



Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev was a disciple of the Maggid of Mezrich (successor of the Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chasidism). He was renown throughout Poland as a great tzadik (righteous person) whose love of G-d, the Torah and the Jewish people was unlimited.

One year on Rosh Hashana, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak approached the bima (lectern) in his synagogue, with obvious seriousness. Soon it would be time to sound the shofar, the main mitzva (commandment) of the days of Rosh Hashana. The moment of the sounding of the shofar is one of the holiest moments of the year; it is the moment when we crown G-d as our King.

So the congregation was in shock when Rabbi Levi Yitzchak went up on the podium to blow the shofar and, weeping profusely, pulled a long braid of blond hair from his pocket. The Rebbe held the braid aloft for several moments. Tears streamed down his face as he prayed with deep emotion. Only after he put the braid on the table before him, did he begin to blow the shofar.

When Reb Levi Yitzchak finished, he was beaming with joy. Later at the holiday meal, one of his pupils got up the courage to ask him what had transpired, and the Rebbe explained.

"Weeks before Rosh Hashana, I and other members of the chevra kadisha (holy society) sensed that the upcoming year would be filled with unspeakable tragedies for the Jews. All of the tzadikim, especially Rebbe Boruch of Mezibuz and I, were very worried and finally we agreed to devote all our energies, day and night, to fasting and prayer in order to remove the terrible decree. Despite our greatest efforts, we did not sense any relief.

"It was obvious that it was out of our hands. We needed a big miracle. Yesterday, the day before Rosh Hashana, I suddenly felt an urge to search for something, some sort of merit that might change things.

"I left my house and my feet took me to the poorest part of town. I walked aimlessly until I noticed a house in the Jewish section that seemed to be calling to me. I knocked on the door and a woman answered, but when she saw me she almost fainted. She began moaning and weeping uncontrollably. It took her several minutes to allow me to enter, and several more until she had calmed down and began to speak.

"The woman told me a tragic story. She and her parents had lived on land rented from the local baron. They managed to pay the rent and eke out a meager living by milking cows and selling the milk and cheese to nearby farmers. Life was not easy, but it became even more difficult when she was 16 years old and tragedy struck. Her parents fell ill and several months later they both passed away. Suddenly she was alone with no money. All this time there had been no income so there were many debts.

"She had no choice other than to go to the baron and beg him to give her time to get herself back on her feet. Perhaps he would have mercy on her. With much trepidation, she managed to get an audience with the baron. When the young woman, who was also exceedingly beautiful, was ushered into his room, she saw a look in the baron's eyes that made her let out a little cry and instinctively run toward the door.

"The baron commanded his servants to block her exit and he ordered her to face him. Then he spoke to her in a soothing tone. He explained to her that he could offer her a life of luxury and comfort, with servants at her beck and call and days filled with fun and excitement. Surely, this was a much grander future than being a lowly Jewess with no future.

"But when it was obvious to him that this also did not impress her he stood up and said, 'Let me at least kiss the locks of your beautiful hair. Then I will waive your debts and give you the next three years rent at half price.' Saying this he suddenly stepped forward and, as she turned to run from him once more, he grabbed her hair in his two hands and kissed it passionately.

"The young woman bolted out the door and ran for as long as she could until she

could run no more. When she finally reached her home she felt so humiliated that she wasn't able to sleep all night. The next morning, instead of cashing in on the baron's promise, she took a scissors, cut off her braids, packed a bag, and left her home, never to return again.

"She found a job in the city as a housemaid where she worked for several years until she got married. Last year her husband passed away and she felt that perhaps the foul kiss of the baron had something to do with it."

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak continued, "I assured her that this was certainly not true. I asked her if perhaps she had saved any of the hair that she had cut off so many years ago."

Reb Levi Yitzchak raised the braid in his hands for all to see once again. "This is what she gave me. This is what I held up before I blew the shofar earlier today. And as I held this hair aloft, I wept before G-d, 'Master of the Universe, if you have any doubt about what kind of people are Your nation, then just look at this braid of hair. A poor, orphan girl gave up a life of luxury and comfort, in order to be Your servant! Now, G-d, have mercy on us and be our merciful Father, our benevolent Protector, our omnipotent King.' The braid of hair, together with our sincere prayers, have nullified the decree."

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

Rosh Hashana Prayers and Customs

May everything that has been made, know that You made it.

