

טוב הקהילה

בס"ד

'יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו הרה"צ ר' גמליאל רבינוביץ שליט"א

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טיב המערכת

זכרנו לחיים – Remember us for life

Moreinu HaRav shlia relates: When I was a young man, I once stood *davening* the silent Shemona Esrei during the Yomim Noraim, and when I reached the request of 'זכרנו לחיים' – 'Remember us for life', I tried to think about why we ask of HaKadosh Baruch Hu that He remember us for life, that is, that He should add years to life? Who says this is a good thing? There is a famous teaching of Chazal (Eruvin 13b), 'They took a vote and concluded that it would have been more pleasant for a person not to have been created than having been created', and the teaching of the Tanna (Avos 4:22) 'against your will you were born', so, if we came into this world against our will and it would have been better that we not come here at all, then why do we ask to remain here? This is one of the additional requests in Tefillah that we make through the Aseres Yemei Teshuva, it is a question. At first, I thought that I have small children and I have to raise them and marry them off, and perhaps for this it is worth that I stay alive. But in second thought, I thought that this is not a good answer since nowadays we Baruch Hashem have many organizations that care for orphans and perhaps they would do a better job than I could. If so, why do I ask of HaKadosh Baruch Hu 'Remember us for life'?

Having no choice and no answer, I continued my Tefillah and the words were in front of my eyes, 'מלך חפץ בחיים' – 'King Who desires life', I then understood: the reason that we ask of HaKadosh Baruch Hu to extend life is because He wants it, but now the question returns, 'What is the purpose of this? As I went on, I found the answer to this as well, 'למענך' – 'For Your sake, the living G-d', that is, so that we continue to do His will Yisbarach, and in this way fulfill our role on the earth.

This week, we all stand and ask again and again 'זכרנו לחיים', and when we have such an important request, it causes us to remind ourselves, why do we have life? To do His will Yisbarach, as the Sfas Emes explains, 'and write us in the book' – all our requests should be written in the Book of the Righteous whose entire purpose in life 'is to live for Your sake', that is, a life filled with fulfilling the will of Hashem Yisbarach, as in the request for livelihood 'הטריפני לחם חוקי' – 'allot me my daily bread so I can eat to do your will' (Mishlei 30:8). Even *parnasah* is so we can do His will. May it be His will that we be written and sealed in the Book of Life, and we should remember what our purpose in life is.

- Tiv HaMoadim – Rosh Hashanah

טיב ההשגחה

'The *chavrusa* of Rav Shimon bar Yochai' – חברותא של רשב"י'

My son called all excited from the holy city of Meron, and he told me he traveled to Rav Shimon bar Yochai for Shabbos, and after he got his family settled, he went up to the holy monument to learn. He wanted to learn *Seder HaKavanos* of the Reshash for rosh Hashanah and he went looking for a *chavrusa*. He raised his eyes in prayer and asked for a *chavrusa* to learn the Reshash and went to his seat. On the way to his place, he noticed a young man deeply involved in a certain *sefer*. He approached and saw that he was learning *Seder HaKavanos* for Rosh Hashanah. He asked hesitantly if he would like to learn with a *chavrusa*, and the young man happily agreed. My son concluded, "I have no idea what the name of the young man is or where he lives, but I learned continuously for several hours, and he gave me clarity in this that I never had before. I was glad for the *hashgacha pratis*, to find someone to learn with exactly what I wanted to learn, and also that he agreed to learn with me, and even with such clarity. This was only through *hashgacha pratis!!!*" **ב.מ.**

'A ride for the parents' – טרמפ על ההורים'

We made *sheva berachos* in Beit Shemesh because most of the children and grandchildren live there. For the way home, since there is no transportation at that hour, and most of the taxis are taken since all *simchos* finish then, we hired a bus to take all the families, each to their homes.

All the families got on the bus except for two couples and granddaughters who stayed to help. When I asked them how they will get home, they told me not to worry, they will find a way home. We finished making final arrangements in the hall which took some time, and suddenly, we found a cellphone. It belonged to one of the families from the other side who lived near one of my families who stayed to fulfill *kibud av ve'eim*. They called the owner and told him they were leaving the hall and walking home and they would be there in a half hour. The owner needed his phone and said he was coming right back to the hall to get it, and he had a large van, and if we wanted to join him for the way back, he had plenty of room.

A few minutes later, he took them all home. We tried looking for a taxi for the two couples, but there were none at this late hour. Had we found the cellphone earlier, there would have been no ride for those who stayed behind in the hall. HaKadosh Baruch Hu arranged it so we would find the phone only after everything was done and they had a ride home.

Whoever honors parents never loses!!!

ה.צ.ר.

כל חיות תלוי בראש – All life depends on the beginning

The importance of this holy day, the day that Rosh Hashanah falls on, we can learn by observing the head of the physical body. It is a known fact that the vitality of the body is dependent on the head, if the head is healthy – even if there is an ailment in one of the limbs, the person continues to live with clarity of mind and all his senses continue to function.

The same applies to the head 'rosh' of the year. Therefore, we must be very careful to conduct ourselves with completeness, and the matter will influence the rest of the year because every day we can do the will of Hashem properly.

There is another hint on this topic. Just as there is a brain in the head of a person appointed over all the functions of the body, so too on the two days of Rosh Hashanah, there are 48 hours that control the rest of the year.

