana. In this article we will discuss the above practice and its permissibility. In Shut Hitorerut Teshuva, R. Shimon Sofer (the Av Beit Din of Erlau and son of the Ketav Sofer) discusses whether it is permitted to eat at all before hearing teki'at shofar on Rosh Ha-shana. He notes that many people are lenient in this regard despite the fact that on Sukkot, for example, it is forbidden to eat until the mitzva of taking the four species has been fulfilled (see Sukka 38a and Shulchan Arukh OC 652:2). He concludes that there is no suggestion whatsoever in either the gemara or the later halakhic authorities to forbid such a practice, though the prohibition does apply in relation to eating before taking the lulav on Sukkot, davenin g mincha, saying the Shema (Shabbat 9b; Shulchan Arukh OC 231), reading the Megilla on Purim, lighting the Chanuka candles, etc. Why is there a difference between teki'at shofar, where it is permitted to eat before performing the mitzva, and all the other examples mentioned above, where it is forbidden? R. Sofer suggests two possible reasons: 1. In general it is forbidden to eat before performing a time-bound commandment, since we are concerned that one will become so involved in his meal that he will inadvertently miss out on the mitzva. However, this concern does not exist on Rosh Ha-shana because a Jew is overcome by the awe and fear of the Day of Judgment (eimat ha-din) and he will certainly not forget to fulfill his obligation of teki'at shofar. (Based on this reasoning, it should be permitted to read by the light of a candle on Yom Kippur. Even though one is forbidden from doing so on Shabbat, out of fear that he will tilt the candle and cause it to burn brighter, on Yom Kippur when one is suffused with eimat ha-din, he will not inadvertently transgress the prohibition.) 2. In the times when Rosh Chodesh was proclaimed by the Sanhedrin based on the sighting of the new moon, they would wait until the witnesses' testimony had been accepted and Rosh Ha-shana proclaimed before blowing the shofar. According to the gemara (Rosh Ha-shana 30b), this once occurred very late in the afternoon, and in fact, very often, they would wait most of the day before the shofar was blown. This being the case, it is understandable why it was not forbidden to eat before hearing the teki'ot. Surely the people could not be expected to fast an entire day before fulfilling the mitzva of hearing the shofar. Thus, even today when this problem does not exist, we are still permitted to eat before teki'at shofar. The second reason is somewhat forced. However, there appears to be a basis for the first reason (eimat ha-din) as will be explained presently. Contrary to the opinion of R. Sofer, there indeed seems to be a basis to forbid eating before hearing teki'at ha-shofar on Rosh Ha-shana. The Magen Avraham (OC 692:7) quotes a Tosefta (Shabbat 1:4) which states: "Just as one must interrupt his meal in order to say Keri'at Shema (MAFSIKIM le-Keri'at Shema), so too he must interrupt for the mitzva of reading the Megilla ... for teki'at shofar, netillat lulav and all the mitzvot which are mentioned in the Torah." The Tosefta does not differentiate between netillat lulav and teki'at shofar with regard to interrupting the meal in order to fulfill one's obligations. How much more so should it be forbidden to actually BEGIN a meal when one has not yet fulfilled the mitzvot of the day! However, it is not self-evident that such a conclusion may be drawn and it behooves us to carefully examine the law of "mafsikim le-Keri'at Shema" which is applied by the Tosefta to the mitzva of teki'at shofar. Careful attention must be paid to the term "mafsikim" - WHICH activities must one interrupt? The Mishna in Shabbat (9b) states: "One may not sit down to have a haircut when the time for Mincha is approaching; rather, he should pray first ... However, if he began [his haircut], he is not required to interrupt what he is doing in order to pray. One must interrupt [mafsikim] in order to say Keri'at Shema, but it is unnecessary to do so to pray the Amida." There is an apparent repetition in the mishna which is questioned by the gemara (11a). In the first part of the mishna (reisha), we are told that one need not interrupt his haircut in order to pray and in the second part (seifa), we are told the exact same halakha. The gemara explains that while the reisha relates to one who is taking a HAIRCUT, the seifa deals with a different case and refers to one who is engaged in LEARNING when the time for Mincha approaches. He need not interrupt his studies to pray (and can say the Amida at a later time). Thus, the mishna teaches that one who is involved in learning must, nevertheless, interrupt his studies in order to say the Shema. It would make sense that this halakha should apply to one who is eating or engaged in work. He, too, must interrupt his activities in order to fulfill the obligation of Keri'at Shema. However, the Rambam in his commentary on the mishna explains that although one is required to interrupt his studies in order to say the Shema, he may CONTINUE to take a haircut, bathe or eat - even though the time of Keri'at Shema has arrived. The Ba'al Ha-maor interprets the mishna in a novel way and differentiates between a scenario when there is enough time to both complete what one is doing and fulfill the upcoming mitzva, and a case where one must choose between one or the other. In the former, one may continue what he is doing (be it learning or merely eating) and say the Amida when he has finished. In the latter, however, he may forfeit prayer in order to continue studying, but prayer takes priority over eating. Thus, according to both the Rambam and the Ba'al Ha-maor, one may continue EATING if there is time to say Keri'at Shema afterwards. Nonetheless, he is required to interrupt his LEARNING in order to say the Shema - even though he will have ample opportunity to fulfill his obligation once he has completed his studies. In a similar vein, the gemara explains the mishna in Sukka (38a) that one is required to interrupt his meal in order to shake the lulav as applying ONLY if he will otherwise forfeit the mitzva. If, however, he will have time to take the arba minim AFTER he has completed the meal, he is entitled to continue eating. Based on the explanations of the Rambam and the Ba'al Ha-maor, the term "mafsikim" does not refer to interrupting one's MEAL, but rather to taking a break from one's STUDIES in order to perform another mitzva. Thus, the Tosefta quoted above takes on a new meaning: just as one is required to interrupt his LEARNING in order to say the Shema, so too he is required to interrupt his LEARNING in order to fulfill the mitzva of reading the Megilla, teki'at shofar, netillat lulav "and all the mitzvot which are mentioned in the Torah." Nevertheless, one would not be required to interrupt EATING for these mitzvot (assuming that he will be able to properly discharge his obligations once he has completed the meal). Thus, one may continue his meal and blow the shofar thereafter. However, from the Tosefta we learn only that one need not INTERRUPT a meal that was previously begun in order to fulfill the mitzva of teki'at shofar. If one has not STARTED the meal yet, it should be FORBIDDEN to do so until he has heard the teki'ot, just as it is forbidden

