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ROSH HASHANAH

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When you learn a gemara, in order to follow the flow of the sugya you must know where each step begins, and what type of step it is. This code helps you focus on each step of the gemara.

HOW TO USE THE CODE

- 1) Identify what the first word of each step is.
- 2) Identify what type of step it is - Question, Answer, Statement, Proof.
- 3) Number each step of the sugya.

By writing down the code, it will help you focus on and keep track of the steps of the sugya.

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ROSH HASHANAH

WITH

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT" L

BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

THE NEW YEAR AND SHABBOS

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Part I. Praying for a New Mind

Last Minute Preparations

The end of the year is rushing towards us and so it pays for us to take time now to talk about Rosh Hashanah. Of course, there's so much to say, so many important ideas, but what can we do? We don't have ten hours now to sit together and talk – and even if we did, it wouldn't be enough time to prepare. We need days and days for that, hours upon hours.

I remember how we got ready for Rosh Hashanah in Slabodka. Already from Rosh Chodesh Elul they began saying a *shmuz* every day; instead of three times a week, now it was every day. The entire month was spent in preparation for Rosh Hashanah and we, the yeshiva men, spoke constantly about the Yom Hadin. As Rosh Hashanah was approaching the air was

saturated with gravity, with a seriousness. All of our thoughts were, “We’re approaching the Day of Judgment.”

Maariv in Slabodka

You have to understand what that means; when Rosh Hashanah finally came, it was something to see. I can’t forget the sight. We’re sitting there in the *beis medrash*. All of us are filled with emotion, with thoughts, with trepidation. A whole month of intense preparations and now it’s finally nighttime; it’s Rosh Hashanah.

And when the *chazan* said “*Borchu*”, a roar rose from the yeshiva people, raising the roof: “*Baruch Hashem hamevorach l’olam va’ed!*” Then they sat down quietly. When they sat down it was quiet, perfectly silent. And then all together they started the first *bracha* before Kriyas Shema, the word *boruch*. “*Baruch, oy yoy yoy, oy yoy, oy yoy.*” And they were weeping and shouting. *Baruch* means blessed, but you have to put all that you can into these words now. *Baruch* means, “We’re thanking You. We bless You. We love You Hashem.” And then “*Atah – You! You! You!*”

It was an experience. You davened *Maariv* in the yeshivah on Rosh Hashanah, and you were a new person when you came out. The other *tefillos*, the whole *yomtov*, it’s hard to describe what the *davening* did to us. You had a different mind after Rosh Hashanah than beforehand, no question about it.

Our Preparation

Now, we can’t do anything like that; the time is late and anyhow we couldn’t match such a thing. That was something, an experience, that couldn’t be duplicated here in America. But that doesn’t *patur* us; we’re obligated to do what we can – and there’s a lot we can do. We also, to a great extent, can create for ourselves new minds for the new year.

And so we’ll choose at least a few ideas, things that we can grab onto, that will help us be ready for Rosh Hashanah. And if we have time at the end we’ll talk also about *motzei* Rosh Hashanah – that’s Shabbos. This year Shabbos comes right after Rosh Hashanah and that’s an especial opportunity that we should make use of.

Reminding Hashem?

Now, the day of Rosh Hashanah is introduced in the Torah in terms that explain almost nothing. יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יִהְיֶה לָכֶם – *It should be for you a day of blowing on the shofar* (Bamidbar 29:1). That’s all; it doesn’t tell us anything more. And then in another place it tells us something about the purpose of the blowing:

It says זָכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה which means, 'You will be remembered by your *teruah*' (Vayikra 23:24). When you'll blow *shofar* so Hakadosh Baruch Hu will remind Himself about you; He'll have you in mind to give you His blessing for the new year.

Now that immediately brings us to a question because what kind of procedure is this that we remind Hashem? He needs reminders from us?! Is He absent-minded *chas veshalom* and He forgets? Of course not. He's thinking about us at all times; He doesn't forget about us for a second.

That's a *yesod ha'emunah*. We have to believe and understand and always think that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is looking at every one of us. עֵינָיו מְשֻׁטוֹת בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ – Hashem looks everywhere all the time (Divrei Hayomim II 16:9). Not for a moment does He remove His thoughts from you. And so, what are you saying that you're going to blow a *shofar* and say certain *pessukim* of *zichronos* and that way you'll remind Him about you?

Reminding Ourselves

And so we'll begin with the following foundational principle, a *yesod hayesodos* – and it's especially important for Rosh Hashanah when we'll spend a lot of time in the *beis knesses*.

The principle is like this: Why do we ask Hakadosh Baruch Hu in our prayers for the things that we desire? If it's necessary, He'll do it anyhow. And if He decides that He doesn't want to give it to you, that it's not necessary or that it's not good for you, so He won't give it. Why should your prayers accomplish anything? The whole thing seems entirely superfluous.