In the future, when Moshiach comes, every creation will understand and recognize that within everything in this world there is a G-dly power which makes it exist and gives it its life-force. This is the meaning of this prayer which we say on Rosh Hashana. We beseech G-d to reveal His Kingship in this world - "May everything that has been made, know that You made it" - because in truth nothing exists without this G-dliness. (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi)

This is the day which is the beginning of Your work. The world was created on the 25th of Elul. Rosh Hashana, the first of Tishrei, is therefore the sixth day of Creation. How, then, can we say about Rosh Hashana, "This is the day which is the beginning of Your work"? The fact of the matter is that the entire purpose of Creation was to make a "dwelling place below" for G-d and this is accomplished through man. Because of this, before man was created, it is impossible to say that the world existed in the true sense, for its purpose was still missing. Therefore, the sixth day of Creation, on which man was created, is "the beginning of Your work." (Likutei Torah)

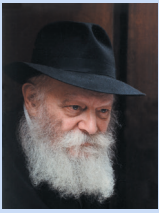
As a young boy, the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, asked his father, the Rebbe Rashab, what he was supposed to be doing on the day before Rosh Hashana. "We recite Psalms the whole day long and feel remorse for our misdeeds of the past year, so that by the time evening falls and the new year begins, we are free of all our bad habits," his father replied.



6:53 PM Candle Lighting Time
NY Metro Area
29 Elul / September 11
Shabbat and Rosh Hashana
1 Tishrei/ Sept 12
Light candles after 7:51pm from a pre-existing flame
Rosh Hashana ends 2 Tishrei/Sept 13, 7:49 pm

L'Chaim

בס"ד
1940
29 Elul, 5786
September 11, 2026
The Weekly Publication for Every Jewish Person
יוסף תורה שלישי
Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson
"Jerusalem has mountains around it, and the L-rd is around His people from now and to eternity" (Psalms 125:2)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

Our holy Torah designates the first day of the Hebrew month of Tishrei as the date on which we celebrate Rosh Hashana, the New Year. However, this is not the anniversary of the beginning of creation, for the Talmud teaches that the first day of creation was actually five days earlier on the 25th of Elul.

Nevertheless, we celebrate the new year on the sixth day of creation which is actually the day on which Adam, the first person, was created.

The reason for this is that it wasn't until Adam was created that the Creator Himself was recognized. In fact, it was man who instilled an awareness of G-d into all of creation.

One of the primary characteristics by which man is distinguished from all other creatures is the free will with which he has been endowed by G-d. This "gift" must be properly utilized, for it allows him to rise above all of creation and achieve the very highest of spiritual levels.

G-d revealed His holy Torah to help man achieve perfection and find the right way in life. G-d's Torah is eternal, and its directives apply in every time and in every place.

On Rosh Hashana man is not only judged by G-d but must render judgment upon himself. As soon as Adam was created, he declared, "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the L-rd our Maker."

Thus, each year on Rosh Hashana, we follow his example and accept G-d's sovereignty upon ourselves anew.

On Rosh Hashana we resolve to live our daily lives in accordance with the Torah's laws, and to do so in the very finest manner of which we are capable.

Of course, a lot of inner strength is necessary in order to live up to our resolution. But is it really possible to experience the same sense of G-d's Kingship as our ancestor Adam?

The answer is a resounding "yes!"

G-d grants each and every one of us immense powers - a tremendous capacity for choosing the right path. Indeed, when we uncover these inner strengths, nothing is beyond our reach, and on Rosh Hashana we can surely attain the same perception and recognition of G-d in our daily lives as did Adam, and extend that recognition to those around us.

Thus, on Rosh Hashana we declare: "And every creature shall know that You have created it...and every soul shall say, 'The L-rd G-d of Israel is King, and His sovereignty reigns over all.'"

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, volume 9

A Cry Beyond Words: The Shofar of Rosh Hashanah

"Avinu Malkein — Our Father, Our King."

These words capture something essential about Rosh Hashanah. We stand before G-d as our King — but also as His children.

The Baal Shem Tov taught that G-d's love for every Jew surpasses even the love of a parent for an only child. It is a love that doesn't disappear when we make mistakes, drift away, or lose touch with who we really are.

Rosh Hashanah marks the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve — the birthday of humanity. Each year, we are invited to begin again, rediscover who we are, and renew our relationship with G-d.