to BEGIN a meal if one has not yet shaken the lulav. Assuming, though, that one may not begin eating because we are concerned that he may forget entirely to perform the mitzva, we can distinguish between netillat lulav and teki'at shofar (based on R. Sofer's opinion): on Rosh Ha-shana, one is suffused with eimat ha-din and will not be negligent in hearing the shofar blasts; whereas on Sukkot there is a real concern that he will miss out on the mitzva altogether. However, there is another option to explain the difference between netillat lulav and teki'at shofar. The Shulchan Arukh (OC 652:2) rules that one may not eat before fulfilling the mitzva of arba minim. The Mishna Berura cites the Chayyei Adam who claims that it is forbidden only to eat a MEAL before shaking the lulav. According to the strict letter of the law, though, one is permitted to have a snack (te'ima be-alma). Nonetheless, one is prohibited from doing so other than in a case of great need (tzorekh gadol). Rav Sternbuch (Mo'adim u-Zemanim, 4) applies the principle of the Chayyei Adam in the following manner: since it is forbidden to fast on Rosh Ha-shana and one is required to eat before chatzot (halakhic noon), it is considered tzorekh gadol to have a snack before teki'ot (as Musaf usually finishes well after this time). Furthermore, there is a commandment of enjoyment (simchat Yom Tov) on Rosh Ha-shana (Shulchan Arukh OC 693:1), which precludes fasting for so long. It is possible that if one has not yet fulfilled the mitzva of netillat lulav, he is forbidden to eat only UNTIL chatzot. Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank (Mikra'ei Kodesh, Yamim HaNora'im, 29) quotes the ruling of the Hagahot Maimoniyot that if one does not have wine for kiddush on Shabbat morning, he should eat without making kiddush, since it is forbidden to fast past chatzot on Shabbat. Therefore, if one is unable to obtain a lulav BEFORE chatzot, he should nevertheless eat, as it is forbidden to fast on Yom Tov. The Sha'arei Teshuva (OC 692:4) writes that since it is a relatively common occurrence to finish praying late on Rosh Ha-shana, if one does not have a shofar he should refrain from eating until just before chatzot. Rav Frank therefore concludes that there is room to be lenient with regards to eating before teki'at shofar, since we usually reach teki'at shofar long after chatzot. It seems clear then, that one is permitted to snack before teki'at shofar. What is the dividing line between a snack and a full-blown meal? The Shulchan Arukh rules with regards to the laws of berakhot that a meal (kevi'at se'uda) is 4 beitzim or more. Anything less than this amount is considered to be merely a snack. However, the Vilna Gaon (in Hilkhot Eiruvim) claims that we learn from the Omer offering that 43.2 beitzim constitute enough for two meals; thus, the amount required for a se'uda is quite large: over 21 beitzim. To summarize: the halakhic authorities do not mention that it is prohibited to eat prior to hearing the shofar. It is quite reasonable to distinguish between eating before lulav and eating before shofar on the basis of the idea that the awe of judgment will prevent one from forgetting to hear shofar. Although the Tosefta seems to imply that there is, in fact, a prohibition of eating before shofar, our understanding of the Tosefta depends on our understanding of the mishna in Shabbat (9b). In any case, even if one wants to draw a parallel between lulav and shofar and thereby to prohibit taking a meal prior to shofar blowing, it is reasonable to permit snacking so as to avoid fasting for more than half the day (and thereby marring our enjoyment of the holiday). Although many people rely on the ruling permitting eating before teki'ot on Rosh Ha-shana, there are those who are particular not even to snack before discharging their obligation. R. Akiva Eiger rules that if it is absolutely indispensable that people eat (e.g. in a time of plague), it is preferable to eat between the first set of teki'ot (teki'ot de-meyushav) and second set (teki'ot de-me'umad) rather than eating before hearing any teki'ot. [In our yeshiva, we make kiddush and eat a snack (mezonot) before blowing the shofar. Others take a drink of water before davening to alleviate the prohibition of fasting until midday. - M.F.] [This shiur was delivered in Elul 5747.]

