



AT THE ARTSCROLL YOM TOV TABLE

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

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L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

ASERES YEMEI TESHUVAH

THE LETTERS COME HOME

A Most Meaningful Viduy by Rabbi Yechiel Spero

Have you ever wondered why Viduy is written in the order of the *aleph-beis*? Why we go through *אָשְׁמֵנוּ, בְּגִדְנוּ, גְּזֵלְנוּ*... all the way to the end of the alphabet?

R' Chaim of Volozhin explains. Every single Jew is a living Sefer Torah. Just like a Sefer Torah has 248 *mitzvos aseï*, positive commandments, we have 248 limbs. And just like it has 365 *mitzvos lo saaseh*, negative commandments, we have 365 sinews and veins. The mitzvos are written *into* us. The holiness of the Torah is *inside* us.

When a person chooses to go against the will of Hashem, something awful happens. The *kedushah* that rested in the part of the body that violated the mitzvah begins to fade. The letters connected to that mitzvah are no longer written inside. They become detached, hovering in the air, waiting. The "Sefer Torah" becomes *pasul*. Something is missing.

But Hashem, in His infinite mercy, gave us Viduy, the gift of confession. We say our sins to help us return to Him. And so, we do *teshuvah*, cry to Hashem with bitterness of the heart, and recite Viduy in the order of the *aleph-beis*. Letter by letter, step by step, we go back and collect the letters we lost. We pull them back from the air. We call them home. With every word, we bring our *kedushah* back. With every tear, we write ourselves again. Until the holy Sefer Torah that is our soul becomes whole once more.

Full *teshuvah* rewrites us.

Aleph. Beis. Gimmel. Dalet. From the beginning... back to who we really are.

Mrs. Miriam Adler served as a menaheles at a Bais Yaakov near Rechov Rashi in Yerushalayim. Her son,

Shmuel, was born with significant brain damage. After rounds of tests, the doctors told Rabbi and Mrs. Adler the news: Their son was functioning at about fifty percent of what was expected for his age. It hit them hard. The future they had imagined seemed to evaporate in that one sentence.

But once the shock wore off, the Adlers made a decision. Shmuel was a matanah, a gift from Hashem. They would not only raise him, but they would celebrate him. As he grew, they enrolled him in Alei Siach, a school for children with developmental challenges. There, the staff did everything they could to help him learn.

One day at a parent-teacher conference, Shmuel's teacher sat across from them and said, "We've tried everything: puzzles, plastic aleph-beis letters, sponge games. But we simply don't think Shmuel has the capacity to learn the aleph-beis."

Mrs. Adler's heart broke. No letters? No siddur? No bentcher? No tefillah?

That night, she cried. And the next morning, she got up before dawn and poured her heart into every kapitel of Tehillim. She thanked Hashem for her son — his smile, his voice, his laughter — and she pleaded with Him, "Please let Shmuel learn the aleph-beis."

And she didn't stop. For eight months straight, every single morning, she recited the entire Sefer Tehillim. Then one Thursday night, she held up a little plastic letter — a tzaddi(k) — and with tears running down her cheeks, said to Hashem, "How can he become a tzaddik if he can't even read the



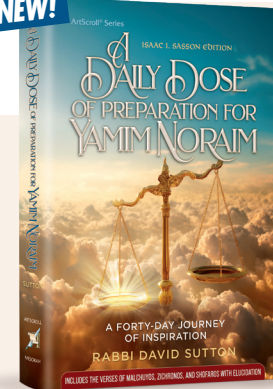
Rabbi Dov Levy



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THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS SPONSORED לזכר נשמת OUR DEAR GRANDPARENTS,
יחזקאל שרגא בן יהודה ז"ל וחנה פרידל בת יעקב אליעזר ע"ה - CHATZEL AND HONEY SCHINDLER

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION



תקעו בחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר בַּבֶּסֶה לְיוֹם חֲגֻגּוֹ. כִּי חֹק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא מְשַׁפֵּט לְאַלְקֵי יַעֲקֹב

Blow the shofar at the moon's renewal [for: when the moon is covered], at the time appointed for our festive day. Because it is a decree for Yisrael, a Judgment Day for the God of Yaakov.

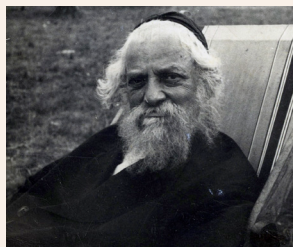
(Tehillim 81:4-5)

While the Torah doesn't clearly say to blow the shofar on Rosh Hashanah, the Gemara in several places (e.g., *Rosh Hashanah* 8a) explains that this *pasuk* from *Tehillim* is one of the hints to blowing the shofar on Rosh Hashanah.

On other festivals, such as Succos and Pesach, which fall in the middle of the month, the moon is out in the open; and on Shavuos, you see some of the moon. But on Rosh Hashanah, which is on the first day of the month, one doesn't see a moon at all. Thus, at the time when the חֹדֶשׁ, the *new moon*, is בַּבֶּסֶה, *covered*, we blow the shofar.

The Midrash (*Vayikra Rabbah* 29:6) explains that the word חֹדֶשׁ derives from חֲדוּשׁ, *renewal*, while the word שׁוֹפָר derives from שְׁפֹר, *beautification*. Yocheved, Moshe's

mother, was known as שְׁפֵרָה, *Shifrah*, because as a midwife, she *beautified* the babies at birth (*Shemos* 1:15; see *Rashi*).