At the center of that experience is the shofar.

There are no lyrics. No speech. No carefully chosen words.

Just a cry.

The Baal Shem Tov explained this with a story.

A prince, the king's only son, left the palace and traveled far from home. Years passed, and he became so distant that he even forgot the language of his father's kingdom.

Eventually, he longed to return. After a difficult journey, he finally stood outside the palace — but he could no longer find the words to identify himself.

So he cried out.

It was the raw cry of a child calling for his father. The cry said what words could not: Father, it's me. I'm still your child. Please bring me home.

The king recognized his son and

embraced him.

That, said the Baal Shem Tov, is the sound of the shofar.

We may arrive at Rosh Hashanah feeling deeply connected to our Judaism — or distant, distracted and uninspired. Perhaps there are things we wish we had done differently. Maybe we want to reconnect but don't know where to begin.

The shofar tells us we don't need the perfect words.

Beneath the noise, distractions and mistakes of life is a part of us that never loses its connection to G-d. The shofar gives that part of us a voice.

Its simplicity is its power. It says: This is who I am. This is where I come from. I want to be close again.

And G-d hears that cry.

No matter how far we think we have traveled, the relationship itself was never lost. A child does not stop being a child because they have been away from home.

Rosh Hashanah is our invitation to come home.

Jewish tradition speaks of a future "Great Shofar" that will announce the coming of Moshiach. At that moment, the barriers that have hidden our connection to G-d will finally fall away, and we will recognize what was true all along: we were always children coming home to our Father.

May we hear that Great Shofar very soon, with the coming of Moshiach and our return to Jerusalem.

May we all be inscribed and sealed for a good and sweet year.

SLICE OF LIFE

The Accidental Interpreter

In the late '60s, my father served as the president of Achdut Israel, the German-Jewish community in Buenos Aires, where we lived.



Rabbi Noson Grunblatt

In those days, annual collections showcasing the best

advertisements of the previous year would be published in countries around the world, so that people in the industry could follow the latest trends and innovations. My parents used to get these imported books from Europe and then go from agency to agency, selling them to their art departments.

Now, Argentina's economic and financial history has always been like a carousel, constantly going up and down. In 1971, the government was trying to fix its economic problems, when one day, they suddenly decided to stop importing all goods into the country. So the next day, my parents had nothing to sell.

They waited a little, but there was still no forecast for when imports would open up again. Although he was not a chasid at the time, my father wrote to the Rebbe, introducing himself, and explaining how he and my mother had found themselves with no livelihood. He wrote in his letter that maybe it was time for our family to move to Israel:

He didn't realize that since he had mentioned his role as the Achdut Israel community president, the Rebbe would not approve of his plan to leave the country.

He sent the letter off. A month passed, then two, and then three – but there was no answer. Every so often, he would call the Rebbe's secretaries,

yet six months passed and there was still no answer.

One day, the telephone rang. It was the Rebbe's secretary who said that the Rebbe had answered and that he would deliver the message over the phone. "No, not at this time," the Rebbe had said, adding that he would keep my father in his prayers.

The day after that phone call, Argentina opened its doors to imports once again. Apparently the Rebbe knew when to answer.

We came to learn something else about the Rebbe's attitude towards communal work: If you tell the Rebbe that you are an important part of the community, he will not agree for you to leave it.

In the mid-'70s, on a rare trip to New York, my parents had a private audience with the Rebbe. Back in Argentina, various people had asked my mother to request the Rebbe's blessings on their behalf, so she had prepared a long note with the names of each person, and the question or issue each person wanted her to ask the Rebbe about.

When Rabbi Leibel Groner, the Rebbe's secretary, saw the size of her note, he didn't allow her to bring it in. It would be too taxing on the Rebbe's time to go through so many issues.

My mother rewrote her note. When my parents went into the Rebbe's room, she gave him the note.

The Rebbe took a look at the first name. "What's this person's story?" he asked.

My mother explained what the issue was, and then the Rebbe instructed her on how the person ought to deal with it.

Then he went on to the second name: "And what's with –?"

By this time, the audience was already taking longer than usual. Rabbi Groner began turning the door handle as a signal to my parents, but of course they weren't going to get up and leave while the Rebbe was talking to them. Rabbi Groner opened the door and walked into the center of the room, but the Rebbe gestured for him to leave, continuing on to ask about each name, "What's with him? What's with her?" – until the Rebbe had asked about every single name on the list.

