



The story of Chana, the Haftorah of Rosh Hashana, is a story of devotion and of love, of service and of sacrifice. It is the story of the woman who taught the world what it means to pray—that one prays not with one’s lips, but from one’s heart.

“Marry another woman that you may have children,” Chana said to her husband, Elkana. “And when G-d sees my pain, perhaps I to will be given a child.” So, Elkana took a second wife, Penina. And she bore many children, but Chana had none.

With time, Chana might have resigned herself to her state, and found solace in her loving husband and her service of G-d. But Penina knew of the longing that burned deep within Chana and resolved that longing not be extinguished. And so, Penina tormented her endlessly.

In the morning, Penina rose early to prepare her children for school. “Chana,” she called, “Why are you not up yet? Don’t you have to wash and dress your children?”

At noon, Penina stood at the door, awaiting her children’s return. “Chana, aren’t you going to come too, to welcome your children home?”

At dinner, when Elkana served the main course, Penina once again called attention to her young.

There was not a day that Chana was not confronted with her barrenness. She sat silently at the table, the tears welling in her eyes, observing the lively tumult about her and the obvious pleasure Penina took in tending to her children, and she could not eat. Elkana, sensing her agony, served her the choicest portion, handing it to her lovingly, but it remained untouched.

Each year, Elkana and his family traveled to Shilo. Along the way, they stopped, and Chana and Elkana encouraged others to join them in their pilgrimage. Each year they took a different route, exhorting everyone they met to come along, until eventually, entire villages from all over the land of Israel journeyed with them to sacrifice and give thanks to G-d in Shilo.

It was autumn, and they were in Shilo again. Elkana called his family together to share with them the sacrifice. As always, the best went to Chana. And she alone took no part in the joyous celebration. Gently, Elkana said to her: “Chana, why do you cry? Why is your heart saddened today? Does not my love mean more to you than the love of ten children?”

But the days when that love could have contented her were long past. In her mind, she saw only Penina, who made even the most mundane aspects of motherhood seem sublime. So, when everyone had finished the meal, she returned to the House of G-d, and standing before the Ark, she prayed.

“G-d, you have created everything in this world for a reason. You have given me eyes to see, ears to hear, a mouth to speak. Why have You given me a womb, if not to carry a child?”

“Look at all the hundreds of people I have gathered to stand before you here. Shall I not have even one to call my own? Look at my despair, and give me a child, like other children, a happy child, a healthy child. No more do I ask for myself. But if it be Your will, then send me a child who will be a great leader, a sage and a holy man, as were Moses and Aaron, and I will dedicate his life to You.”

For what seemed like an eternity, she stood before the wall, her body shaking and racked with tears, her lips moving but her voice hardly more than a whisper. In those days, prayers and supplications were said aloud, and Eli, the high priest, was suspicious of her behavior.

“Woman, are you drunk?” he called. “Go away from here, for it is improper to stand before G-d in a state of intoxication.”

“No,” she answered, “I have poured myself no wine today. It is my heart that I have poured out before G-d in my anguish.”

“Then go in peace,” Eli replied, “and may G-d grant you your prayer.”

So they returned home. That year, Chana bore a son, and she named him Shmuel. When Shmuel was two, she took him with her to Shilo. She stood before Eli and said, “I am the woman who prayed to G-d in my sorrow. Beside me is my son, the answer to that prayer. And now may he be given into the service of G-d for the rest of his life.”

And she sang a song of thanks to G-d, she returned home, and Shmuel remained with Eli in the House of G-d. Though she visited him again each year, from that day on he was no longer only hers. She sacrificed her son to G-d, as Abraham had done before her. She sacrificed him not on an altar of stone, but on the altar of her heart, and her sacrifice was forever.

