

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

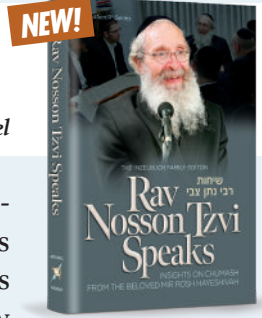
WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY
L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

YAMIM NORAIM

ROSH HASHANAH – JUDGING THE FUTURE

Rav Nosson Tzvi Speaks – Insights on Chumash from Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel



During these days, we are judged for the choices we made throughout the last year, both good and bad. It seems puzzling, however, that *Rosh Hashanah*, the day of judgment, marks the first day of the new year as opposed to the final days of the year that just ended.

Logic dictates that a person be judged after he has acted, and not before. Why, then, does the *Yom Hadin* coincide with the dawn of a new year? Furthermore, why is this *Yom Tov* referred to as *Rosh Hashanah* — “the head of the year” — when it is essentially a day of judgment on the past year?

The judgment of this day focuses primarily on a person’s future, not on his past actions. On *Rosh Hashanah*, a person is assigned his *tafkid* for the coming year, which encompasses what he must accomplish in order to bring this world to its final *tikkun*. But since a person can only be assigned a role that he is capable of fulfilling, he is also judged regarding his past actions and how he fulfilled his mission throughout the past year. If he did not carry out his role faithfully, his spiritual stature sinks, and he is designated a less prestigious role and given inferior tools and capabilities relative to his true potential.

Rosh Hashanah, then, is not a day when man’s actions are judged so that he can be punished for his sins. Rather, it is a day when he is allocated the tools and abilities that he will require throughout the coming year in order to serve Hashem and optimally fulfill the role that he

was assigned. This is the primary reason why this day is called *Rosh Hashanah*, as it is the starting point of the new year and the day when a person receives all the tools he will need in order to serve Hashem and accomplish his mission in the world.



Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel

HE REJOICES OVER THE VAST POTENTIAL EMBEDDED IN THESE DAYS.

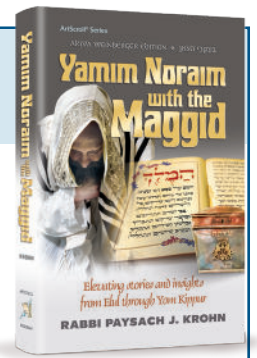
This is a time when we stand at a spiritual crossroads, trembling in awe as we await, on one hand, the weighty verdict regarding how we fulfilled our mission throughout the past year, and, on the other hand, our assignment for the next year. The heights that we will achieve in Torah and *yiras Shamayim* and the growth that we will experience in *avodas Hashem* are all determined on this momentous day.

During these auspicious moments, we can still muster the courage to strengthen ourselves to choose our paths anew, and to opt for good by repenting and pledging to fulfill Hashem’s will in the future. Moreover, the very fact that we possess the ability to choose good and thus impact our yearlong spiritual ascent and mission means that it is surely incumbent upon us to do so.

When a *Yid* stands in prayer before Hashem, recites *Vidui*, and *klaps Al Cheit*, his focus should not be directed to his past actions, but to his future deeds. His yearning, moreover, should reflect that of a *ben aliyah* who is striving courageously to succeed in *avodas Hashem*.

On a simplistic level, it would seem that man’s *bechirah* is a question of *continued on page 11*

ARTSCROLLAMESORAHSPRAYS



At times, one learns a lesson for life at an unexpected moment from an unexpected source. The inherent message becomes moving, striking, and memorable. Rabbi Ron Yitzchok Eisenman, noted *rav* and author from Passaic, New Jersey, shared the following episode with me. It put his *Rosh Hashanah* into dramatic perspective.

Rabbi Eisenman grew up in the Canarsie section of Brooklyn in the 1960's and '70's, when the neighborhood was predominantly Jewish and Italian. In his early teens, his good friend was Rafi Feinberg,* whose family moved there in the '60's. In school, the boys were inseparable, as they had mutual interests — especially their shared love of basketball.

With the New York Knicks becoming National Basketball Association champions in May 1970, city children were on the basketball courts for hours every day. Throughout the summer, Ron and Rafi played till nightfall at the Bildersee Playground on Flatlands Avenue between East 81st and East 82nd Streets.

There were many well-maintained courts throughout the playground. The boys could play uninterrupted, either with each other or with teams formed from the neighborhood. As Rabbi Eisenman says, “We were the happiest boys in the world.”

At night, Ron and Rafi discussed their future homes, occupations, and lives, never suspecting that their paths would separate and they would lose touch.

After high school, they each went to a *yeshivah* in Israel, Ron attending a *Litvishe yeshivah* and Rafi attending a Chassidic *yeshivah*,

where he became a full-fledged *chassid*. They eventually married, Ron becoming a *rav* in Passaic and Rafi, now known as Refoel, living in Monsey. Their paths never crossed for thirty-five years, until one day Rabbi Eisenman heard that Refoel was sitting *shivah* for his mother.



Rabbi Ron Yitzchok Eisenman

IN THE ENVELOPE, HE FOUND ONE DOLLAR AND FORTY- THREE CENTS.

Rabbi Eisenman remembered her from when she walked to Bildersee Park every morning at about 11 a.m. to bring drinks and cookies to her son Rafi and his friend Ron. Recalling her generosity, he decided to make the trek to Monsey to be *menachem avel*.