We have also established a 'simana tova' – a 'good omen' to eat food that hints at a 'good year', for example, apple in honey and we say, 'Yehi ratzon shetechadesh aleinu shana tova umesuka' – 'May it be the will that You renew for a good and sweet year'. And we eat leek and say, 'sheyikarsu soneinu' – 'that our enemies be decimated', and so on. All this because the beginning of the year influences the rest of the year.

שנה טובה ו'מתוקה' – A good and 'sweet' year

When we dip the apple in the honey, we ask of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, 'shetechadesh aleinu shana tova umesuka' – 'that You renew for a good, sweet year', as explained in Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 583:1). Those who think about it ask, what is the purpose of 'sweet', is it not enough to just ask for a 'good year'?

Rather, HaKadosh Baruch Hu always gives us a good year, for we believe with complete faith that everything that Hashem does is for the best, as Chazal say (Berachos 60b), 'Everything Hashem does is for the best, and everything that happens to us – even if it seems to us that it is bad – is definitely good for us.' However, we request of HaKadosh Baruch Hu that we should also appreciate the good that is hidden in everything that happens to us.

There is a famous teaching of Tzaddikim on the *posuk* (Tehillim 85:8), 'הראנו ה' חסדך' – 'Show us Your kindness, Hashem', that is, we believe that everything is certainly kindnesses, but we request that these kindnesses should be revealed, we can see them, and we can sense them.

This is also the meaning of our request, 'vesigmelanu chasadim tovim' – 'and bestow beneficent kindnesses upon us', the question remains, are there kindnesses that are not good?! Rather, we request that we merit that beneficent kindnesses are seen and revealed, and not just rely on faith that they are good.

This is why we eat sweet things on Rosh Hashanah and we request, 'Yehi ratzon shetechadesh aleinu shana tova umesuka' – 'May it be the will that You renew for a good and sweet year', just as we taste the sweetness of the apple in the honey, so too we should sense the good hidden in everything that happens to us throughout the coming year.

יעברון לפניך – Pass 'before You'

During the *Yomim Noraim* every Jew feels the fear of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and he can easily fulfill the halacha (Ramah Orach Chaim 1:1), that a person must always imagine that he is standing before Hashem Yisbarach as it states (Tehillim 16:8), 'שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד' – 'I have set Hashem before me always'.

Perhaps we can say that the reason is that during these days HaKadosh Baruch Hu is found closer to us, as explained at length in many holy *seforim*, and is mentioned many times, for all year long HaKadosh Baruch Hu is categorized as 'Keil mistater' – 'the hidden G-d', and when Hashem is hidden, it is much harder to sense him and keep 'I have set'. But during the Days of Judgment when the person is judged, HaKadosh Baruch Hu has to come down to us, as it were, as stated in the Gemara (Sanhedrin 79b) that we do not judge capital cases unless it is before the accused, and now that we are being judged for life or *chas v'shalom* the opposite, the matter must be done openly before us, as it were.

This is the deep meaning of the *paiton* [composer] of the *piyyut* 'Unesaneh Tokef': 'וכל באי עולם יעברון לפניך כבני מרון' – 'and all those who came into the world pass 'before Him' like sheep' (based on the Gemara – Rosh Hashanah 16a). That is, that each and every one literally passes 'before Him', in order to be judged by Him, that is to say now He is the closest to you. Truly, we see on *motzaei Yom Kippur* we blow the shofar, and with this blast we accompany the Shechina above, as it were, as the Taz brings down (Orach Chaim 723:2) and HaKadosh Baruch Hu returns to being the *Keil Mistater* – the Hidden G-d (see Shaar HaKavanos on Yom Kippur, Drush 4).

חוס וחנונו – Pity, and be gracious with us

Even on the days of Rosh Hashanah, aside from being *Yomim Noraim* – Days of Awe, they are also holidays and we add in Shemona Esrei – like every holiday – 'Yaaleh Veyavo'. Towards the end we ask, 'חוס וחנונו ורחם עלינו והושיענו כי אליך עינינו כי קל מלך' – 'pity, be gracious and compassionate with us and help us, for our eyes are turned to You, because You are G-d, the gracious and compassionate King.'

It is fitting to understand, with which merit do we ask that Hashem be gracious and compassionate with us – as a free gift? This is why we continue and say, 'כי אליך עינינו' – 'for our eyes are turned to You' – our eyes are raised to You in prayer on *Yom HaDin* – Judgment Day, and this is our advantage. For even if you judge the whole world today and not just *Klal Yisrael*, not one of these nations would stand in prayer to You today. Only Israel beseeches You and places their trust in You, and in this merit we request that compassion and mercy be given to us – 'כי קל מלך חנון ורחום אתה' – 'because You are G-d, the gracious and compassionate King'.

דרגות של שמחה בה' – Levels of joy in Hashem

Everyone notices the miracles and wonders that HaKadosh Baruch Hu does for us all the time at every hour, and so, everyone according to his level rejoices in the miracles that are performed and he knows how much he has to cherish them.

We find in the Tefillah of the *Yomim Noraim* three levels of the joy of Tzaddikim in Hashem: The first level – 'ובכן צדיקים יראו וישמחו' – 'And so, too, the righteous will see and be glad' – they see the miracles and they are glad. The second level – 'וישרים' – 'the upright' – these people are at a higher level than ordinary righteous, when they see the kindness of Hashem then – 'יעלזו' – 'will exult' – this is a stronger level of joy. The third level – 'וחסידים' – 'the devout' – these are people at a very high level, when they see the goodness of the providence [*hashgacha*] of Hashem, they immediately are 'ברינה יגילו' – 'mirthful with glad song' – they sing and praise before Hashem with mirth and great joy.