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לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלטר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה קורץ

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מאת מוה"ר ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
ראש כולל עטרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

שבת קודש פרשת נצבים – ראש השנה – יום הדין

Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim - Rosh Hashana - Yom Hadin

כ"ח אלול / א'-ב' תשרי תשפ"ג – September 24, 26-27, 2022

טיב התבלין

הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבינוביץ שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים עיה"ק

ועינת ופירושים לעורר את האדם לעבודת השי"ת והתחזקות באמונה ובטחון מאת

זכרון טוב לפניך - להחשיב כל רגע של ראש השנה שהוא המה של השנה

לאבד אפילו רגע אחד לבטלה מן היום הגדול והקדוש הזה, כמו שהעידו מקורביו של **מזך הגר"י מבריסק זצ"ל**, כי למרות התמדתו הנוראה ודרכו לנצל כל רגע פנוי ללימוד התורה הקדושה, אבל בראש השנה שינה ממנהגו, וכל אימת שחיה לו קצת זמן פנוי במשך היום השתדל לומר פירקי תהלים.

בהדרגות, כשנשאל מדוע אומר תהלים בשעה שיכול לעסוק בתורה, ענה הגאון זצ"ל, שבצעדידותו היה אכן נוהג ללמוד בזמנים הפנויים של ראש השנה, אך לאוד מכן שם לב שבשעת הלימוד נופלים בדעתו כל מיני קושיות ועיונים ובכדי ליישבם צריך לעיין בספרים ומוזה הוא חושש, כי הרגעים הספורים שלוקח לו ללכת ממקומו עד לארוח הספרים הוא חושש לביטול תורה, וחס לו לאבד אפילו רגע אחד של ראש השנה לבטלה, על כן הוא מעדיף לומר תהלים בכל רגע פנוי.

מנהגים שונים לסימנא טבא, והיות שראש השנה הוא היום המשפיע והמכריע לכל השנה כולה, וביום הזה נידון האדם מה יהיה עמו משך כל השנה הבאה עלינו לטובה, לכן מצאנו בגמרא (הוריות יב.) ובפוסקים כל מיני זהירות שנהגו להיזהר ביום ראש השנה, בכדי שלא להוכיח דברים שאינם טובים ולא נמשך אותם, ומאידיך גיסא נהגו להרבות במאכלים ששמים ומהותם מעוררים וזכרון טוב, ובזכות זה אנו מבקשים לעורר וזכרונו לפנינו לטובה ולהמשיך עלינו כל מיני טובה וברכה לכל ימות השנה.

סימן שלם כתב המחבר בהלכות ראש השנה שבו הולך ומונה כמה וכמה דברים שנהגו לאכול בראש השנה לסימנא טבא, או להיפך, נהגו לא לאכול, שלא לעורר עניינים שאינם רצויים וכה כתב המחבר: "הוא אדם רגיל לאכול בראש השנה רוביא, כרת, סילקא, תמרי, קרא, וטבשאיכל רוביא יאמר: יהי רצון שירבו זכותינו. כרת, יכרתו שונאינו. סילקא, וטבשאי אויבינו. תמרי, יתמו שונאינו. קרא, יקרע גזר דינו ויקראו לפניך זכותינו". הוסיף על זה הרמ"א, "יש נוהגין לאכול תפוח ברבש ואומרים: תתחדש עלינו שנה מתוקה, וכן נוהגין. ויש אוכלים רימונים ואומרים: גרבה זכיות כרמונו; ונוהגין לאכול בשר שמן וכל מיני מתיקה."

מאידיך גיסא נזהרים גם שלא לישן ביום של ראש השנה, על פי המובא בשם הירושלמי, 'האי מאן דרמיך בריש שתא דמיך מוליה; כלומר, כל מי שישן בראש השנה יישן מולו במשך השנה. כמו כן כתב הרמ"א שיש מדקדקים לא לאכול אגוזים, הטעם הפשוט הוא מפני שמרבה כיהה וניעה ומפריעים להתפלל כראוי, אבל יש ליה עוד טעם, היות שאגוז בגימטריא 'הטא', ואין אנו רוצים להוכיח הטאים בראי יומא רבה, בכדי שלא לעורר זכרונות שאינם טובות.

