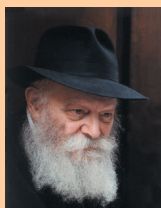


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

*from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion*

This week we read the Torah portion of *Nitzavim*. Next week we will read the portion of *Vayeilech*.

Nitzavim is always read on the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah, while *Vayeilech* is read either together with *Nitzavim* on the Shabbat before Rosh Hashana, or separately like this year on the Shabbat between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

As nothing is by chance, there must be a Rosh Hashana lesson for the proximity of *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech* with Rosh Hashana.

Nitzavim means "standing firmly." *Vayeilech* means "and he went." These seem to be opposite ideas. Standing or going? You can't do both, or can you? How can you stand and go at the same time?

A Jew's responsibility is to make a dwelling place for G-d here in this world. How to accomplish this task is through *mitzvot* (commandments) which are clearly prescribed down to the most minute detail. Our job is to be *Nitzavim* – standing firm, doing the *mitzva* in its exact prescribed manner. Not to be influenced by those who say "lighten up," or "so what if you change it up a bit."

On the other hand we don't want to be robots, just going through the motions. That's where *Vayeilech* comes in. *Vayeilech* is movement and change, not in the action of the *mitzva*, but in the intent. Every day, as we learn and get a deeper appreciation of G-d, it intensifies the meaningfulness of our service to Him. The *mitzva* done as prescribed "stands firm" but our expression of it "goes" ever higher.

On Rosh Hashana we renew our commitment to G-d, to do His will for another year. Not just in action but also by adding in depth.

The same idea can be seen in our personal relationships.

Sometimes, as time passes, our lives seem to be bland and repetitive. Keeping our responsibilities, being a good spouse, parent, child, friend. What is now needed is time to get to know the other person better. As your appreciation for each other grows, your responsibilities will become more joyous, more deep and meaningful.

Regularly set aside time to talk and get to know each other better. This will do wonders for your relationship.

Have a happy and sweet New 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.

Simple Actions

What do I have to do to make a difference in the world? We often think that the ones who make the greatest impact are the people that make the cover of *Time* magazine or win the Nobel Prize. But the truth is that the simple actions of so-called simple people are what really make a difference. When we do things right, it becomes contagious.

When we listen to the sound of the shofar, we shake. It sounds like the primal cry of a child for his mother. It is the inner cry of every soul, recognizing that as great as we are, we remain impossibly distant from our Father in Heaven; no matter how wise or discerning we become, the soul is, after all, far away from home.

The shofar's cry reminds us of our purpose, our priorities, and empowers us to stay focused on the meaning of life and avoid getting caught up in the pitfalls and challenges of material life. And the really amazing thing is that we are able to achieve this clarity through the simple act of hearing the cry of the shofar. Nothing fancy – just a simple horn with a simple sound from the head of a simple beast. Just as the world is transformed by every simple thing we do.

I can't recall ever getting inspired to emulate the work of the nuclear physicist who won the Nobel Prize, but I can remember dozens of times that the simple actions of simple people have motivated me to emulate them and become better.

Rosh Hashana marks the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It's our collective birthday.

Therefore, in addition to being the Jewish New Year, a time for moral introspection and positive resolutions, it is also a time to appreciate the tremendous capacities and gifts that we possess as human beings, and as Jews.

At the same time, with the recognition that we have these talents and powers that can change the world comes the responsibility to do just that – to utilize all of the power within us and utilize their fullest potential to improve our lives, the lives of those around us and of all humanity.

All of this is expressed in the fact that Rosh Hashana, which is known as the Day of Judgment for all of Creation, is not observed on the day when the world was created, but on the day that humanity was created. This impresses upon us the fact that the destiny of all life on earth depends on humanity.

Furthermore, even one person can make a monumental difference, as expressed in the fact that all of humanity descends from one man and one woman. The first action undertaken by Adam upon his creation was to look around at all the amazing fauna, the diversity of animals and life, the heavens and the earth, and to declare his awe of G-d's creation, and to inspire the rest of creation to follow suit.

In a sense, this is exactly what we do on Rosh Hashana: We look around (and within) and we declare that though we may get a little sidetracked here and there, G-d is the real reality in our lives, and we resolve to make this recognition a practical part of our daily lives.

SLICE OF LIFE

The Power of the Shofar

As told to Rivkah Dina Butman by Rabbi Zvi Konikov



Rabbi Zvi Konikov

Every year, during our Rosh Hashana services at Chabad of the Space & Treasure Coasts, I blow the shofar for the many people in attendance.