Rav Baruch Ber Leibowitz

These terms signify two aspects of improvement on Rosh Hashanah: to renew ourselves and to beautify ourselves.

A renewal is a total makeover. This is *teshuvah*. We have to leave behind the sins and accept upon ourselves to do better in the future. R' Shlomo Wolbe says that this is the *segulah* of Rosh Hashanah. At the beginning

of a new year, we have the chance to renew ourselves and renew our deeds and press the restart button: *We've been recreated, reborn, like a new person;* *continued on page 4*

THE LETTERS COME HOME

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letter tzaddik?"

The next morning, Shmuel ran into her room, bright-eyed. "Mommy! I finished the puzzle. But I'm missing a letter. Where's the tzaddik?"

"What did you say?"

"The tzaddik," he repeated. "It's missing."

She raced to the living room. Sure enough, he had laid out every single aleph-beis letter in order — perfectly. Every single one.

She went to the bakery, bought a bag of fresh croissants, and ran to Alei Siach to tell R' Dov Levy, the principal. He was known for believing in every child, and when he tested Shmuel and heard him say every single letter, one after the next, he stated, "It's a Yom Tov today."

He turned to Mrs. Adler. "Go home. Get him dressed in his Shabbos clothing. We're going to make a real simchah." An hour later, Shmuel

walked back into school in his finest clothes. The music began. The children danced. They lifted him on their shoulders and celebrated as if a new Sefer Torah had been brought into the world. Because it had.

Two months later, there was another parent-teacher conference. This time, the teacher — not R' Dov — spoke. Her tone was cautious. "Yes, he knows the letters. But he still can't connect them into words. That may not be something he'll ever be able to do."

But Mrs. Adler had learned her lesson. She smiled, thanked the teacher, and went back to what she knew best. The next morning, and every morning after that, she once again opened her *Tehillim* and cried.

Years went by. One morning during the days of Selichos, as the girls of her school stood in the Ezras Nashim of the Zichron Moshe Shtiebach for Selichos, Mrs. Adler heard a voice, a voice that was familiar and pure.

She turned to one of the teachers. "Do you hear that voice?"

They nodded.

"That's my son, Shmuel," she stated. "That's my tzaddik."

Tears filled her eyes, not from pain, but from awe. "Every time I hear him lead Selichos," she said, "I hear the letters. The ones we thought were lost. The ones that took years to come home."

The same is with us. Our letters are lost. Because of our sins, we worry that we are no longer the Sefer Torah we once were.

But then we do a heartfelt *teshuvah* and say Viduy. אֲשַׁמְנוּ, בְּגִדְנוּ, גִּזְלָנוּ. Letter by letter, we return. Aleph... beis... gimmel...

... And yes, *tzaddik*. Like a mother arranging plastic letters with her son.

If we do it right and from the heart, then slowly, the letters return.

And the Sefer Torah that is each and every one of us becomes whole once more. 📖

תִּאֲזִין שׁוֹעֲתֵנו וְתִקְשִׁיב מִנוּ מֵאֲמַר: כִּיּוֹם וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם ה', וְשָׁם נֶאֱמַר:

Give heed to our cry and be attentive to our declaration, as on the day "He called out with the Name Hashem," and there it was said...

After we declare "Keil Erech Apayim Atah," and acknowledge Hashem as the Master of Mercy Who has shown us the path to repentance, we move on to the next seven lines. Each one is a plea for Compassion, each one reflecting a different facet of Mercy.

The seventh and last one is, "Taazin shavaseinu, v'sakshiv menu maamar...Give heed to our cry and be attentive to our declaration."

This is the final step. The deepest level of *tefillah* comes without words; it is *shav'ah*. A cry. A groan. A soundless plea that comes from the deepest place.

"Taazin — Give heed."

Bend down, so to speak. Come close.

We depend on You.

Just You.

The Pnei Menachem shared a meaningful story, told to him by Dr. Eizelbach, the personal physician of his father, the Imrei Emes of Ger.

Before Dr. Eizelbach came to care for *tzaddikim*, he trained under one of the greatest medical minds in the world, a master surgeon in Vienna, the capital of medicine at the time.

This story took place roughly a century ago, when medicine was far more art than science. There were no MRIs. No advanced antibiotics. No heart-lung machines or modern monitoring tools. Surgeries were high-risk procedures. Survival often depended as much on intuition as on skill. Every movement in the operating room could

make the difference between life and death.

One day, Dr. Eizelbach, then a young intern, was asked by his mentor to assist in a particularly delicate operation. The patient's stomach needed to be carefully sutured, and the surgeon needed another steady pair of hands to hold the two torn parts of the organ together while he stitched.



The Pnei Menachem

IT'S THE EYES, DR. EIZELBACH!

The room was still. Every breath measured. Every hand gloved and steady. Dr. Eizelbach focused com-

pletely on his task, his fingers applying gentle but firm pressure to the sides of the stomach, as his mentor sewed the tissue back together.

Suddenly, he felt a sharp, stabbing pain shoot through his hand. Real blinding pain.

His mentor, absorbed in the rhythm of stitching, had accidentally pushed the needle through the patient's tissue, and then straight into his assistant's hand. Though his mentor took it out right away, Dr. Eizelbach still suffered a piercing wound as a result of this medical mishap.

Any normal person would have gasped. Screamed. Pulled back reflexively in alarm and pain.

Not Dr. Eizelbach.