#### CHANA'S PRAYER AND ROSH HA-SHANA

by Rav Baruch Gigi Translated by Kaeren Fish

A. In Remembrance of Whom are the Nine Berakhot of Rosh Ha-shana? On Rosh Ha-shana, there are nine berakhot (blessings) in the Amida (silent prayer) of Mussaf, while on all other holidays there are seven. The gemara in Berakhot (29a) questions the source of this anomaly: "In remembrance of whom are the nine [berakhot] of Rosh Ha-shana? R. Yitzchak of Kartignin said: In remembrance of the nine mentions [of God's name] made by Chana in her prayer (I Shemuel 2:1-10)." The gemara goes on to provide a reason for remembering Chana's prayer in our Rosh Ha-shana prayers: "Mar said, On Rosh Ha-shana Sarah, Rachel and Chana were remembered [by God and finally conceived]." Some Rishonim (e.g. the Ritva) did not have this reason in their text of the gemara, but they mentioned it on their own, while others (e.g. Tosafot Rav Yehuda Ha-chassid) quote the Yerushalmi (Berakhot ch. 4): "For she (Chana) said in her supplication, 'God will judge the lowly of the earth'" - on Rosh Ha-shana God judges the world. >From this it would appear that Chazal chose to remember Chana's prayer either because it was on Rosh Ha-shana that she finally conceived, or because of the judgment of the world which is alluded to in her prayer. And the nine berakhot of the Mussaf Amida correspond to her nine mentionings of God's name. However, in truth, neither of the above reasons is satisfactory. Firstly, let us remember that not only Chana conceived on Rosh Ha-shana. This being the case, why should the number of berakhot then not correspond to the number of times that God's name is mentioned in the parasha where "God remembered Sarah?" The second explanation, based on the Yerushalmi, is equally problematic: could Chazal not have found somewhere in the whole of Tanakh some excerpt more appropriate to the theme of judgment? Why did they see fit to choose this episode of seemingly marginal significance, where the issue of judgment appears secondary, as the parasha representative of the theme of Divine justice? Let us take a closer look at the verses of Chana's prayer and see if we are able to detect some deeper connection between it and the Rosh Ha-shana prayers. B. "And Chana Prayed..." Chana's prayer comes in the wake of the birth of her son Shemuel, and its principal theme would therefore logically be thanks to God for His mercies towards her. But Chana's prayer is not introduced as being "hoda'a" (thanksgiving), "hallel" (praise) or "shira" (song), but rather "tefilla" (prayer), apparently in light of the nature of the last verse: "God's opponents will be broken, He shall thunder upon them in the heavens. God shall judge the ends of the earth and He shall give strength to His king, and shall raise up the horn of His anointed one" (I Shemuel 2:10). Accordingly, it would seem that this verse is actually the crux of the prayer, and Chana's main message. A closer look reveals the fact that Chana is speaking

