



דרכים בפרשה

נצבים

אתם נצבים היום כלכם

You are all standing here today



Quoting the Midrash, Rashi tells us that when the Yidden heard the ninety eight curses of Parshas Ki Savo, their faces turned green. “Can anyone withstand such curses? What will be with us?” And so, our Parsha begins with Moshe Rabbeinu calming them down, saying, לכם אתם נצבים היום כלכם – “*You are all standing here today*”. After forty difficult years in the desert, during which HaShem was angered numerous times; the Golden calf, the *meraglim*, and the complaints, and yet, you are all still here. Therefore, don’t despair.

As the year comes to a close, we look back and take note of the extremely difficult times throughout the world that we are all living in. From calamity to disaster and catastrophe, many lives were lost as well as people’s livelihoods still taking a big hit, not to mention all sense of normalcy and moral compasses having disappeared. There is no one that hasn’t been affected in one way or another. And yet, אתם נצבים היום – We are standing here today at the cusp of another year. So much has happened, most of which we just don’t understand, but one thing that is for sure true is that HaShem kept us here and continues to do so, offering His protection and watching over us. So we now offer a tefilla that תכלה שנה וקללותיה, תחל שנה וברכותיה – may the curses of this past year come to a conclusion and be replaced with a new year full of bracha!

But what is the point of all these difficulties? My assumption is that this question has been and will continue to be asked again and again, but in a day and age that we do not have prophecy, we will not get a definite answer, and

each person will need to look at it on a personal level and try and take a lesson from it. However, one thing is certain, the message that applies to all is that HaShem wants to be a part of our lives and this is one of the ways of gaining access to us and grabbing our attention. On that note, the seforim tell us that this time period which we are now entering into, is known as שערך ירושלים – Your gates, Yerushalayim. This means that as we enter the days of selichos, and then Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, followed by Sukkos, Hoshana Rabba and Simchas Torah, we are supposed to realize that we are on a pathway towards true happiness together with HaShem and His Torah. Now as we stand at the gates we are faced with a big question, which I will allow me to explain based on a *shmuess* that I heard in the Mir from Rav Volbe zt”l.

One of the *kapitlach* of Tehillim which will be recited a bunch of times and takes center stage during Rosh Hashana’s mussaf is ch. 24, לדוד מזמור. There are two similar pesukim with a slight variation that we shall focus on. שאו שערך וראשיכם והנשא פתחי עולם and שאו שערך וראשיכם ושא פתחי עולם. Both pesukim mean, *Raise up your heads, O gates, to allow the King to enter*. But what is the difference between ושא and והנשא? As similar as these two words are, the difference is huge. Rav Volbe explained that “והנשא” means “it will be lifted”, whereas “ושא” means “you shall lift”. Let us explain further with a mashal from Rav Yosef Elefant shlita: The mother-in-law is coming for a visit. She knocks on the front door. Perhaps the home is not all that tidy, and

no one is running to answer the front door. Guess what, she is not going away so fast. She has the combination and can go in on her own if she is not welcomed in. How will she feel if she comes inside without being welcomed and sees everyone just sitting around as if she is not there? What about if she let you know before that she was coming, perhaps from out of town, and she arrives and nothing was prepared for her? Most likely her reaction will be a lot different.

Coming back to the possuk, the King is coming! Lift up the gates and let Him enter. So now there is a choice. We can ignore the calls to open or we can open the gate on our own. Let us look at the results. In the first possuk, when it says, “**והנשא**” (and it will be lifted, i.e. you did not open the gate but rather, the King let himself in), the very next possuk tells us which type of king is entering the door. **ויבוא מלך הכבוד** - *So that the King of Glory may enter.* **מי זה מלך הכבוד** - *Who is this King of Glory?* **ה' - עוזו וגבורתו** - *HaShem the mighty and strong, HaShem the strong in battle.*

In the second possuk, when it says, “**ושא**” (and you will lift, i.e. you invited the King inside), the very next possuk tells us **מי זה מלך הכבוד** - *Who is this King of Glory?* **ה' צבאות הוא מלך** - *HaShem, Master of the Legions, He is the King of Glory.*

If we refuse to open up for HaShem in our lives, the result is that He will come anyway, but as a King of war. However, by opening up and welcoming the King into our lives, His relationship with us is on a completely different level. It is one of Honour and respect, a “feeling” of being welcome.

Coming back to the question that we must ask ourselves: In this New Year, **הבא עלינו לטובה**, how are we going to welcome in the King? HaShem wants to have a relationship with us

and will do so in one manner or another. It is up to us to decide which version of the King we shall see, and that will be dictated by the welcoming that He receives.

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The Shem Meshmuel writes: **זו שבת האחרונה שבשנה ויש לתקן בה מה שהחסיר בכל שבתות השנה דביקות ועונג שבת.** וכאשר שבת זו בעונג ודביקות כדת מתקן בה כל שבתות השנה כל האורות מכל שבתות השנה כולם נקבצו ובאו בשבת זו. *This Shabbos is the last Shabbos of the year, and it has the capacity to redeem all the Shabbosos of the year that were not kept with the full devotion and deveikus they should have had. All the holiness and spiritual light of all the previous Shabbosos gather in this Shabbos, so they can be rectified on this Shabbos.*

In general, every Shabbos can rectify the six days of the week. So in essence, the Shabbos before Rosh Hashana is *mesaken* the entire year. Since each Shabbos encompasses the six days after it, and this Shabbos encompasses all those Shabbosos, if this one Shabbos is kept properly, it rectifies and transforms the entire year.

**מרדכי אפפעי, Good Shabbos,**



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