With superhuman self-control, he said not a word. He didn't recoil. He didn't move.

He knew that even a small jolt could cost the patient his life — a movement

that disrupted the surgeon's concentration, a tear in the delicate operation. So, he bit his lip. And stood firm.

After the surgery, he mentioned the incident to his mentor, to simply explain why he hadn't reacted.

The senior doctor was flummoxed. "You mean you felt the pain? The entire time?"

He nodded.

The surgeon gazed at him in awe and said, "You will be an exceptional physician one day." Slowly, he added, "Come. There's something I want to show you, something I've never shown another soul."

Flattered and curious, Dr. Eizelbach followed his mentor to a private inner office.

The great surgeon opened a locked drawer and took out a sealed envelope. Dr. Eizelbach peeped at it curiously.

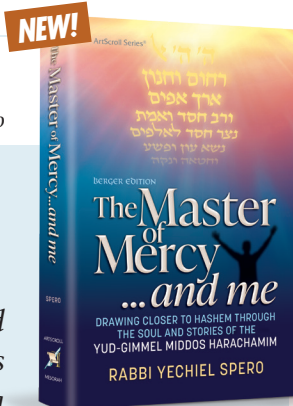
His mentor held it up and said, "Inside this envelope is a list of every patient I've seen or operated on in the past month. Next to each name, I wrote a prediction, who I believe will live and who will not."

Dr. Eizelbach was shocked. How could the senior doctor possibly know? These were complicated cases; some critical, some uncertain.

The doctor continued, "Take this envelope. In two weeks, open it. And see if what I've written holds true."

Two weeks later, Dr. Eizelbach opened it. To his astonishment, it was exactly as predicted. Every person the surgeon had said would survive had lived. And every person he said would

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we can start fresh.

For example, if, in the past, we bought our morning coffee in coffee shops with questionable kosher certification, we follow the preliminary steps of *teshuvah* (regret, leaving the sin behind, and confessing), and then accept upon ourselves not to buy from these coffee shops in the future. And if we are wise, we set up a fence for ourselves, perhaps by making sure to walk to work via a different route so as not to be tempted. This is a full refresh; in this regard, we are a completely new person.

R' Baruch Ber Leibowitz, the rosh yeshivah of Yeshivas Kamenitz, an extremely sensitive individual, was known for his exceptional kibbud av va'eim. Yet he never felt he was doing enough.

After R' Baruch Ber's father passed away, R' Baruch Ber was inconsolable. He believed he could have done more and taken better care of his father; these feelings of guilt exacerbated his grief. Months passed and R' Baruch Ber's health declined.

One day, he traveled to Vilna to participate in a gathering of gedolim. The Chofetz Chaim, R' Yisrael Meir Kagan, was in attendance. Noticing R' Baruch Ber's melancholy, the Chofetz Chaim inquired, "R' Baruch Ber, *vuss iz* — what's wrong?"

R' Baruch Ber told the Chofetz Chaim how awful he felt that he had not properly fulfilled the mitzvah of *kibbud av va'eim*, how he had not done enough for his father.

THE INDIVIDUAL WHO FAILED; IT WASN'T YOU.

The Chofetz Chaim took R' Baruch Ber's hand in his own. Speaking gently, the Chofetz Chaim reminded him of the mitzvah of *teshuvah*. "When one does *teshuvah*, he becomes an entirely new person. In essence, you are no longer the same person. The individual who failed in his kibbud av was someone else; it wasn't you."

R' Baruch Ber began to smile for the first time in months. "*Ich bin a naiya mensch* — I am a new person!"

He then expressed his gratitude to the Chofetz Chaim for the gift he had given him, a brand-new lease on life! He now appreciated and valued *teshuvah* in a manner he never had previously.

When one does *teshuvah*, he does not merely become a better person — he becomes a completely new person!

The other aspect of improvement on Rosh Hashanah is building on the mitzvos we already do: making them better, smoothing them out, polishing them to a shine. For example, we may always be careful to pray with a *minyan*. However, we may show up exactly on time, without even a moment to properly prepare for *tefillah*. Beautifying the mitzvah would entail making an honest effort to come early to davening, allowing for proper preparation and thereby improved *kavannah*.

תקעו בחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר בַּכֶּסֶה לַיּוֹם חֲגֻגוֹ — *Blow the shofar at the moon's renewal, at the time appointed for our festive day.* What makes this *our festive day*? What empowers the shofar on this day in which the *new moon is hidden*?

It's the *חֲדוּשׁ*, *renewal*, and the *שׁוֹפָר*, *beautification*, that take place as we celebrate His Kingdom. 📖

TAKEAWAY

As you prepare for Rosh Hashanah, try to think of either one aveirah that calls for full teshuvah, or one mitzvah that can be enhanced. Then make a concentrated effort to either do full teshuvah for the aveirah or renew and/or beautify the mitzvah.

WITH HOPEFUL EYES

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not had passed away.

Dr. Eizelbach returned to his mentor, both shaken and intrigued. "How on earth did you know? What was your method? You're not a prophet; how did you do it?"

The doctor revealed the secret. "It's the eyes, Dr. Eizelbach. When a patient walks into my room, I

look into their eyes. And I can tell. Those who have hope in their eyes — they live. Those who have already given up — they rarely make it. The eyes tell me everything."

The Pnei Menachem explained what this means for us.

In medicine. In life and death. And in our spiritual lives.