simultaneously on two levels: a. She is speaking of the personal salvation which she merited - the birth of her son: "the barren woman has borne seven..." b. She also has a broader perspective of the needs of Am Yisrael: "He shall give strength to His king and shall raise up the horn of His anointed one." Chana sees herself not only as the barren woman in need of Divine mercy who then merits this mercy and becomes "the jubilant mother of the children," but also sees herself to some degree as the collective mother of Knesset Yisrael. She is filled with concern for the nation at the last stages of the period of the judges - a period which exhausted the nation's spiritual as well as material resources, a period which would end with the destruction of Shilo and the Mishkan which resided there. It is against this background that Chana expresses her prayer, as someone who feels the pain of the nation, and prays that God raise the horn of His anointed. In the heading which Chana gives her prayer, she puts the honor and needs of the nation before her private salvation. What we have here is "tefilla" - alongside thanksgiving and praise, admittedly, but the crux of the outpouring of Chana's heart exists in the sphere of tefilla: "As You have saved me, please, O God, save Your nation."

C. "He Makes the Barren Woman to Keep House, and become a Jubilant Mother of Children"

The two basic themes of Chana's prayer mentioned above find expression in two other chapters of Tanakh, which are similar to this prayer both in structure and in content and hence have a strong connection to it. The one source is Tehillim 113, where the thanks of the "mother of children" is mentioned, and the other is in II Shemuel 22 and the psalm which corresponds to it - Tehillim 18: "He makes great the salvation of His king and performs kindness with His anointed one, with David and his descendants, forever." If we look at Tehillim 113 (familiar to us as the beginning of Hallel), we see that it is structured thus: the opening is a call to praise and thanks to God - "Praise the name of God..." The background to this call to praise is not entirely clear, but from the continuation of this psalm it becomes clear that the key lies in the last pasuk: "He makes the barren woman ... into a jubilant mother of children." The psalmist, in his usual fashion, explains and develops on the process which must be undergone by the person wishing to offer praise. First, he must see the King of the Universe as possessing transcendent power - "From the rising of the sun to the setting, the Lord's name is to be praised ... who is like the Lord our God, Who is enthroned on High?" (3-5). Nevertheless, God does not remain in the lofty heavenly realms but rather watches over all His creations: "And looks down to see (what takes place) in the heaven and on the earth. He raises up the poor from the dust and lifts the destitute from the out of the ashheap" (6). Following this realization, the psalmist is led straight to praise: God, Who is the King of the world and watches over all His creations, makes the barren woman to keep house, and become a jubilant mother of children. And for this - "halleluya."