ונסיים עם דעתו של בעל **המשנה ברורה** בנידון, כי גם הוא לאחד שהולך ומונה את כל הדברים שאינם ראויים לעשות משום סימנא מילתא, מסיים וכותב: "והנהגה כל אלו העניינים עושים הכל לסימן טוב, ולכן פשיטא שיהיה מאד שלא יכעוס בימים האלו, מלבד גודל האיסור, כי שיהיה לסימן טוב, רק יהיה שמח לבו ובטחו בד' עם התשובה ומעשים טובים." וה' יתא בעזרו לזכות לשנה טובה ומתוקה **(בנין יעקב)**.

"אלוקינו ירחם על בריותיו ויעשה שלום במרומיו ומנע: a beracha that hold differently. He concludes that it is hard to be מכריע & ends with a beracha. It was said by **רבי ג. ב. סאלוויצק זצ"ל** that there was once a plague in the city of Brisk and R' Chaim sent his sons to the homes of the sick to help them. He quoted the ירושלמי brought in ב"י [ח"ר"מ שכ"ו] that one is מחוייב to put himself in a סכנה to save someone in a סכנה. Some learn that this ירושלמי is only a מדה חסידות.

discusses if one may be יוצא the mitzvah of ביקור חולים by phone. R' Moshe says that there are a few aspects to this mitzvah. One is to daven for the חולה to get better and to also inquire about his personal needs and offer assistance if needed. R' Moshe says that if one isn't able to visit a choleh personally, one can at least fulfill some of the aspects of bikur cholim by phone, but it isn't complete. R' Moshe explains that even the davening for the choleh is more intense when one is physically present and therefore he is motivated by the sight of the choleh (and his suffering). This, of course, can only be accomplished by visiting the choleh personally.

הלכה למעשה

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Selected Halachos of Shemita (6)

Arba Minim in a Shemita Year. Last week we explained the justification of the process of the "Otzar Beis Din" setup, where public representatives take care of the "ownerless" orchards and pay workers a fee to pick the *esrogim* that grow themselves. The *Beis Din* sets fair prices for wholesale/retail, markups, expenses, etc. If a person chooses to buy such an *esrog* this year, it is a valid choice but only if he will keep the following *halachos*, which are not difficult to keep. In fact, there also might be the following benefit: According to the opinion of **Sefer Megillas Esther** on **Sefer Hamitzvos** (1), the **Ramban** holds that eating *shviis* produce is the fulfillment of a *mitzvah asei*, which one can do by making the *esrog* into jam and eating it. The **Chazon Ish** (2) argues and says there is no fulfillment of a *mitzvah* when one eats them.

Hefsed. The **Gemara** (3) learns from a *posuk* that one is not permitted to "ruin" *shviis* produce. "Ruining" is defined as doing something that does not let the produce come to its full potential of being eaten in its normal manner. The *Mishna* in *Shviis* (4) prohibits even picking fruit before they are fully ripe. Similarly, one should eat the produce in its normal, maximum benefit way. He shouldn't eat a vegetable raw when its normally eaten cooked. The normal use is defined as its maximum benefit. However, it is permitted to cause an indirect loss as a result of

הוא היה אומר ...

R' Noach Weinberg zt"l (R"Y Aish HaTorah) would say: Why does the *Torah* frame this as a choice and then tell us which choice to make? Because in truth, man is a composite of physical and spiritual. While the spiritual side wants life, the physical - it seems - does not, it wants death. Pleasure comes to a person tackling challenges and meeting them. Comfort and complacency are a step removed from death itself. We need to realize that we make choices every day, but *Hashem* is cheering for us not to be complacent - He wants us to choose life."

