

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

Nisavim and Rosh Hashana

October 1-4 - 1 Tishrei 5777

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Editors Notes

I am so sorry we missed publishing last week and I am so appreciative of all of your notes. This week, we have an extra long issue, but you have Shabbat and Rosh Hashana to read

Do our actions have an effect on those who passed before us.

Atem Nesavim Hayom – You are standing here today.

During the high holidays, there are a number of customs that seem to bind the living and the dead. Many people go to the cemetery during Elul to the point where cars are not permitted and people must park on the outside and walk along the roads. The Rama - Rabbi Moshe Isserles, the great Ashkenazic Posek and codifier of Jewish Law who in essence authored the Shulchan Aruch together with the Bet Yosef, mentions in the laws of Rosh HaShana the custom to gather at the cemetery on Erev Rosh HaShana and pray on behalf of the community. It seems that we pray to Hashem in merit of those who passed away that we should be judged for life. We see that in essence they or at least their merit can benefit us, but can we do anything for them?

The Rama writes further in The Darchei Moshe, his commentary to the Tur, commenting on the term Yom HaKippurim - that the plural term "Kippurim" alludes to the function served by this holiday to atone for both the living and the dead. Not only are the living judged on Yom Kippur, but the deceased are judged, as well. The question is asked. Are we not judged at death? How can we be continually judged year after year? What merits can we earn? What sins can we commit? Do the actions of those alive contribute to the case either in a positive or negative way of someone who has passed?

I believe that there is a thread which binds us from father to son throughout the generations. It is an

important and irreplaceable bond. This bond extends from them to us, but also extends back from us to them. And at no time of the year is the bond more visible than now. It seems we are all, both living and dead, standing together in judgment.

Last week I wrote of my great grandfather Joseph A. Bibi. Although I never met him as he passed away in 1927 when my own father was just a toddler, I have a deep connection with him.

In contemplating our connection to those who came before us, I noted:

Their souls are affected by our actions; actions of the children can have a beneficial effect on our ancestors in heaven. Furthermore, our actions can be the interest payments that they (our ancestor's souls) continually collect. And through these actions the souls of the departed are elevated in heaven each year on their *yahrzeit*.

One of our readers wrote: Other than Kabbalah, can you provide support from the written or oral Torah to support what you wrote?

To many this might seem like a strange question. After all, go into any Sephardic house of mourning and there is food on the table with a note: please say blessings *leiluy nishmat* - to raise up the soul - of so and so (the departed).

A similar note will be found by the *sedaka* plate. Perhaps another by a sign up page to learn *mishna*. (Aside from the food, all these can be found in an Ashkenaz home as well). We read *tehilim*. And universally say *Kaddish*. All with the supposition that our actions are of direct benefit to the departed.

If there was no source for all of this then what would we suppose? That the rabbis got together in the last couple of hundred years or so and created this from thin air?

The difficulty is that at first glance it appears that perhaps this idea is not supported by the Talmud nor by the Geonim and Rishonim (Rabbis who lived about a thousand years ago).

In fact the Rambam commenting on *Pirkei Avot* makes it clear that the person who has passed away exists in a fixed and timeless relationship with God.

Maharam Chalavah, a prominent 14th century Torah scholar who was a disciple of Rashba, writes as follows: There is no doubt that what one person does for another after their passing is of no benefit or aid, for each person is judged according to what they are at the time of their death. In accordance with the person's level and attainments at the time that his soul departs from his body, so will he attain elevations and merit light with the Light of Life, and there is no additional elevation or benefit in that which others do afterwards to benefit him...

Going back even further, Rav Sherira Gaon is quoted as saying: A person cannot merit someone else with reward; his elevation and greatness and pleasure from the radiance of the Divine Presence is only in accordance with his deeds. Even if all the righteous people in the world were to seek mercy for him, and all the righteous acts were to be done in his merit, it would be of no help to him...

Given these and other statements on the subject, One might even suggest that this whole idea of aliyat neshama is a conspiracy of contemporary rabbis to get people to give money, go to synagogue to pray and say Kaddish, donate breakfasts and buildings, do misvot, and learn Torah all for the sake of the departed when in fact there is no source for this. Could it be possible?

Obviously not! There are countless Kabbalistic sources. But setting aside the Kabbalah as the reader requested, this seemed to be a really great question and we explored it during our class on Shabbat.

We generally do not associate the Rama who lived on Poland in the 16th Century with the Kabbalah, so what did he mean when he suggested that the dead are judged each year?

Another of the great Ashkenazic Halachists, Rabbi David ha-Levi Segal also known as the Turei Zahav or the Taz after the title of his significant halakhic commentary on the Shulchan Aruch in the 17th century (and certainly not known as a Kabbalist) comments in the laws of charity where Maran notes that giving in memory of a deceased person works. The Taz asks how does this work? He suggests that it "reminds" Hashem, kavyochol, that the deceased person would have actually done this Mitzvah had he been alive. He gets credit for wanting to do that Mitzvah that now only someone else can do in his memory. Perhaps the Tur based his words on Rabbi Elazar of Worms, an important 13th century authority, who

suggests that giving charity for the dead on Yom Kippur is associated with the half-shekel contribution to the Tabernacle, which is described as a kofer nefesh, a ransom for the soul. This works as a form of prayer; one is pleading to God that this person would surely have given charity were he still able to do so. So it seems one can give charity for someone who would have given charity and that deceased person gets credit.

What about prayer? The Talmud on Makot 11b tells us of Moses praying on behalf of Yehudah who died two centuries earlier.

The Second Book of Maccabees tells us of an incident where people had died as a result of a particular sin. Judah the Maccabee collected money to pay for sin offerings, which is described as being performed as atonement on behalf of those who died.

The Sifre commenting on the misvah of eglah arufah - the calf that is sacrificed to atone for an unsolved murder - discusses the concept of providing atonement for those who have passed away. The Midrash explains that the Kohanim seek forgiveness not only for all living members of the nation, but even for all the members of the nation who have ever lived.

In fact Rabbi Shlomo ben Aderet, a 13th century halakhist, and Talmudist known for his rationalist views and widely known as the Rashba says that anyone can pray or do charity to help the deceased referring to the Talmud, Sotah 10b, about David praying on behalf of his son, Abshalom and raising him from Gehinam. Recall that we quoted his student Maharam Chalavah above who seemed to say the opposite. How can we understand this? Let's set this aside for a moment and at the end we will suggest an answer.