D. "He Makes Great the Salvation of His King and Performs Kindness with His Anointed One"

We find a similar structure, if slightly expanded, in the song of King David (II Shemuel 22), which is not the song of an individual who has merited God's salvation but rather the song of the king and representative of Israel, acting in his capacity as messenger of the nation, who comes to thank God for the great mercy which He has shown towards himself as well as toward the nation. David - who merited having God make him a "great name like the name of the great ones in the land" (II Shemuel 7:9), and the nation - which merited that "I have made a place for MY NATION ISRAEL and I have planted them, that they may dwell there..." (ibid. 10), both offer praise to God. David's song opens with a description of the salvation which came to him and the nation and brought David to "an open place" (II Shemuel 22:1-20); thereafter he moves to the subject of the foundations of Divine Providence and of reward and punishment: "God will reward me according to my righteousness ... You will show mercy to the merciful ... He is a shield to all those who trust in Him." Finally David describes God's Kingship, "For who is God other than the Lord, and who is a rock other than our God?" (32), and returns to a description of the salvation. It would appear that the change in structure comes in the wake of the psalmist's burning emotions, such that the song bursts from his lips and includes the elements of thanks which have been mentioned: God's Kingship - His Providence - His salvation, and the obvious conclusion, "Therefore I shall give thanks to You, O God, among the nations, and shall sing to Your name" (50), and a hope for the future: "He is a tower of salvation to His king and performs kindness to His anointed, to David and to his descendants, FOREVER."

E. "And He Will Raise the Horn of His Anointed" The two forms of thanks mentioned in the two chapters discussed above correspond to Chana's thanks on one hand and her "tefilla" on the other. Chana has merited giving birth to a son - and for this she must give thanks, but Knesset Yisrael has not yet merited the long-awaited salvation, and for this Chana prays as the "mother" of Israel: "If you will give Your handmaid a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life..." (I Shemuel 1:11). This is not a prayer merely for personal descendants but also, according to Chazal, a prayer for a child who will eventually anoint two people - Shaul and David - through whom salvation will come to Israel. Chana's offspring - Shemuel - indeed makes Chana into the "mother of children," but Chana also wants him to make Israel into the nation saved by God: "He shall give strength to His king and lift the horn of His anointed." Close scrutiny of the verses of this chapter reveals the many parallels between this chapter and the two mentioned above. We shall not expand on this here but shall suffice with pointing out the foundations which we have mentioned: a. Kingship of God - "There is none as holy as God for there is none other than You and no rock like our Lord." (ibid. 2:2) b. His Providence - "He lifts up the poor from the dust and the destitute out of the ashheap." (8) c. Prayer for Salvation - "God's opponents shall be broken, in the heavens shall He thunder..." (ibid 10. Compare this pasuk to David's song.) "And lift the horn of His anointed" - parallel to "And perform kindness to His anointed, to David and his descendants, forever."

F. Malkhuyot, Zikhronot, Shofarot The central focus of the Rosh Ha-shana prayers is, obviously, the middle berakhot of the Mussaf prayer - known as malkhuyot, zikhronot and shofarot.

A. Malkhuyot - a description of God's Kingship in the world: "And you shall know today... that God is the Lord in the heavens above... and God shall be King over all the earth." B. Zikhronot - God's providence in the world: "You remember the deeds of the world... for You shall bring a law of remembrance to account for every living thing... for the remembrance of all of Creation comes before You." C. Shofarot: Two aspects of the shofar are alluded to: firstly, that which hearkens back to the giving of the Torah: "And the sound of the shofar was very loud..." and secondly the shofar of the final redemption: "And it shall be on that day that there shall be a great blast on the shofar..." The common denominator is that in both cases the shofar serves as an