So many of us come to Elul and Tishrei wounded, spiritually un-

well. We carry years of struggle, distance, coldness.

Sometimes, we wonder: *Do we still have a chance?*

The key lies in the eyes. As we say in Mussaf of Rosh Hashanah, "*Eineinu lecha teluyos* — Our eyes look toward and depend upon You."

With hope. With yearning. With the silent cry of a heart... we will get there. 📖

TAKEAWAY

If you believe you will get there, then you will get there. As long as your eyes keep looking Upward.

HASHEM DID IT: THE MIRACULOUS RESCUE IN ARGENTINA

RONNIE by Suri Cohen; Edited and expanded by Rabbi Chananya Greenwald



In 2003, a friend called Ronnie about Rabbi F*, a remarkable man who had helped thousands. “Ronnie, he urgently needs to meet you.”

At the meeting, the rabbi shared the painful story of his son Aharon’s arrest in Argentina. Something felt off to Ronnie, but out of gratitude for all the rabbi had done for Klal Yisrael, he asked, “What do you want me to do?”

“Well, maybe you can go to Argentina and get him out.”

“I can’t go now, but I’ll give you some names in the CIA and the State Department who may be helpful.”

Aharon, meanwhile, had been incarcerated in Devoto Prison, essentially a giant room that held over a thousand prisoners who slept on mattresses on the floor.

“Every day I survived was a miracle,” recalled Aharon. “They hated Jews... I didn’t speak the language... there were daily murders, stabbings and assaults all around me... I spent four months there, and the inhumane conditions were wearing me out... my lawyer was helpless... I didn’t see any hope...”

Sometime later, Ronnie called the rabbi to check if there was any progress.

“Progress?” the rabbi responded bitterly. “My son lives in terror, surrounded by murderers and gangsters. He can’t daven or eat kosher, and his *yarmulke* makes him a target. It’s Rosh Hashanah in less than a week. You must help me. None of those names you gave me did anything.”

“Let me think about it,” Ronnie said.

He contacted a lawyer in Argentina, who confirmed that Aharon was still in prison and that there would be no trial for at least a year. “Is there anything we can do?” Ronnie asked.

“Well, there’s a halfway house not too far away. If you can get him in, he could get kosher food on the Jewish holidays, and things will be easier for him.”

Ronnie tried to think of a next step but didn’t have any good ideas.



Ronnie in Buenos Aires, Argentina

**IT’S ROSH HASHANAH
IN LESS THAN A WEEK.
YOU MUST HELP ME!**

The next morning, he received a phone call from Raffaello Fellah.

“Rabbi, I’m in New York. I want you to come with me to a dinner honoring President Berlusconi of Italy.”

“I won’t stay for the dinner,” Ronnie said, “but I’ll accompany you to the reception.”

At the event, Ronnie was the only one wearing a *yarmulke*. A tall man made his way through the crowd and offered his hand. “Shalom!”

“Shalom.”

“What do you do?”

“I’m a camp director. What do you do?”

“I’m a consultant for a compa-

ny.” The man handed Ronnie a business card with his name, Saul Rothstein, and the name of his company. Much to Ronnie’s surprise, he saw that Rothstein was based in Argentina.

Ronnie’s grandson Yisroel Wolff looked up the name later that night. “Zeidy,” he said, “this guy served in the Argentinian government under Carlos Ruckauf, former vice president and foreign minister. He is very active in Argentinian politics.”

Ronnie visited Rothstein at his hotel. “The other night, you asked me why I was at the dinner. I figured it out. It wasn’t to see President Berlusconi — it was to see you!”

He told Rothstein about Aharon. Although Rothstein wasn’t religious, he was a Yiddish-speaking Polish Jew whom Ronnie sensed would be sympathetic to a fellow Jew’s plight.

“Is there a way that we could get this Jewish kid from the prison into the halfway house?”

“You know,” Rothstein replied, “I came to the States with the minister of the interior, he’s staying in the room next to mine. I’ll talk to him.”

Indeed, before Rosh Hashanah, Aharon was transferred to Chando Maria, a kind of VIP prison for very wealthy, well-connected people. He could receive food and visitors and daven normally, even learn.

“No one was threatening me,” Aharon says, “and I felt like a human being again. I

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couldn't believe what was happening."

The next morning, Ronnie received an excited call from the lawyer in Argentina.

"Rabbi! What did you do? They brought him to the halfway house! He's going to be there for the holidays. He can have visitors. He can get kosher food. *What did you do?*"

"I didn't do anything," Ronnie said. "G-d did it. I mean, I went to a party, I saw a guy. I didn't do anything."

The next call was from the father. "A miracle! Thank you very much.... Listen, you got him into the halfway house. Maybe you can get him back home?"

Unable to resist the father's pleas, Ronnie flew to Buenos Aires on Chol HaMoed Succos to meet with the assistant foreign minister of Argentina. He presented some letters from influential people in Washington and tried to expedite the case.

"This kid's been in prison for months. You've got to give him a trial."

Ronnie also visited Aharon in prison.

"He came to visit me on Succos! It gave me so much hope, and a will to continue — someone cared about me so much that he left his family on Yom Tov for me!"

On the return flight to New York, Ronnie was greeted by a man sitting in his row.

"What's your name?"

"Ronnie Greenwald."

"What do you do?"

"I'm a camp director. You?"

"I run a newspaper and a radio show. My name is Hector Timerman."

Ronnie couldn't believe his ears. "Are you related to Jacobo Timerman?"