There are many sources we can quote on doing for the deceased especially when the person doing Sedaka or other acts is a descendant, a student or person affected by the departed and show from the Talmud, Midrash and Rabbis that we have a major effect on those who passed. I will list more sources as a footnote for those who wish to further explore the subject.

But let's ask, why do we say Kaddish? We all say Kaddish and although it has been part of our religion for perhaps two thousand years or more, in the last thousand years it has become something we associated as a prayer said by a mourner for those who have departed. What is the basis?

We have the story of Rabbi Akiva in Midrash tanchuma (or Rabbi Yochanan in Midrash Tanna Devei Eliyahu) and the tax collector as the basis of Kaddish. The fullest version of the story and perhaps the source that brought it the most fame and actually changed our relationship with the kaddish is brought in the 12th century machzor Vitry.

Rabbi Akiva was walking in a cemetery by the side of the road and encountered there a naked man, black as coal, carrying a large burden of wood on his head. He seemed to be alive, and was running under the load like a horse. R. Akiva ordered him to stop.

"How comes it that a man does such hard work?" he asked. "If you are a servant and your master is doing this to you, then I will redeem you from him. If you are poor and people are avoiding you, then I will give you money."

"Please sir," the man replied. "Do not detain me, because my superiors will be angry."

"Who are you," Rabbi Akiva asked, "and what have you done?"

The man said, "The man whom you are addressing is a dead man. Every day they send me out to chop wood."

"My son, what was your work in the world from which you came?"

"I was a tax collector, and would favor the rich and kill the poor."

"Have your superiors told you nothing about how you might relieve your condition?"

"Please sir, do not detain me, for you will irritate my tormentors. For such a man [as I], there can be no relief. Though I did hear them say something—but no, it is impossible. They said that if this poor man had a son, and his son were to stand before the congregation and recite the prayer Barechu and the congregation were to answer amen, and the son were also to say Yehe Shemeh Rabba Mevarach they would release him from his punishment. But this man never had a son. He left his wife pregnant and he did not know whether the child was a boy. And if she gave birth to a boy, who would teach the boy Torah? For this man does not have a friend in the world."

Immediately Rabbi Akiva took upon himself the task of discovering whether this man had fathered a son, so that he might teach the son Torah and install him at the head of the congregation to lead the prayers.

"What is your name?" he asked. "Akiva," the man answered. "And the name of your wife?" "Shoshnia."

"And the name of your town?" "Lodkiya."

Rabbi Akiva was deeply troubled by all this and went to make his inquiries. When he came to that town, he asked about the man he had met, and the townspeople replied, "May his bones be ground to dust!" He asked about the man's wife, and he was

told, "May her memory be erased from the world!" He asked about the man's son, and he was told, "He is a heathen—we did not even bother to circumcise him." Rabbi Akiva promptly circumcised him and sat him down before a book. But the boy refused to receive Torah. Rabbi Akiva fasted for forty days. A heavenly voice was heard to say, "For this you mortify yourself?" "But Lord of the Universe," Rabbi Akiva replied, "It is for You that I am preparing him." Suddenly the Holy One, blessed be He, opened the boy's heart. Rabbi Akiva taught him Torah and Shema Yisrael and Birkat HaMAzon. He presented the boy to the congregation and the boy recited Barechu and they answered Baruch HaMevorach LeOlam VaEd. At that very moment the man was released from his punishment. The man immediately came to Rabbi Akiva in a dream and said, "May it be the will of the Lord that your soul find delight in the Garden of Eden, for you have saved me from the sentence of Gehenna." ..

For this reason, it became customary that the Arbat prayer on the night after Shabbat is led by a man who does not have a father or a mother, so that he can say Kaddish and Barechu.

Based on this the custom spread across the Jewish world to say Kaddish to lift ones relatives up from Gehinam.

Rabbi Yehudah HaChassid – 12th Century Germany - explains: But how can a deed atone for someone who did not perform that deed while he was alive? ...However, thus stated the Holy One: A son provides merit for the father. For example, if the father was a sinner, but ensured that his son studied Torah and performed good deeds, then since it was due to the father that the son thus merited, the son provides merit to the father. If the parents instruct the children to perform [good] deeds after their passing, then when the children perform these deeds, it is as though the parents performed them. (Sefer Chassidim 101)

Rabbeinu Yonah – 13th century Spain – Author of Gates of Repentance - likewise writes that the merit of a woman for the next world comes as a result of her children acting appropriately; when they are God-fearing and busy with Torah and mitzvos, it is rated as though she is alive and doing this. See also Rashba, Responsa 5:45; Maharsha, Chiddushei Aggadot, Sanhedrin 104.

Perhaps in these explanations we can understand the what, the why and the how.

Let us ask one more question,

The longest serving king of the Jewish people was Menashe. He was the son of King Hizkiyahu who prophetically saw his wickedness and was reluctant to have children. One of Menashe's early acts was to kill the prophet Isaiah who may even have been his grandfather. This set the tone for his future actions, which included desecrating the Temple by extinguishing a flame which had been lit there by King Solomon. He also became involved in various pagan cults, and built a monstrous idol which he brought into the Temple. His behavior was so evil that the destruction of Yerushalayim is mainly attributed to him, as he caused the worship of avodah zara to spread throughout Yisrael. The book of Melachim or Kings presents a an uncomplicated biography of a wicked king. Menashe is evil from beginning to end.

But for some strange reason when his story is told in Divrei HaYamim, we read: "God spoke to Menashe and his people, but they paid no attention. So God brought the army commanders of the king of Ashur against them; they took Menashe prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Bavel. In his distress he sought the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. And when he prayed to Him, God was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so He brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Menashe knew that the Lord is God. Afterward, he rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David. He got rid of the foreign gods and removed the image from the House of God. He restored the altar of God and sacrificed thank-offerings upon it, and told Judah to serve the God of Israel"

Whats going on here? Did he repent or not? And if he repented, why was it left out of the story in Melachim? We know that Divrei Ha-yamim's account is historically accurate, so why does Melachim censor Menashe's repentance? Why does it take 200 years to discover the truth?

Rabbi Abittan, z'sl suggested to me that while Menashe may have repented in his later days, the damage he caused was so extreme, the influx of idolatry into the kingdom so prevalent and the degenerate public culture so pervasive that despite later attempts at rehabilitation, it was simply an incurable situation. He may have tried to repair the mess he caused but the fact is, he had contaminated the kingdom irreparably. This contamination lived on after him and was a direct result of his actions. It was only after the men of the great assembly prayed that Hashem remove the desire of idolatry from the hearts

of men that Menashe's dominoes of evil stopped falling.

