

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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TAL WISHES THE COMMUNITY A SWEET AND HAPPY NEW YEAR 5779! TIZKU LESHANIM RABOT NE-IMOT VETOVOT.

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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR  
TAL



## ONE SMALL STEP!

After a big storm, thousands of starfish had washed up on a secluded beach. One day, a man was walking down the beach and saw a stranger picking up one starfish at a time and throwing them back into the ocean. The man told the stranger he was wasting his time – that his effort alone wasn't going to matter in the grand scheme of things. The stranger picked up another starfish, threw it into the ocean, and replied, "It mattered to that one."

It's so easy to get wrapped up in our own lives and completely forget to make the little efforts. To see a homeless man sitting in Starbucks and think one cup of coffee or a handful of change couldn't possibly make

a difference in their life. So, we do nothing. I think you're right, a lot of the time we get lost in the idea that we need to have a giant impact on the world all at one time or our contribution is altogether meaningless. We don't think it's worth taking those small steps of service or making the small acts of kindness.

Our Sages put it this way: "A person is not given the opportunity for greatness until he is tested in the small things." Moshe Rabenu, the greatest leader in Jewish history, started his career as the shepherd of someone else's sheep. The same is true for King David: first a shepherd, then a king. A future Moshe Rabenu or a King David is entrusted with the destiny of the Jewish people only if first he is able to tend a flock with integrity and compassion and take care that the sheep don't wander off and eat a bit of grass from someone else's field. ►

## YOM KIPPUR TIMES

Starts: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>: 18:54

Ends: Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup>: 19:53

## > UPCOMING EVENTS

• 27<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER - LUNCH & LEARN CANARY WHARF

• 12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER - FRIDAY NIGHT BANQUET AT THE AVENUE

For our upcoming events check our website  
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Probably the most famous quote of the 20th Century was said by the first man on the moon, Neil Armstrong. It was heard by over 600 million listeners around the world.

As Armstrong stepped foot on the moon back in 1969, he uttered those famous words: “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

What a remarkable group of ten words which sum up so much.

Indeed, Armstrong’s small step with his foot (if one can describe any space motion as small) represented a marvellous achievement for humanity. But his message runs much deeper.

If each and every one of us starts taking small steps, then a large leap for human kind will follow.

Every little helps and every step is essential.

We are ten days from Rosh Hashanah, ten days into the New Year. What should be our focus?

On Rosh Hashanah we coronate The King of Kings – Hashem. Our focus is on the big picture.

Rosh Hashanah beckons us to take a panoramic view of our lives, all the while paying scant attention to the nuance that lies therein.

Yom Kippur, on the other hand, is just the opposite—entirely nuance: the tree, the leaves, and the nourishing roots, with barely a thought to the great forest in which we stand.

It’s a day of introspection; a day on which we ask forgiveness, realising and admitting our sins.

A day so powerful, bursting with potential.

A time we understand who we really are, where we have been and how we can improve going forwards.

But once we look into the past, we feel that it’s difficult to change. Being realistic we say to ourselves, it’s not possible to conquer the world. We are who we are, and that’s how we will stay.

Yet on Yom Kippur a small voice from within radiates our essence.

How do you feel when you don’t have the food and drink you have so accustomed yourself to? Questions start arising as to direction in life, and your soul emanates from within, with a cry to

Against that backdrop is a ‘realistic’ you.

“I can’t change my lifestyle; I won’t succeed in doing everything my soul yearns for!”

Yet the answer today is clear, ‘Take one step at a time, and you will succeed!’

Some of the most powerful words we say in prayer today are “Al Na Teshivenu Rekom Milfanecha – Don’t leave us empty handed from in front of you.”

The simple understanding is that we beseech G-d not to return us empty handed. We have spent the day praying and yearn for a positive answer from G-d.

Yet there is a deeper explanation. On this day that we have worked so hard for, a day of fasting, introspection and of seeking repentance for our sins, we beseech the Almighty and say, “Please G-d, don’t let us come away empty handed. Ensure that we are able to come out differently than we came in. Let us take with us something from our experience today that will last into the rest of the year.”

A year from now, you will wish you had started today.

One small step for man – what will your step be? ■

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## YOM KIPPUR - A DAY OF OPTIMISM

Have you ever wondered why the Jewish day starts at night? Why is it that Shabbat and Yom Tov begin just before it gets dark in the evening rather than as dawn breaks the next morning?