"Yes," Hector replied. "He was my father."

Jacobo Timerman, a Soviet-born Argentine journalist, was imprisoned and tortured by the Argentine government in the seventies for reporting the regime's atrocities. In 1979, his Argentinian



Ronnie with Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky

RABBI, I WANT YOU TO COME TO A DINNER HONORING PRESIDENT BERLUSCONI OF ITALY

citizenship was revoked, and he was released to Israel.

"Do you remember a Jewish congressman and a rabbi involved in getting your father to Israel?"

"Sure."

"I'm that rabbi."

Overcome, Timerman rose from his seat and embraced Ronnie. "Oh! *That* Ronnie Greenwald! Please give the congressman my regards. I'll never forget what you did!"

Ronnie seized the opportunity Hashem had sent him. He told Timerman the story of the imprisoned youth.

"I know the president, Nestor Kirschner," Timerman told him.

"Listen, Hector. Do what you can. We went out of our way for your father. Please go out of your way as well."

A few months later, Ronnie

learned that Timerman had been appointed the consul general of Argentina in New York and reached out to him again. Ronnie also managed to convince government officials to set a trial date.

Despite video evidence proving his innocence, Aharon was convicted and sentenced to six years in prison. Nevertheless, a year and a half after Aharon's ordeal began, Ronnie was able to negotiate his early release.


"I don't know exactly how he did it," said Aharon, "but Rabbi Greenwald got me out of there."

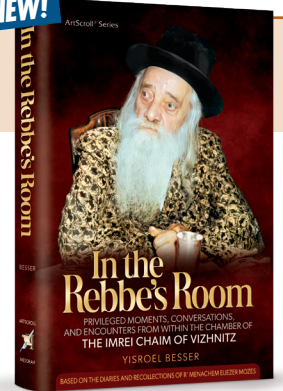
The young man called Ronnie from the police station on the day of his release. "I'm here picking up my passport. *Mazel tov*, Rabbi Greenwald. Thank you very much!" (Ultimately, the Argentinian high court exonerated Aharon completely.)

Reflecting on his seemingly central role in the story, Ronnie commented that there are two types of miracles.

"On Pesach, Moshe took the Jews out of Egypt, but we say in the Haggadah, '*Ani v'lo malach*' — Hashem alone took the Jews out, not any messengers or intermediaries. Moshe is not given any credit as a *shaliach*."

"Yet on Shavuot, it says that Moshe gave the Jews the Torah. Why is he recognized as a *shaliach* on Shavuot but not on Pesach? So I figured like this: when there's an open miracle, a person truly has no role. Moshe can't perform a miracle. Hashem performed the miracle. But on Shavuot, you have to teach the Jews Torah, and for that you need a *shaliach*."

"So by me, it was a miracle. Who am I to think that I have any role? I'm not even a *shaliach*!" 



In Vizhnitz, the Yamim Tovim were not just annual occurrences, great days that came and left. Rather, all twelve months of the year one could feel the awe of Rosh Hashanah and the *teshuvah* of Yom Kippur, the joy of Succos and the *cheirus* of Pesach.

If there was a reference to one of the Yamim Tovim in the weekly *parashah*, the Rebbe would seize the opportunity and speak about it at the *tish*. He might become passionate about Chanukah on a hot summer Friday night or express his longing for the Pesach matzah on an autumn Shabbos day.

The Rebbe was excited to mention any Yom Tov, but it was especially true with regard to the Yamim Noraim: Months before Tishrei, the Rebbe was already preparing for and anticipating the season.

“From my *zeide*, the Imrei Chaim, I learned that one can already be awaiting Rosh Hashanah months before it arrives,” the Slonimer Rebbe once told R’ Menachem Leizer. He recalled that when the Rebbe encountered a *pasuk*, whatever the *parashah* or topic being discussed, that appears in the *nusach* of *Malchuyos*, *Zichronos*, and *Shofaros* recited in the *Shemoneh Esrei* of Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe would sing it in the tune of the Yamim Noraim. “And already in mid-Sivan,” the Slonimer Rebbe testified, “you could hear that it was coming from deep inside him, that he was already holding there.”

R’ Chaim Yaakov Goldwicht spent *Shabbos Mevarchim* for Rosh Chodesh Tammuz with the Rebbe, and throughout his spoken Torah, the Rebbe referenced the upcoming days of judgment, singing out parts of the *tefillah* with the proper *nusach*.

After the *tish*, the Ponevezher *talmid* reflected, “Some of us have to toil an entire Chodesh Elul to acquire the feeling that the Vizhnitzer Rebbe was able to instill in us during a single *tish*!”

In Chodesh Elul, the Rebbe was completely preoc-

cupied with his preparations for Rosh Hashanah.

Once the days of Selichos actually arrived, the feeling in the Rebbe’s room was different. One night, the line was particularly long and the Rebbe’s door was open until late at night. The early-morning Selichos did not leave the Rebbe much time to rest, and R’ Menachem Leizer prepared a cup of coffee for the Rebbe before Shacharis. The Rebbe acknowledged the efforts of the *meshamesh*, but he did not drink from the coffee.

“Now is not the time for this,” the Rebbe said.

On the first day of Selichos, the Rebbe would go to daven at his father’s *tziyun*. He was always accompanied by a large crowd of chassidim. After saying *Tehillim*, the Rebbe would wait for them to leave and remain in the *ohel* by himself, with just the *meshamesh* there. Then he would sing the *tefillah* of *Heyei Im Pifiyos*, a special request made by the *baal tefillah* at that time of year, the hope that Hashem will “be with the mouths of the emissaries” of His people.