Refoel recognized Rabbi Eisenman immediately. After their reunion and some small talk, Refoel asked Rabbi Eisenman to come with him to another room for a moment. Refoel closed the door and took out an envelope that had yellowed with time. Refoel spoke in a hushed tone. “Last week, as I was with my mother, she told me that after she is gone, I should look for the envelope in the bottom drawer of her desk. She said, ‘Open it

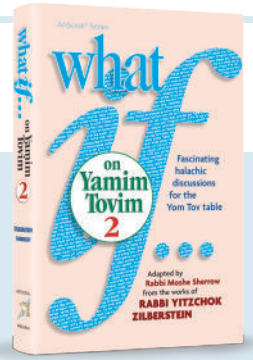
during *shivah*, and you will know what to do with it.’ I did not question her mysterious request. After she passed away and we began *shivah*, I opened it. Here, read it yourself.”

Rabbi Eisenman opened the envelope and carefully unfolded the sheet of yellow legal paper. He read, “Dear Refoel: During my *shivah*, I have to believe Ron Yitzchok Eisenman will come to be *menachem avel*. When he comes, give him this money. It's for the time at Bildersee Park when he lent you the money to buy a snack when I was unable to come. I clearly remember I did not pay him back and wanted him to be paid back, so that I will have no outstanding debts when I come to the Next World. When you return the money, I can go to the Next World with a clear conscience, as the real Day of Judgment is when you leave this world. Thank you.”

In the envelope, he found one dollar and forty-three cents.

When Rabbi Eisenman told me the story, he said, “I had not seen Rafi in over thirty-five years. I had not seen his mother in over forty years. How she knew I would come to be *menachem avel* remains a mystery. However, I never experienced a greater lesson to prepare me for the *Yom Hadin* of *Rosh Hashanah* than seeing the one dollar and forty-three cents left to me by Rafi's mother.”

No debts, no liabilities, no balances due, spiritually or monetarily. That's preparation for the Heavenly Court! 📖

**Question:**

Yosef is the regular *baal tefillah* for *Mussaf* on *Rosh Hashanah* at Kehillas Bnei Torah. He has held this post for the past ten years, to the great pleasure of the entire congregation, and he does not receive any remuneration from the *shul* in return for his services.

One *Rosh Hashanah* after *Shacharis*, Hillel, who was a *chazzan* for *Mussaf* in a nearby nursing home, approached Yosef and asked in a very hoarse voice if Yosef could possibly help him. Hillel had suddenly lost his voice and could not possibly serve as a *chazzan*. He asked if Yosef could replace him and, with his beautiful voice and *niggunim*, bring *simchah* to the residents of the nursing home. At Kehillas Bnei Torah, there are others who could fill in for Yosef, and Yosef has no financial obligation to them.

The question is whether Yosef should leave his regular post of *davening* for his *shul* in order to bring joy to the elderly, who will certainly appreciate his superior rendition of the *tefillos*, or if perhaps the people of his own *shul* have priority.

Answer:

It seems that it would be improper for Yosef to leave his own *tzibbur*, who are accustomed to hearing him. They should have preference over others and have priority to hear their regular *chazzan*. Yosef has no financial obligation to them, as he is merely a volunteer, but since they are expecting him to *daven* for them, it is not appropriate to do *chesed* with a different *shul*, at their expense.

Perhaps an argument could be made that Yosef also has an obligation to keep his word, since he already informed the *gabbaim* that he would be the *chazzan* for them. On the other hand, since unforeseen circumstances arose, perhaps he would not be bound to his original agreement (see *Choshen Mishpat* 204:7-8). Each similar case would have to be judged individually.

A similar idea is discussed in *What If ...? Volume 1* regarding a *kallah* whose older sister had two handicapped children. The older sister was tragically *niftar*, leaving

SHOULD HE LEAVE HIS REGULAR POST OF DAVENING FOR HIS SHUL IN ORDER TO BRING JOY TO THE ELDERLY?

her husband to raise their children on his own. Some relatives suggested that perhaps the *kallah* should marry her brother-in-law and raise her sister's children, as there was no one capable of doing as good a job as the children's aunt. The *kallah* asked if it would be proper to break her own engagement in order to marry her brother-in-law and raise the orphans together with him, instead of the children's father remaining a single parent or remarrying and having the special needs children raised by a stepmother, or if she should not pain her *chassan* by abandoning him, despite the tremendous *mitzvah* vis-à-vis the children.

Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv's opinion was that the *kallah* should

not break her engagement, as she and her *chassan* had already agreed to marry each other. Their mutual agreement constitutes an obligation to each other, as explained in the *Beis Meir* (*Even HaEzer* 177:1).

Therefore, since the *kallah* is already obligated to marry her *chassan*, she can't possibly nullify his rights by marrying someone else. Even if her motivations are noble, that does not give her a right to usurp the *chassan's* due privilege, even for the benefit of the handicapped orphans.

Of course, the obligations of a *baal tefillah* and a *kallah* do not share the same level of commitment. The pain of a broken engagement is excruciating, as the *chassan* will feel that he has lost all that he holds precious. In our case, as professional and enjoyable as a *chazzan* may be, one can hardly compare the disappointment of a *shul* that is used to hearing his *davening* to the heartbreak of nullifying a *shidduch*. However, the common denominator is the concept of not doing *chesed* at other people's expense.

That said, if the senior citizens will be very upset over not having a professional *chazzan*, and the *tzibbur* of Kehillas Bnei Torah will understand and be able to bear their own disappointment for the benefit of the elderly, then Yosef should *daven* at the nursing home. The elderly people are likely to be brought to tears over their own difficulties when this is coupled with the fact that they could not even hear a good *chazzan* on *Rosh Hashanah*. They may

continued on page 4

HOW CAN WE DAVEN FOR YIRAS SHAMAYIM?

Rav Druck on Machzor From Rav Yisrael Meir Druck, translated by Mrs. Malky Heimowitz

וּבְכֹן תֵּן פִּחְדֶּךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

And so, too, O Hashem, our G-d, instill your awe.