And the answer is in the meaning of the word *lehisparallel*. We say 'pray' in English but that's not what *lehisparallel* means. Listen now to the definition; it's important. We find in the Torah that Yaakov said to Yosef, וְאָהַבְתִּי לִפְנֵיךָ לֹא – פָּלַלְתִּי – “I didn't think I would ever see your face again” (Bereishis 48:11). *Pillel* means 'to think' and *lehisparallel* means 'to make yourself think'.

Change My Mind

Oh, that's a different story then; *davening* is a different function than we thought. We were thinking that the function of *tefillah* is to twist Hashem's arms. Like a poor man says to the rich man, “Have pity on me!” He tries to give a tug on the rich man's heartstrings. Same thing here, we think. We want to influence Hashem to change His emotions, His mind.

No, no. Forget about changing His mind. His mind is just fine; it's a perfect mind. *Tefillah* means that you're changing your mind. It's your mind

that needs changing. And how do we do that? By being מְתַפֵּל – ‘making ourselves think.’

Now, don’t think it’s nothing. To get a mind, that’s one of our primary achievements in this world. It’s an acquisition, a real accomplishment. Instead of being an animal mind, a *megusham*, you change over your mind by filling it with Torah patterns of thinking. And that’s the foundation of *tefillah* – to understand what you’re saying first of all, and then to believe it and to convince yourself as much as possible of the principles of the truth.

True Truths

What truths? All kinds. Number one that He listens; that He’s a *Chai v’Kayam* Who hears us and listens to us. כִּי אָתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ – *You are listening*. And if you keep on saying it to yourself and thinking about it, after a while you’ll come to have that attitude.

Also, the truth that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is in charge of our fate. By asking Him always to heal us, to help us with *parnassah*, with children, with health, with this and that, so we’re reminding ourselves that He is the Author of our fate, not us.

And so *tefillah* is a lifetime of achieving true ideals, true attitudes, true ideas. It’s *emunah*, *bitachon*, *ahavas Hashem*, *yiras Hashem*; to be a *misparallel* means many things because every word is another gem. *Atah! Boruch! Michalkeil chayim b’chessed! Morid Hageshem! Modim! Rifaeinu! Bareich aleinu!* You’re filling your mind with the most important *yedios* and each one is made stronger and stronger each time it’s repeated. If you’re thinking, you’re acquiring a mind. That’s the real purpose of *davening*; to gain all those ideas in our mind.

Tefillos Answered

So why are our prayers answered sometimes? Because Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants to encourage us by doing what we ask Him to do. “Oh,” Hashem says, “if you really think I’m listening then I’ll listen. You’re accomplishing in this world by acquiring a new mind and I’m going to encourage you in that.”

Now, He’s not necessarily going to give us exactly what we want because who said it’s good for you? It’s like the boy who needs an operation; he has to remove his tonsils or his appendix, whatever it is. So the doctors are about to strap him onto the operating table. But this boy has other ideas and

as soon as the doctor turns his back, he leaps off the table, streaks through the door straight to the candy store.

Now he's buying a big ice-cream a mile high, walking in the street, licking it. Oh, this is called living! Who needs an operation when you can be licking ice-cream?

What happens? His father finally collars him and says, "You think this is good for you?! I'll show you what's good for you!" And then comes the *potch*. He smacks him and the ice-cream goes flying into the gutter. And the father drags him straight back to the hospital. So that *potch* is going to save his life; he'll be able to eat a lot of ice-cream cones later in life because of that *potch*.

Sometimes the Answer is No

So Hakadosh Baruch Hu is not necessarily going to give us exactly what we want. We're not the physicians to be able to write our own prescription. He knows better what's good for us! But this you have to know – that your *tefillah* helped. You're never a failure when you *daven* because the more you do it right, the more of a mind you achieve.

And you can never tell – maybe Hakadosh Baruch Hu is waiting for your prayers and He's going to say to you, "My boy, since you prayed to Me, I'm going to tell the doctors to take you off the operating table." And then they'll take a look at your chart and they'll say, "It was all a mistake. It was a wrong diagnosis. Out to the candy store you go!"

Sometimes the Answer is Yes

It happens sometimes that way. Many times it's a wrong diagnosis. Sometimes it's a fatal disease and people survive. And when the patient gets well after the doctor said he wouldn't live – the doctor said he could live only three more weeks and this man kept on living for thirty more years; it happens again and again – so when the doctors are confronted with that, they say, "Well, it was the wrong diagnosis. It was a mistake in diagnosis."

So you keep on praying and Hakadosh Baruch Hu might make that diagnosis turn out to be wrong. And whether or not Hashem has answered your request according to what you hoped, you have gained a much more valuable gift – the gift of *a mind*. And that gift, that success, will accompany you much further than anything you might have asked for!