R' Simcha Bunim of Pshischa zt"l (Vedibarta Bam) would say: We ask *Hashem*, if there is not one good emissary to intercede on our behalf, then You should tell the accusers, 'דבר חק ומשפט', - there is a statute (חק) which has become the accepted law concerning one who is being judged in a matter of life or death. If no one in the *Sanhedrin* can find a merit for him and all rule that he is guilty, then the *halacha* is that he is exonerated (*Rambam, Sanhedrin 9:1*). If You, *Hashem*, tell them this, the result will be 'וצדקינו במשפט' - You will vindicate us in judgment."

<p>A Wise Man would say: "Remember us for life - the purpose of life is to lead a life of purpose."</p> <p>Printed By: Mailway Services, Serving Mosdos and Businesses Worldwide Since 1980 (1-888-Mailway)</p>	<p>* Improve your connection with "T" all the time! ... (SIGN TOO!)</p> <p>103.902+ 855.400.5164 www.kiffel.com</p>	<p>Dedicated In Memory of הרב שלמה יעקב בן יהודה ארי' זצ"ל נפ' כ"ו אלול * תשע"ז By The Davis Family Chicago, Illinois</p> <p>לעילוי נשמת האשה חי' בת ר' אברהם קיפפעל ע"ה יארצייט בצום גדלי' * תנצב"ה The Kiffel Family</p>
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(1) השמטות ג' (2) ש"ת חזון איש שביעית י"ד (3) פסחים נב, בכורות יב (4) שביעית ז"י

The *Gemara* in *Rosh Hashana* tells us that *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* tells His beloved children: “Say before Me, *Malchiyos, Zichronos and Shofros. Malchiyos, so that you shall make Me your King. Zichronos, so that the memory of you will come before me for the good. And how should you do this? With the Shofar.*” This is odd since the *Gemara* clearly states that we should SAY all of these three things. And yet we are told to only SAY - to speak - the first two, and the way to say the first two is - with the *Shofar*.

Within these words, says **R’ Gedalya Rabinowitz *shlita*, Manistricher Rebbe**, lies the secret of the power of the *Shofar*. When the *Shofar* is blown on *Rosh Hashana, Hashem* moves from His Throne of Judgment to His Throne of Mercy. Many difficult *gezeiros* are ripped up in Heaven at the time the *Shofar* is blown. Why is the *Shofar* so powerful that it can turn everything around and even does the work of *Malchiyos* and *Zichronos*? By blowing the *Shofar* we are literally shaking the world. The question is, is the *mitzvah* to hear the *Shofar* or to sound the *Shofar*? We *pasken*, to hear the *Shofar* as we say in the *bracha* “*Lishmoa kol Shofar*” - to hear the sound of the *Shofar*. We later say in our *Tefillos*, at the end of *Shofros*, “*Shomea kol teruas amo Yisroel b’rachamim.*” *Hashem* hears the sound of the *teruah* of His Nation with mercy. So we see from here that the *mitzvah* is to hear the *Shofar* and the One who hears the *Shofar* is *Hashem*.

Chazal tells us, “*Zeh hayom techilas maasecha, zikaron l’yom rishon.*” *Rosh Hashana* is the first day of *Hashem’s* handiwork, it is a commemoration of the first day of creation.

But in truth, *Rosh Hashana* is not the first day of creation. It is the 6th day of creation. It is not the beginning of *Hashem’s*

handiwork. It is the culmination of the entire creation! The **Ran** explains that the day Adam was created was the last day of creation but it is considered the first day of the creation of the world. Since the purpose of the world is Man, the day Man was created is considered the first day of creation. In **Kisvei Arizal** it is written that every year is a repeat of what happened when *Adam Harishon* was created. This means that on *Rosh Hashana* every one of us is born anew.

We know that there are 4 types of species in the world. *Domem* - an inanimate object. *Tzomaiach* - a plant. *Chai* - an animal, and man is called *Medaber*. A talker.