In the passage of *Uvechein tein pachdecha*, we ask Hashem to cause His creations to fear Him. Yet, we know that *yiras Shamayim* — fear of Heaven — is the one thing that is not in Hashem's hands, as the *Gemara* teaches (*Berachos* 33b): “Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for the fear of Heaven, as it states, “*Ve'atah Yisrael mah Hashem Elokecha sho'el mei'imach ki im l'yirah, And now, Yisrael, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you, but merely to fear [Hashem, your G-d]*” (*Devarim* 10:12). *Rashi* comments that every aspect of a person's nature and situation in life — his height, his complexion, his intelligence, his wealth, etc. — is determined by Hashem, but whether he will be G-d-fearing or not is his choice alone.

HE WANTS PEOPLE TO MAKE THAT CHOICE THEMSELVES.



Rav Yisrael Meir Druck

If it is up to a person to choose the path of *yiras Shamayim*, then how can we pray to Hashem to grant us fear of Heaven as a gift?

A similar question arises with regard to the *Bircas HaChodesh* prayer, in which we ask Hashem to grant us “*Chaim sheyeish bahem yiras Shomayim v'yiras chet, A life in which there is fear of Heaven and fear of sin.*” How can we ask Hashem to give us the one thing that is in our hands to achieve?

Hashem has, indeed, placed two paths before a person, one of righteousness and one of wickedness, but the very fact that a person is standing before Hashem and asking for fear of Heaven is an expression of his choice to fear Heaven. Once he has chosen this path for himself, he can then ask Hashem to grant him his choice. When Hashem then grants him *yiras Shamayim*, it is no mere “free gift”; rather, it is something he has chosen, asked for, and worked to attain.

After *Mattan Torah*, Moshe told the Jewish people, in the Name of Hashem (*Devarim* 5:26), “*Mi yitein v'hayah levavam zeh lahem l'yirah osi v'lishmor es kol mitzvosai kol hayamim, Who can assure that this heart should remain theirs, to fear Me and observe all My commandments all the days.*” The phrase “who can assure” is puzzling, as Hashem Himself can give His people the gift of *yiras Shamayim* and assure that they fear Him. It must be that since “everything is in the hands of Heaven except for the fear of Heaven,” Hashem does not give people *yiras Shamayim* unilaterally. Rather, they have to choose that path themselves.

Hashem is certainly capable of inclining a person to do good and fear Him, but He does not do that, because He wants people to make that choice themselves. Yet, when a person asks Hashem to imbue him with *yiras Shamayim*, that itself constitutes a choice of *yiras Shamayim*, and Hashem can then grant it to us. 📖

THE BAAL TEFILLAH

continued from page 3

feel as if their lives are worthless, and that false conclusion would certainly create an untenable situation.

There is an incident regarding the ruling of Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld when the *baal tefillah* in his *shul* was *niftar* shortly before the *Yamim Noraim*. The *rav* ruled that the *chazzan's* son should replace his father. People asked how the *rav* could allow the son to serve as the *chazzan* when he was still within thirty days of his father's *petirah*, not to mention the fact that he was so young. The *rav* answered that all of their concerns were valid in regard to choosing a *chazzan*, but all of them could not outweigh the tears of the *chazzan's* widow, who would be sitting in the women's section, when she would hear someone else *davening* instead of her husband. At the very least, if she were to hear her own son taking his father's place, her tears of sorrow would be mingled with those of some measure of comfort.

In summary, an excellent *chazzan* who *davens* regularly for his own *shul*, and who was expected to do so on this *Rosh Hashanah* as well, should not leave his *shul* to *daven* in a nursing home to bring joy to the residents there. However, if there is no one else to replace him at the nursing home and he feels that if he does not lead the services, the residents' pain will be so great that they will cry over their desperate situations in addition to the fact that they did not have a good *chazzan*, he should go to the nursing home and lead the *tefillos* there. The members of his own *shul*, in contrast, would understand and make peace with his absence. 📖

A 'FAMINE'

Rav Chaim Kanievsky on the Yamim Noraim compiled by Rabbi Avraham Yeshayahu Shteinman

Rav Chaim Kanievsky told a story, in the name of the *Chofetz Chaim*, to describe the fear that a person would feel if he would internalize the truth of how our lives hang in the balance on *Rosh Hashanah*, as Hashem decides our fate for the year.

A *yeshivah* student was arrested by the Russians, and, following a brief sham, he was sentenced to death. His captors moved to carry out the sentence immediately. They placed the boy up against a wall and assembled a firing squad. By some miracle, their guns jammed and could not fire. After trying a few times with the same results, they gave up in frustration.

Eventually, the boy was set free and he returned to his *yeshivah*. He was met with a strange reception: no one recognized him. At a glance in the mirror, he saw that in those moments when his life had almost ended, his hair had turned completely white!

The *Chofetz Chaim* said, "See how a genuine fear of death has a recognizable physical effect on a person. If so, why don't our hairs all turn white out of fear of the Heavenly judgment that faces us?"

Despite the severity of the Heavenly judgment, though, a person should be aware that every *mitzvah*, prayer, and word of Torah that he studies has tremendous power to help and save. A grain merchant asked the *Chofetz Chaim* for a *berachah* that he be successful in his business. "You need a *berachah* for success in your business?" asked the *Chofetz Chaim*. "But you have one of the largest grain businesses in the region." "Nevertheless," insisted the merchant, "the business is not going well and I need a *berachah*." The *Chofetz Chaim* blessed him with success.

Soon after, the communists took over the area, and before long, hunger was widespread. One day, the *Chofetz Chaim* met the grain merchant, who was now selling small quantities of grain on the black market.