The Rebbe explained his need for privacy to R’ Menachem Leizer: He did not want the chassidim to think that it was a Vizhnitzer *minhag* to sing at a *kever*, for it is not. Rather, it was just the Rebbe’s personal practice.

As tangible as the awe was during these days, the Rebbe himself preferred not to use the term “Yamim

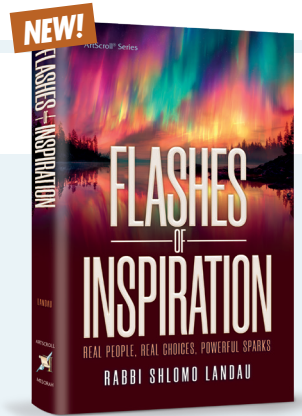
Noraim,” translated as Days of Awe. Instead, he referred to the period as the *heilege teg*, “days of holiness.”

“The focus should be purely on coronating the Ribono shel Olam as our King,” the Rebbe explained to R’ Menachem Leizer, “and the awe is the consequence of being *mamlich* Him. There is certainly awe, the days are certainly *nora*, but that is not the goal — it is the outcome.”



The Imrei Chaim of Vizhnitz

**SOME OF US HAVE
TO TOIL AN ENTIRE
CHODESH ELUL TO
ACQUIRE THE FEELING
THAT THE VIZHNITZER
REBBE WAS ABLE TO
INSTILL IN US DURING
A SINGLE TISH!**



When Daniel's grandfather neared the end of his life, he called Daniel to his bedside with a deep sense of purpose.

"I want to give you something very special," he said.

From under the bed, he pulled out a large, velvet-lined box. Inside lay the most exquisite tray Daniel had ever seen — golden, radiant, etched with delicate engravings, and adorned with tiny, glimmering diamonds.

"This," his grandfather said, "was given to me by my father. And he received it from his father. And he from his. It has been in our family for generations. It's priceless. And now, it's yours. You are the next guardian of this legacy."

Daniel was stunned. He had never even heard of this family heirloom. He felt honored — humbled — but also overwhelmed by the responsibility. Still, he accepted it with reverence, knowing it wasn't just an object. It was a symbol.

Over the years, Daniel would take it out from time to time to show his children. "This is part of who we are," he would say. "This is our legacy."

One day, during one of these viewings, a young grandchild came near the tray. In a moment of excitement, the child slipped — and a sharp corner of a toy scratched across the surface.

Daniel gasped.

The scratch was deep. Visible. And irreparable.

A tray that had survived centuries — untouched, unblemished — was now damaged in a split second. Daniel's heart sank. He felt crushed, as though he had failed his grandfather, failed his family.

Desperate, he brought it to a goldsmith to see if it could be polished, repaired, and restored to its original beauty. But the expert examined it carefully and shook his head.

"I'm sorry. There's not much I can do to remove the scratch."

He paused. "But... maybe there's another way."

The goldsmith looked up. "What's your family name?"

"Feldman," Daniel replied.

"Then let me try something. The scratch — it's perfectly angled. I think I can etch an F into it. I'll refine the lines. Add a small stroke above. I'll shape it so that it looks intentional — like it's always been there. A family signature."

Daniel agreed. And the craftsman went to work.

When he was done, the tray didn't just look repaired. It looked transformed. The scar had become a symbol. The damage had become part of the design.

The above is more than just a story; in essence, it is the story of our lives.

Periodically, we all need to take a long, hard look at the heirloom that we carry: our *neshamah*.

And sometimes, when we take that penetrating look, we gasp. That beautiful and perfect heirloom is smudged, sullied, and — perhaps worst of all — scratched.

We've made mistakes. We've fallen short. We've acted in ways we wish we hadn't. And we wonder: Is it too late to fix this?

FROM UNDER THE BED, HE PULLED OUT A LARGE, VELVET-LINED BOX

But what if we've misunderstood the scratch? What if that flaw is really the beginning of our signature?

Because behind every misstep is a hidden strength — a *middah*, a power waiting to be redirected.

If you've struggled with anger — it means you have passion.

If you've battled laziness — it means you are capable of deep rest, perhaps even contemplation.

If you've spoken harshly — it means your words carry weight.

Instead of erasing who we are, maybe we need to refine it. Reshape it. Etch it into something meaningful.

Teshuvah isn't just about undoing — it's about transforming.

Yes, it might take a lifetime. But if we embrace the essence of our flaws, if we allow Hashem to guide our hands, even the scratches become part of the beauty.

Let's use what's within us to build a legacy worth passing on. 📖

Names have been changed.



The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 597:1) writes in the laws of Rosh Hashanah that on this great day we are supposed to eat and drink and be happy. However, we should not eat to complete satiation, so that we don't reach a light-headed state of mind, but, rather, keep the fear of Hashem upon us. The *Mishnah Berurah* (ibid.) writes that although Rosh Hashanah is a day of judgment, there is still a mitzvah to be happy on the festival. Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein asks (*Vavei HaAmudim*, Vol. 22, pp. 80–84): Seemingly these two emotions — fear and happiness — are contradictory. How can we be expected to feel both at the same time?