Rosh Hashana is referred to in the *Torah* as “*Yom Teruah.*” *Teruah* is a *lashon* “*yivava*” which means to cry. The **Baal HaTanya** writes that sound without speech is crying. On *Rosh Hashana*, a man who is a *Medaber* is born, but a baby cannot speak. A newborn baby knows only how to cry. On *Rosh Hashana* we cry out to *Hashem* with the *Shofar*. This is why we say, “*Shomaia kol teruas amo Yisroel b’rachamim.*”

When a baby cries, he is expressing to his mother. “You are my protector, my Savior. You are my EVERYTHING and I am completely dependent on you.” The blow of the *Shofar* is the way we do *Malchiyos* and *Zichronos*. It is our way of connecting to *Hashem* on a most intimate level, like a newborn baby. The cry of the *Shofar*, like the first cry of a newborn baby, is the sweetest sound in the world. It immediately arouses feelings of compassion and love. On *Rosh Hashana* we are pure, we are vulnerable, we are helpless. The only thing we can do is turn to our Source of Life, our Source of Sustenance, *Hashem*. And the way we express that special connection to Him is with the cry of the *Shofar*.

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV AND HEMSHECH HADOROS

מחשבת הלב

FROM THE FAMILY OF R’ CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT”L

ומל ה' את לבבך ואת לבב זרעך לאהבה את ה' אלוקיך ... (ל-ו)

Chazal enumerate a number of *remazim* as acronyms for *Elul*. The above *posuk* is one example. The **Kitzur Shulchan Aruch** quotes another few: “איש לרעהו ומתנות לאביונים” and “אני לדודי ודודי לי”. He goes on to explain that these three represent *Teshuva, Tefillah* and *Tzedaka*, which we know annuls bad decrees. Our *posuk* of “ומל” refers to *Teshuva*; “איש לרעהו” to *Tzedaka* and “אני לדודי” refers to *Tefillah*, which is called a “*shir*” - a song of a friend. This reminds us to strengthen ourselves in these three areas to be *zoche badin*.

relationships are blossoming. We interact with people all the time; in *shul*, at work, on the street, in stores, at school, at home, etc. We have so many opportunities to smile, to help, to be generous and forgiving. Let us make good use of these chances to better our *ahavas habriyos*.

Secondly, the *meforshim* write on the *posuk*, לרעהו האביוני, “לרעהו האביוני - the word “לרעהו” contains the letters “אלול”. One *machshava* may be that through *Elul* we see and have faith in *Hashem*. *Elul* should not be considered a frightening time, but rather a gift from *Hashem*. We have a chance to repent and attain a clean slate. A chance to reflect on our lives and direction. And maybe above all, to forge a stronger relationship with *Hashem*, drawing Him closer into our lives, 24/7.

May we all be *zoche* to a *ksiva v’chasima tova*, ושועה וישועה for all of *Klal Yisroel, Amen*.

Gemara in *Shabbos 89b*. The *Gemara* says that *Yitzchok Avinu* will intervene on our behalf and accept full responsibility for us in the *zechus* of the *Akeida*. Hence, today, a day of judgment, we proceed to evoke *Yitzchok’s* merits.

There are another two that I would like to mention. I heard in the name of **R’ Matisyahu Salomon *shlita***, that *Elul* stands for “אהוב למעלה ונחמד למטה” which means, that besides for working on our *avodas Hashem* in order to find favor in *Hashem’s* eyes, we must also make sure that our interpersonal

עוקרת יצחק לודיעו היום ברחמים תוכור ... (סדר זבחות לר”ה)
In the closing section of *Zichronos*, we ask that *Hashem* remember the *zechus* of the *Akeida*. The word “היום” seems to be superfluous. The **Vilna Gaon *zt”l*** explained, based on a

disappeared in all directions. And just at that moment, unaware of this sudden change of plans, *Yossele* stuck his head gleefully out of the window in order to give the signal to his cronies that they should be ready to catch the loot. The night watchmen looked up and saw a man hanging near the top of the steeple, calling out in a language they could not understand. Overawed by this marvel, he hurried to wake up the parish priest. All the local gentiles were soon on the scene, and when they opened the church they discovered to their horror that all their bejeweled objects of worship were gone!

