

# The Jewish Weekly

## Quality Of Life

By Rabbi Benyamin Adilman

Once a chassid from a neighboring town came to his Rebbe, Rabbi Zvi Hersh of Riminov, and begged him to somehow intercede so that his father-in-law would die. "What!" exclaimed R. Hersh, "What are you talking about."

"Well, my father-in-law is very old, already more than 100 years old," explained the chassid, "And he has to be watched over all the time. He can't really do much for himself, and he is miserable most of the time. He doesn't learn and doesn't pray any more. He has had enough of life already, but he just keeps hanging on day after day, week after week, year after year."

The Riminover didn't really know what to say, but he reasoned that a Jew who lived to such an age must have some kind of merit. He commanded the chassid to bring in the old man to speak with him. The chassid protested saying that his father-in-law was too old and too feeble, but the Rebbe wouldn't relent. "Bring him in anyway as I have requested," he ordered.

So they picked up the old man, put him in a wagon and brought him to Riminov. They carried him in on a bed and placed him in front of the Rebbe. R. Hersh began to ask him questions. He soon found out that the old man was a simple but boorish Jew. He had been a wagon driver all of his life. He recited the prayers in the morning, but his real interest was to get to breakfast. He went to shul on Shabbat, but the cholent (Sabbath stew) served at the end was his main reason.

The Riminover peppered him with more questions to find out if the old Jew could remember any reason that might account for his many years. Maybe there was some special mitzvah that he did once or some experience, maybe he met a tzadik, a special holy Jew, on some noteworthy occasion that could have helped him to merit a long life.

The old Jew recalled that once some young Torah scholars had asked him to take them for Shabbat to a town about a half a day's journey away called Lujzinsk. "They pleaded with me", he reminisced, "but I didn't want to go. I told them that I like Shabbat at home with my bed and my cholent. But they promised me a good wage and the same food that I would eat at home and then some. So I finally agreed and we set off. We got there not long before Shabbat and they set me up in a nice hotel."

"Sure enough, right after the Shabbat Night prayers, they showed up with a great meal; everything just the way I like it. They came back a while later and asked me if I wanted to

go with them to some kind of gathering, but I told them that I didn't come for that kind of thing, and they should let me sleep. So, being decent guys, they did."

"In the morning after the Morning prayers, they again brought me a good meal with a cholent even better than what I would have gotten at home. So I ate my fill and went down for a Shabbat nap. When I woke up, it was already close to dark and nobody was around. I waited awhile, but none of my passengers showed their faces. So I went to look for them. I came to the shul and I heard the loudest singing and saw wildest dancing you can imagine. I was sure that they were all shikker (drunk). I peeked inside and saw empty bottles everywhere, and these guys were singing and dancing like anything. When I went in I saw that they were all dancing around in a circle and one of them was there in the middle. He must have been the chief drunk or something because he was tall and his face was red like fire and he was dancing with his eyes closed and they were all singing and dancing around him."

At this point the Riminover stopped the old man, exclaiming that now he understood everything. The tall one in the middle with a face red like fire was none other the Rebbe R' Elimelech of Lujzinsk. He explained that it is well known that whoever even just caught a glimpse of R' Elimelech's face would not be able to leave the world until he had done teshuva.

So the Rebbe turned towards the old man and started to explain to him in a gentle fatherly way how G-d created the world, and how everything in it was put there for our benefit. He described the beauty of the creation, how every aspect of it is perfect, existing together in total harmony.

Then he began to explain the nature of the Jewish soul. He described how every Jew is like one soul, we are only separated by the physical bodies that we bear. Later, G-d gave us the Torah and its mitzvot, specific instruction for serving Him and understanding His will. The old Jew sat and listened but didn't utter a sound.

So the Rebbe continued. He began to describe how we were given the Shabbat to further bring ourselves closer to Him. We welcome the Shabbat, and the Divine Presence comes to us, and so to speak, sits at our table together with us, sharing our food and our company.

At this point the old Jew turned his head and stared dreamily out the window. A moment passed and he let out a deep sigh. The Riminover (who was a Cohen) quickly left the room (Cohanim even today are forbidden contact with the dead). The old Jew heaved one more sigh of remorseful repentance and left this world - for the world to come.

Reprinted from [www.nishmas.org](http://www.nishmas.org).