But the Rebbe encouraged his followers to do more. And so, our children all know that no matter how tired we are after services or how hot the Florida sun is, we go out on Rosh Hashana to blow shofar for other Jews who weren't at synagogue services.

Two years ago on Rosh Hashana, we headed to Jack Perlmutter's house. Jack is an avid surfer and his home is on the beach. I have known Jack almost from the time my wife Shulamit and I arrived in Satellite Beach in 1990. Jack would always tell me that it's his greatest privilege to be within walking distance of our Chabad House.

It was a long walk of two miles on a hot Florida day and I was worn out when I finally reached his house. I knocked on the front door and waited a few minutes. There was no response. But, knowing Dave well, I was sure that he was home. And so, I went around to the back of the house.

In the backyard, I saw Jack's wife and daughter relaxing while watching Jack surf. When they caught sight of me, they called out,

"Hey Rabbi!"

I grinned, and responded gaily, "Happy Rosh Hashana!"

They were really apologetic when they told me that this year I would not be able to blow the shofar for Jack as he was out surfing.

But I was not put off. "Well then," I said merrily, "I'll blow the shofar just for the two of you instead!" The two women were excited at the idea, and suggested that I blow the shofar right there in the backyard. But I suggested, "I'd rather walk along the beach, and get as close as possible to where Jack is."

The two women agreed, and we set out walking together along the boardwalk until we reached the sand. When we got as close to the water as we could, I turned to Jack's wife and said: "Now, I'm going to blow the shofar. I'm going to try to blow it so loud that when your husband comes in for dinner tonight, he'll tell you: 'I could've sworn I heard the shofar today as I surfed!'"

That day, Jack was surfing with a friend, Dr. Richard Weissman, who is also Jewish. And Richard had brought along his two twin sons – Benjamin and Samuel – who were also surfing. So there were four people riding the waves who I was about to blow shofar for.

Hoping that the sounds would carry out far into the ocean and reach them as they concentrated on finding strong waves to surf, I let out a mighty blast. And then another. I did the whole set of shofar sounds as loudly as I could. I stayed to talk a bit with Jack's wife and daughter, and then I headed off to sound the shofar for other Jews who had missed synagogue services.

I blew the shofar for a few other people until it was time for me to head back to be at the Chabad House for the special *Tashlich* ceremony.

I soon forgot all about the encounter at Jack's home and my hope that Jack and the Weissmans had not only caught the waves but also the sound of the shofar.

Ten months passed. It was a summer afternoon in August, the holiday of Tisha B'av when we commemorate the destruction of the Holy Temples. Jack was at the Chabad House. Jack always comes to Chabad on Tisha B'av. Yom Kippur and Tisha B'av Jack is always in shul.

I one time asked Jack, "What is your motivation

for coming to shul on Tisha B'av?"

Jack responded that in her last years, his mother had pleaded with him, "Don't be a 'once a year Jew.'" He promised her, but he knew he wouldn't come daily, or even weekly. So he made a decision: he would come on Tisha B'av and Yom Kippur.

This Tisha B'av, Jack came accompanied by a tall teenager. The teen was carrying a *Tefilin* bag, and upon arriving at Chabad, he began wrapping Tefilin. This was an unusual occurrence in our Chabad House, as most of the people who frequent the Chabad House do not wrap Tefilin! I made my way over to Jack and the teenager and said "hello."

Jack greeted me back, and then I asked, "And who is this young man?"

The young man told me he is Benjamin Weissman and then told me, not without a touch of pride, that he puts on Tefilin every day. I was surprised and I asked what inspired him to make this commitment. "You inspired me!" he said.

Puzzled, I asked him to explain. This is what he told me:

"Last year, I was surfing with my dad and twin Samuel, as well as Jack. It was Rosh Hashana and the waves were great. As I was catching a wave, I heard a blast. It sounded like a shofar, but I wasn't sure. When I heard another set of blasts, I was sure. It was the sound of the shofar being carried way over the ocean.

"The sound shook me; it touched my core. Then and there I made a decision. I wanted to go to Israel. I inquired and researched and planned. A little while later, the trip was all set. When I got to the Holy Land, I enrolled in a yeshiva for beginners to Judaism. I spent a little while there, learning about my heritage. "Now," he finished with a flourish, "I wrap Tefilin daily and I keep Shabbat!"

I was so inspired by Benjamin's commitment and transformation. And I got to see the power of the shofar blasts. But that isn't all. Richard is now a steady visitor at Chabad of the Space & Treasure Coasts. And Samuel also owns his very own pair of Tefilin. Although previously they had been uninvolved, today each one of them has his own personal connection to Judaism, all through the power of the shofar!