They climbed up, seized *Yossele*, and threw him into prison pending trial. When the day came, and he was brought before the judges, *Yossele* argued that his intention was only to test whether the icon they worshiped in church was a thing of substance. He decided to visit at night, undisturbed by anyone, and to pray to it that he be granted a more generous livelihood for the support of his wife and two children. If it helped, then he would know it was divine, and he would worship it all his life. When, however, he had prayed there a few times, and had received no answer, he lost his patience, and addressed the icon as follows: “Look, you’re fooling everyone around these parts into worshiping you because they think you are divine. But I can see there’s nothing to you. Better that I take you and sell your gold; that way at least I’ll have a livelihood!”

Yossele continued his explanation to the court: “You realize, your honor, that I have done you a great favor, for now you know that there is no point in worshiping these objects of nonsense!” The judges were shocked and horrified. Notwithstanding *Yossele’s* logic, they sentenced him to be burned alive in front of the entire populace. After handing him the sentence in writing, the chief justice said: “You still have a way of saving yourself from this wretched death. Because you are so young, and you showed such prowess in climbing to the top of the steeple, we have decided that if you convert to our religion we will let you live. Not only that: we will give you all kinds of gifts, and make you rich.”

The answer was bold and clear: “I, *Yossele* the thief, have committed plenty of sins in my lifetime. But to betray his faith, that *Yossele* the thief will never do, even if he is tortured by all the means in the world. Why would you exchange the living G-d for a dumb stone, fashioned by the hands of mortal man, a thing which wasn’t even able to defend itself against me? *Yossele* may be a thief, but to change his faith, that he will never do, whatever happens.”

He was thrown back into his prison cell, and when the day arrived, an eager crowd assembled to watch the spectacle. He stood next to the fierce flames of a burning barrel of tar, and the parish priest addressed him in measured tones: “My son, you still have a chance to save yourself from a horrible death - join our Religion of Love. If not, you will be thrown into this burning barrel and boiled alive.” Once again, the answer rang loud and clear: “I, *Yossele* the thief, may be a thief, but to change my faith - never!” They seized his shackled hands and plunged them into the barrel. *Yossele* writhed in unspeakable agony. He was held up only by the hands of the burly gentiles who surrounded him. But he cried out at the top of his voice: “*Yossele* the thief will be burned in fire - he will suffer all the tortures you can invent - but he will not convert!”

When it was all over, his mortal remains were handed over to the Jewish community for burial, and the simple gravestone in the old cemetery of *Shpola* records the date of his martyrdom. “*Nu*, what do you say about my thieves now?” the *Shpoler Zeide* would say. “Just see what good points they have to their credit!”

משל למה הדבר דומה

אתם נצבים היום כלכם לפני ה' אלוקיכם ראשיכם שנביאים וקנינים ושטרנים כל איש ישראל ... (לא-א)

משל: There was once an old man who realized his time was limited on this world. He was getting older and his health was far from stellar. He knew that his days were numbered.

shaking hands, untied the strings, separated the reeds - and what do you know, he cracked them all in half!

One day, he called all of his kids and asked them to come to visit. The children all hurried to make arrangements, and they traveled from near and far, until they were all present and surrounding their father as he lay prone on his deathbed. With a heavy sigh, he began to give over his parting words.

The children looked at each other, not quite sure what to make of this. “Now I will explain,” he said to them. “You are like this bundle. When you are together, you children will be unbreakable. You will be able to stand up to the challenges of life with ease and ride the vicissitudes of life to success. But if you separate - you are all on your own and easily breakable.”