## It Once Happened...

### Give More Praise to Hashem than Requests

By Rabbi Elimelech Bidernman

A man living in one of the southern cities of Eretz Yisrael was having a hard time marrying off his children. His oldest child was twenty-eight, and he had another four children above twenty. He also had financial problems, because he had taken out a mortgage on his house to help his chavrutah (study partner) marry off his children. His chavrutah was supposed to pay the monthly fees, but he wasn't able to, and the bank put up his house for foreclosure.

One evening, this man was in Yerushalayim for a chatunah (wedding), and he met with a relative. He told his relative about his hardships marrying off his children and his financial problems.

The relative replied, "There's a great tzaddik in Yerushalayim – the Beit Yisrael of Gur (Rabbi Yisroel Alter, 1895-1977). Tell him your problems. He will certainly help you."


This man wasn't a chassid, but his relative convinced him to go. He poured his bitter heart out before the Rebbe. The Beit Yisrael asked him, "Do you ever praise Hashem? Praise should be 60% and requests should be 40%."

This man told his relative the counsel he received. The relative said, "You have a lot to thank Hashem for. You have health, a wife, and children. You always have food on your table... Focus on the good. Get into the practice of praising Hashem as the Rebbe suggested: 60% praises and 40% requests."

Two months later, his oldest daughter was engaged. Within a half year, three of his children were married and two more were engaged. Around that time, his chavrutah's mother was niftarah (died), leaving a large inheritance. The chavrutah immediately paid up the debt, and this man was able to redeem his house from the bank.

This man realized that the Rebbe's counsel of 60% praises and 40% requests can be found in Hallel. We say there יהודו לה' כי טוב six times, while יהי אנוה' is said four times. This is exactly as the Beit Yisrael advised: 60% praises and 40% requests. This ratio brings yeshuot (salvations).

Reprinted from an email of Torah Wellsprings.



**Shabbat Times – Parshat Vayelech**

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:16	7:27	8:07
Tel Aviv	6:31	7:29	
Haifa	6:23	7:29	
Be'er Sheva	6:33	7:29	



## SHOFAR OF FREEDOM

By Rabbi Moshe Segal

In the years that Jerusalem was under British rule, the area in front of the Kotel - Western Wall did not look as it does today. Only a narrow alley separated the Kotel and the Arab houses on its other side. The British forbade us to place an ark for the Torah scroll, tables or benches in the alley; not even a single chair or stool could be brought to the Kotel. We were also forbidden to pray out loud, to read from the Torah, or to sound the shofar on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Policemen were stationed at the Kotel to enforce these decrees.

While praying at the Kotel on Yom Kippur of that year (1930), I overheard people whispering to each other: "Where will we go to hear the shofar? It'll be impossible to blow it here. There are as many policemen as people praying!" The Chief of Police himself was there to make sure that the Jews would not, G-d forbid, sound the single blast that traditionally closes the fast.

I listened to the whisperings and thought to myself: Can we possibly forgo the sounding of the shofar that accompanies our proclamation of the sovereignty of G-d? Can we possibly forgo the sounding of the shofar, which symbolizes the redemption of Israel? True, the sounding of the shofar at the close of Yom Kippur is only a custom, but "a Jewish custom is Torah"!

I approached Rabbi Yitzchak Horenstein, who served as the rabbi of our "congregation," and asked him for a shofar. The rabbi abruptly turned away from me, but not before he cast a glance at the prayer stand at the left end of the alley. I understood: the shofar was in the stand. When the hour of blowing approached, I walked over to the stand and leaned against it.

I opened the door and slipped the shofar into my shirt. I had the shofar, but what if they saw me before I had a chance to blow it? I was still unmarried at the time, and following the Ashkenazi custom, did not wear a tallit. I turned to the person praying at my side and asked him for his tallit.

I wrapped myself in the tallit. At that moment, I felt that I had created my own private domain. Outside my tallit a foreign government prevailed, ruling over the people of Israel even on their holiest day and at their holiest place, and we are

not free to serve our G-d. But under the tallit is another domain. Here I am under no dominion other than that of my Father in Heaven; here I shall do as He commands me, and no force on earth will stop me.

When the closing verses of the Neilah prayer were proclaimed, I took the shofar and blew a long, resounding blast. Everything happened very quickly. Many hands grabbed me. I removed the tallit from over my head, and before me stood the Chief of Police, who ordered my arrest.