"How is your livelihood?" asked the *Chofetz Chaim*.

The merchant raised his hands to the sky. "*Baruch Hashem!* Business has never been better! Your *berachah* was fulfilled!"

"How can that be?" wondered the *Chofetz Chaim*. "In the past, you sold wagon-loads worth of grain and yet you complained about your business. Now, you are reduced to selling bits of grain from a sack and you say that business is great?"

"Let me explain," said the merchant. "In the past, I bought and sold grain by the ton. However, grain was plentiful and I had a lot of competitors. I therefore had to convince buyers that my grain was better and my prices were cheaper. I had to make sure my grain was the highest quality and therefore I did not make much profit. Now, *baruch Hashem*,

everyone is hungry. I take a small basket of grain, much of which is wormy. I add pebbles to the grain to increase its volume. I come to the black market and can charge whatever I want. If anyone asks to inspect the grain, I refuse to sell him anything until he pays me triple the original price. Thus, I make a very

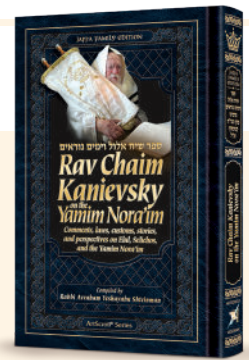
large profit on whatever I sell. Because when there is a famine, no one checks the merchandise!"

Hearing this, the *Chofetz Chaim* proclaimed, "What a lesson we can learn from this! In earlier times, the Jews had prophets, and later, the great *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*. The 'market' was full of high-quality Torah study, prayer, and *mitzvos*. Thus, every *mitzvah* and prayer was checked to ensure that it met the market level of quality. Nowadays, though, there is a 'famine' for prayer and Torah study. Whatever we do — every prayer, Torah thought, and *mitzvah* — is accepted with open arms, whether or not it was performed with elevated intentions. Because when there is a famine, no one checks the merchandise. Thus, now is the time when we can become wealthy on Torah and *mitzvos!*"



The Chofetz Chaim

**"NOW IS THE TIME
WHEN WE CAN
BECOME WEALTHY
ON TORAH AND
MITZVOS!"**



THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

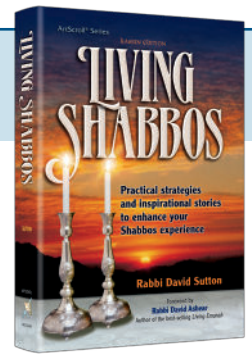
SEPTEMBER / אלול-תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
24 כח	25 כט	26 א	27 ב	28 ג	29 ד	30 ה
Kesubos 80	Kesubos 81	Kesubos 82	Kesubos 83	Kesubos 84	Kesubos 85	Kesubos 86

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

SEPTEMBER / אלול-תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
24 כח	25 כט	26 א	27 ב	28 ג	29 ד	30 ה
Challah 1:4-5	Challah 1:6-7	Challah 1:8-9	Challah 2:1-2	Challah 2:3-4	Challah 2:5-6	Challah 2:7-8



The *Arizal* teaches that the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* have the power to atone for the sins we committed on each of the seven days of the week during the previous year. Leaving out the two days of *Rosh Hashanah* and the day of *Yom Kippur*, the period of *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* consists of seven days, and each of these seven days, the *Arizal* teaches, is able to rectify the inadvertent transgressions done on that day during the year. On the Sunday of *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, for example, we are able to atone for our sins committed on any Sunday throughout the year. Each day of the week poses its own challenges, and we are prone to certain mistakes on each day of the week, and the period of the Ten Days of Repentance affords us the opportunity to correct the mistakes that we have made on each day.

Accordingly, on *Shabbos Shuvah*, the *Shabbos* between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, we are able to earn atonement for all the mistakes made on the most important day of the week — *Shabbos* — throughout the year. And thus we should all be especially vigilant on *Shabbos Shuvah* to ensure that we observe *Shabbos* properly, both by avoiding all forms of forbidden activities (the *shamor* aspect of *Shabbos*) and by conducting ourselves with a level of *kedushah* that is appropriate for this sacred day (the *zachor* aspect).

The unique importance of *Shabbos Shuvah* can be seen in a beautiful insight that I came across

regarding the *zemer* of *Shalom Aleichem* that we traditionally sing on Friday night upon returning from *shul*. In this hymn, we greet the angels that have come into our home on *Shabbos*, and it is commonly understood that these angels represent the *yetzer hara* (evil inclination) and *yetzer hatov* (good inclination), the two forces within us that try to lead us, respectively, to sin and to good deeds. These angels come into our homes on *Shabbos*, and we hope that the angel representing the *yetzer hatov* blesses us and the angel representing the



LET US TREAT THIS SHABBOS IN A SPECIAL WAY.

yetzer hara then answers “*amein*” to that blessing.

But I saw a different interpretation, one that is based upon the well-known comment in *Pirkei Avos* that every *mitzvah* we perform produces a protecting angel. Normally, although we create these angels, we do not earn the privilege of having these angels close to us. On *Shabbos*, however, the special sanctity of the day renders us worthy of having these angels that we have produced accompany us and join us in our home. These are the angels that we greet

when we sing *Shalom Aleichem* on Friday night.

Understandably, the more significant and powerful the *mitzvah* is, the more distinguished and special the angels are. And thus, when we sound and hear the *shofar*, we create especially powerful angels. The *mitzvah* of *shofar* is observed in a very special way, as everyone is gathered in *shul*, concentrating intently and thinking thoughts of *teshuvah*.