It is clear that we are judged every year, even after our deaths. But what can we be judged for after we die? We can do no further good, nor further harm! But that's not true. We must remember a term we call, the "ripple effect". Webster defines the "ripple effect" as a situation in which one event causes a series of other events to happen.

For two hundred years, in each and every year after his passing, Menashe was brought to the court. He may have repented, but the ripple effect of his original actions continued. He brought a level of idolatry to the people which even he couldn't eradicate and every year he was judged for the continuing consequences of his action. It was only after the idolatry ended which coincided with the writing of the Book of Chronicles that he could stand before the Heavenly Court and finally be judged in a positive way. It is only then that we write of his repentance.

As a child of a kabalistic heritage, the great grandson of Yosef Bibi, the grandson of Reuben Bibi, the great nephew of Haham Moshe Bibi and the great nephew of perhaps the pre-eminent mekubal in our community since we arrived in America, Haham Moshe Gindi, z'sl, I could point to Kabbalistic sources which perhaps suggest that merits themselves can actually be transferred. But let's stay with what they call the rationalist view for the moment.

Here is how it probably works

We are all ripples of those who preceded us. My great grandfather dies almost 90 years ago, yet I am one of his ripples. My grandfather wouldn't have been who he was, my father wouldn't have been who he was, I wouldn't be who I am and my children wouldn't be who they are if it wasn't for him, his sacrifice, his efforts, his learning and his teaching. Each year he is judged in Heaven; and he is judged for his actions or the at least the ripple effect of those actions. During the week of his Yarzeit, we prayed, we said Kaddish, we read tehilim, we learned, we taught, we said berachot and more, all to raise his soul. How could my actions do anything for him? They only can because my actions are ripples of his. With this in mind read through the sources and it becomes very clear. Everything we do has an effect on those who came before us.

The sources which tell us that a person can be judged only for his own actions may be correct, but actions include consequences, both bad and good,

Those who have passed are judged for their actions and the consequences of those same actions. They are judged for all their ripples.

So as we approach these high holidays we have some extra encouragement. It's not only us and our children we can help. Its for all those who came before us too. In the Pele Yoetz, Rav Eliezer Pappo writes that a person for his entire life even after the passing of the parent must continue to do for his parent.

May our ancestors merit act as a merit for us and may our actions benefit their souls. All the best and Shabbat Shalom, Tizku LeShanim Rabot
A Happy, Healthy, Peaceful and Prosperous Year !
Rabbi David Bibi

PS This article easily could have been ten times as long, but we had to limit it in some way ... I am deeply grateful to my colleague and friend Rabbi Aharon Siegel for assisting with additional sources supporting this idea

: ב דומע גס תומבי

בי א לאומש quotes רוא הרות Where

,טי קוספ, חי קרפ , אריו תשרפ, ישר

! הבר תישארב quoting קוספ on ישר Last

א דומע זטק פד ארתב אבב ארמג

אי קרפ, 'א מיכלמ" says, רוא הרות Where

,תינעת תכסמ, ב דומע ה

. Quoted by ישר on ישר חיו תשרפ

ב. דומע ה פד תינעת תכסמ תופסות

ז קוספ, חמ קרפ, יחיו תשרפ ישר

Quoting ישר also quotes which יתבר אתקיספ and הבר תישארב in his שוריפ either קוספ אל קרפ והימרי to שוריפ 14, or 15, or 16.

ב דומע אל תורוכב, ב דומע צ פד יירדהנס, א דומע זצ פד תומבי ארמג

דומלת א " . ז ריש " says, רוא הרות Where the דק, his lips move in the grave !

א דומע דק פד יירדהנס ארמג

" . בל מירבד " , quotes, רוא הרות Where

ב דומע י פד הטוס תופסות

Discussing the above ארמג in relation to דוד ולמה דוד and מולשבא .

! הרורב הנשמע א"מרו רבחמ , ו פיעס אכרת נמיס ח"א פורע ונהלוש

At end of the ב"מ, quotes the Gemara in יירדהנס ב"מ ! א דומע דק

! מש הלוגה ראב נייע דועו

In addition we are Rabbi Natan Slifkin who eulogized his mother in law, Anne Sampson, in January of 2014 with a lecture entitled: "What Can One Do For Someone Who Has Passed Away?" and whose notes were very helpful in preparing my own class and this article.

The Lessons of Shimon Peres By Daniel Gordis

Editor's note: Shimon Peres died on Wednesday, September 28 in Israel. The following article was originally published on September 16, after he had suffered a stroke.

Ad me'ah ve-esrim, the Jewish tradition has us wish each other. May you live to be 120.

The age at which the Bible says Moses died, "one hundred and twenty years," has come to signify completeness, wholeness. Next year, 2017, marks 120 years since Theodor Herzl launched political Zionism and the project of building a Jewish State with the First Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897.

A century is also a mark of completeness. Next year, 2017, will be a century since the British issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917. True, the British eventually backed away from their endorsement of a "national home for the Jewish people" by limiting Jewish immigration to Palestine to almost zero in the late 1930s, but 1917 marked the first time that a major world power publicly and unabashedly stood behind the project that Herzl had launched two decades earlier.

So, too, with 70 years. Seventy years, says the Mishnah in Avot 5:21, is the age of "fullness of years." And next year, 2017, will be seventy years since the UN voted on November 29 to partition Palestine and to create a Jewish State.

We are on the eve of all those significant anniversaries... but they will not arrive until next year. Perhaps that is part of the reason that Shimon Peres's very serious stroke strikes many of us as particularly sad. Updates on his status lead the Israeli news, several times a day. An entire country is waiting to see and hear what will be. Peres, to be sure, is not a young man; and he has lived an extraordinary life of great purpose and accomplishment. Yet, it is hard not to feel wistful: Is there anyone alive who more deserves to see 120 years since the Zionist Congress, a century since

Balfour, and 70 “fullness” years since UN Resolution 181?

Why would it be so wonderful to have had an alert and healthy Shimon Peres live to celebrate those anniversaries? Because he is, in many ways, the bookend to Theodor Herzl. Herzl, often called the “father of the nation,” got the Zionist movement under way. It was David Ben-Gurion and his colleagues who brought it to fruition, and Peres is the last of Ben-Gurion’s circle still alive. Dayan, Meir, Rabin, and many others were all part of that effort, but they are gone. Peres’s abiding presence in the Israeli public eye was our last living link to that founding generation. When we lose him, there will be no denying that the defining era of Zionist toil and accomplishment has ended.