She had other children later, two more sons and two daughters, but we know her only as the mother of Shmuel the Prophet, the son she gave away.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

Day of Judgment

Rosh Hashana is the day of judgment for all humankind. On this day man is judged as to the events of his life during the forthcoming year. (Talmud, Rosh Hashana 8)

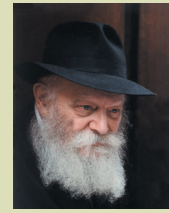
It is the way of the world that if a person has a judgment pending against him, he dresses in black, wraps himself in black, lets his beard grow for the uncertainty of the outcome. Israel, however, is different. They dress in white; they eat, drink and rejoice, in the knowledge that G-d will perform miracles on their behalf. (Jerusalem Talmud, Rosh Hashana, ch. 1)

Sounding the Shofar
The sounding of the shofar contains an allusion: Awake you sleepers from your sleep, and you slumberers, arise from your slumber—examine your deeds, repent and remember your Creator. Those of you who forgot the truth in the vanities of the time and dwell all year in emptiness, look into your souls, improve your ways and actions... (Maimonides, Hilchot Teshuva, ch. 3)

Rabbi Saadia Gaon gives ten reasons for sounding the shofar on Rosh Hashana, among them: At the beginning of a reign, it is customary to sound trumpets before the newly crowned king, and to proclaim his ascent to sovereignty throughout the realm. Similarly, do we accept anew the Creator’s sovereignty upon ourselves each year on Rosh Hashana. Also, sounding the shofar on Rosh Hashana causes us to recall our faith in the future resurrection of the dead. As it is said: “All you inhabitants of the world, and you who dwell in the earth; when an ensign is lifted on the mountains you will see, and when the shofar is sounded you will hear.” (Isaiah 18)

6:47 Candle Lighting Time
NY Metro Area
29 Elul / Sept 15
Shabbat and Rosh Hashana
1 Tishrei/ Sept 16
Light candles after 7:44 pm from a pre-existing flame
Rosh Hashana ends 2 Tishrei/Sept 17, 7:42 pm

L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

On the verse, “Seek Hashem when He could be found,” the Talmud says, “These are the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.” The words of the Talmud seem to contradict itself. On one hand it says, “between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur,” which means that Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are not included. On the other hand, it says, “These are the ten days,” which must include Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, because there are only seven days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

We must conclude that there are two different aspects to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

First is their own essential individual identity. And then there is the Teshuva - Repentance aspect, how they are included in the Ten Days of Teshuva. And because it says, “between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur,” We understand that the holiday’s own significance comes first and is higher. What is the individual aspect of Rosh Hashanah?

The Talmud tells us that about Rosh Hashanah, Hashem says, “Say before Me (verses of) kingship, in order that you should make Me King over you.” The whole concept of mitzvahs doesn’t exist before you accept Hashem as King. While Mitzvahs are Hashem’s will, Teshuva is even higher than mitzvahs, therefore, it can fix the damage that was caused by breaking them.

When we ask Hashem to be King over us, we are asking for Him Himself, His essence, which is higher than His will, and for that matter, beyond all of existence. This is a testament to how great the souls of the Jewish people are, they reach and connect to the essence of Hashem.

That is why we are able to generate the will in Him, to want to be King. And when do we connect with His essence? When we connect with our souls essence, on Rosh Hashanah, during the Amidah, when we say the words, “Be King over the whole world with Your glory.”

To understand this better, we first have to understand the role of a human king in general in Judaism. A true king is not a dictator, nor is he seeking the office or yearning for power. He actually doesn’t want to be king. He is someone who everyone realizes, that he is higher and greater, not just greater, but head and shoulders over the rest.

We request of him to be our king, because we want to gain from and connect with his greatness.

Once he accepts, he is totally given over to the welfare of the people, physically and spiritually and because of his great closeness to Hashem, he has the ability to raise everyone up, closer to Him.

Therefore, the Torah gives him the title Nassi, because Nassi is from the word nasso, which means to raise.

The holiday is called Rosh Hashanah, the head of the year. The head has different aspects to it. First, is its own unique individuality as the head. Second, it is the life force of the limbs and organs. And third, it is what controls all the organs and limbs, even after the life force has been drawn into them.

The same is with Rosh Hashanah. First, there is the individual aspect of the day, making Hashem our King. Second, is the teshuva aspect of Rosh Hashanah, which is still higher than the mitzvahs, and third, is the direct effect of Rosh Hashanah on all the days of the year, because of the resolutions we make with regards to doing mitzvahs and serving Hashem all year round.