Indeed, the moments of the *shofar* blowing are among the most moving and serious times of the year in *shul*. We can imagine, then, that the angels produced by our fulfillment of this *mitzvah*, which is done with such feeling, concentration, and thoughts of *teshuvah*, are particularly powerful. In fact, there is a *Yehi Ratzon* prayer that many people recite before the *shofar* blowing requesting that the angels created by the *shofar* sounds should ascend to the heavens.

It is told that Rabbi Ephraim Laniado, a rabbi in Aleppo, Syria, would blow the shofar each year in the shul, but when he aged and did not have the strength to blow, he delegated this duty to his son, who was also experienced in sounding the shofar. Rav Ephraim prayed at home, and when he saw people returning from shul, he asked them how his son had blown the shofar. They told him that his son at first seemed anxious, and the sounds did not continued on page 9

One way to merit a favorable judgment on the *Yom Hadin* is by thinking about others and *davening* for them.

Chazal say that the *Mabul* was blamed on Noach (*Zohar, Noach*). Why? Because he didn't *daven* for his generation to be saved. Noach had a good reason not to *daven*. Since he was only worthy to be saved because he found favor in Hashem's eyes, he was afraid that if he would *daven*

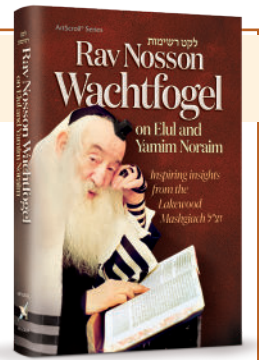


Rav Nosson Wachtfogel

for them, he would also be punished. Nevertheless, he still should have *davened* for his generation. He didn't realize that by *davening* for them, he would have become worthy — and he could have saved the world.

Gideon ben Yoash did *daven* for his generation. He advocated for them in front of Hashem and was *zocheh* to become their leader. The *Midrash (Tanchuma, Shoftim 4)* says that the *pasuk* about

Gideon (*Shoftim 6:14*), "*Leich b'chochacha zeh v'hoshata es Yisrael* — Go with this strength and save Yisrael," is referring to the strength of the *zechus* of advocating on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*. When a person *davens* for the *tzibbur*, it makes him into a greater person (see *Kovetz Sichos, Vol. 2, Parashas Noach*). Knowing this and doing this will make it much easier to merit a favorable judgment on the *Yom Hadin*. 📖



The renowned *tzaddik* Rav Chaim Brim *zt"l* was close to the *Chazon Ish* and many other great Torah figures of his time. His brilliance in Torah was known in all of Eretz Yisrael and the world. Nevertheless, he was often described as "the *anav*," the humble one.

During a period in Rav Chaim's life, he served as the *baal tefillah* on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* for the Skverer community, in their massive *shul* where 2,000 people *davened*.

At one point in the *davening*, a man ascended to the *aron kodesh* to open it for the *tefillah* of *Imru L'Elokim*. In the *machzor*, this prayer takes up several pages, and the man was supposed to wait until the end to close the *aron*. However, as he balanced his *machzor* in one hand while pulling back the curtain and opening the door of the *aron*, he inadvertently lost his place and skipped ahead to the end of the prayer. Rav Chaim had barely gotten started when the man closed the *aron* as if the whole prayer had been said.



Rav Chaim Brim

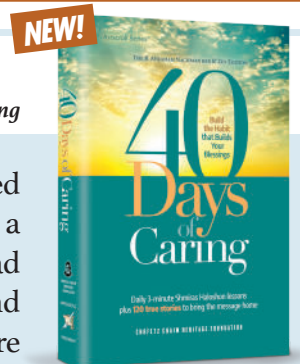
Instantly, Rav Chaim realized what had happened. He made a snap decision. He skipped ahead to where the man was up to and concluded the prayer as if it were his own mistake. Now the crowd in attendance would think that the man at the *aron* was following Rav Chaim's lead.

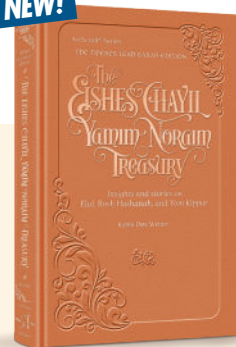
RAV CHAIM HAD BARELY GOTTEN STARTED WHEN THE MAN CLOSED THE ARON AS IF THE WHOLE PRAYER HAD BEEN SAID.

from shame. Those are the *tefillos* I want to hear!"

For us, the lesson is clear. When we protect and cherish the reputation of another Jew, we can bring only blessing. 📖

40 Days of Caring





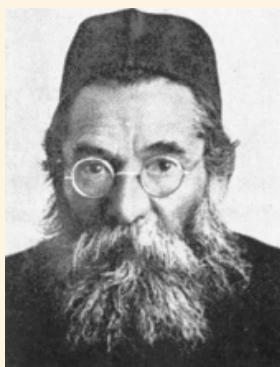
Psychologists document that goals fail for two reasons. First, the goal itself is unattainable:

“I will never get angry.”

“I will *daven* the entire *tefillah* with concentration three times a day.”

“Sugar will never pass my lips again.”

Although such goals are commendable and may even be required of us (the *Rambam* teaches that one should indeed avoid getting angry at all costs), aiming for such a general, overarching goal is bound to fail from the start, which only discourages future growth.



Rav Leib Chasman

Second, even when the goal is attainable and practical, if a plan of action that will enable the successful realization of the goal is not put into place, it is likewise bound to fail. Setting attainable goals and implementing a plan of action are essential ingredients for accomplishment.

As we approach the *Yom Hadin*, our mission is to improve ourselves. We never want our spiritual accomplishments and personal achievements to be on cruise control from year to year. For this, we need to define our goals for improvement and strategize ways to actualize them.

Nearly anyone who has successfully actualized a goal did so through making a detailed plan or process that enabled him to attain success and fulfill his goal. From the smallest goals to the largest,

preplanning, calculation, and forethought are necessary to ensure success.