expression of God's revelation in the world - both in His descent onto Har Sinai at the time of matan Torah and in the shofar blast of redemption. This phenomenon heralds the giving of the Torah, which was to serve as the basis for the world and for the building of a perfect society, and also heralds the appearance of God to cut off the wicked, to gather in the lost and the dispersed and to lift the horn of His anointed one. Hence we have seen that the Rosh Ha-shana prayers recited by all of Am Yisrael were in fact established by Chana, mother of Shemuel, who perceived not only her own personal sorrow but also the trials and troubles of the nation as a whole. She merited to have her personal salvation serve also as the salvation of the nation - her son anointed the people who came to save the nation. The Anshei Knesset Ha-gedola followed Chana's example and structured our prayer along similar lines, with the hope and prayer that God would listen to the sound of the shofar blast of His people with mercy, and that the shofar of our ultimate freedom would be sounded. Indeed, Sarah and Rachel also merited their personal salvation on Rosh Ha-shana. But only in Chana's case did this signal the salvation of the nation. She left us a legacy of prayer full of awe for Divine majesty, comprising the malkhuyot, zikhronot and shofarot of redemption. May we merit to witness that redemption speedily.

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mj-ravtorah@shamash.org Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZTL on Inyanei Teshuva teshuva.97 [Note: This summary was taken from the conclusion of the 1977 Yarchei Kallah Shiurim on Shofetim]

The Ramban on the verse Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof (Devarim 16:20) explains that a judge must render accurate decisions no matter what the personal cost to him may be. The Gemara notes that this verse refers to the litigants, that they should not be content with a mediocre court, but should seek out the best available court to hear their dispute. Why is the word Tzedek repeated in the verse? In order to teach us that it refers to both the judges and the litigants. The Gemara derived this because the Torah used the word Tirdof. Had the intended target of the word Tzedek been the judges alone, the Torah might have said Tzedek Tzedek Tishpot. Instead, it addresses the litigants, that they should seek after, Tirdof, the best available court and not to accept mediocrity. The Rav noted that the same principle of Tirdof applied elsewhere; for example one should seek out the best Yeshiva and best teacher for Talmud Torah.

The Ramban then quotes the Midrash of Reb Nechuniah Ben Hakaneh which mentions that there are 2 different types of Tzedek. The Midrash employs a phrase of Im Tadin Atzmecha, if you will judge yourself, The Rav noted that this phrase indicates that the Ramban was driving at a similar message to that expounded by the Mussar movement years later and is also found in Chazal and the Chachmei Hakaballah: the notion of self judgement. In fact the Baalei Mussar and Chachmei Hakaballah were of the opinion that the Haftoros between Parshas Reeh and Parshas Nitzavim refer to the Aseres Yemay Teshuva. In Reeh, the foundation of Bechirah, self determination, is laid down, which is a condition sina qua non as far as Teshuva is concerned. Every year the month of Elul begins with the principle that Hashem has given us 2 paths from which to choose: life and death. It is up to us to choose our course. The phrase Im Tadin Atzmecha says that man must set up a court to sit in judgement over himself. We should interpret the words Shofetim Vshotrim Titen Lecha in 2 ways: as providing judges to judge between 2 litigants and also to provide judges that judge you personally. You must split yourself into 2 personae one which will act as defendant and the other that acts as the judge over yourself. You must judge yourself through all Shearecha, all your gates. Not only does a city have gates, but each individual is full of gates through which he sins and are used as excuses for his actions. We find this aspect in Adam Harishon, where he sought a gate through which to escape his guilt, and blamed Hashem and Eve for his sin. That is why Parshas Reeh usually coincides with Shabbos Mevarchim for Elul and Shofetim is the first Shabbos of Elul because we want to enforce the need for Im Tadin Atzmecha, man must sit in judgement over himself. If you can't examine your actions as if you were peering through the unbiased eyes of a stranger, than you will not be choosing life.

The Rav continued to explain the Ramban. Tzedek means Midas Dino Shel Olam - the manner through which the universe exists and is guided. Tzedek represents the mathematical equations and laws of nature that prevail here as well as in the furthest reaches of the universe. This kind of Tzedek is what the Chachmei Hakaballah referred to as Malchus - the revelation of Hashem through the laws that prevail through the universe. The universe

functions through this Ratzon Hakadmon. The Baal Shem Tov said that the verse Udevarcha Nitzav Bashamayim Uvaaretz means that the world was created through the word Yehi that was used in connection with the creation of the world. For example, Yehi Or, means let there be light that is composed of certain properties. Midas Dino Shel Olam is Malchus and Shechina, which is the revelation of the glory of Hashem through the repetition of physical laws.