New Yeshiva Opens in Panama

A Yeshiva grows in **Panama!** This past month, a group of 12 rabbinic interns arrived in Panama to help establish a yeshiva that will serve the needs of Panama's vibrant and growing Jewish community. The students will study and work with the community.

New Building Out of the Ashes

Just before the start of the school year in August 2020, the Jewish Student Center at the **University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware** went up in flames. This past month, almost two years to the day, Chabad broke ground on its new center. At twelve thousand square feet, the new Chabad Center will be eight times larger than the previous Chabad House. **Rabbi Avremel and Shulie Vogel** credit the students and alumni as being the catalyst for the new Center. The Center will house a student lounge, study rooms, a synagogue, and a library, as well as a full commercial kitchen and a dining room big enough to fit over 180 people.

Today Is...

28 Elul

"G-d's blessing brings wealth."¹ This is so in general, but especially to whoever gives of his time to occupy himself with the community's needs in matters of charity and strengthening Judaism; as the saying goes, "G-d does not remain in debt". For every good thing a person does, he is recompensed grandly by G-d, with children, health and livelihood, in abundance.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Freely translated and adapted from a letter of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

In the Days of Selichos, 5726 (1965)

In addition to the perennial qualities which each festival, Rosh Hashana included, brings with it from year to year, there are certain qualities which are associated with certain years, and which, therefore, are of particular significance in the year of their occurrence.

The approaching year – may it bring good and blessing to all of us and to all our people Israel – has the distinction of being a “post-shemitta (Sabbatical) year.”

As such it is characterized by the additional special *mitzvah* (commandment) of Hakhel (“Gather together”), which is described as a “solid pillar and great honor to our faith” (*Sefer HaChinuch*).

During the time of the *Beth Hamikdash* (Holy Temple), it was required to gather the people – men, women, and children, including the very little ones – into the Temple, in order that they hear certain selected Torah portions, which were read by the king.

This had to take place at the first opportunity in the new year (namely, Succoth, when Jews came to Jerusalem on their pilgrimage).

Since the Temple was destroyed this *mitzvah* is no longer practiced - until it will be restored again, may it be speedily in our time. However, the Torah and mitzvot are eternal, so that also those mitzvot which were to be practiced only during the times of the Temple, by virtue of their eternal spiritual content, have a special significance in their appropriate day or year, which has to be expressed and fulfilled in an appropriate manner (e.g. prayers at the time of day when the sacrifices were offered in the Temple, etc.)

The mitzvah of Hakhel had two features which, at first glance, seem to be contradictory:

On the one hand, it was required to “gather the people, men, women and small children and the *ger* (stranger) in thy gates” – indicat-

ing that everyone, regardless of his or her station in life and intelligence can and must be a participant in the event; and on the other hand, it was required that the portions of the Torah be read to them by the most august person of the nation, the king.

One explanation is the following:

The Torah was given to us in order that it permeate and vitalize each and every Jew without exception – man, woman, child and stranger – so thoroughly, and to such an extent and degree, that one’s entire being, in all its aspects, senses and feelings, will become a Torah and mitzvot being.

And in order to attain this end, most deeply and fully, the Torah was read on that occasion by the king, whose awe-inspiring quality filled the audience with an overwhelming sense of awe and subservience, to the extent of complete bitul – self effacement.

The significance and instruction of the mitzvah of Hakhel to each and every one of us is, to avail ourselves of the opportune awe-inspiring days of Tishrei, to gather our fellow Jews – men, women, and children, including the very little ones – into the hallowed places of prayer and Torah, in an atmosphere of holiness and devoutness; and gather them for the purpose which was the very essence of the mitzvah of Hakhel, as stated in the Torah: In order that they should listen and should learn, and should fear G-d, your G-d, and observe to do all the words of the Torah (Deut. 31:12).

Particularly it is the duty of everyone who is a “king,” a leader, in his circle – the spiritual leader in his congregation, the teacher in his classroom, the father in his family – to raise the voice of the Torah and mitzvot, forcefully and earnestly, so that it produces a profound impression and an abiding influence in the audience, to be felt not only through the month of Tishrei, nor merely throughout the year, but throughout the seven years from the present Hakhel to the next; an influence that should be translated into daily life, into conduct governed by the Torah and mitzvot, with fear of Heaven, and, at the same time, with gladness of heart.