Someone who is traveling from Monsey to Far Rockaway on *Erev Shabbos* would be wise to leave early and turn on Waze prior to setting out on his journey to determine the route with the least traffic. A person who wants to control expenses in order to maintain a healthy budget and avoid credit card debt sits down and makes a calculation of the money he earns and what his monthly expenditures should be. Every business has a goal-oriented roadmap that aligns it with the day-to-day priorities and provides the direction the company needs to take in order to be successful.

The same idea should be put into place with regard to who we want to become and what we want to accomplish in life.

We should ask ourselves: Am I living with a plan to become someone who is elevated and spiritually close to Hashem? Am I developing a path in life, a daily schedule, that is focused on what's truly important and real? How am I effecting good in this world — in a practical, meaningful way?

By asking ourselves these questions, we are on the way to formulating a practical, successful plan of action for achieving the spiritual gains we want.

Small Steps

A talmid went to the great mash-

giach of Chevron Yeshivah, Rav Leib Chasman, during the month of Elul and asked what he could take upon himself for the new year. Rav Leib answered, “Think of one thing, and one thing only, that you want to work on and that you feel is within your reach to accomplish. Choose something easy and then return to me.”

The talmid returned a little while later having identified something he wanted to work on that was within his grasp to achieve. Rav Leib then told the talmid, “Now take your kabbalah and split it in half. Aim to achieve half the goal that you set for yourself. Through this you will grow!”

The *yetzer hara* wants us to set extravagant goals, knowing that we will never be able to hold onto them in the long run. He wants nothing more than for us to stumble and quash all interest in further growth. It's far more effective to work on something small, actualize the goal, and feel good that we accomplished what we set out to do. The positive energy born out of achieving even a small goal triggers the desire for further and more impactful growth.

Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach would say, “The smaller the resolution, the greater the success.” One *Rosh Hashanah*, Rav Shach, accepted upon himself to look into a *bentcher* when he would recite the first *berachah* of *Bircas HaMazon*. One *berachah* from a *bentcher* — this was the *kabbalah* of the great *rosh yeshivah* and *gaon* Rav Shach (*Kinyan Torah Haggadah*, p. 127). 📖

THE SPECIAL ANGELS

continued from page 6

come out properly, but gradually the blowing grew stronger and steadier. The rabbi asked his son about it when he came home, and his son explained that when he began blowing the shofar, he saw angels coming out of the shofar, and this worried him.

“There is no need to worry,” the rabbi said. “I see those angels every year.”

We cannot even imagine the spiritual power of the shofar blowing and the feelings of *teshuvah* that accompany it, which is capable of producing very special angels, even more so than the other *mitzvos* that we perform. And these angels join us in our home on *Shabbos Shuvah*.

Of course, we should endeavor to conduct ourselves properly every *Shabbos*, knowing that we are hosting angels in our homes. (It should be noted that according to one version of the *Shalom Aleichem* text, we do not say *tzeischem l’shalom* — which indicates that the angels are already leaving then — but rather *bo’achem l’shalom* — “When you leave in peace,” in which case the angels do not necessarily leave then. It stands to reason that they remain in our homes throughout the entirety of *Shabbos*.)

As we want these angels to grant us their blessing — as we sing, *barchuni l’shalom* — we must certainly conduct ourselves on the highest standard possible. But this is especially vital on *Shabbos Shuvah*, when we are privileged to host in our home the angels of the shofar, the most distinguished and most powerful angels.

Let us treat this *Shabbos* in a special way, as we recognize that we are hosting these special angels, and thereby correct and elevate all the *Shabbosos* of the previous year. And through our observance, we shall be deserving of complete redemption, as our sages teach that our proper observance of two consecutive *Shabbosos* brings us our nation’s Final Redemption. 📖

PRIORITIES

WHERE SHOULD HE DAVEN?

My Parents and Me by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman

It was a hard time for Nosson and his mother. Nosson’s father had passed away in the summer, and the start of the new year in *yeshivah* was difficult for him. And it was hard for his mother that he was away in *yeshivah* all week, coming home only for *Shabbos*. But she knew that for his growth as a *ben Torah*, it was important that he be in the dormitory all week like the other boys.

and *daven* nearby.

“I also know that I *daven* so much better in *yeshivah*. What should I do?”

Nosson decided that he would bring his question to the great Ponovezher *rosh yeshivah*, Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach, and would do as he said.

Rav Shach listened care-

“WE NEVER LOSE OUT FROM DOING THE RIGHT THING.”

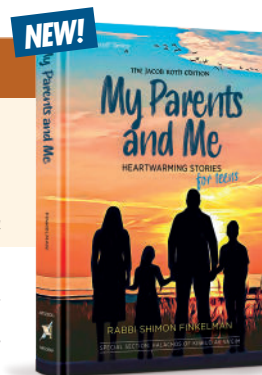
Knowing how hard it would be for his mother to be alone for two days of *Rosh Hashanah*, he had *davened* in a *shul* near their home and spent *Yom Tov* with her. As *Yom Kippur* approached, he was faced with a dilemma.

“I know that if I ask my mother’s permission to remain in *yeshivah* for *Yom Kippur*, she’ll tell me to do so. But I also know that it will mean a lot to her if I sleep at home



Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach

fully as the *bachur* explained his dilemma. Then he replied, “One thing is for sure — we never lose out from doing the right thing. It seems to me that the right thing would be for you to spend *Yom Kippur* at home so that your mother won’t be alone. I assure you that your *kibbud eim* will not cause you to lose out. You will only gain!” 📖





Rosh Hashanah for Children

ROSH HASHANAH

The Scale



n the village of Pach-kow it had not rained all year. The river was dry. The trees, the grass and the plants were dying. Everyone

was thirsty and hungry.