Of course, the obvious answer is that we follow the order of creation, as the Torah describes, 'there was evening and there was morning' and so from the beginning of time, night preceded day and that's how it's been ever since. But could there perhaps be a deeper significance to it?

I'd like to suggest that it represents a deep sense of hope. Day following night symbolises good prevailing over evil, light following dark implies happiness overcoming sadness and victory triumphing over defeat. This is what King David was referring to when he said: 'My soul is to G-d among those who await the morning... Israel, hope to G-d, for kindness is with G-d and much redemption is with Him.'

In our national consciousness we know that just as day follows night so too dark periods in our history give way to the light of peace and security. We await the morning during the darkness of the night. That is why every Shabbat we say: 'It is good to thank G-d and to sing praise to Your exalted name; to relate Your kindness in the morning and Your faith in the nights.' (Tehillim 92)

Daytime is an allusion to redemption, while night represents exile. We express our faith that even though there are times when we suffer ultimately we remain hopeful that G-d will save us. It is this hope that is the foundation of our faith.

The story is told of the great 19th century sage Rabbi Yisroel Salanter who once went to a shoemaker in his town to have a pair of shoes repaired. Since it was already nearing the end of the day he felt that the lack of light might cause the shoemaker difficulty. Rabbi Salanter therefore suggested that the shoemaker wait until the next day to start on the job. 'Do not despair' came the shoemaker's reply. 'I'll just light a candle. As long as the candle is lit, it's still possible to do the repairs.'

Rabbi Salanter saw these simple words as significant and took them to heart. Upon his return to the yeshiva he repeated the shoemaker's words to his students, while shedding his own Torah 'light' on them. We must never resign ourselves to spiritual despair. As long as the candle burns, we can affect the necessary repairs.

There seems to be a widespread misconception that Yom Kippur is a sad day because we fast and ask to be forgiven. In fact, it's a Yom Tov in every sense of the word because it affords us a remarkable opportunity to make our own necessary repairs and know that we'll be forgiven. That's why, just as day follows night, so too we begin the new year with a renewed sense of hope. So that whatever happened in the previous year, whatever negative things we experienced we can be optimistic that the coming year will be better.

**Gemar chatimah tovah ■**



## THE AVODAH OF THE TWO GOATS

*Few years ago we had a very special guest, Rabbi Gabriel Sasson, who recently in Brooklyn lost seven members of his family. He addressed us on the subject of emunah and he pointed out the difference between someone whose life is a spiritual one and one whose main focus is on material life. He himself felt a tremendous closeness to Hashem through his tragedy. I feel that on Yom Kippur a certain portion of the mussaf symbolises this concept of the contrast between one who lives a spiritual life and one who lives a more materialistic life.*

One of the most remarkable elements of Yom Kippur when the Bet Hamikdash stood was the ritual of “the two goats.” The first goat was sacrificed in the Bet Hamikdash; the second was taken to a cliff and thrown off, dying unceremoniously before it even reached the bottom.

What message can we find in this avodah that we can relate to?

There are two opposite ways to live life. Either one can focus his life on serving Hashem, with the knowledge that this is what is truly important, or focus on materialistic desires of pleasure and honour.

If one chooses to ignore the opportunity of life to serve Hashem, he might feel freedom of doing as he pleases and that he is making the most from life, but in reality such a life is meaningless and empty, it is truly death, and the neshamah feels this, which is why such people are constantly pursuing new pleasures to fill their emptiness. Only being close to Hashem can please the neshamah, and once one has this true enjoyment, he needs few physical pleasures to be completely happy.

We see this very clearly from the Torah. Immediately after the concise description of the creation of millions of galaxies, the focus of the Torah is limited to Adam and Chava, and after Avraham Avinu, to his descendants who took upon themselves the purpose of creation, the service of Hashem. Only one who serves Hashem is truly important.

However the world at large has the exact opposite philosophy. They believe that what we can perceive with our physical senses is all there is. This worldview of focusing on superficiality affects us and makes us lose our appreciation of anything spiritual.