How amazing are we, that Hashem chose us as His own, and that we can connect with His essence. As the shofar is sounded, take a moment to lose yourself to the essence of your neshama, which will connect you to the essence of Hashem, and ask Him to be your King. He will surely accept and grant you and your loved ones a happy and sweet year.

Adapted by Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz from the teachings of the Rebbe, yitzihurwitz.blogspot.com. Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

The Cry of the Shofar: Two Parables

A parable from Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov:

A King had an only son, the apple of his eye. The King wanted his son to master different fields of knowledge and to experience various cultures, so he sent him to a far-off country, supplied with a generous quantity of silver and gold. Far away from home, the son squandered all the money until he was left completely destitute. In his distress he resolved to return to his father’s house and after much difficulty, he managed to arrive at the gate of the courtyard to his father’s palace.

In the passage of time, he had actually forgotten the language of his native country, and he was unable to identify himself to the guards. In utter despair he began to cry out in a loud voice, and the King, who recognized the voice of his son, went out to him and brought him into the house, kissing him and hugging him.

The meaning of the parable: The King is G-d. The prince is the Jewish people, who are called “Children of G-d” (Deuteronomy 14:1). The King sends a soul down to this world in order to fulfill the Torah and mitzvot. However, the soul becomes very distant and forgets everything to which it was accustomed to above, and in the long exile it forgets even its own “language.” So it utters a simple cry to its Father in Heaven. This is the blowing of the shofar, a cry from deep within, expressing regret for the past and determination for the future. This cry elicits G-d’s mercies, and He demonstrates His abiding affection for His child and forgives him.

A parable from Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev:

A king was once traveling in the forest and lost his way, until he met a man who recognized that he was the king and escorted his master out of the forest and back to his palace. The king later rewarded him with many presents, and elevated him to a powerful minister’s post.

After a while, however, the man committed an act which was considered rebellious against the king, and he was sentenced to death. Before he was taken out to be executed, the king granted him one last request.

The man said: “I request to wear the clothes I wore when I escorted His Majesty when he was lost in the forest, and that His Majesty should also wear the clothes he wore then.”

The king complied, and when they were both dressed in the garments they wore at the time of their meeting, he said, “By your life, you have saved yourself,” and called off the execution.

The meaning of the parable is that when G-d gave the Torah to Israel, he offered it first to all the nations of the world. They all refused, except the people of Israel, who willingly accepted the yoke of Heaven and fulfilled the commandments of the Creator.

But now we have transgressed and rebelled, like the man in the parable, and with the arrival of the Day of Judgment we are fearful indeed. So we blow the shofar to recall the shofar blowing that accompanied our original acceptance of the Torah and coronation of G-d. This merit stands by us, and G-d forgives us all our sins and inscribes us immediately for a year of goodness and life.

Excerpted from Days Of Awe, Days Of Joy by Rabbi Eli Friedman, published by Kehot Publication Society

Dedicated in Honor of good friends of the Lubavitch Youth Organization
Mr. Michael and Fiona Scharf
Wishing you a Kesivah V’Chasimah Tovah, Shana Tova U’ mesuka, A good, sweet year

SLICE OF LIFE

The Power of a Mitzvah

by Yudi Hercenberg

I frequently travel within the United States for business purposes. To ensure my personal protection and provide reassurance to my wife, she often sends me with a few dollars to give to charity. There is a widely accepted concept in the Torah, Shluchei Mitzvah Einan Nizakin – Those people who are messengers for a mitzvah will not be harmed.

In February 2023, I had a flight on Super Bowl Sunday from Florida to California to attend a conference. As I said goodbye to my wife, she expressed a desire to send me with charity cash, but she didn't have any. She decided to send me on a different mission, urging me to perform another mitzvah. Curious, I looked at her, waiting for her challenge. "While you're on your trip," she said, "try to find someone to put on tefillin with."