May it please the One Above, Whom Jews crown on Rosh Hashana as the “King of Israel” and “Sovereign Over All the Earth,” to bless each man and woman in carrying out the said task, in the fullest measure, and this will also speed and bring closer the time when the mitzvah of Hakhel will be fulfilled in all its details, in the Holy Temple, with the appearance of Moshiach, speedily in our time.

us worthy of blessing. And this unity will lead to the ultimate blessing – the coming of the time when G-d will “sound the great shofar,” and together “with our youth and with our elders... with our sons and with our daughters,” the entire Jewish people will proceed to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem, and to the Third Holy Temple. May this take place in the immediate future. (*The Rebbe, 24 Adar I 5752-1992*)

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Unity is the key to G-d’s blessings. Thus, in our daily prayers, we say “Bless us, our Father, all as one.” Chasidic teachings explain that the very fact of being together “all as one,” makes

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

With Rosh Hashana we enter the year of 5783, spelled out in Hebrew תשפ”ג. May this year be “a year of ‘great wonders – פלאות גדולות – and:

שנת אלה תקום חורם ציון, שנת “אפליטסיקייט” בעיני משיח וגאולה. שנת אמונה בה’ ובמשה עבדו. שנת ארץ עם ענני שמיא. שנת אריאנו ופלאות. שנת פלאות בכל בית המקדש. שנת בטחון. שנת פלאות גדולות. שנת גאולה האמיתית והשלמה. שנת פלאות גדולות. שנת דירן נצח. שנת דור השביעי. דור הגאולה. שנת דור מלך ישיאל חי וקיים. שנת הקיצו ורגו שוכני עפר והוא בארשם. שנת הנה משיח בא ובכר בא. שנת התגלות מלך המשיח. שנת וריא. גאולנו. שנת ויאמנו בה’ ונסה עבדו. שנת זור ינחמנו. שנת פלאות חורוננו. שנת שיר דוד. שנת טובה מושפעת הרבה (בלשון הרמב”ם). שנת יחי המלך. שנת כחיבה וחתימה טובה. שנת כינורו של משיח. שנת למוד תורתו של משיח. שנת מלך המשיח. שנת יבוא מנחם לנחמנו. שנת לפלאות. שנת נסים גלויים. שנת נחמם בכפליים. שנת סגולה. שנת סיום וסוף הגלות. שנת גילוי אור אין סוף. שנת עושים. הניע זמן גאולתכם. שנת פירות השב ירושלים. שנת צמח דוד עבדך. שנת קיצו גלויות. שנת קבלת מלכותו על ידי העם. שנת ראש בני ישראל. שנת שלום. שנת שיר דוד. שנת שופרו של משיח. שנת שלמות תהורה. שנת שלמות העם ושלמות הארץ. שנת תחיית המתים. שנת תורה חדשה מאתי 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... travels through the Heavenly 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 חי'ה 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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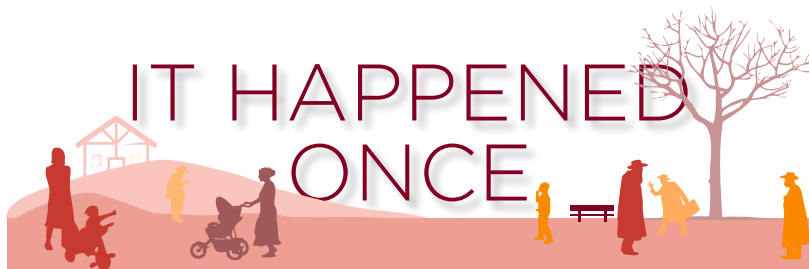
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An awesome event occurred once in Spain after the Expulsion. Many of the Jews had accepted Christianity under duress. Having held high government offices and having attained great wealth, they found it difficult to forsake all they had toiled for, and the prospect of wandering great distances in famine and destitution struck terror into their hearts. They therefore publicly abjured their faith, but remained inwardly loyal to the G-d of their fathers – whose precepts they secretly strove to fulfill to their utmost capacity.

There was one among them by the name of Don Fernando Aguilar, who was conductor of the royal orchestra in Barcelona. The days of Elul arrived; the days of judgment were approaching and Don Fernando's soul yearned to hear the sound of the shofar on Rosh Hashana. His yearning was shared by many of his brethren.

What did he do? He announced that on a certain day (the date of Rosh Hashana), he would present a concert featuring instrumental music of various peoples.

Many of the Marranos came to hear the sound of the shofar and they did! Many varied compositions were played by the performers, among them also the shofar sounds: tekiah, shvarim and truah, in full keeping with the prescribed order of the mitzva of shofar, under the very direction of Don Aguilar himself without any of the clergy aware of it.