Maybe these two diametric worldviews are somehow reflected on Yom Kippur. The goat that becomes a sacrifice on the Mizbeach might symbolize dedication to serving Hashem. One who sets himself aside for Hashem merits serving and giving nachat ruach to Hashem in the holiest place. If so, maybe its partner, which finds its fate in a desolate cliff, alludes to someone who focused his life on materialism, so he ends up with the emptiness and spiritual death he lived with. The two goats looked identical. Every individual has the potential to be great. It all depends on one’s focus in life.

The Se’ir la’azazel is described by the Torah as carrying away the sins of the people. The mefarshim wonder at this concept. The Rambam interprets it to mean that the people will be spurred by it to repent.

If the Se’ir la’azazel alludes to the mind set of materialism, this could explain the inspiration that can be derived from it. The fate of the two goats depicts how one who does not dedicate himself to serve Hashem only finds emptiness and desolation. The Gemara in effect said as much when it states that “A person does not sin unless a spirit of madness enters him”, meaning that he does not feel how what he desires is beneath him, and will devalue him.

Those who witnessed its death might well have been spurred by the thought to turn instead to consider the other goat, the one sacrificed in dedication to Hashem. They might then be able to commit themselves to re-embrace the true meaning of life.

We may lack this avodah today, but we can certainly try to absorb this eternally timely thought just the same. ■

*Based on the work of Rabbi Avi Shafran*





## “והחתן עמד בפתח מחייד...”

הצב"י אסף פורטל ס"ט  
והחתן עמד בפתח מחייד..."

חייד קורן ומצודד, ובידו- זר פרחים. נכנס לדירה כשפיו ממלמל אלף סליחות- והיא המומה. נקרעת בין חרון וכעס לבין אהבתה ותקוותיה. האם תורה לו את הדרך החוצה, האם תדרוש ממנו הסבר, או תבליג ותסלח, תמתח קו על העבר ותניח לו לפתוח דף חדש?

"את חיוורת" אמר לה. "בואי, שבי. למה את שותקת, את ניראת מתוחה..."

מה הייתם עושים? כיצד הייתם מגיבים? היא מכל מקום החלי- טה להבליג. ישיבה מולו והאירה לו פנים. לא שאלה שאלות. לא פתחה בתוכחות. הדחיקה את התהיות, ונתלתה בבקשת הסליחה. בבוקר יום המחרת ירד למכולת להביא כמה מצרכי מזון.

ולא שב.

הפעם לא עירבה עוד את המשטרה. אף לא סיפרה להוריה על הביקור. הסכינה עם בדידותה. בהגיע יום השנה השני לנישואין, אף לא פתחה את האלבום. אבל הפעמון צלצל. ובפתח, מי אם לא, החתן דנן. לבוש במיטב בגדיו, צרור פרחים בידו, בעיניו חייד קורן ושפתיו ממלמלות מילות התנצלות...

מה הייתם עושים? מצטדדים, ומניחים לו להיכנס? או טורקים בפניו את הדלת?!

כמדומני שהנמשל מובן מאליו. אבל קשה להתאפק מלצטט את הדו שיח הקצר שהתנהל שם, ליד הדלת הפתוחה למחצה, בין הגברת לבחור שבחדר המדרגות. "מה אתה רוצה?" שאלה בקול קר כקרח.

"הבאתי לך פרחים" אמר. "ואני מאוד מבקש שתכניסי כספים לחשבון הבנק, משום שמשכתי משם את כל היתרה ויש לי הוצאות רבות, את מבינה..."

הן כדאי להיזכר מה היה ביום הכיפורים הראשון של עם ישראל, מה אירע ביום הכיפורים שלאחר חג מתן תורה. הבה נרענן את הזיכרון: התורה ניתנה בחג השבועות, ומשה עלה למרום לקבל את הלוחות. 04 יום שהה במרום, וביום הארבעים- שעה לפני רדתו- איבדו את העשתונות ועשו את העגל. נגזרה עליהם כליה.