Initially hesitant, I expressed my concerns to her. "I'll be staying at a hotel with 3,000 finance professionals. I'm not a rabbi, nor did I grow up surrounded by Chabad Shluchim. I'm unsure if I can fulfill this task. In fact, I think I've only helped one person put on tefillin in my entire life." However, my wife was determined, refusing to accept my reluctance. "Give it a try," she insisted, "and make a sincere commitment. Hashem will guide you and make it easier for you." Encouraged by her unwavering attitude, I committed.

Less than 20 minutes later, while standing in line to board the flight, I overheard the guy behind me muttering something under his breath. It wasn't clear if he was addressing me, talking about me, or something unrelated. He said "I wish I had one of those." I couldn't figure out, whether he was referring to my watch, sunglasses, or something else entirely.

Curiosity got the better of me, and I turned

around. The fellow appeared to be heading to the same conference as me. I asked him, "What did you wish you had?" He responded, "That beautiful leather Tefillin bag with a nice strap on it. If I had a tefillin bag like that, I would bring it with me on every trip." I didn't even know he was Jewish. Never before had anyone commented on my tefillin bag, let alone while standing in an airport queue. I realized that this whole conversation was somehow connected to the commitment I had just made to my wife. So I asked him, "Have you worn tefillin today?" He replied, "No, I don't wear it every day, only sometimes." Without hesitation, I blurted out, "Well, would you like to wear it right now?" Excitedly, he agreed! We both stepped out of the line, and I helped Eduardo put on the tefillin. In that moment, I felt like a million bucks. I took a photo of him wearing the tefillin, and once he finished saying Shema, we returned to the line to board the plane.

After 5 minutes on the plane, I turned around and discovered that Eduardo was sitting directly behind me. What a remarkable coincidence! If the story had ended at that point, it would have been astounding. But it continues...

30 minutes later, I shared Eduardo's photo of wearing the tefillin on my family chat. I wanted my wife to see that I had successfully met her challenge, and I hoped that the rest of my family would find inspiration in it as well. Unexpectedly, my brother Ezra decided to initiate a conversation:

Ezra: Who is that?

Me: My wife didn't have cash to give me for shliach mitzvah, so she sent me on a mission to wrap tefillin on strangers instead. 20 mins later, I wrapped this guy's tefillin.

Ezra: So you're now wrapping people with Tefillin for Chabad?

Me: It was not for Chabad. It was for you to see & realize that you can do it too :)

Ezra: got it, so your doing it for me and not for chabad, but you are doing it.

Me: Exactly!!!

Me: Ezra - Go wrap today before the sun goes down, if you didn't already! And if u did, go find someone who didn't and get them to wrap!! Take a picture and send it on the chat :)

Surprisingly, Ezra then sends a photo of him

and one of his friends wearing tefillin during the Super Bowl, captioned "Done. During the Super Bowl!"

Ezra: Can you get another one?

My Wife: Yudi – Come on – another one on the plane!! Or is it too late in the day?

Me: Actually since we are flying west, it's still good. Let me try. I'm not sure who I can get right now since the flight attendants are giving out drinks and snacks.

I showed the family chat to Eduardo, to demonstrate how his act of wearing tefillin had inspired others. Eduardo read through the entire conversation and then had an amazing idea! Let's get the guy sitting behind me to wear tefillin too! A few minutes later, I sent a photo of "Jay" wearing tefillin.

It all started with my wife's initial challenge to me. Inspired by Eduardo, I then extended the challenge to my brother, who, in turn, challenged his friend. The chain continued as my brother challenged me again. Remarkably, during that Super Bowl trip, a total of FOUR people ended up wearing tefillin—all because my wife had urged me to commit, assuring me that Hashem would make it easier. The power of one mitzvah had a ripple effect, touching multiple lives along the way.

So I challenge each of you. Commit to doing something outside your comfort zone. Commit to reaching out to another person, even if you're used to saying "The Rabbis, the Shluchim do that; it's not for me." You and I can have a tremendous impact on a fellow Jew that others may not reach.