“Please bring me a bundle of reeds,” he asked. The children all looked at each other, surprised. What was this? But they hurriedly complied to his dying request.

נמשל: The *Zohar* explains that this *parsha* is referring to *Rosh Hashana*. We are standing before the King of all Kings and we must contemplate our past year’s performance. However, many feel, perhaps correctly, that they underperformed this past year and are not worthy of a favorable judgment. The *Torah* hints to us a way to deal with this too, explains the **Me’am Lo’ez**. When we are standing together, we are unbreakable. Unity is one of the most powerful and effective tools we have and if we can show that to *Hashem*, we will always prevail!

“Now,” said the old man, struggling with each word, “I ask of each of you, can you break this bundle in half?”

Each child took the bundle in his or her hands, but try as they might, they simply could not break the sturdy bundle. After many strenuous attempts, they all gave up. Seeing this, the father asked for the bundle back. He took the bundle in his

hands of the enemy or into the hands of any other creature.

Rav Yitzchak Dahan z"l, who was almost 100 years old at the time, told the following story to the **Baba Sali, Chacham R' Yisroel Abuchatzteira z"l**. R' Yitzchak had the great privilege of being counted among the close disciples of the **Abir Yaakov, Chacham R' Yaakov Abuchatzteira z"l**, the *Baba Sali's* grandfather, and accompanied him on his many travels. Being accustomed to *Rabbeinu Yaakov's* miraculous behavior, he did not bother recording in his memoirs many noteworthy events, save for this and a few other isolated occurrences:

During their visit to the Moroccan city of Sifro, *Rabbeinu Yaakov* desired to visit the cemetery and the grave of a "holy young man." This was the burial place of a young *Torah* scholar who had departed this world in his prime. On arriving at the cemetery, they were informed that the young man's grave, which was in a chamber off a long catacomb, had subsided so deeply into the ground that its roof almost touched the ground. Instead of entering at the gates and advancing down the hallway from room to room, one had to bend over and crawl slowly until they reached the grave. Members of the local Jewish community who wished to pray at the grave of the "holy young man" did so at the entrance to the cave, where the gates had sunk so low that they were barely visible.

As *Rabbeinu Yaakov* approached the entrance to the cave, before he had even placed his foot on the threshold, the gates arose and stood as tall as a man. Not only did the gates stand up straight but even the inside of the cave widened out, all in honor of the *tzaddik* of the generation, the *Abir Yaakov*, so that he would not have to exert himself too much.

Rabbeinu Yaakov entered the cave and spent approximately two hours at the grave. The moment he left, the gates returned to their former sunken position leaving no trace of their elevation. *Rabbeinu Yaakov* turned to his escort, R' Yitzchak Dahan, and told him, "Know that at this moment the deceased is not in his grave, he is at present in the holy city of Jerusalem. Tomorrow he will return and we too will return to meet him at his burial site."

The following day when they arrived at the cave - after the gates once again rose to human height - *Rabbeinu Yaakov* entered the crypt, and when he emerged he was elated that he had found the "holy young man" in his grave.

Not only did R' Yitzchak not understand exactly what *Rabbeinu Yaakov* was telling him, but he did not even attempt to understand! Before his eyes, he had witnessed behavior that could not be fathomed by ordinary human beings ...

Near the resting place of the **Shpoler Zeide, R' Aryeh Leib of Shpola z"l**, stands the tombstone of a man who "Sanctified the Name of Heaven in public." The grave is known by the local townsfolk as "the grave of the martyr, Yossele the *Ganev* (thief)." But how does one call a martyr a thief? In 1929, a *chasid* by the name of Reb Raphael Wiltz (or Wolf) of Skoli, Galicia, recorded in his final memoir, that in 1881 he visited Shpola, in Russia. While there, he questioned a number of local residents about this curious grave, and the following is what he learned from them: There was a band of thieves in Shpola who maintained a personal connection to the *Shpoler Zeide*. Whenever one of them was caught and had to serve a sentence, the *tzaddik* used to send him food and drink and attend to all his needs. He would say: "*Ribono shel Olam*, Master of the Universe! Just look at my thieves. Why, even the least worthy of them is full of good points!"