Though an entire country has Shimon Peres in its thoughts, and the Chief Rabbi has urged the nation to pray for Peres, it is clear that we may lose him. If we do, though, in the year before those anniversaries and the “fullness” they reflect, perhaps there will be a lesson in that, too. The Zionist movement has not yet made it 120 years since Herzl. We have not had that full century since Balfour. And we have not quite reached the seventy years of fullness since Resolution 181. This is, then, still the beginning. This project is still very young, still vulnerable. It is not too late for us to shape it.

That is what Shimon Peres’ life was about. When necessary, in particular on the eve of the 1956 Sinai Campaign, he procured advanced weapons for Israel. Yet he never lost hope that peace could be still possible. In 2007, Peres became the first President to visit Kfar Kassem, the site of the 1956 massacre of Arab citizens by IDF soldiers, and he asked for forgiveness. He was the man who was deeply involved in Israel’s pursuit of a nuclear weapon, and the man who signed the Oslo Peace Accords. In his latter years, he grew fascinated with nanotechnology and became the darling of Israel’s youth.

More than anything, Shimon Peres, never a terribly successful politician, has long represented the belief in possibility, the belief in Zionism coupled to realism. With Peres aging and now very frail just on the eve of all those anniversaries, the fullness of those years not quite achieved, his illness is a kind of passing of the torch. His generation did what it could. It is up to us to pick up this mantle and emulate their wisdom before it’s too late, lest we lose the promise of those anniversaries. We still pray Shimon Peres will live to see them.

**Our advocate in heaven
Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, former Chief Rabbi of
Israel and current chief rabbi of Tel Aviv.**

The greatest hero is he who makes his enemy a friend, the Talmud says. No one fits this description more than Shimon Peres.

The man dedicated 70 years of his life to making the Jewish state grow and prosper, and held more positions in public life than anyone else. During most of his life, he did not receive the love he yearned for.

But after becoming president, he was showered with the love and admiration he deserved, both at home and abroad. This transformation encapsulated the Talmudic phrase and made him into the man he was. He always stood tall despite suffering devastating setbacks in his career and the refusal of many to put their ideological differences aside and accept him and his contribution.

Peres’ most powerful qualities came to light in recent years because of the love he received. Peres excelled at looking into the future and envisioning a better life for his people. But what made him such a unique figure was his ability to realize his vision in the present, not just articulate it. He was a man of the book who never stopped reading prose or poetry. It is thanks to him that Israel’s defense industries flourished and developed, and it is because of his work as finance minister that Israel is now on a solid economic footing. The scope of his contributions on those two fronts is unrivaled.

Peres’ soul has left this world and has joined the other Israeli giants in heaven, the latest Israeli leader to have left us in recent years. I can’t think of any other leader who, after suffering a crushing defeat in his own party primaries, refused to hang up the towel and simply asked his advisers, “OK, the voters have rendered their verdict; what’s my schedule tomorrow?”

The man was a celebrity in the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. I saw him being admired in a conference that took place right after the 9/11 attacks. Even then Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa -- hardly a Zionist sympathizer -- was blown away by what he had to say, listening to his every word despite disagreeing with most of his speech. Many people owe their lives to him, including the more than 100 hostages who were freed in the Entebbe raid when he was defense minister. Let’s hope he continues to be our advocate in the heavenly courts. We need more people like him.

An "Unusual" Rosh Hashanah Concert in Spain

In Spain of August 1492, all Jews were ordered to leave the Spanish kingdom. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella had recently conquered all of Spain and sought to make their new kingdom an entirely Christian nation. No Jews could remain. Thousands of Jews fled, and within days, the Jewish community of Spain, which had flourished for hundreds of years, had ended.

However, not all of Spain's Jews had fled. It was possible to remain in Spain, but every Jew had to publicly convert to Christianity and renounce all Jewish observance. Many Jews lived outwardly as goyim in public, but held on to their Jewish observance in secret.

On Friday nights, these secret Jews would shutter their windows so neighbors wouldn't see them light Shabbos candles. They would bake their challah in hiding, and would whisper the words of the Kiddush. They knew their lives were at stake if they were ever discovered. The Spanish Inquisition had begun years before, and Jews were frequently killed when their secret Jewish lifestyles became known.

Even though these Jews had apparently embraced Christianity, the secret Jews of Spain were never trusted by the Spaniards. They called these Jews "Marranos", a disparaging term that means "pigs", and many looked for any sign of Jewish practice in order to turn them over to the Inquisition.

There was a large group of these secret Jews in the city of Barcelona who clung to their ancient traditions. One person, a prominent Jew named Don Fernando Aguilar, was the conductor of the Royal Orchestra in that city, and he enjoyed great wealth and prestige. He privately kept all the mitzvos he could. When he would come home each night, he kissed a Mezuzah that he kept hidden in his floorboards. He was careful to eat only Kosher food and observe the Jewish holidays.

Some Mitzvos, however, were nearly impossible to observe, like hearing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah. Blowing a Shofar out loud would lead to an immediate arrest, and death. After five long years of living this secret life, Don Aguilar saw an opportunity. In 1497, he made a public announcement, that on Sunday, the 5th of September, he would personally lead the Royal Orchestra of Barcelona in a brand new concert of his own composition, and the piece he had written was unlike anything ever heard in Spain before.

He declared that it was going to be a musical celebration of different people and cultures from around the world, featuring every instrument ever invented from across the globe, no matter how far away. The only thing he didn't announce was that it was also the first day of Rosh Hashanah. He

generated much excitement for his concert, and on the day of the performance, the orchestra hall was filled with an over-flow crowd.

Also in attendance were those "Marranos", but nobody seemed suspicious of them. As the concert began, Don Fernando Aguilar was true to his word, the audience heard interesting music from a wide range of instruments. There were bells and horns, stringed instruments and an array of different drums.

Then, in the middle of the concert, a musician with the orchestra who was rumored by many to be a secret Jew took the stage. He was holding an unusual instrument: a ram's horn. The musician put it to his lips, and began to blow. He blew a Tekiah, a Shevarim, and a Teruah. Each note of the Rosh Hashanah Shofar service rang out throughout the hall, one hundred notes in all.