The rabbi explains with a *maschal*. Imagine that we discover a hidden *tzaddik* in Yerushalayim, a master of every facet of Torah. Very quickly, *Klal Yisrael* begins looking to him for guidance. Not only is he a *gadol baTorah* and righteous in all his deeds, but he also has *ruach hakodesh* and can see on a person's face every deed he ever did, both good and bad. In addition, he also has a special power of *berachah*. Whenever he gives a blessing, it always comes true.

Every day, hundreds of people line up to try to spend one minute with this great *tzaddik*. If a person knows he is about to go in, he will do *teshuvah* for all his sins, not

wanting the rabbi to see his past transgressions. He will also come well prepared with what he wants to say, unwilling to waste time on unimportant matters. When he walks into the *gadol's* room, he will be afraid, knowing whose presence he is in, but at the same time he will be happy, knowing that the answer to all his problems is just one



Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein

and analyzes and scrutinizes every single deed we did. When we stand before Him, everything about us is revealed. But Hashem also sits on His Throne of Mercy and wants to give us the happiest, most blessed year. Thus, we are fearful of Whose Presence we are about to stand in, but at the same time, we are happy that the Judge is also our loving Father, Who can help us with every problem we have.

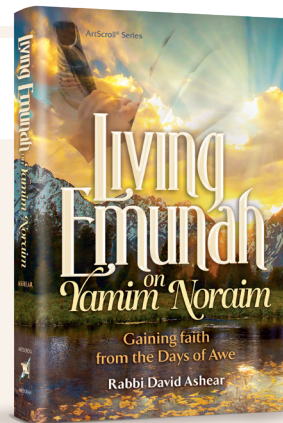
Before our deeds are scrutinized on Rosh Hashanah, we have

ON ROSH HASHANAH, HASHEM SITS ON HIS THRONE OF JUDGEMENT AND ANALYZES AND SCRUTINIZES EVERY SINGLE DEED WE DID. WHEN WE STAND BEFORE HIM, EVERYTHING ABOUT US IS REVEALED. BUT HASHEM ALSO SITS ON HIS THRONE OF MERCY AND WANTS TO GIVE US THE HAPPIEST, MOST BLESSED YEAR.

blessing away.

All year long, Hashem is our loving Father, and on Rosh Hashanah, we begin calling Him *Avinu Malkeinu*, Our Father and Our King. On Rosh Hashanah, Hashem sits on His Throne of Judgment

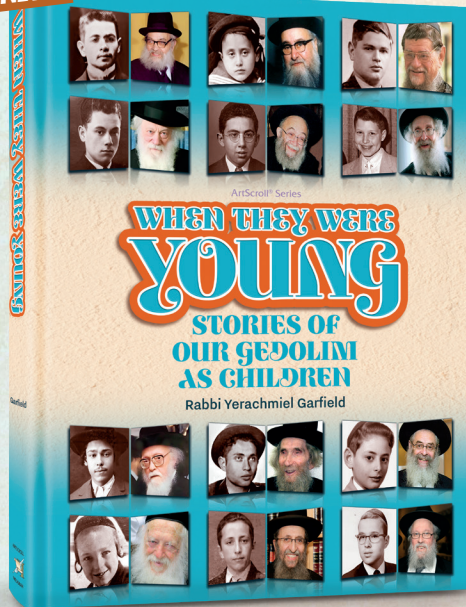
a chance to repent so that we can enter the King's chambers looking our very best. Rosh Hashanah is a very serious day, but at the same time it is a happy one because we are privileged to be in the Presence of Hashem. 📖



	SHABBOS SEPT 20 בז אלול	SUNDAY SEPT 21 בח אלול	MONDAY SEPT 22 בט אלול	TUESDAY SEPT 23 א תשרי	WEDNESDAY SEPT 24 ב תשרי	THURSDAY SEPT 25 ג תשרי	FRIDAY SEPT 26 ד תשרי	SHABBOS SEPT 27 ה תשרי	SUNDAY SEPT 28 ו תשרי	MONDAY SEPT 29 ז תשרי	TUESDAY SEPT 30 ח תשרי	WEDNESDAY OCT 1 ט תשרי
BAVLI	Zevachim 6	Zevachim 7	Zevachim 8	Zevachim 9	Zevachim 10	Zevachim 11	Zevachim 12	Zevachim 13	Zevachim 14	Zevachim 15	Zevachim 16	Zevachim 17
YERUSHALMI	Shekalim 28	Shekalim 29	Shekalim 30	Shekalim 31	Shekalim 32	Shekalim 33	Shekalim 34	Shekalim 35	Shekalim 36	Shekalim 37	Shekalim 38	Shekalim 39
MISHNAH	Menachos 6:1-2	Menachos 6:3-4	Menachos 6:5-6	Menachos 6:7-7:1	Menachos 7:2-3	Menachos 7:4-5	Menachos 7:6-8:1	Menachos 8:2-3	Menachos 8:4-5	Menachos 8:6-7	Menachos 9:1-2	Menachos 9:3-4
KITZUR	131:17-132:End	133:1-8	133:9-15	133:16-21	133:22-26	133:27-134:1	134:2-6	134:7-12	134:13-135:2	135:3-6	135:7-12	135:13-End

When They Were Young

NEW!