It is told that one *Rosh Hashana* when the prayers were over, the *Shpoler Zeide* told his congregation that during *davening*, he discovered to his anguish that the accusing angels had erected a wall between the prayers of the House of Israel and their Father in Heaven. He had turned and toiled in every possible way, seeking some opening through which he might force his way through - but the iron wall stood firm, locked and bolted, defying any challenger. "It was then that I recalled my thieves," the *Shpoler Zeide* went on to explain his congregation, "for they are able to break the strongest of locks. I quickly called them, and straight away they shattered the locks and broke down the wall. A new light shone forth, as the Almighty rose from the Throne of Judgment and rested on the Throne of Mercy. The angels of mercy brought in the prayers of all Israel to the presence of Him Who listens to prayer, and the supplications of His People were accepted graciously. I thank the Almighty that through my thieves I was able to bring about a salvation for all of Israel for the forthcoming year."

Now in Shpola there lived a young burglar of slight and athletic build, who could clamber up any stone wall with the greatest of ease. He was known as *Yossele Ganev* ("Yossele the thief"), and whenever his colleagues were confronted with a professional problem involving a narrow passage he would make his services available to the cause.

One day, the local thieves planned to steal a fortune of silver, gold, gems that was found in the main church of Shpola. It stood in the middle of the town, a solid stone edifice with a tall steeple. The only way to reach the interior was for one of them to climb up the steeple, and to break his way inside through a small window near the top. The little band of burglars collected in the dead of the dark night behind the massive walls of the church, while Yossele climbed swiftly up to the top of the steeple, wriggled in through the little window, and found his agile way in the gloom down the steep interior staircase that took him all the way to the floor. Once there, he piled all the golden icons and other valuables into the tablecloths that he found there.

Suddenly, the night watchmen appeared on the scene outside the church. With exemplary alacrity, the waiting little band

Perhaps we can take another approach *be"H*. The **Pesikta**, regarding the *posukim* of *Rosh Hashana*, comments as follows: "*Hashem* says the gentiles have no merit of *zechus avos* when being judged. But the *Yidden*, even if they are found guilty *r"l*, will be exonerated *b'zechus ha'avos*." Then there's a fascinating give and take. *Klal Yisroel* asks, "Even on *Rosh Hashana*?" *Hashem* responds, "Yes, even in the *posukim* (*Tefillos*) of *Rosh Hashana*, the *Avos* are mentioned *b'remiza*." We must understand: what was the *safek* that *Klal Yisroel* had? Our *davening* is always replete with *zechus avos*! Why would *Rosh Hashana* be different?

It may be possible to explain based on the *Chazal* that on *Rosh Hashana* we stand before *Hashem* "*Kivnei Maron*."

The *Gemara* explains that we are judged on our own individual basis. If so, we might have thought that the *Avos* cannot interfere or sway the *din* in our favor because it must be based solely on our own merits. *Hashem*, therefore, explains that even on *Rosh Hashana*, the *Avos* can help. You know why? Because the *Avos* are who we are! All their extraordinary deeds and *mesiras nefesh* were transmitted to us and enables us to become who we can be. The caveat is as long as we keep their *mesorah* going, they can be part of our essence. Thus, we close the *beracha* with "היום". Even today, we can still access their incredible *zechusim*.

May it be *Hashem's* will that in the *zechus* of our *Avos* and ancestors, we will be *zoche* to a טובה וישועה ומתוקה ושובה וישועה!