Join me in reaching out and inspiring more people to do a Mitzvah, even while you are on a business trip somewhere. Jay, Eduardo, Ezra, and Ezra's friend are all real people who would normally not wear tefillin every day.

As a result of this challenge, Jay, Eduardo and I connected on a personal level, even though we were each on our way to a work conference. We have kept in touch until today. Who knows what the future brings.

Mr. Yudi Hercenberg is a Senior Managing Director at Walker & Dunlop. He is also the President of Hercenberg Mitzvah Mission, a non-profit that focuses on empowering laymen to be leaders in their communities. He lives in Parkland, FL with his wife, Simcha, and their three sons.

WHO'S WHO

Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson was the daughter of Meir Shlomo and Rochel Yanovsky. As a teen she was known amongst Chasidim as a scholar. She married the Kabbalist Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson and they had three sons, the oldest of whom became the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Rebbetzin Chana willingly joined her husband when he was exiled to Chi'ili, Kazakhstan, despite the subhuman conditions. In 1947, a few years after her husband's passing, Rebbetzin Chana was able to leave Russia and travel to Paris. There she was reunited with her son who brought her to the USA. She passed away on 6 Tishrei, 1964.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

SEARCHING IN THE NEW YEAR

Freely translated from a letter of the Rebbe

The days immediately preceding and following Rosh Hashana are 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: "Search my inwardness; Thy inner essence, 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 accordance 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 your path of Torah and 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 life 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 parents who set the pace of the spiritual life of their household and family.

All too often do we see them stymied by doubt and fear, afraid to use, what seem 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-d-liness 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 they begin to animate his daily life.

Your Moshiach, and upon Your structure and Your Holy Temple... Bring joy to Your land, and gladness to Your city. And empower David, Your servant, enlighten the son of Yishai, Your anointed one - speedily, in our days....And You shall reign - You, Who are G-d, our G-d, You alone - over all Your works on Mount Zion, the dwelling-place of Your glory, and in Jerusalem, Your holy city. (From the Machzor)

MOSHIACH MATTERS

And therefore, may Your sanctified name, G-d, our G-d, rest upon Israel Your people, upon Jerusalem Your city, upon Zion the sanctuary of Your glory, upon on the sovereignty of the house of David,

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

With Rosh Hashana we enter the year of 5784. May this year be a year of revealed blessing and,

שנת אתה תקום תרחם ציון, שנת אפגעליטיקייט בנייני גאולה ומשיח, שנת אמונה בה ובמשה עבדך, שנת ארו עם עניי שמיא, שנת אריאנו נפלאות, שנת נפלאות בכל, שנת בני בית המקדש, שנת בטחון, שנת נפלאות גדולות, שנת גאולה האמתית והשלימה, שנת נפלאות דגולות, שנת דוד נצח, שנת דור השביעי דור הגאולה, שנת דוד מלך ישראל חי וקיים, שנת הקיצו ורגנו שוכני עפר והוא בתוכם, שנת הגה הגה משיח בא וכבר בא, שנת התגלות מלך המשיח, שנת הווא וגאלנו, שנת ויאמינו בה ובמשה עבדך, שנת זה יחזמנו, שנת נפלאות חרותנו, שנת שיר חדש, שנת טובה מושפעת הרבה (ולשון הרמבם), שנת יחי המלך, שנת כתיבה וחתומה טובה, שנת כינור של משיח, שנת לימוד תורתנו של משיח, שנת מלך המשיח, שנת יבוא מנחם לחמנו, שנת נפלאות, שנת ניסים גלויים, שנת נחמה בכפלים, שנת סגולה, שנת סיום וסוף הגלות, שנת גילוי אור אין סוף, שנת ענינים הגיע זמן גאולתכם, שנת פירות תשוב ירושלים, שנת צמח דוד עבדך, שנת קיבוץ גלויות, שנת קבלת מלכותו על ידי העם, שנת ראש בני ישראל, שנת שלום, שנת שיר חדש, שנת שפורו של משיח, שנת שלימות התורה, שנת שלימות העם, שנת שלימות הארץ, שנת תחיית המתים, שנת תורה חדשה מאתי

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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