In 1980, I was asked to go with a Sephardic lady from Argentina to translate during her private audience with the Rebbe. She was afraid that she wouldn't understand the Rebbe.

The woman wrote a note with a question about some medical issue, and at the bottom of the paper I wrote why I had come with her. The Rebbe read the note, and then spoke to me, in Yiddish, advising her to do so-and-so.

I had intended to translate after the audience, but instead the Rebbe stopped and looked at me expectantly: "Presumably you're going to translate..."

I turned to the lady and told her that the Rebbe had said to do so-and-so.

But she was of a different opinion. "No," she said. "What about this-and-that?"

"My G-d," I thought. Now I had to turn around and tell this to the Rebbe.

"I've never heard of such a thing," replied the Rebbe, once I had translated, and then he repeated his advice.

Once again, I put up my hand to my mouth, and translated, before adding "... and stop arguing!"

Once the Rebbe saw that everything was quiet, he took a dollar out of his drawer and gave it to the woman for her to give to charity after traveling home, and then he gave another one to me.

The next day, I came back, together with my wife, for our own audience. The Rebbe gave us a beautiful blessing but before that, as we came into the room, he looked at us and asked: "Do both of you understand Yiddish?"

Later on, I thought about this question: Obviously he hadn't forgotten that I know the language – I served as the translator just the day before. He wanted to know whether my wife spoke Yiddish. But since asking her directly might make her feel uncomfortable, he asked whether we both understood.

Rabbi Noson Grunblatt is the director of Editorial Kehot Lubavitch Sudamericana, the Chabad publishing house in Argentina for Spanish-language material, and he has worked as a translator and publisher of Jewish literature for over 40 years. He was interviewed by JEM in November 2025.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

25 Elul, 5718 (1968)

The month of Elul, especially the Days of Selichot and the Ten Days of Repentance, is the time dedicated to sincere introspection and a careful and honest examination of the record of the outgoing year, with a view to the proper deductions and resolutions which are to regulate one's personal daily life, as well as that of his home, and all his affairs in the year to come.

Moreover, these are exceptionally propitious days, days permeated with the core of the Psalm recited twice daily: "Search my inwardness: Thy inner essence, O G-d, do I seek" (Ps. 27:8).

They call and demand:

Search for the innermost and the profound within you; seek out also the inwardness of everything around you, the soul of the universe; search for and bring to light the G-dliness that animates and pervades the world!

Both aspects - the honest self-appraisal and the search for the inner essence of things - are interrelated and interdependent.

In evaluating the results of the outgoing year, one is very prone to err by taking into account only the external, both in himself and in the environment. In doing so, one is on equally treacherous grounds in regard to setting the pattern of daily living in the year to come.

To forestall this misleading approach, these auspicious days sound their message and challenge: Do not sell yourself short! Do not underestimate your capacities and abilities!

For, no matter what your spiritual "stock-in-trade" is, your "visible assets" - the existing possibilities that you have to conduct your life in accord with the teachings of our Torah, no matter how formidable is your strength of character and your ability

to cope with a frustrating environment, and with undaunted perseverance to follow the path of the Torah and its mitzvot, much greater and richer are your "hidden reserves" of powers to create new possibilities, and of inner qualities giving you the ability to overcome obstacles and to shape your life and the lives around you to be in harmony with truth and goodness.

In order to reveal and apply these powers, however, it is necessary that you search for and release your potential forces. But you are promised:

"You will discover - because you will search with all your heart and soul" (Deut. 4:29)

What has been said above is more especially and more fully applicable to those who occupy positions of spiritual leadership and influence, from the rabbi of the community down to the individual parent who sets the pace of the spiritual life of the household and family.

All too often do we see them stymied by doubt and fear, afraid to use, what seems to them, a strong word or excessive demand lest they might alienate, instead of attract.

To them these days address themselves with this message and challenge: Search inwardly; seek deeply and you will unravel the innermost treasures of those whom you would lead and inspire; evaluate them not externally, but according to their inner resources, according to the capacity of their soul, the veritable spark of G-dliness from Above.

For with the right approach and by indefatigable effort you will be able to uncover and activate in everyone his inner spiritual resources, so that he begins to animate his daily life.