“The entire town must fast and pray to Hashem for rain,” the rabbi told the people. “Only Hashem can save us.”

Still no rain came. Still the ground was dry.

“It must be me who is at fault,” thought the rabbi. “I will fast and pray even harder, and maybe Hashem will help us.”

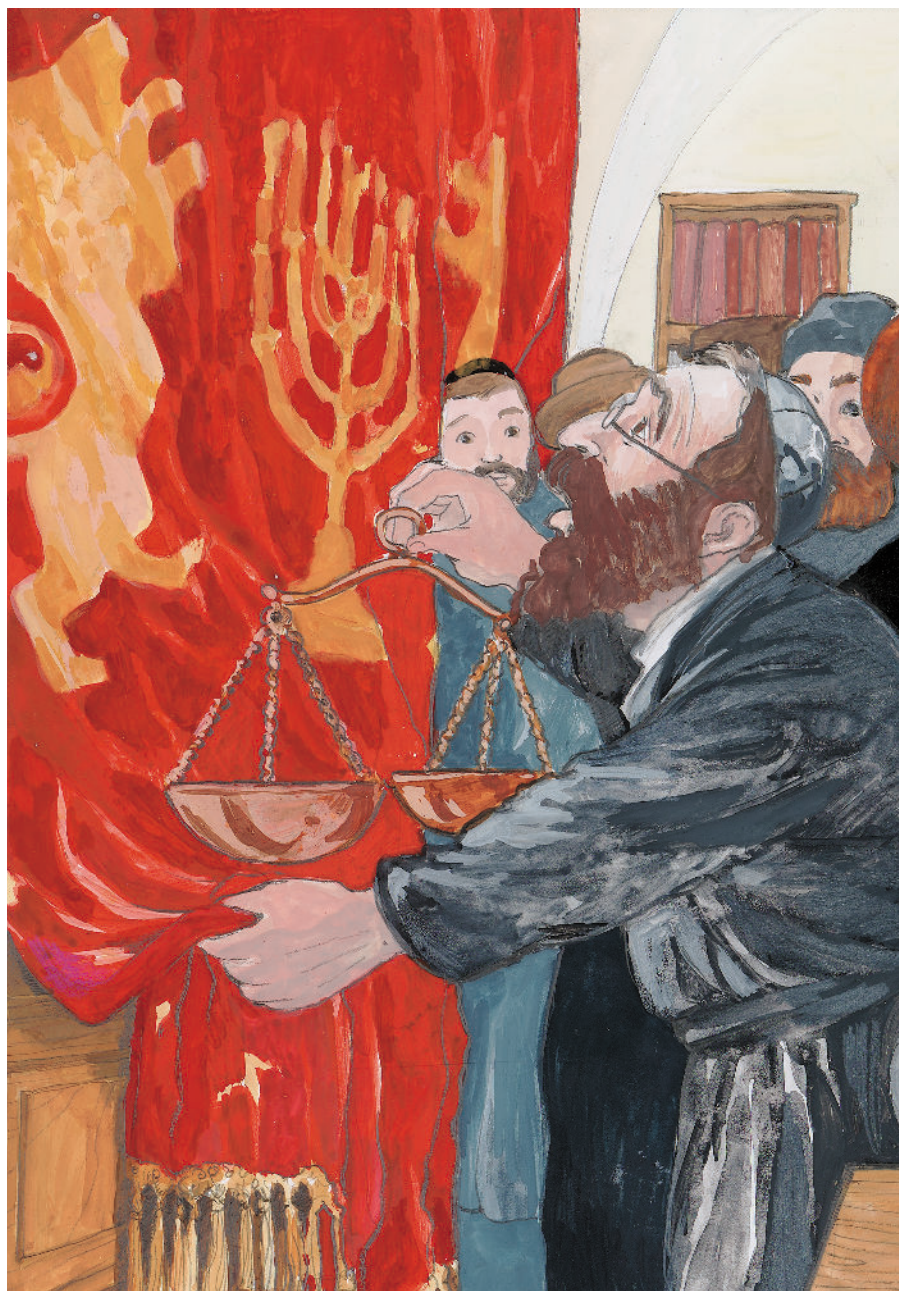
That night the rabbi had a dream. In his dream Hashem said, “Rosh Hashanah is coming and Kalman the storekeeper must be the *chazzan* on the day before Rosh Hashanah.”

The rabbi awoke. “Kalman the storekeeper? But Kalman can barely read! He can’t lead the service. It must have been a false dream.”

The next night, the rabbi had the same dream. Hashem again told him that Kalman the storekeeper must be the *chazzan* on the day before Rosh Hashanah.

That morning the rabbi awoke. “I had the same dream twice. It must be true.”

In shul that morning, the rabbi approached Kalman and said, “You will



ROSH HASHANAH — JUDGING THE FUTURE continued from page 1

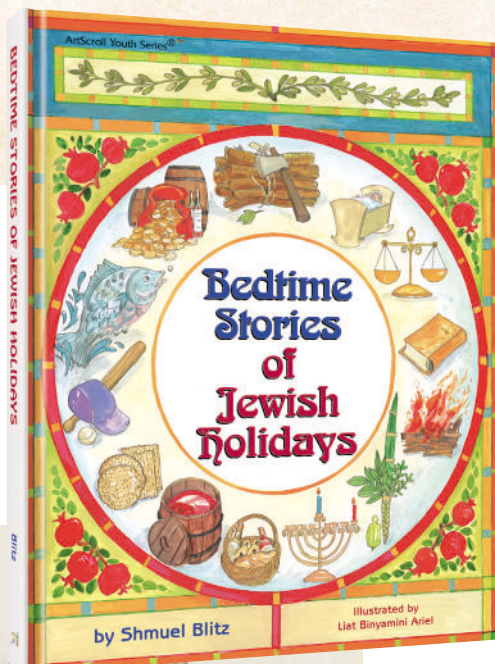
good and evil, black and white, yet this is far from the truth. Every *mitzvah* opportunity compels a *Yid* to choose not only whether to fulfill the *mitzvah*, but also how to fulfill it, and whether to adhere to each *halachic* detail. It is for these fine choices that man is judged. Did he recite a *berachah* with more *kavanah* or less *kavanah*? Did he observe *Shabbos* with all its requirements? Was he cautious with other people's money, and was he careful to avoid humiliating a fellow *Yid*? He is likewise judged for his *middos*: Is he arrogant? Is he angered easily?