Most of the audience appreciated it as a skillful performance of an unfamiliar instrument, but to the secret Jews in the audience, Don Aguilar's "music" gave them their first chance in years to fulfill the mitzvah of hearing the Shofar! (The Book of Our Heritage, Rabbi Eliyahu Ki Tov)

Summary of the Perasha

During these weeks leading up to Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur we begin to experience some added clarity and closeness to Hashem. It becomes evident what is important in life and what is not worth getting stressed out about. We naturally feel inspired and the difficult things we are experiencing in life become easier to understand. There is a pasook in Yehezkel and another in sefer ha'yetsira that refers to a mashal of "mar'eh ha'bazak" (a flash of lightning). Rav Shimshon Pinchus brings down these pesookim and explains that sometimes a person is lost in total darkness. He can't see and he doesn't know the way. And then comes a flash of lightning. When that flash of lightning comes he looks around taking in everything he can to see and remember the path so that when he is once again in darkness he remembers the way. And that is similar to these times right now. Over the next few weeks the emet (the truth) becomes clearer. We realize what things in this world have value and which do not. We have a better vision as to what we really want to accomplish in life and how to go about it. And the message here is to write it down. Write down how you feel. Write down what you want to accomplish. Write down how it is clear to you that this thing that usually bothers you during the year is really not worth worrying about. Like a man lost in darkness let us take advantage of this moment of light. Let us take these days of clarity and save them that they should last us through the year and throughout our life! Tizku le'shanim Rabot!

Nitsavim- Teshuva and Benei Israel seals a covenant with Hashem

- 1- Moshe gathers Benei Israel on the day of his death to enter a covenant with Hashem
- 2- The purpose of the covenant is so we should remain acting like Hashem's nation
- 3- A warning to stay away from avoda zara
- 4- A day will come when we do teshuva and Hashem will gather us and return us to Israel
- 5- Blessings that will come when we do teshuva and return to Hashem
- 6- Hashem reassures us that the Torah is not in the heavens or seas but rather is close and attainable for us to learn
- 7- Hashem again tells Benei Israel that if we follow the mitzvot we will have life and goodness and if we don't there will be death

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

**Visit DailyHalacha.com, DailyGemara.com,
MishnaBerura.com, LearnTorah.com
The "Cardiac Jew"**

Parashat Nitsavim continues Moshe's warnings to Benei Yisrael of the consequences of their failure to observe the Torah. After describing in great detail the catastrophes that God would bring upon them if they violate His laws, as we read in Parashat Ki-Tabo, Moshe now expresses concern that some among Benei Yisrael will ignore his warnings: "Perhaps there is among you a man or woman...whose heart turns away this day from Hashem our God... When he hears these words of curse, he will bless himself in his heart, saying: All will be well with me for I shall follow my heart's wishes..." (29:17-18).

Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank (1873-1961) offers a novel interpretation of this final phrase – "for I shall follow my heart's desire" ("Ki Bi'shrirut Libi Elech"). The person that Moshe describes in these verses feels he can ignore the detailed laws of the Torah because he "follows his heart" – meaning, he is a good person, with a good heart and a fine character. He is polite, caring and sensitive, he deals honestly with people and treats them kindly. In this person's mind, that is really all that God demands. God does not really care whether or not he puts on Tallit and Tefillin, and if or when he recites Berachot. Halachic details such as when he must stand or sit during prayer are entirely irrelevant, according to this line of thinking. What's important is "Sherirut Libi" – having a good heart, being good-natured and kind.

God reacts angrily to this attitude, as Moshe warns in the next verse, "God will not agree to forgive such a person."

It goes without saying that the Torah demands a good heart. There is no question that we must be honest, courteous, caring and good-natured people, and that if we are not, then all our Mitzvot are worthless. Good character comes before all else. But we must never think that this is all God wants from us. We are bidden to follow all the laws He commands us, all four sections of the Shulhan Aruch. The Torah does not approve of the "cardiac Jew," the Jew who has a good heart and feels that this is all that is necessary. A good heart is indispensable but insufficient.

Imagine a CEO who hands his employee a list of twenty tasks that he needs completed by the end of the workday. At 5pm, the employee goes over to his boss to say hello. He very warmly asks how the boss's day went, how his wife and children are, and shows genuine concern for the boss and his family. He even gives the boss a box full of treats and gifts for his children, and offers to paint his house for him, free of charge, as a kind gesture.

"Thank you, that's very kind," the boss replies. "But before we get to that, what about the list of jobs I asked you to do today? Are they done?"

The employee replies that he hadn't done any of them.

This worker sounds like a very nice man, with a heart of gold, who genuinely cares about people and likes doing favors, but he utterly failed as an employee. The boss certainly appreciates his kindness, but he demands much more – that the employee does what he's told to do.

Hashem is our boss, and He has given us a list of jobs to do – all the Halachot in the Shulhan Aruch. We cannot pick and choose only those parts of Torah that naturally appeal to us and disregard the rest. We have been given the whole package, and we must always be committed to the whole package, so that God will approve of our "job performance" and continue "paying" us with His blessings.

VICTOR BIBI SOD HAPARASHA

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Rabbi Wein
ROSH HASHANAH

The past year has passed rather quickly. As one thankfully becomes older, time seems to start racing by. Maybe that is part of what Einstein meant when he declared that time is relative. It certainly is relative to each individual person and to each differing circumstance and experience in life. There are long days and shorter ones depending on the occurrences in that twenty-four hour period of time.

This is indicated to us in the sounds of the shofar that we are privileged to hear on Rosh Hashanah. There are long smooth sounds that are vaguely comforting and steadying. There are many days in the year that are like that. It is the ordinary, uneventful day that we so treasure and long for. Then there are also more broken, sharper sounds that the shofar gives forth. These are the sounds of tension and confusion, of problems unresolved and disappointments and frustrations, of long lines and wasted times, of unfulfilled goals and unaccomplished errands.

I would imagine that there are many days of the year that correspond to these broken sounds of the shofar. These are the days of raising children, of career and work, of medical appointments and taxing traffic jams. Finally there is the sound of staccato warning, of the sirens of danger and feared destruction and loss. These are usually caused by things that are not under our particular control. Financial reversals, wars and violent conflicts, megalomaniacal national leaders, illness and accidents are the stuff of life but we are not happy to have to suffer or witness them. These circumstances make for a very long day.

The cliché is that we should not only count our days but more importantly make our days count. In spite of its being a rather trite cliché it nevertheless is a true and most valid one. Days are precious and should not be needlessly squandered. People who have worked and been busy and occupied for most of their lives often find it difficult to fill the days of retirement with meaningful and satisfying experiences. It is as though no sound of the shofar exists for them any longer.

The shofar of Rosh Hashanah serves as a wake up call to all of us. This is the famous statement of Maimonides in Mishna Torah explaining the commandment of sounding the shofar. It is to rouse us from our slumber of inactivity and lethargy and to encourage us towards acts of spiritual, social and national worth and value.