עלה משה רבינו בראש חודש אלול ושהה שם ארבעים יום נוספים, ויירד ביום הכיפורים, וכל אותם ימים היו ישראל שרויים בתשובה ותפילה על חטאם- ויירד משה רבינו בעשור לחודש (יום הכיפורים) והיו ישראל שרויים בתפילה ותענית. ובו ביום נאמר לו למשה: "סלחתי כדברך", וקבעו הקדוש ברוך הוא יום סליחה ומחילה לדורות. שנאמר: "כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לטהר אתכם מכל חטאותיכם לפני ה' תטהרו"

אמור מעתה: אמת, שיום הכיפורים ההוא היה היום התרצות, יום פיוס, יום סליחה ומחילה- אבל בעיקרו, היה זה יום נתינת הלוחות לעם ישראל. יום בו נמסרו להם כל המצוות. וזהו אופיו האמיתי של יום הכיפורים: יום של התחלה מחוד- שת. יום של קבלת עול מצוות, אותן מצוות שהזנחנו עד כה. "ביום חתונתו" אומרת הגמרא, זה מתן תורה. פירש רש"י: יום הכיפורים, שניתנו בו לוחות אחרונות!

אם כך נבוא- תיפתח הדלת לרווחה. נוזמן להכנס, מבלי שנישאל שאלות מביכות. היכן היינו עד כה...

גמר חתימה טובה לכל בית ישראל

החגים הנפלאים שלנו צבעוניים הם. זוהרים בסגוניותם. סעודת ליל ראש השנה על שלל סימניה הטובים: תפוח בדבש- לשנה טובה ומתוקה. גרגירי הרימון האדמדמים- לריבוי זכויות ומצוות. ראש הדג- שנהיה לראש.

וחג הסוכות - כמה צבעוני הוא. לאכול בסוכה המקורה בירק וענפי עצים, מקושטת בשרשראות נייר צבעוניות, ובתמונות ססגוניות. והסגוניות של חג שמחת תורה, על שיריו וריקודיו, ההקפות המרוממות עם ספרי התורה ודגלי הילדים.

וכן הלאה. נרות החנוכה, הלביות והסופגניות ומאכלי הגבינה, שמחת פורים עם קריאת המגילה והכאת המון, התחפושות המקוריות ומשלוחי המנות, ההכנות והקניות לקראת חג הפסח, ניקיון הבית והכשרתו, וליל הסדר המרומם. ניחוח המצות, הקערה ואר"ב בע הכסות, קריאת ההגדה ומתנות האפיקומן. חג השבועות- ליל שימורים של אמירת תיקון ולימוד תורה, בית הכנסת המקושט וקריאת עשרת הדיברות.

בתוך אותה קשת מועדים נפלאה, אחד הוא הבולט והנישא על פני כולם. זהו חג ללא סעודות, ללא זמירות ושירה. חג ללא צבעים, בוקר בלבד. אכן כן, מנהג ישראל ללכת בו בבגדי לבן. והכוונה כמובן ליום הכיפורים.

כי מיוחד הוא יום זה, ניסה ונשגב מכל ימים. גם יהודים שאינם מקפידים על שמירת המצוות בכל ימות השנה, ואינם נמנים על באי בית הכנסת- ביום הכיפורים פוקדים את בית הכנסת בצום ובתפילה. והם מתקבלים בשמחה ובמאור פנים. בפתח תפילות היום הקדוש מכריז החזן: "על דעת המקום ועל דעת הקהל, אנו מתירים להתפלל עם העבריינים".

אבל יש כאלו, שמושג היום הגדול והקדוש הזה התעוות אצלם. חושבים הם, שניתן לעשות בכל ימות השנה ככל שיעלה על הדעת, וביום הכיפורים באים לבית הכנסת לכעין חנינה כללית, "שמיטת חובות"

לאלו נספר מעשה:

מעשה בנערה שהגיעה לפרקה והכירה בחור. לא היה לו מקצוע, לא היו לו חסכוניות, אף לא דירה. אבל הנערה לא נרתעה. היא קנתה את הדירה, היא ריהטה אותה, ואף נתנה לו זכות חתימה בחסכוניותה. את בגדי חתונתו קנתה מכספה - ואכן נראה הדור ומקסים בעומדו תחת החופה. מובן שהיא זו ששילמה עבור החתונה המפוארת והתזמורת הנפלאה והמובחרת. לאחר החתונה נסעו לדירתם החדשה, ולמחרת בבוקר ירד למכולת להביא כמה מצרכי מזון- ונעלם.