Part II. A Day of the New Mind

A Day of Change

Now, if that's the case, then we can better understand our approach to Rosh Hashanah; it's not the day of asking, of trying to get what we want. It's the day of *changing our minds*. And the *tefillos* are long; they're filled with very many ideas because this is the day! The day of זְכוּרָה וְתוֹעָה, of 'blowing for remembering', that's the best day to start fresh; it's the opportunity to remember and review very many great ideals and to thereby get a new mind.

That's why in *Mussaf* we say various *pessukim* of *malchuyos*, *zichronos* and *shofros*; and for each one there are ten *pessukim*. So some people think it's a game, a matching game. We have to say, let's say, ten *pessukim* of *zichronos* so the *Chachomim* opened up a Concordance and looked up under the letters ז-כ-ר and they chose ten *pessukim*.

No, that's foolish. Each *pessuk* is chosen as a lesson, a teaching what to think. You're davening *Mussaf* and you're thinking what the *pessukim* are saying, what they're trying to teach you, and you're getting a new mind.

Building a Teivah for the Year

Just as an example so you'll understand better what I'm saying. Let's say the *pessukim* of *zichronos*. When you say וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת נֹחַ – And Hashem remembered Noah (Bereishis 8:1) you have to think about what it's trying to tell you. Did you think about that last Rosh Hashanah? So think about it now at least.

Here is Noah, riding out on the ocean. It's a tremendously stormy ocean, and all around him is nothing but *mabul*. *Mabul* means 'destruction' – from *balah*; all around, everything is being destroyed because of the sins of the generation.

And Noah and his family are the only ones left. What's going to be? And then finally וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת נֹחַ – Hashem remembered Noah. It means that the one who remains loyal to Hashem, he'll be remembered. Around you, the whole world is sinning. On all sides terrible things; evolution, immorality, television, libraries, and the loyal Jews, we're riding on the *teivah* of Torah. And therefore just like He remembered Noah, He'll remember the descendants of Noah.

The Decree of Parnassa

Or another *zikaron*. טָרַף נָתַן לִירְאָיו – Hashem gives *parnassah* to those who fear Him, יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ – He remembers His promise (Tehillim 111:5). When

you go out and make a living, you work in your factory, in your office, on your farm and you're making a living, you should know Hashem is giving it to you. He remembers His *bris*.

Do we remember it? People are coming from the streets carrying shopping bags full of food. The whole world is busy carrying food from the stores, from the butcher shops. Refrigerators are packed with food. The pantry is packed with food. Are they thinking that Hashem is feeding them? Are they thinking that Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave them the food? "What do you mean?" they say. "We paid for it. It's our money."

Oh, that's what we need Rosh Hashanah for, to prepare for a long year of shopping in the grocery. To remind us that He is fulfilling His promise; He's *zan es haolam kulo*. That's one of the aspects of *zichronos* that we have to think about on Rosh Hashanah; that this year I'm going to have a different attitude when I bring home my paycheck or I go shopping and bring home bags full of food. I won't think it's me. I'll remember that it's Hakadosh Baruch Hu's *bris*.

Torah Attitudes Light the Way

Now there are many other things mentioned in *Mussaf* and like I said in the beginning, we don't have enough time. But at least we should learn from these examples the principle that Rosh Hashanah is not merely a day of one element, of one ideal. It's a day of impressing on our souls the Torah attitudes that are to be a foundation for the rest of the year. Because that's the only way a person can have a year of success – he must have a Torah head. What else is going to light our way in this world? The New York Times? The *shoteh* who talks to you from the radio? נֵר לְרִגְלִי דְבִקְרִיד – *It's Your Word that will be a light for me, אור לְנִתְיָבְתִּי* – *that's what will light our path in this world* (Tehillim 119:105)

So while the *chazan* is singing *tra la la* and spending time on his business of keeping the *niggun*, you utilize the time for your business and think about the various things you're going to try to achieve on Rosh Hashanah. Spend a little time on the *pessukim*, thinking what they're saying to you.

And little by little, by being *mispallel*, we are getting ourselves to think of the great ideals for which Rosh Hashanah is made. *Zichron* – it's a day for remembering. "And if you'll do it," Hashem says, "then I'll remember you. I see that you're facing the new year with a new mind, new attitudes, and so I'll give you a year that will be good for you."

The Number One Attitude

Now, of all the ideals that we are expected to remember on Rosh Hashanah, the most fundamental one, the most urgent one, is *Hashem Melech*. Everything else – the blowing of the shofar, the *davening*, the *pessukim* of *malchiyos*, *zichronos*, *v'shofros*, even all the *minhagim* – they're all subsets of the one most fundamental idea that we have to think about on Rosh Hashanah: *Hashem is the King!* That's the *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah; it's the *ikkar*, the core of this day.