The universe has no choice but to obey these laws of nature. A Malach, angel, does not understand the concept of Teshuva. This is the Ratzon Hakadmon, the unchangeable Midas Hadin that prevails throughout the cosmos, the unalterable laws that light always travels at a constant speed and that each spring the trees bloom and in the fall they wither, and tells man to obey certain moral codes and laws. As we say in the Piyut on Rosh Hashana - that Hashem bears the universe on His shoulders, K vayachol. It is the Tzedek of Yehi that maintains the continuity and balance within creation.

The Rav quoted the Midrash on Breishis that prior to creating man, Hashem, K vayachol, asked 4 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 argued that man should not be created. Hashem resolved the dispute by K vayachol, throwing Emes to the ground. The Rav mentioned the following explanation that he heard from his father. Why did Emes and Shalom argue against creation? Because man can be a complete Ish Emes without deviating one iota from the path of truth. Likewise, man can be an Ish Shalom without deviation from the path of peace. Man is capable of great sacrifices in order to preserve peace and harmony. However, it is impossible for man to be a complete Ish Emes and a complete Ish Shalom at the same time. The Gemara says that just as their faces were created to be different from each other, so to their opinions differ from each other. If you find 2 people that agree after a dispute, this agreement grows out of a desire to maintain peace. However if I say guilty and you say innocent, really these 2 opinions are irreconcilable. There is an aspect of Sheker, falsehood, on the part of the person who would change his opinion. Likewise, if 2 judges disagree and recommend arbitration, that is not full realization of Emes either. Emes and Shalom argued against creation of man because one of them would always have to give in. If Hashem created man to exemplify the attribute of Emes, then men would be in constant conflict. So Hashem resolved the dispute by throwing, K vayachol, Emes to the ground and making Emes grow from the ground. However before Hashem there is no conflict between Emes and Shalom. As we say Oseh Shalom Bimromav, Hashem who makes peace between Michael and Gavriel, we pray that He will make peace upon us, a peace that will not be a compromise between Emes and Shalom.

This coexistence of Emes and Shalom will come to pass in the days of Moshiach. We read in the prophet Zechariah that when the people were rebuilding the temple the prophet asked Hashem if they should continue to observe the fast days that had been established to commemorate the destruction of the first Temple. The response came back that these fast days will be days of joy in the future and the concluding words were Haemes Vhashalom Ehavu. What was the connection between the question regarding the fast days and this phrase? The answer is that these days will be truly days of joy in the time when there will be no conflict between Emes and Shalom, in the days of Moshiach. The Rambam, in Hilchos Taanis, says that in the days of Moshiach all these fast days will be turned to days of joy and uses the same terminology and quotes the prophet saying Haemes Vhashalom Ehavu, which represents the days of Moshiach.

The Ramban describes the period of Moshiach as Tzedek Shayni. This is the time in which Hashem has promised us that there will be no conflict between Emes and Shalom. Until that time we have to rely on Tzedek Rishon, via the Choshen Mishpat. Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof Lmaan Tichyeh Vyarashta Es Haaretz means that we must pursue Tzedek in order that we may inherit the land, Eretz means Malchus Hashem. We cannot be completely happy with the fact that we have not as of yet attained the period of Hames Vhashalom Ehavu. Hashem instructed us to live in the best manner possible prior to our reaching that stage, through following the Torah and

Chachmei Hatorah [Note: the Rav used the term Daas Torah, but I believe he meant in a more meaningful way than how the term has been used lately]. Still, the litigants and judges will not reach perfection, which will only come in the days of Moshiach. Until that age, we must practice judgement based on the split between Emes and Shalom, even though in the days of Moshiach we will live with a different kind of Tzedek.