It bids us to become productive with our lives in a meaningful way. Rosh Hashanah becomes not only a day of calendar commemoration but rather a day of challenge and positive change – of goal setting and personal responsibility. No matter how long and short the day is for us, it should not be allowed to be an empty and silent one. The wise person has his or her ear attuned to hear the sound of the shofar every day in one's heart and mind. It is the key to purposeful living.

Rosh Hashanah is also the day of memory. We all sense that memory is the greatest of all gifts granted to us. Memory impinges on all of our present actions and behavior. It is the coloring to our lives and the true guide to our goals and hopes. It decides for us who are one's heroes and villains. It helps us make correct choices and to ignore previous errors and pitfalls. We are charged with remembering God and God, so to speak, remembers us on that holy day. In His omniscience, everything is remembered and recalled, judged, weighed and inscribed.

The sound of the shofar is also the sound of memory. What has gone before us is now restored to us once more. The shofar is a most powerful instrument of human recall and validation. In its sounds we hear our past, both personally and nationally. It serves not only as a wakeup call but also as documentary recording of our lives and events.

Its varied notes parallel the days of our years. The holiday heralds the beginning of a new good year but it also initiates within us the review of the past year and other previous years and times. We pray for better times, for health and healing, for successful endeavors and meaningful accomplishments and lasting achievements. So, the shofar is also the sound of hope and eternity, of improvement and redemption.

A very happy new year to all.

Shabbat shalom
Ktiva v'chatima tova

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks
Not In Heaven

When I was a student at university in the late 1960s – the era of student protests, psychedelic drugs, and the Beatles meditating with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi – a story went the rounds. An American Jewish woman in her sixties travelled to north India to see a celebrated guru. There were huge crowds waiting to see the holy man, but she pushed through, saying that she needed to see him urgently. Eventually, after

weaving through the swaying throng, she entered the tent and stood in the presence of the master himself. What she said that day has entered the realm of legend. She said, "Marvin, listen to your mother. Enough already. Come home."

Starting in the sixties Jews made their way into many religions and cultures with one notable exception: their own. Yet Judaism has historically had its mystics and meditators, its poets and philosophers, its holy men and women, its visionaries and prophets. It has often seemed as if the longing we have for spiritual enlightenment is in direct proportion to its distance, its foreignness, its unfamiliarity. We prefer the far to the near.

I used to think that this was unique to our strange age, but in fact Moses already foresaw this possibility:

Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. It is not in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will climb to heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and let us hear it so that we may obey it?" No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. (Deut. 30:11-14)

Moses had an intimation that in the future Jews would say that to find inspiration we have to ascend to heaven or cross the sea. It's anywhere but here. And so it was for much of Israel's history during the First and Second Temple periods. First came the era in which the people were tempted by the gods of the people around them: the Canaanite Baal, the Moabite Chemosh, or Marduk and Astarte in Babylon. Later, in Second Temple times, they were attracted to Hellenism in its Greek or Roman forms. It is a strange phenomenon, best expressed in the memorable line of Groucho Marx: "I refuse to belong to a club that would accept me as a member." Jews have long had a tendency to fall in love with people who don't love them and pursue almost any spiritual path so long as it is not their own. But it is very debilitating.

When great minds leave Judaism, Judaism loses great minds. When those in search of spirituality go elsewhere, Jewish spirituality suffers. And this tends to happen in precisely the paradoxical way that Moses describes several times in Devarim. It occurs in ages of affluence not poverty, in eras of freedom not slavery. When we seem to have little to thank God for, we thank God. When we have much to be grateful for, we forget.

The eras in which Jews worshipped idols or became Hellenised were Temple times when Jews lived in their land, enjoying either sovereignty or autonomy. The age in which, in Europe, they abandoned Judaism was the period of emancipation, from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, when for the first time they enjoyed civil rights.

The surrounding culture in most of these cases was hostile to Jews and Judaism. Yet Jews often preferred to adopt the culture that rejected them rather than embrace the one that was theirs by birth and inheritance, where they had the chance of feeling at home. The results were often tragic.

Becoming Baal worshippers did not lead to Israelites being welcomed by the Canaanites. Becoming Hellenised did not endear Jews to either the Greeks or the Romans. Abandoning Judaism in the nineteenth century did not end Anti-Semitism; it inflamed it. Hence the power of Moses' insistence: to find truth, beauty and spirituality, you don't have to climb to heaven or cross the sea. "The word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it."

The result was that Jews enriched other cultures more than their own. Part of Mahler's Eighth Symphony is a Catholic mass. Irving Berlin, son of a chazzan, wrote "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas." Felix Mendelssohn, grandson of one of the first "enlightened" Jews, Moses Mendelssohn, composed church music and rehabilitated Bach's long neglected St Matthew Passion. Simone Weil, one of the deepest Christian thinkers of the twentieth century, described by Albert Camus as "the only great spirit of our times" was born to Jewish parents. So was Edith Stein, celebrated by the Catholic Church as a saint and martyr, but murdered in Auschwitz because to the Nazis she was a Jew. And so on.

Was it the failure of Europe to accept the Jewishness of Jews and Judaism? Was it Judaism's failure to confront the challenge? The phenomenon is so complex it defies any simple explanation. But in the process, we lost great art, great intellect, great spirits and minds.

To some extent the situation has changed both in Israel and the Diaspora. There has been much new Jewish music and a revival of Jewish mysticism. There have been important Jewish writers and thinkers. But we are still spiritually underachieving. The deepest roots of spirituality come from within: from within a culture, a tradition, a sensibility. They come from the syntax and semantics of the native language of the soul: "The word is very near you; it is

in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.”

The beauty of Jewish spirituality is precisely that in Judaism, God is close. You don't need to climb a mountain or enter an ashram to find the Divine presence. It is there around the table at a Shabbat meal, in the light of the candles and the simple holiness of the Kiddush wine and the challot, in the praise of the Eishet chayil and the blessing of children, in the peace of mind that comes when you leave the world to look after itself for a day while you celebrate the good things that come not from working but resting, not from buying but enjoying, the gifts you have had all along but did not have time to appreciate.

In Judaism, God is close. He is there in the poetry of the psalms, the greatest literature of the soul ever written. He is there listening in to our debates as we study a page of the Talmud or offer new interpretations of ancient texts. He is there in the joy of the festivals, the tears of Tisha be-Av, the echoes of the shofar of Rosh Hashanah and the contrition of Yom Kippur. He is there in the very air of the land of Israel and the stones of Jerusalem, where the oldest of the old and the newest of the new mingle together like close friends.