עברו שעה ושעתיים ולא חזר. הלילה ירד והיא בודדה בדירתה. חששה אולי אירע לו משהו. אולי נחטף, אולי איבד את הזיכרון. פנתה למשטרה, נערכו חיפושים, אך לשווא. עבר שבוע, עברו שבועיים, אי אפשר היה להסתיר את הסוד. אוי לאותה בושא, אוי לאותה כלימה. עברו חודש וחודשיים, לא היה ממנו אות חיים. לא מכתב, לא צלצול טלפון, רק הבנק דיווח על משיכות כספים מן החשבון...

כך עברה שנה של בדידות ומצוקה. שנה של רגשות קוטיבים, בין כעס ועלבון לבין חרדה ודאגה. בליל יום השנה לנישואין האומללים ישיבה לה נוגה, דפדפה באלבום והגירה דמעה, ולפתע נשמעה נקישת בדלת. קמה לפתוח- וסומרה למקומה: החתן ניצב בפתח, לבוש באותם בגדים- כמה נאה הוא בבגדי כלולותיו, מחייד



## ELEPHANT AND THE IVORY TOWER

Elephants are pretty powerful creatures. They can weigh as much as 12 tons, and stand as high as thirteen feet tall. Their trunks are strong enough to rip branches off of a tree.

But despite their enormous power, elephants can be chained.

Chaining an elephant isn't as simple as just putting a chain around its leg – an adult elephant would snap the chain without even noticing the effort. Which chain is strong enough to hold an elephant who struggles to break it?

For the answer to that question, we have to take a trip back to the time when the elephant is born. A small chain fastened to a metal collar around the elephant's foot is attached to a wooden peg nailed into the ground. The baby elephant will struggle, but eventually it will realise that it can't break the chain, and even worse, continuing to struggle creates a painful burn on its leg. The baby elephant learns not to struggle – it accepts that the limit imposed by the chain is permanent, and there is no use struggling against it.

Sure, the elephant grows up, and becomes the most powerful land mammal on the face of the earth. But the chains in its mind remain,

and so the chains on its leg are never broken. The proverbial "Ivory Tower".

Now, this might be fine when applied to an elephant. After all, who would want 12 tons of angry blubber running around in the jungle, saying "Ok, who's the wise guy who tried to tie me up?"

But I heard a beautiful insight by Rav Fischel Schachter. How often do us Jews act like the elephant? So very often, there is a test that we fail to pass, and addiction that we fail to beat, a relationship that we cannot tolerate. And the conclusion is always the same:

**I JUST CAN'T!**

Teshuvah can only begin if I do not give up on myself. If I believe that I am totally worthless, then I cannot begin to think about repentance. Then I am no better off than that baby elephant who started off life with the chain. If only it realised the power it has as a fully grown adult, to smash the chain with one blow. But it is conditioned from birth not to believe in its own potential.

**IF ONLY WE REALISED OUR POTENTIAL AND VALUE AS SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF HASHEM!!**

The Mishna states "Don't be wicked in your own eyes" [Avot

2:13] In order for a person to begin the process of Teshuvah, he must first realize that he is somebody of value. He must take note: I am a son of Israel. I have a King in Heaven. I am a servant of the King. Yes, I may not have been a very good servant, but at least I can say that I am His servant.

The realization that there is a King and that I am His servant, and therefore that I have self worth, is a prerequisite for the process of Repentance.

Being a Jew entails the combination of two factors: Pride and responsibility.

It is essential that we ignite within ourselves the innate sense that we are proud children of Hashem. And it is equally essential that we take responsibility for being His children, and give Him the honour He needs in this world.

Just as important as it is to believe in Hashem, one must realise that Hashem believes in us. ■

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# OUR CHACHAMIM

## RABBI LEVI YITZCHAK OF BERDITCHEV

When we speak of a Tzaddik, a righteous man, two sayings of our Sages come to mind. The first is "The Tzaddik is the foundation of the world." We learn from this that, despite the torments that they've endured through history, if the Jewish people have managed to survive where other nations have disappeared, it is because of the presence of the Tzaddikim among them. The second saying is "The Tzaddik decides and G-d executes" and it perfectly illustrates the considerable influence that the Tzaddik, the living symbol of piety and virtue, has on the highest celestial entreaties that govern the entire universe.