One who examines every nuance of his conduct and every detail of his *mitzvah* observance will achieve an exalted level of *teshuvah*.

A person who appreciates the significance of this period and recognizes his obligations during these days can approach *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* with the sentiment of “*vegilu biradah, and rejoice when there is trembling*” (*Tehillim* 2:11). On one hand, he trembles in fear of the impending judgment for last year's sins and the ensuing verdict for the coming year. Yet, on the other hand, he rejoices over the vast potential embedded in these days, when he can easily choose to change direction, return to Hashem, and within a remarkably short time transform his entire life into one of joyous *avodas Hashem*.

We must remember, though, that these days are numbered and pass far too quickly. Woe unto one who idles and thereby forfeits the incredible potential of this time.

May Hashem help us redouble our efforts in *avodas Hashem*, Torah, *tefillah*, and *bein adam lachaveiro*. May we all find the strength inside us to reinforce each other's commitment to Torah and *teshuvah*, and in the merit of this unity, may we emerge from darkness to spiritual light and radiance. ■



Excerpt from Bedtime Stories of Jewish Holidays by Shmuel Blitz

be the *chazzan* on the day before Rosh Hashanah.”

Kalman sat and stared at the rabbi. “You must be mistaken, rabbi. I can hardly read the words of the *davening*. I cannot lead the prayers.”

“There is no choice,” the rabbi replied. “You will lead the prayers.”

Kalman took off his *tallis* and *tefillin* and rushed out of *shul*. Everyone waited in silence, not sure what would happen next.

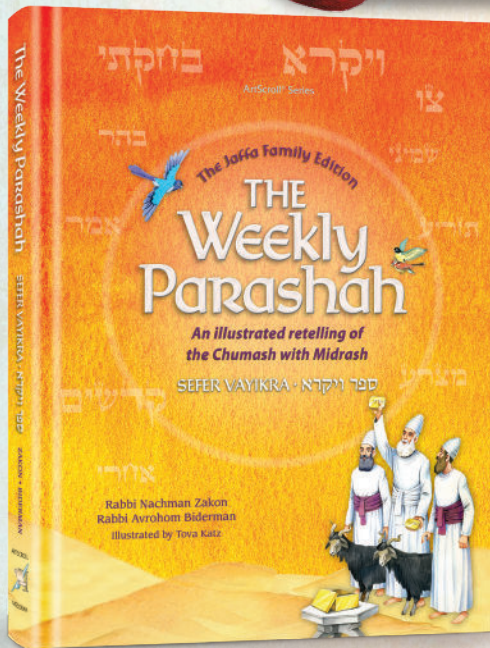
A short while later, Kalman returned, holding the scale from his store in his hand. He walked up to the *aron kodesh* and said, “Hashem, this is the scale from my store. I promise that I have never charged even one person unfairly on it. On Rosh Hashanah our deeds are put on a scale. Please have pity on us when we are measured on Your scale.”

A few moments later, a boom of thunder was heard outside. Everyone ran out and watched the rains finally start falling. Because of Kalman's purity and honesty, Hashem had mercy on the people and brought the rain. ■





Rosh Hashanah for Children



The Sounds of the Shofar



Here are four kinds of shofar sounds:

tekiah — a long blast: woooooooooooooooooooo

shevarim — three short sounds:

wooo, wooo, wooo

teruah — nine very short blasts: wu, wu,

wu, wu, wu, wu, wu, wu, wu

shevarim/teruah — a combination of shevarim and teruah: three short blasts followed by nine very short sounds.

Ashkenazic Jews blow a total of 100 blasts during the Rosh Hashanah services, a combination of these four kinds of shofar blasts.



The Rosh Hashanah Mussaf Prayer



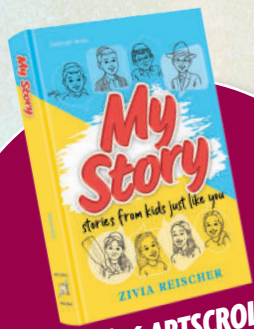
The Mussaf prayer of Rosh Hashanah includes three special sections: Malchiyos (Kingship), Zichronos (Remembrance), and Shofaros (Shofar). Each section contains 10 pesukim taken from Torah, Nevi'im, and Kesuvim.

Malchiyos: We say 10 pesukim that describe Hashem as the King and Master over the world.

Zichronos: We say 10 pesukim that talk about how Hashem

remembers everything that we've done, and has mercy on us.

Shofaros: We say 10 pesukim that describe shofars being blown. These pesukim will bring the great merit of Akeidas Yitzchak before Hashem.



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Rosh Hashanah:

What type of shofar do Yemenite Jews use?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.



The winner of the Parashas Shoftim question is: **CHAIM ELIEZER GOLDBERG, Brooklyn NY**

The question was: What is the reward for appointing good judges? The answer is: The precious right to live in Eretz Yisrael.

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