God is near. That is the overwhelming feeling I get from a lifetime of engaging with the faith of our ancestors. Judaism needed no cathedrals, no monasteries, no abstruse theologies, no metaphysical ingenuities, beautiful though all these are, because for us God is the God of everyone and everywhere, who has time for each of us, and who meets us where we are, if we are willing to open our soul to Him.

I am a rabbi. For twenty-two years I was a Chief Rabbi. But in the end I think it was we, the rabbis, who did not do enough to help people open their doors, their minds, and their feelings to the Presence-beyond-the-universe-who-created-us-in-love that our ancestors knew so well and loved so much. We were afraid. Of the intellectual challenges of an increasingly secular culture. Of the social challenges of being in, yet not entirely of, the world. Of the emotional challenge of finding Jews or Judaism or the state of Israel criticised and condemned. So we retreated behind a high wall, thinking that made us safe. High walls never make you safe; they only make you fearful.[1] The only thing that makes you safe is confronting the challenges without fear and inspiring others to do likewise.

What Moses meant in those extraordinary words, “It

is not up in heaven ...nor is it beyond the sea,” was: “Kinderlech, your parents trembled when they heard the voice of God at Sinai. They were overwhelmed. They said: If we hear any more we will die. So God found ways in which you could meet Him without being overwhelmed. Yes He is creator, sovereign, supreme power, first cause, mover of the planets and the stars. But He is also parent, partner, lover, friend. He is Shekhinah, from shakhen, meaning, the neighbour next door.

So thank Him every morning for the gift of life. Say the Shema twice daily for the gift of love. Join your voice to others in prayer so that His spirit may flow through you, giving you the strength and courage to change the world. When you can't see Him, it is because you are looking in the wrong direction. When He seems absent, He is there behind the door, but you have to open it.

Don't treat Him like a stranger. He loves you. He believes in you. He wants your success. To find Him you don't have to climb to heaven or cross the sea. His is the voice you hear in the silence of the soul. His is the light you see when you open your eyes to wonder. His is the hand you touch in the pit of despair. His is the breath that gives you life.

[1] See Rashi to Num. 13:18.

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL Preparing For Yom Hadeen/Rosh Hashana

The main Avoda of the Judgement Day is focusing on "Hashem Melech", The King. That Hashem created the universe & He runs it all. He is the only one that has any power & only He can do anything for us.

EMUNAH is what we are working on gaining clarity for Rosh Hashana.

Rambam: "I am Hashem your G-d"(10 Commandments"), this is the Mitzvah to gain Awareness & Belief in Hashem.

This is most fundamental & supercedes even admitting our sins (which we don't do today) in front of the Heavenly court.

The great Purpose in life, to constantly improve, is something that Hashem is urging us and weighing.

"Hashem imparts wisdom to the wise person" (not the jester) because He sees that this wise person will make the best use of this gift. So, we want to put

ourselves in this position for the Great Day of Judgment, Yom Hadeen.

"Asher Bara Elokim Laasot", "...That Hashem created to do".

The words 'to do' seem superfluous since it was already stated that "Hashem rested from all of the work that He did".

R' Miller explains that the words "to do" come to teach us the great purpose of life, to be a doer, to make something out of ourselves through constant improvement.

Hashem, our Father, Avinu Malkenu, is waiting on Rosh Hashana to hear our commitment to improve. We can say, "Hashem, we are going to utilize the coming year to love & fear Hashem.

To do everything to serve Hashem.

I am going to make something out of myself".

When Hashem hears our commitment for the New Year, He says: "My child, I see that you are committing to improvement, I commit to giving you another year of life and blessing".
"Hashem imparts wisdom to the wise".

Step 1 to Teshuvah: Realizing how much Hashem has done for you. Step 2: Thanking Him

Some thoughts for a more meaningful Rosh Hashana ... Nathan I. Dweck

Mikveh

We have a minhag to go to the mikveh before Rosh Ha'shana in order to cleanse ourselves and accept upon ourselves the kedoosha this awesome day of Rosh Hashana. Ben Ish Hai in Parashat Netzavim brings down the kavanot we should have when dipping.

Dip # 1 - Tahara – Purity

Dip # 2 - Rectify Anger

Dip # 3 - To Sweeten the Judgment

Dip # 4 - To Remove the Weekday Garb & To End Last Year and its Curses

Dip # 5 - To Accept the Holiness of Rosh Hashana & To Begin the New Year and its Blessing

**Thanks to Saul Kassin who sent these kavanot around

Dinner

At dinner we eat things as a segula for a good year. And by some of the items we eat we say it is so that we can defeat or remove our enemies. It is helpful to

have in mind when saying this that our main enemy is the yetser hara. And thus we can have kavana in asking Hashem to make it easier for us to defeat the yetser hara and that we should desire more to do Hashem's will. We can have kavana that Hashem should make it easier for us this year to want to learn Torah and do mitsvot.

After Dinner

Some siddurim (like the Orot siddur) have the mishnayot of Rosh Hashana in it. Many people try and read/learn these mishnayot on Rosh Hashana. It is a nice idea to read these mishnayot after dinner. This will assure that our night has some Torah learning it.

Walking to Shul

When walking to shul in the morning a nice idea is to think about all the things we are thankful for. Talk to Hashem (out loud). Say thank you Hashem for giving me parents. Thank you Hashem for giving me a wife. Thank you for my children. Thank you that they are healthy and happy and getting along with their friends and learning well in school. Thank you for giving me a year of life and a year of health... and we can think of this again in the tefila of nishmat. This will lay the foundation of hakarat hatov. This will give us a feeling of "katonti mikol ha'hasadim" as we say in the selichot. That we are humbled by all Hashem has done for us. And thus when we come before Hashem we come as a person who has no demands. Everything we get and ask for is the hesed of Hashem who is giving us more than we rightfully deserve. Let us think about all Hashem has done for you this year!

Shachrit

Nishmat - As we are approaching nishmat it is helpful to stop for 30 seconds and think of all the things Hashem has blessed us with. If we have even one of the following items (the ability to see, the ability to hear, the ability to talk, the ability to walk, the ability to think and learn) we are very fortunate. All the more so if we have all these things! If Hashem blessed us with a spouse, if Hashem blessed us with a child, if Hashem blessed us with multiple children, if Hashem gave us a place to live... We are very fortunate! For any of these items alone we cannot begin to thank Hashem adequately. And this is the theme of nishmat. That we all are forever indebted to Hashem and cannot even begin to thank Hashem enough. If we can invoke that feeling hopefully this will make our tefila of nishmat more powerful. Further, our requests later in the tefilah can have more impact and effectiveness if they are built on a foundation of hakarat ha'tov. This is similar to a parent who wants to give a child but when the child doesn't appreciate

what he has and only asks for more the parent holds back so the child will realize all he is getting and taking for granted.