These two sayings seemed to have been coined to define the exceptional character of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev. Whenever the name of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak is mentioned, one immediately thinks of the defender of the Jewish people. This Tzaddik, in reality one of the pillars of the Chassidic movement, has become indelibly etched in our collective memory as the one who, in all circumstances, didn't hesitate to take G-d as witness to plead Israel's case.

When it came to requesting favors for the community, or for coming up with unexpected agreements in their favor (arguments that were fervently true yet disarmingly simple) the Celestial Court could not refuse him.

It must be said that Rabbi Levi Yitzchak had been endowed by G-d with enormous spiritual powers that allowed him, whenever necessary, to raise his soul towards the celestial realm. It was there that he made himself the poignant advocate of the Jewish people and usually won his case.

It was an unconditional, absolute love for the Jewish people that burned in the heart of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak. This love was so evident that whoever approached the Tzaddik had but one desire: To emulate him, if even just the slightest bit, and to take shelter under the wings of the Shechinah (the Divine Presence). For this, everyone got ready to go back on the road of Torah and mitzvot. It was in this way that, thanks to him, many of our Russian brothers who had been more or less dangerously removed from Judaism came to make the decisive choice to do Teshuvah. Just as for Moses, we say of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak: "Many were those that he removed from sin."

Many are the stories and testimonies that evoke the righteous mission that Rabbi Levi Yitzchak had taken upon himself, as well as the unique manner in which he carried it out. Each of them invites us to emulate him, for as our Sages teach us, the Holy One, blessed be He, rejoices every time a Jew invokes him in order to defend another. And, our Sages add, the more this happens, the quicker the long awaited Geula (Final Redemption) will happen. What follows is just one of those stories.

It happened that in Berditchev, when the large synagogue overflowed with people on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was standing near the amud (the lectern) of the speaker. His voice, both strong and beautiful, as well as his prayers - sung with such force and emotion that they could only belong to him - shook everything around. The faithful, their souls moved to trembling on that Yom Hadin (Day of Judgment), didn't miss one word of the Rabbi's prayers, all while their eyes filled with tears. Such an irresistible magnet, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak carried away all the Jews in the town with his own emotion.

After the Amidah (the prayer composed of 18 blessings) and just before the Kedusha (the solemn sanctification of the Divine Name), Rabbi Levi Yitzchak began singing, with trembling voice, the song la-El orech din ("to G-d Who judges"). Each of the faithful felt his heartstrings tighten, and each was truly and deeply cognizant of appearing, at that moment, before the King of kings Who presides over the Celestial Court and Who judges the entire world. He places one and the other on the balance of good and evil, and He examines all hearts with a penetrating and forceful gaze, revealing all secrets. He knows the least of our thoughts and will soon pronounce His verdict.

"Avinu Malkeinu! [Our Father, Our King!]" - a single and unified cry sprang from the mouth of all - "consider us with kindness and mercy. Otherwise, no one can stand before You!"

Now, just before chanting the phrase lekonei avadav bedin ("Who acquires His servants through judgment"), Rabbi Levi Yitzchak abruptly stopped. His face turned pale - as white as a ghost. He was incapable of uttering the least sound. The faithful, at first surprised by this interruption, were later shocked by what their eyes saw: The Tallit (prayer shawl) of their Rabbi slowly slid off his head, all the way onto his shoulders. Having come

closer, certain of the Rabbi's long-time Chassidim found him motionless, his eyes shut. His disciples, as opposed to the rest of the congregation, understood what was happening. Due to Ruach Hakodesh (Divine inspiration), Rabbi Levi Yitzchak had learned that at that moment the Celestial Court was preparing a great punishment (G-d forbid) for the Jewish people. As soon as they learned this, they followed their Rabbi's lead and closed their eyes, then began a great soul-searching exercise in Teshuvah, repenting of any evil thoughts that they had perhaps once entertained.

For many long and seemingly unending minutes, the entire synagogue remained like this, as if frozen in time. Finally, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak opened his eyes and little by little his features began to take on their normal appearance. Everyone truly had the impression that the Tzaddik, after having left this world, had just made it back. And for all the more reason, the faithful started to feel happy and reassured when the face of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak began beaming with joy and he finally started to sing that famous phrase, lekonei avadav bedin ("Who acquires His servants through judgment").

After the service, as the Rabbi and his disciples were gathered around the table to eat, one of the Chassidim got up the courage and asked his teacher what he had seen in the upper worlds.