I was taken to the Kishle, the prison in the Old City, and an Arab policeman was stationed there to watch over me. Many hours passed; I was given no food or water to break my fast. At midnight the policeman received an order to release me, and he let me out without a word.

I then learned that when the Chief Rabbi of the Holy Land, Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook, heard of my arrest, he immediately contacted the secretary of the High Commissioner of Palestine and asked that I be released. When his request was refused, he stated that he would not break his fast until I was freed. The High Commissioner resisted for many hours, but finally, out of respect for the rabbi, he had no choice but to set me free.

For the next eighteen years, the shofar was sounded at the Kotel every Yom Kippur. The British well understood the significance of this blast - they knew it would ultimately demolish their reign over our land as the walls of Jericho crumbled before the shofar of Joshua, and they did everything in their power to prevent it. But every Yom Kippur, the shofar was sounded by men who knew they would be arrested for their part in staking our claim to the holiest of our possessions.

Reprinted from *Week in Review* ([www.meaningfullife.com](http://www.meaningfullife.com))

**טשרת וילך**

**This week has been sponsored  
in memory of**  
מלכה בת יצחק צבי הלוי ע"ה פרנקל  
**who passed away**  
**Erev Shabbat Shuva**  
ה' תשרי תשע"ט

This coming Shabbat will be a special one, but what is its correct title: Is it 'Shabbat Shuvah' or 'Shabbat Teshuvah'? Both actually are used and both make sense.

We have a tradition that for special Shabbatot, the title is taken from a key word in the special Maftir or Haftarah that we recite on that Shabbat, such as Shabbat Hagadol, Shabbat Zachor, Shabbat Parah and Shabbat Nachamu. As a result, because the opening word of this week's Haftarah is שׁוּבָה 'Return, O Israel, it is appropriate to call the Shabbat 'Shabbat Shuvah'.

On the other hand, this Shabbat will take place in the midst of the Aseret Y'mei Teshuvah, the ten days of penitence, so therefore we could call the Shabbat - 'Shabbat Teshuvah'.

Now actually there is a far more profound dimension to the difference between Shuvah and Teshuvah. That is because Shuvah is an imperative, Hashem is commanding us that 'You must repent', whereas Teshuvah relates to the phenomenon - it is the penitence that takes place. This begs the question: why should I repent? Is it because Hashem is commanding me to do so, or is it because I want to?

And the same question can be asked about all of the Mitzvot. Let's take for example, charity. Why should I give generously to others: Is it because Hashem has commanded me to, or is it because I want to help other people?

Our Sages, Chazal, teach in the Gemarah, " גדול המצווה ועושה "ממי שאינו מצווה ועושה", when you perform a good deed because you are commanded to, it has far greater value than when you perform a good deed out of the goodness of your heart.

Now I actually might have thought just the opposite. For example, let's take charity. If you have a person who gives generously to a good cause, without any religious connection whatsoever, isn't this a marvelous person - it comes from such a good place? But our tradition teaches that when we give charity because Hashem has commanded us to, we have a connection with Hashem, and at the same time we still feel the value of it, it does come from our hearts and as a result, we have an added spiritual dimension which relates to every practical thing that we do.

So too with regard to penitence. At this time of the year, we should change our ways because of Shuvah, because Hashem is commanding us to do so, and we should also chart a new path within our lives because we appreciate how important it is for us.

As a result, let us therefore at this time perform both Shuvah and Teshuvah, let's listen to Hashem and let's appreciate the great opportunity He gives us to start afresh and let's pray for our soldiers and emergency service personnel who risk their lives to defend and help us, as well as those who need healing, shidduchim, children or parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, happy, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, sweet Shabbat, may we be blessed to have, a wonderful, happy, fulfilling and successful life ahead of us, גמר התימה טובה.



*Yoel*

**The Jewish Weekly's**  
**PARSHA FACTS**

**NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 2**  
**MITZVOT ASEH: 2**  
**MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 0**

**NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 30**  
**NUMBER OF WORDS: 553**  
**NUMBER OF LETTERS: 2123**

**HAFTORA:**  
"Shuva Yisrael" - Hoshea: 14:2-10; then we conclude with Yoel 2:11-27 (some add verses 7:18-20 from Micah).

**Yom Kippur starts Wednesday, September 15 and ends Thursday, September 16.**