Amida - Melech Hakadosh- See the attached sheet on this regarding what we are saying here.

Amida- Ata Bachartanu- Hashem chose us as his nation. He gave us the Torah and he gave us the mitsvot. Think about what this means. Without the Torah there would be no Shabbat. No mitsvot to guide our lives. No community. No emphasis on family. Without Torah where would we be? What would our lives be like? Take a minute to think about this and it will help us to feel grateful while saying these words.

Modim- Same kavana as nishmat. One can stop for 30 seconds before beginning modim and think of 3 or 4 things he is grateful for.

Bidding

On Rosh Hashana we work so hard to get in the right zone for tefilah. It is important to take notice that the more we look up out of our siddur and look around the room taking notice of the things going on around us the more this takes us out of that zone we are working so hard to get in to. This also applies very much with the bidding. If one is going to buy an aliyah that is great but if not let us not be distracted with who is bidding for which aliyah and how much he is paying. This is valuable time that can be spent saying tehillim or reading through the upcoming Musaf amida in English to better understand what we will be saying.

Taking out the Torah

The aron is open. This is a precious time. It is an eht rason (a time of mercy). Let us not waste it by talking to the person next to us. When taking out the Torah we say the words "le'olam Hashem debarecha nisav bashamayim" twelve times. Literally it means "forever Hashem's word is established in shamayim". What does this mean? What should we be thinking when we say this? I heard from Rabbi David Sutton two kavanot we can have when saying this pasook. One that Hashem's evil decree should stay up in shamayim and not be carried out here in this world. The second is that Hashem's word, the words that created the world, nisav bashamayim, is still established in shamayim and is fueling the existence of the world to this day. We are acknowledging that without Hashem actively making everything in the world happen the world would cease to exist. To help us better understand this concept we can think of a moonwalk. Without the air being pumped into the moonwalk every second the moonwalk would

collapse. Everything exists and is happening because Hashem is making it happen. These words are a statement of emunah!

Shofar

See the attached sheet for what to think about while the shofar is blowing.

Musaf – Making a kabala

Making a kabala. I heard from Rabbi David Sutton quoting the Pele Yoetz that one should try and take something on before Musaf of the Rosh Hashana tefila. And the idea is that by taking on something new we are looked at as a baal teshuva (someone who is working on getting closer to Hashem). So to be counted among the "baaley teshuva" one should try and take something on before Musaf.

We often have difficulty thinking about what item to take on this year to show Hashem that we are trying and headed in the right direction. And many times we are just unable to find an item that is right for us. Or maybe we take something on that is too hard and are unable to follow through. And many times we get caught up in taking on another stringency yet what we really need is something that provides a little more life and feeling to our avodat Hashem. And so I wanted to propose an idea that maybe could be good for all of us. And that is that this year we resolve to talk to Hashem more. That we resolve to build our relationship with Hashem. It something that doesn't take more time but rather just takes more focus. And so an idea for this year is to make a seder (a set time) where you talk to Hashem. It can be while walking to shul in the morning, walking to the train, walking to or from the office, or before going to bed. It doesn't matter when but it just has to be the same time every day (so we are able to get into the routine). We can tell Hashem we love him. We can tell Hashem the different things we are thankful for that day. We can ask Hashem for things and ask him to bring us closer to him. So it is a nice idea to stop right now and set a time that we plan to use for talking to Hashem this year.

Musaf – The amida

The musaf amida is very different than any other amida we pray during the year. See the attached sheet which discusses the structure of this unique amida and what we are saying.

After shul

All day long when we have a free minute thank Hashem. Thank him for the things he gave us. List them. Keep saying thank you. A parent wants to give his child more when he sees how happy it makes him and how grateful it makes him. And the opposite is

also true. When a child doesn't say thank you for what you gave him and only asks for more it makes a parent not want to give. Let us be that child that Hashem wants to give to.

Also the idea of the day is that Hashem is the king. So maybe it is appropriate to pray during the day that everyone realize Hashem's greatness. Pray for ourselves and for the people around us that we should realize Hashem is the king. That we should all desire to serve him. That we should see with clarity his hand in our lives and that he is running the show. Let us pray that Hashem show himself in the world and everyone should know his is the king!

Some people have a custom to read the tehillim twice on Rosh Hashana. There are 150 psalms in each cycle making 300 psalms if you read it twice. 300 is gematria kaper (i.e. kapara). This is a nice custom too because we could be judged at any moment on Rosh Hashana and so it would be a shame if while we were being judged they were looking down from shamayim and instead of looking nervous over what our judgment will be we were sitting around carelessly wasting time with little concern of what the fate of our judgment will be. Hopefully Hashem will judge us while we are praying feverishly but if not at least while we are saying tehillim or doing a mitvah.

Lunch

Let us have extra kavana in our berachot. Let us be extra careful not to speak lashon hara on the table. How can we expect our mouths to have power in tefila if we use them against Hashem to speak lashon hara about his children. Also, the Ben Ish Chai writes that one should be extra careful not to get angry on Rosh Hashana.

Tashlich

Tashlich is composed of 3 parts. The first part is zohar. The 2nd is the miy kel kamocho. This is a pasook that mentions Hashem's mercy and that corresponds to the 13 midot of kel rachum.... This pasook contains the line ve'tashlich be'msoolot yam kol hatotam which is where we get the name tashlich. And the last part is a beautiful prayer from the Chida. It is a nice idea to take time to read this part in English (if you don't understand the Hebrew). It is really a special tefilah and we can learn from here a lot of foundations of what things we should be asking Hashem for when we pray to him.

During the day

Have fear of Hashem all day and think the whole time that we are being judged. Let us not have any light headedness. Think about remorse. Think that all the tragic things that happened this year, all the people

that died, all the people that suffered, all the people that got cancer, all the people that struggled in business this year, it was decreed last year on Rosh Hashana! How could this thought not instill fear in a person! (Note, we should be scared, but then we should feel confident that Hashem will judge us favorably since he is merciful and he is our father).

We are asking Hashem to reveal himself. This is the main focus and request of the day. With this will come all the things we desire. If our father is the king and in power so we, his children, will have the things we need.

See the attached sheet for other mindsets we should have throughout the day.

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