The best situation would be for Hashem Himself to be our judge and resolve our disputes, However that will only come in the future, when we will merit to realize and see Elokim Nitzav Baadas Kel, which will be the age of Tzedek Shayni, with complete access to Hashem. That is the time when Hashem will make a circle for the righteous to dance in. At that time we will fully realize the verse Hu Yaaseh shalom Alaynu, there will be complete reconciliation between Emes and Shalom. Until that time, Hashem entrusted frail, imperfect, guilty man to sit in judgement over his fellow human beings, even though he may be as guilty or corrupt as the litigants he is dealing with.

The Ramban says that Tzedek Tzedek refers to 2 types of Tzedek, in the words of the Baal Hatanya, there is Tzedek Titaa, lower Tzedek, and Tzedek Ilaah, the higher Tzedek. The lower Tzedek is the expression of the will of Hashem through creation and natural law. The lower Tzedek is an imperfect reflection of the upper Tzedek. The upper Tzedek was what the righteous have always been concerned with, to attain their reward and experience the higher Tzedek. This is the Tzedek of Tiferes which is the same as Emes, as it says Titen Emes L'Yaakov. Yaakov's attribute is Tiferes, he was the chosen from the forefathers [who combined the Chesed of Avraham with the Gevurah of Yitzchak].

In this world, Hashem reveals Himself through Shechina, through Malchus, through the physical universe. The prophets had glimpses of Shechina that went beyond the realm of Malchus. However, we see only the continuity of creation. Hashem also gave Bnay Yisrael a moral code through which to live, the Choshen Mishpat. To that end, man must set himself up as judge in order to guarantee that the lower Tzedek be fulfilled. We have an obligation of Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof, to fulfill the lower form of Tzedek and make sure that it is integrated into our daily world.

The verse says Emes Vshalom Shiftu Bshaaraychem, you shall judge truth and peace in your gates. The Gemara says that this refers to compromise, which is an imperfect form of justice. This is the Tzedek Rishon, the lower form of Tzedek that the Ramban mentions. Until we can achieve the Tzedek Shayni, the higher Tzedek, Hashem has instructed man to be guided by his conscience, by the reflective Tzedek. It indicates man's imperfections, yet it is the only way we can prevent constant conflict among litigants.

On Rosh Hashonah we say Vayigbah Hashem Tzevakos Bamishpat Vhakei Hakadosh Nikdash B'Tzedakah. On Rosh Hashonah, Hashem looks at man through a higher form of Tzedek, that of Tzedek Shayni. Hashem suspends the every day Tzedek Rishon where the natural laws are immutable and looks at our deeds through Tzedek Shayni, the higher Tzedek. We recognize that this system of justice that Hashem uses on this day is elevated, Vayigbah, above any form of justice that we can understand. Indeed, this principle of 2 types of Tzedek, can be used to explain and rationalize the question of why bad things happen to good people and good things happen to evil people. If we recognize that on Rosh Hashonah Hashem is working with a system of justice that only He can design and implement, then we are no longer constrained by the Tzedek Rishon, that would imply an understanding between reward and punishment. We understand that we view through the eyes of Tzedek Rishon how one gives Tzedakah and teaches his children Torah and performs the Mitzvos Hashem. On Rosh Hashonah, Hashem shifts from Tzedek Rishon to Tzedek Shayni, a system of justice that is beyond our comprehension. We say Im Tematzeh Omek Hadin, if You will squeeze out the depths of judgement from Tzedek Rishon to Tzedek Shayni, we will realize that despite all our deeds we are completely alone and forlorn on this day and depend on the mercy of Hashem.

People make a mistake and interpret that Oseh Shalom Bimromav refers to international peace. It refers to the metaphysical union of Emes and Shalom that will arrive with the dawning of the messianic era.

[Note: we mention in the introductory prayer recited by the Chazan prior to Mussaf, Hineni Heani, that we ask Hashem to convert all of our misdeeds into merits and to life an peace, Hames Vhashalom Ehavu, let us merit to witness the dawning of the Messianic era and the Tzedek Shayni that will begin at that time. May this indeed be the year of Bias Goel Tzedek speedily in our days, and may we and all Klal Yisrael, Bchal Makom Shehem, be blessed with a Kesiva Vchasimah Tova Latlar Lchayim Tovim.]

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