Have confidence in your fellow-Jew and give him what he, as a Jew, truly expects from you: the whole Torah with all its precepts, unvarnished and untarnished, as it was given from Sinai, in its true eternity, for the Torah is eternal for all times and places.

Only through this approach can one attain a true estimation of oneself and of those who look up to you for guidance and leadership, a true estimation that will make the year a full year - full in content and achievement commensurate with your fullest resources, and also full of G-d's blessings, materially and spiritually.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Baal Shem Tov wrote in a letter that on Rosh Hashana of the year 5507 (1746), his soul ascended to the heavenly realms, where he was granted the privilege of entering the palace of Moshiach. "I asked the King

Moshiach, 'Master, when are you coming?' And he replied: 'When your wellsprings [teachings] will be disseminated outward.' " From this reply it is apparent that the Baal Shem Tov's teachings - Chasidut - are closely connected with the coming of Moshiach. Chasidut is the vessel for the great light of Moshiach.

(Likutei Dibburim)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

In Memory of Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman, Director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization and Founder of the L'Chaim Publication.

From the Archives

May this year be:

שנת אותה תקום תרחם ציון, שנת יאפגלייטקייט בענייני גאולה ומשיח, שנת אמונה בדי ובמשח עבדו, שנת ארר עם ענגי שמאי, שנת אראנו נפלאות, שנת נפלאות בכל, שנת בנין בית המקדש, שנת בטחון, שנת נפלאות גדולות, שנת גאולה האמיתית והשלימה, שנת נפלאות דגולות, שנת דידן נצח, שנת דור השביעי דור הגאולה, שנת דוד מלך ישראל חי וקום, שנת הקיצו ורגו שוכני עפר ודוא בתוכם, שנת הגה הגה משיח בא וכבר בא, שנת התגלות מלך המשיח, שנת ודוא יגאלנו, שנת יואמינו בדי ובמשח עבדו, שנת זה יתחננו, שנת נפלאות הדרוג, שנת שיר חדש, שנת טובה מושפעת הרבה (מלשון הרמבם), שנת יחי המלך, שנת כתיבה והחינה טובה, שנת כינוי של משיח, שנת לימוד תורתו של משיח, שנת מלך המשיח, שנת יבוא מנחם למחננו, שנת נפלאות, שנת ניסים גדולים, שנת נחמה בכללים, שנת סגולה, שנת סיום וסוף הגלות, שנת גילוי אור אין סוף, שנת עמים הגיעו זמן גאולתם, שנת פירות תשוב ירושלים, שנת צמח דוד נבדך, שנת קיבוץ גלויות, שנת קבלת מלכותו על ידי העם, שנת ראש בני ישראל, שנת שלום, שנת שיר חדש, שנת שופרו של משיח, שנת שלימות התורה, שנת שלימות העם, שנת שלימות הארץ, שנת תחיית המתים, שנת תורה חדשה נאמרי תצא

A year of "Arise and have mercy on Zion,"... uplifted in matters of Moshiach and the Redemption... faith in G-d and Moses His servant... traveling with the Heavenly clouds... Revealed Wonders; Wonders in Everything... the building of the Holy Temple... trust; Great wonders... the true and complete Redemption; Dignified Wonders... victory... the seventh generation is the generation of Redemption... King David lives and is eternal; "Those who rest in the dust will arise and sing and he will lead them"... Moshiach is coming and he has already come... the revelation of Moshiach; "He will redeem us"... "And they believed in G-d and in Moses His servant"; "This one will comfort us"; the wonders of true freedom... a new song; an abundance of good (Rambam); the king shall live; inscribed and sealed for a good year... the harp of Moshiach; learning Moshiach's teachings; the coming of Menachem who will comfort us... the King Moshiach; wonders... revealed miracles... a double portion; treasures... the completion and end of exile... the revelation of the Infinite Divine Light; "Humble ones, the time of your Redemption has arrived"; "Jerusalem will dwell in open space"; Your servant David will go forth; the ingathering of the exiles... acceptance of his sovereignty by the people; Rebbe - Rosh B'nei Yisrael; peace... a new song... Moshiach's shofar... unity of the Torah, unity of the Jewish people, unity of the land of Israel; Resurrection of the Dead... "A new Torah will come from Me"

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה'י מושקא

The name of our publication has special meaning. It stands for the name of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (obm), wife of the Rebbe.



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