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

טוב מעם ודעת למדני כי במצותיך האמנותי ... (תהלים קמ"ט: - קודם תקיעת שופר)

A grandson of the **Sar Shalom of Belz**, once spent *Shabbos* in the Hungarian town of Kerestir, after which he continued his travels. A few days later, he stopped in Kalev, where he visited the *Rav*, the **Be'er Menachem**. When the *Kalever Rav* heard where his guest has spent the previous *Shabbos*, he became excited and asked for his opinion of the renowned *Tzaddik*, **R' Shayele of Kerestir z"l**. The man smiled and shrugged. "What shall I tell you, *Kalever Rav*? I am a traveler, and I am acquainted with many of the great *tzaddikim*. But R' Shayele - with his *leffel*, the spoon with which he feeds *Yidden*, will outweigh all the others in the next world!"

The moments before *Tekias Shofar* are among the most sacred in the year. *Tzaddikim* have different customs: some immerse themselves in the mysteries of the *Zohar HaKadosh*, others are engrossed in a complex *sugya* in *Shas*, while many simply recite timeless words of *Tehillim*. R' Shayele had a unique *avodah* at that auspicious hour. As *Chassidim* generally do not eat before *Tekias Shofar*, R' Shayele anticipated that the *Chassidim* would be quite hungry at the end of the lengthy *davening*. He spent the few minutes before *tekios* preparing a grand *Kiddush* so that they wouldn't have to wait to refresh themselves following *davening*. Just as soon as the *tefillos* were completed, food would be available for the hungry *Chassidim*. So important was this task to the *Rebbe* that he insisted on performing it himself. He stood in the kitchen, concentrating intently as he cut the cake. Only then did he head out to *Tekias Shofar*.

He once quipped, "Other *Rebbses* are engaged in '*razin d'razin*' (the deepest mysteries of the world) while I do not delve into secrets - I am engaged in '*L'soivah v'lo L'razoin*' ("for plenty, not for scarcity.") making sure that *Yidden* eat their fill!"

One year, on *Rosh Hashanah*, an overflow crowd filled the *Rebbe's* court in Kerestir, and there simply wasn't enough food to feed all the guests. On the first night of *Yom Tov*, R' Shayele sent for Nechemia, the local baker, and asked him to please bake several batches of large *challos*. The baker hesitated, arguing that if he were to work on *Rosh Hashana*, he would be unable to *daven* properly. "Don't worry. I will *daven* for you, Reb Nechemia, and we won't blow the *shofar* until you arrive."

Nechemia was calmed by this and, after *davening Shacharis* alone at the crack of dawn, he got right down to work. He stood by the oven throughout the morning, baking fresh *challos*. When he completed the task, he headed over to the *beis medrash* and only then did the *tzibbur* begin *Tekias Shofar*.

With R' Shayele pleading on his behalf, Nechemia the baker testified that he merited an unusually blessed year.

שאו שקרים ראשיכם ושאו פתחי עולם ויבא מלך הכבוד ... (תפילה בליל ראש השנה)

On both nights of *Rosh Hashana*, we recite the special *Tefillah* of "*L'Dovid Mizmor*" towards the end of *Maariv*. This *tefillah* keeps with the theme of *Malchus* and *Hashem's* mastery over the entire universe. The *Medrash* tells us that *Shlomo Hamelech* *davened* for the gates of the *Bais HaMikdash* to raise themselves, seeing they were too low to admit the holy *Aron*. When the gates demanded to know who was going to enter that they had to change their posture, Shlomo said that "*the King of glory wants to come in*." This did not satisfy the gates and they demanded again who this king of glory was. Shlomo replied that it was "*the Lord, mighty and valiant, the Lord valiant in battle*." This still did not prove enough to persuade the gates to raise their heads until Shlomo added that the King of glory he spoke about was "*Hashem, the Lord of hosts, He is the king of glory*." Up until that moment the gates had threatened to crush Shlomo. When they heard the latter description of *Hashem*, they opened up immediately. Seeing these gates had shown this honor to *Hashem*, He in turn promised to reward them saying that if and when He allowed His Temple to be destroyed these gates would not fall into the