It has been said: No one ever succeeded in confounding the Satan through shofar sounds as did Don Aguilar. All the emissaries of the Satan were present; the leading figures in the hierarchy and the Inquisition – they all heard and saw, but knew nothing.

The Baal Shem Tov once instructed his disciple Reb Wolf Kitzis to study the Kabbalistic meditations on which he would meditate while blowing the various blasts of the shofar. Reb Wolf studied the mystical significance of the Divine Names associated with this mitzva and made notes of them on a sheet of paper which he put away in a pocket, so he would be able to read them while blowing the shofar. The Baal Shem Tov was not pleased that he had committed these secrets to writing; the paper slipped out of his pocket and was lost.

The awesome moment drew near. Reb Wolf searched his pockets in vain, and was obliged to blow the shofar without knowing which Divine mysteries to meditate upon. This grieved him no end, and he wept with a broken and humbled heart.

After the prayers the Baal Shem Tov said to him: "In a king's palace there are many chambers, and each door has its own particular key. But there is one implement which can open all the doors, and that is the ax.

The Kabbalistic meditations are the keys to the gates in the World Above, each gate requiring its own particular meditation, but a broken and humble heart can burst open all the gates and all the heavenly palaces."

It was the custom of the Shpoler Zeide to closet himself in his study for some time before the blowing of the shofar. What he did there, no one knew. Once, a chasid decided to find out. He crept up to a nook near the Rebbe's private room with out being noticed and peered through a crack.

There he saw the Shpoler Zeide lying on the floor, weeping bitterly, "Master of the Universe! What do you want of Your People Israel. If I did not see with my own eyes how many mitzvot and good deeds they perform, I would not believe it possible in this dark and bitter exile to fulfill even one mitzva! Especially in this benighted world, where Satan himself prances among them, where all things that provoke fleshly desires are before their eyes, while the warnings of retribution You have hidden in some moralistic tome. You can be certain that if You had arranged things the other way around – with the place of retribution in front of their eyes, and all fleshly desires hidden away in some learned book -- then not a single Jew would ever do anything wrong!"

The Shpoler Zeide then rose from the floor and walked to the synagogue, where he sighed repeatedly, and proceeded with the blowing of the shofar.

One year Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev spent a long time in search of a man who would be worthy of blowing the shofar in his shul. Rosh Hashana was fast approaching and though many righteous folk sought the privilege, vying with each other in demonstrating their expertise in the abstruse Kabbalistic secrets associated with the shofar, none of them were to his taste.

One day a new applicant came along, and Reb Levi Yitzchak asked him on what mysteries he meditated while he was performing the awesome mitzva.

"Rebbe," said the newcomer, "I'm only a simple fellow; I don't understand too much about the hidden things in the Torah. But I have four daughters of marriageable age, and when I blow the shofar, this is what I have in mind: 'Master of the Universe! Right now I am carrying out Your will. I'm doing Your mitzva and blowing the shofar. Now supposing You too do what I want, and help me marry off my daughters?'"

"My friend," said Reb Levi Yitzchak, "you will blow the shofar!"



Also with him that is not here with us this day. (Deut. 29:14)

When a Jew enters into a covenant with G-d by keeping His Torah and mitzvot, every Jew, of every generation past and present, is present at his side. One need not therefore be concerned that the Jews are "the least of the nations," for our eternal bond with G-d, in the cumulative sense, is truly monumental and awesome. (*Likutei Sichot*)

If any of you are dispersed at the outermost parts of heaven, from there will the L-rd your G-d gather you (Deut. 30:4)

No matter how far a Jew may be from Torah and Judaism, G-d promises to gather him back into the fold of the Jewish people when Moshiach comes. When a Jew is spiritually brought back from "the outermost parts of heaven," it hastens Moshiach's coming and brings the Redemption closer. (*The Rebbe*)

See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil (Deut. 30:15)

One should not perform good deeds in order to live; one should live in order to perform good deeds. (*Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk*)

To love the L-rd your G-d...and to cleave unto Him (Deut. 30:20)

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, author of the Tanya, used to say in the midst of his devotion: "Master of the Universe! I do not want your Garden of Eden, nor am I interested in the World to Come. I desire only You alone!"



6:33 Candle Lighting Time

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Ethics Chs 5&6
Shabbat ends 7:30 PM

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the Lubavitch Youth Organization*

Mr. Michael and Fiona Scharf

*Wishing you a Kesiva VaChasima tova,
Shana Tova U'mesuka, A good, sweet year*