The Rabbi agreed to answer and said, "All of a sudden I saw the Satan pulling a large bag behind him, and that gave me a very bad feeling. I understood that in that bag, the Prosecutor kept all the sins that the Jewish people had committed in the year that had passed. I approached to see its contents: Gossip and slander, baseless hatred, pettiness, negligence of Torah study ... there was everything there, enough to delight the Satan, the Prosecutor who rushed before the Celestial Court to pronounce the most violent accusations against our people. As soon as I saw this I thought, 'Oh no!' The vision had thrown me into such a distressed frenzy that I didn't know what to do.

"All of a sudden, it happened that the Satan stopped. His shrill eyes had just caught site of a Jew who, on that very day of Rosh Hashanah, was about to commit a sin. He then let go of his bag and ran in the direction of the Jew to take his sin and add it to his evil harvest. I took advantage of the situation to approach the bag and examine each of the sins. I realized that the poor authors of these sins had mitigating reasons for their actions, namely the bitter exile to which we had been condemned and the bitter lot of many of us: Ignorance, suffering, poverty, etc. What could our brothers do in such circumstances? What could they do in light of temptations that were capable of making a Jew forget his spiritual identity and transform the people of the G-d of Abraham into coarse beings that wallow in sin? However, I asked myself, what were these sins compared to the murders, acts of armed robbery, and thievery that so many in other nations committed?"

"As I reflected on this, it happened that the sins of our brothers disappeared from that terrible bag. When the Satan discovered it empty, he let out a scream, 'Thieves! I've been robbed of all the sins of the Jews that I had worked so hard to gather!' It was then that he saw me, standing near the bag, and understood that I had tricked him. He took me by my shirt and demanded compensation from me for having stripped him of the sins of our brothers! I replied that I didn't have any money. But the Satan, who knows Torah, answered that he would therefore have to sell me as a slave! He took me by the beard and offered me to the first angel that passed by there. The angel refused, explaining that I was an exiled Jew who had to earn a living, and so he didn't want to have the responsibility for me, even if he could acquire me freely. Can you believe that? Even for free he didn't want me! All the other angels to whom the Satan offered me as a slave also refused.

"Seeing this, the Satan brought me all the way to the Master of the universe, Who was seated on His royal throne. The Holy One listened carefully to the arguments of the Prosecutor, then declared, in citing a Psalm of David, 'It is I Who will act, I Who will judge, and I Who will save!' He then said, 'I Myself will buy you!' With these words, the Satan remained frozen with his mouth wide open. He had no further arguments. It was then that I began to pull myself together. As you can see, we can now better understand the phase of the song that states lekonei avadav bedin. We are the servants of the Holy One, and thanks to our piety we may escape the clutches of the Satan." ■



# HALACHOT

## RABBI ELI MANSOUR

### IF ONE FORGOT TO RECITE "HA'MELECH HA'MISHPAT" DURING THE ASERET YEMEH TESHUBA

During the period of the Aseret Yemeh Teshuba - the ten days from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur - we are required to substitute the phrase "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat" in the Amida with "Ha'melech Ha'mishpat." If a person mistakenly recited the standard text of "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat," instead of "Ha'melech Ha'mishpat," must he repeat the Amida?

This issue is subject to a debate among the Halachic authorities. Maran, in Shulhan Aruch, rules that "Ha'melech Ha'mishpat" is equivalent to the Beracha of "Ha'melech Ha'kadosh" in this respect. Just as during the Aseret Yemeh Teshuba one who mistakenly recites "Ha'Kel Ha'kadosh" instead of "Ha'melech Ha'kadosh" must repeat the Amida, similarly, one who mistakenly recites "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat" instead of "Ha'melech Ha'mishpat" must repeat the Amida. The Rama (Rabbi Moshe Isserles of Cracow, 1525-1572), however, disagrees. Unlike in the case of "Ha'Kel Ha'kadosh," the Rama notes, one who mistakenly recited "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat" has still mentioned the word "Melech" ("king"), and thus does not have to repeat the Amida. According to the Rama, then, one who mistakenly recites "Ha'Kel Ha'kadosh" must repeat the Amida, but one who recites "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat" does not, since he did, after all, mention the word "Melech." This is also the view taken by the Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909).