RABBI ELIYAHU LOPIAN

הרב אליהו לופיאן זצ"ל

Position: Rosh yeshivah of Yeshivas Etz Chaim; mashgiach of Yeshivas Knesses Chizkiyahu

Place: England and Eretz Yisrael

Publications: *Lev Eliyahu*

Birth: 1876 **Petirah:** 1970

Known for: His role as a *mussar* giant; his teachings on character development

Rabbi Elyah Lopian

Eliyahu (Elyah) Lopian was born in 1876 in Grieve, Poland, to R' Yaakov and Freyda. As a young man, he studied in Lomza and in the great Kelm school of *mussar*. In Kelm, he was influenced by R' Simcha Zissel Ziv. R' Simcha Zissel, known as the Alter of Kelm, was a close *talmid* of the founder of the *mussar* movement, R' Yisrael (Lipkin) Salanter. In 1895, Elyah married Sarah Leah Rottman. R' Elyah learned in kollel in Kelm and also founded a yeshivah there. R' Elyah and his wife moved to England in 1928, where he served as rosh yeshivah in Yeshivas Etz Chaim. In 1950, he immigrated to Eretz Yisrael, where he served as mashgiach at Yeshivas Knesses Chizkiyahu, located in Zichron Yaakov and later Kfar Chassidim. He was *niftar* in 1970.



As a child, Elyah lived with his family in a simple hut. The hut had a dirt floor that had been walked on so much that it became as hard as a cement floor. One day, Elyah's mother decided to wash and polish their crystal and glassware.

A STORY FROM HIS YOUTH

These were special treasures, and she took great care to clean them until they sparkled like diamonds. She laid them out carefully on the large wooden table to dry, planning to put them away later.

Elyah, like many young boys, was full of energy and always in a hurry. As he rushed past the table, he didn't pay attention to the delicate glassware his mother had worked so hard to clean. And he accidentally bumped into the table. Before he knew it, one of the beautiful glasses teetered on the edge and fell to the hard floor with a loud crash, shattering into tiny pieces.

Elyah's heart sank as he saw the broken glass scattered across the floor. His mother, seeing the mess, was disappointed and upset. She gave Elyah a harsh lesson about being careful, especially around fragile things. Elyah learned that he needed to be more cautious, and he promised himself he would be. He even avoided going near the table whenever his mother laid out the glassware.

But one day, something unexpected happened.

The family kept hens in their yard for eggs and meat, and one of the hens, curious as ever, wandered into the hut. As it pecked at the ground, searching for crumbs, it suddenly got startled. In its panic, it flapped its wings and jumped toward the doorway. But instead, it hit the table where the crystal glasses were once again set out.

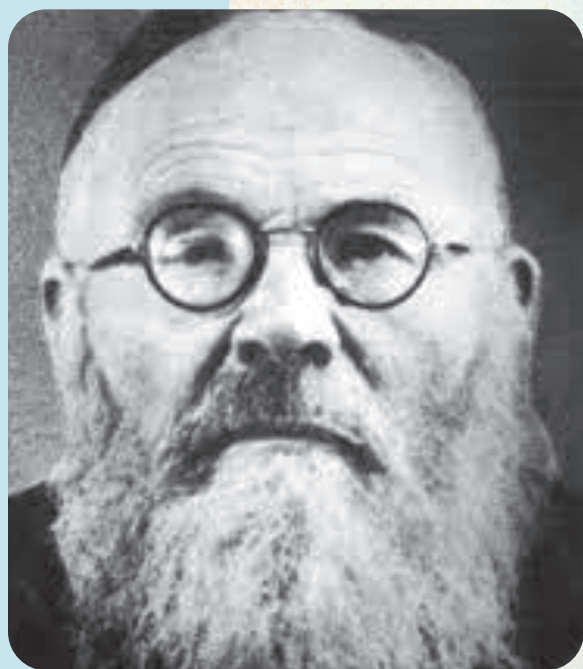
Elyah watched in horror as three of the precious crystal glasses toppled off the table and fell to the hard floor, breaking into pieces. He stood frozen, remembering the punishment he had received for breaking just one glass. What would happen to the hen for breaking three? Surely, it would be punished even more severely.

To Elyah's amazement, his mother didn't scold or punish the hen. Instead, she gently picked it up, stroked its head, and calmly set it outside. She even gave it some grains of feed as if to comfort it.

Elyah was shocked. How could this be? He had been punished for breaking just one glass. And now the hen, who broke three, was treated with kindness. As he watched his mother care for the hen, Elyah said to himself, "I wish I were a hen!"

But as he grew older, Elyah began to understand. His mother had punished him because she wanted him to learn an important lesson about being careful and responsible. The hen, on the other hand, didn't know any better. It was just a hen, after all.

Elyah realized how much better it is to be a human, even with all the extra responsibilities.



Think about a time
when you had to choose
between doing what's
easy and what's right.
How did you handle it?



You're in your cozy bed, enjoying a pleasant dream, when suddenly you hear the loud beeping of your alarm. Do you press the snooze button and sleep another few minutes, even though this will mean possibly coming late to davening? Or do you say *Modeh Ani*, pull yourself out of bed, and get ready to face the day and all the responsibilities that come with being a good Jew?

LESSONS TO LEARN

*A human being does know
better and has the ability
to choose what's right.*



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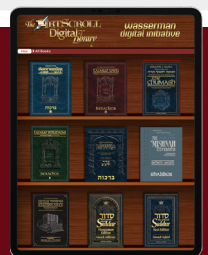
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פֶּלַח הַשְּׁוֹנֶה הַלְכוֹת בְּכָל יוֹם מוֹבְטָח לוֹ שֶׁהוּא בֶּן הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא (נדה עג).

One who studies halachos each day is assured that he is destined to the world to come (Niddah 73a).

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