

Youthful

The Maggid's Corner

The Skolye Rebbe once returned to his apartment on the first day of Rosh Hashanah between Shacharis and Mussaf. He opened the door to find total chaos; it was obvious that he had been robbed. On further investigation, he found that the apartment had been totally ransacked. His possessions that were stolen included those he had brought from Europe. They were irreplaceable.

Years later, when the Rebbe was very sick at the end of his life, the Rebbe retold this story. He said the following words as a way to inspire others to have *Bitachon* in any life situation: "I returned to shul to *daven* before the *amud*. The loss that I had suffered was put completely out of my thoughts. It was as if nothing at all had happened."

[Special thanks to Revach L'Neshama for the story]



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◆ Please, don't read me during *tefilla*, *kadish*, etc. ◆

Menucha

A Shabbos table companion for the whole family

Volume IV, Issue No. 47

נצבים

Elul 28, 5775

Challenges

Halacha Challenge

TOPIC:
The Sweet Tears of the Shofar

On erev Rosh Hashana, Dovi started thinking: "The sound of a shofar symbolizes a cry. But Rosh Hashana is also a Yom Toy, which is supposed to be a happy day." Therefore, Dovi could not figure out if it will be okay for him to cry on Rosh Hashana during the powerful *t'fillos* that often move him to cry.



Question: Is Dovi allowed to cry on Rosh Hashana?

Help: Some aspects of our conduct on Rosh Hashana are based upon a historical event recorded in *sefer* Nechemya.¹ In a certain year, shortly after Bnei Yisroel returned to Eretz Yisroel from Bavel, the nation gathered together on Rosh Hashana. One of the events that took place there was a public reading of the Torah by Ezra HaSofer (with explanations from the Oral Torah²).

Dedications:

- anonymously as a merit for a good year for their family

Menucha thanks all of the co-sponsors of this week's issue.

Special thanks to *kehillas* **Beis Tefillah Yonah Avraham** for all of their help.



◆ requires *geniza* ◆

Hearing those words of Torah made people cry (see Note A). The verse in Nechemya says that after witnessing this, the leaders of Am Yisroel told the people not to cry, as this is improper to do on Rosh Hashana due to the day's unique holiness. Based on this verse in Nechemya, the Vilna Gaon taught his students not to cry on Rosh Hashana.³ On the other hand, we have a *mesora* that the Ariza"l would cry on Rosh Hashana, and praised those people whose souls moved them to cry on this day.⁴ Is there a disagreement between the Vilna Gaon and the Ariza"l on this point? Based on the writings of Rav Chaim Volozhin and other Achronim, we learn that there is no disagreement. The explanation is as follows. If a person's soul reaches a high level on Rosh Hashana and due to this uplifting and *d'veikus* to Hashem, he is overwhelmed with emotions which cause him to cry, then such a cry is more than welcome on Rosh Hashana. What's not appropriate on Rosh Hashana is a cry that's a result of emotions such as sadness and fear⁵ (see Note B).

Menucha's answer: If it's a cry from emotions such as sadness or fear, then Dovi should not cry on Rosh Hashana. However, if it's a cry from spiritual uplifting and yearning to have a good year of Torah and Mitzvos, then such a cry is very praiseworthy on Rosh Hashana. That is the beautiful cry of the shofar!

Note A Why did the people cry after hearing the words of Torah read and explained by Ezra HaSofer? Rashi explains that people cried because they realized that they hadn't been keeping the *mitzvos* of the Torah. The Ralbag explains that Ezra HaSofer read the verses which mention curses. Hence, according to this *peirush*, people cried out of fear of punishment. The Malbim writes that Ezra HaSofer read from *seder hayom*, reminding people that today is Rosh Hashana. Hence, they cried due to *eimas hadin* (fear of judgment). As mentioned in the article, the leaders of the Am Yisroel then told the people that their cry is inappropriate today. With the above *peirushim* of Rashi, Ralbag and Malbim, we learn that a person should not cry on Rosh Hashana if it's a cry of remorse for not keeping the Torah properly, or a cry from a fear of punishment that may result from the judgment. **Note B** It is also important to point out that those verses in Nechemya also mention that the leaders told the people not only that crying is inappropriate, but feelings of sadness or mournfulness are also unwelcome on Rosh Hashana.

1. נחמיה פרק ח' 2. פ' מלבי"ם על נחמיה ח:ב 3. מעשה רב סימן ר"ז 4. בה"ט א"ח סימן תקפד ס"ג 5. עיין בפס"ת ס"י תקפד (ב)

Riddles



The excitement for the *chag* of Succos is in the air! Arba Minim markets began operating again. Here is a riddle that you can ask your friend while standing in line to purchase your set: What does black pepper and Esrog have in common? (No joke! Chazal even questioned why we take an Esrog and not black pepper for the "*pri eitz hadar*" of the Arba Minim).

Answer to the last riddle (A verb in *Loshon HaKodesh* that's in infinitive form, typically, has a letter *Lamed* as the first letter. What *nekuda* is under that *Lamed*? Everyone knows - *Sh'va* is the *nekuda*. Now, find a word (a verb, infinitive form) in parshas Ki Savo which instead of a *Sh'va*,

has a *Patach* under the *Lamed*?) The word לעשר (to tithe) in the verse כִּי תִכְלֶה לְעֵשֶׂר ...

Sweet & Short

Mitzvos

Why is Succos called *z'man ha'asif* (a time of collection)? Because it's around the time of Succos when farmers collect all of their produce that grew over the year and bring it into their storage houses.

Similarly, explains Shem MiShmuel [Succos, 5672, §1], the same happens on the *ruchnius* level - Succos is a time when a Jew 'collects' all of the *mitzvos* that he fulfilled over the past year. The problem is that some of our *mitzvos* have impurities attached to them (e.g., selfish intentions, pursuit of honor, etc.) The gift of Rosh Hashana, Aseres Yemei Teshuva and Yom Kippur, is that through the power of these days, the impurities of those *mitzvos* are cleansed away, and then on Succos, a person 'collects' just the pure *mitzvos*.

Din

After hearing the warnings in parshas Ki Savo, a person needs to step back and look at *yissurim* in the proper perspective. The Targum Yonasan on Shir HaShirim (7:7) teaches that not only is Klal Yisroel praised by Hashem when they accept suffering with love, they are very praiseworthy when *yissurim* themselves appear to Bnei Yisroel as "תפנוקין" (You can understand the meaning of this word after finding it in the "*Ma Yedidus*" song of the Friday night *zemiros*).

Torah

In this week's parsha we learn about the *mitzva* of *Hakhel*. Why for the *mitzva* of *Hakhel*, all of us—men, women, children—need to come together mainly to hear the Torah being read publically? The Sefer HaChinuch explains that the reason for this is to show that for Am Yisroel, the Torah is the essence of life.

Eretz Yisroel

You shall choose life...for that is your life...to live on the land...(Devorim 30:20). These powerful words, which appear in this week's parsha, teach us that the *mitzva* of Yishuv Eretz Yisroel encompasses the entire Torah.

[*peirush* Ohr HaChaim on the Torah]