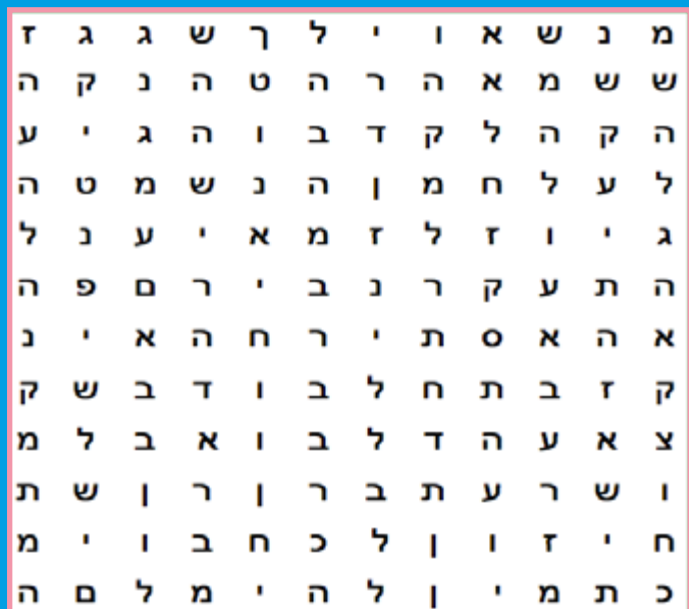
In light of the different views that exist on this matter, one who mistakenly recited "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat" during Aseret Yemeh Teshuba instead of "Ha'melech Ha'mishpat" should repeat the Amida on condition. This means that before beginning the Amida, he should stipulate that if Halacha requires him to repeat the Amida, then this prayer should count as his obligatory Tefila, but if not, then it should be regarded as a voluntary prayer. He then satisfies all views by repeating the Amida on this condition. A more complicated question is how one resolves this problem when he made this mistake during Mincha on Erev Shabbat and he realizes his mistake after Shabbat had begun. Such a situation resembles the case discussed by the Halachic authorities of one who forgot to recite Ya'aleh Ve'yabo during Mincha on Rosh Hodesh, and realized his mistake only after sundown, once Rosh Hodesh had already ended. Ordinarily, we would tell a person who forgot Ya'aleh Ve'yabo to recite an additional Amida at Arvit, but in this case, since Rosh Hodesh has already ended, reciting an extra Amida will not allow the person to make up the missed recitation of Ya'aleh Ve'yabo. This issue is subject to a debate between Tosafot and the scholars of Provence, as one view claims that one does not repeat the Amida in this case, whereas the other claims that since one who omits Ya'aleh Ve'yabo is considered as not having recited the Amida at all, he should recite an extra Amida at Arvit. The solution in such a case is to recite an extra Amida on condition, as described above, in order to satisfy all opinions. At first glance, this should apply to "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat," as well. Since this Beracha of the Amida is not recited on Shabbat, the issue of reciting an extra Amida at Arvit should be subject to this dispute, and the solution should thus be to recite an extra Amida on condition.

The problem, however, is that voluntary prayers are not allowed on Shabbat, just as in the times of the Bet Ha'mikdash voluntary sacrifices were not offered on Shabbat. Therefore, when one mistakenly recites "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat" during Mincha on Friday during the Aseret Yemeh Teshuba, he does not have the option of reciting an Amida during Arvit on condition that it would be regarded as a voluntary prayer if it is not necessary.

The solution in this case is to ask the Hazan to have one in mind when he recites the "Me'en Sheba" section, which is a condensed Amida text, and to listen to the recitation and thereby be considered as having recited it. This allows one to fulfill the obligation of an extra Amida, in case this is necessary, without running the risk of reciting an unwarranted Amida.

Summary: If one mistakenly recited "Melech Oheb Sedaka U'mishpat" instead of "Ha'melech Ha'mishpat" during the Aseret Yemeh Teshuba, he should repeat the Amida but stipulate that according to the view that he has fulfilled his obligation of prayer, the extra Amida should be regarded as a voluntary prayer. If this happened in the Mincha prayer on Friday, and one realized his mistake only after Shabbat had begun, he should ask the Hazan to have him in mind during the recitation of "Me'en Sheba," and fulfill his obligation by listening to the Hazan's recitation. ■





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