And therefore if we're going to change our minds about anything it should be that; that's the first thing and last thing to think about. Whatever else we're saying, whatever other ideas we're thinking, the background of everything is "*Hashem Melech*."

Of course, you have to know what you're saying. Just to scream '*Hashem Melech*' the same way a goy screams "Go Yanks," that's nothing. There have to be some solid thoughts behind those two words if it's going to have its intended effect.

A Calendar Quirk

So we'll start as follows, with a question. Why was the first day of Tishrei chosen for Rosh Hashanah instead of the first day of Nissan? After all, the Torah states that Nissan is **רֵאשִׁוֹן הוּא לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי**. We count our months from Nissan according to the way the Torah speaks. **בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרֵאשִׁוֹן, בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי**, **בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי**, it always means counting from Nissan, the first month. So why shouldn't Rosh Hashanah be on Rosh Chodesh Nissan?

Now I'm not capable of saying this is the answer, but I have a right to guess, and my guess is as follows: We say on Rosh Hashanah again and again, **הַיּוֹם הִרְתָּ עוֹלָם** – *Today is the birthday of the world*. It means that the world was created on *alef Tishrei*. And so even though Nissan is our nation's birthday – Yetzias Mitzrayim, that's when we became a nation – but there's another consideration and that is the birthday of the world, when Hakadosh Baruch Hu created everything. Because that's when He became King.

The Day He Sat on the Throne

Like we say in the *davening*; it's talking there about Creation and it says **הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְרוֹמָם לְבְדּוֹ מֵאֶזְ** – *the King Who has been exalted all by Himself since then*.

Now wasn't He exalted before He created the world? He needs the world to make Him exalted?

And the answer is to be exalted *in the minds of men*, that was the purpose of Creation. Not to *be* a King but so that man should be able to achieve the

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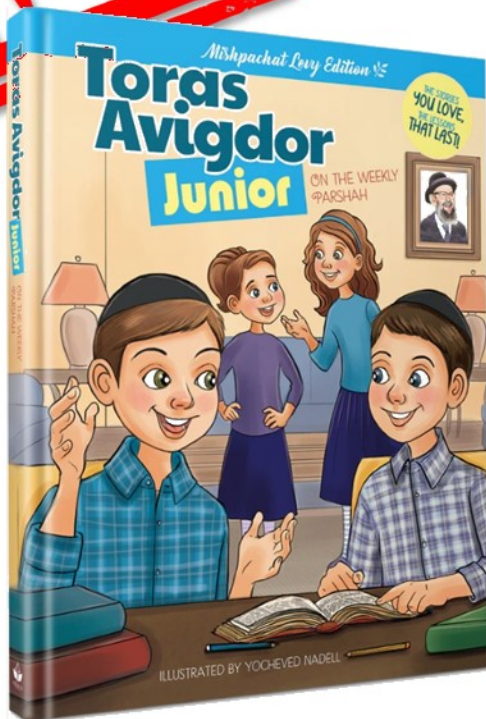
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perfection of *recognizing* the King. That's the number one function of creation, to learn 'HaMelech'.

מֶלֶךְ – the King, הַמְרוֹמָם – Who has been exalted, לְבִדּוֹ – all by Himself, מֵאֲזַל – from the time that He created the world and Man. Because that's why He created everything. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu made this universe and He filled it with phenomena, the chief purpose was that man should see the plan and purpose in them and he should marvel at the wisdom that they demonstrate, and understand clearly from whatever he sees that there is a Creator. That's what it means to make Him your King – when you can see the Creator wherever you turn. When you think about Him because of every natural object you see, that's called *Hashem Melech*.

Laying the Foundation

And Rosh Hashanah, that's the day set aside for that. Of course, it doesn't mean that it's the day we *accomplish* it – the day is too short for that – but it's the day we have to think about this function and recommit ourselves to this function: יוֹם הַרְת עוֹלָם, the day of Creation, that's the day we begin the rest of the year.

On Rosh Hashanah we say, “This year I'll look at the universe with Torah eyes, with the eyes I acquired on Rosh Hashanah. I won't look at everything like the prevaricators, the people who twist facts, do. I'm going to use my native intellect and by means of everything I see in the world I'm going to come to the firm immovable conviction that there is a Creator. And even though it will be a conviction that grows stronger and stronger every day, the foundation for being *mamlich Hashem* all year long, I'm going to firmly lay down on Rosh Hashanah.”

Dip the Apple in the Mind

So when you dip the apple in the honey, it's a good idea to think about having a sweet year; that's the purpose of the honey, to encourage you to *daven*. But there's something even more important. The apple! Because the apple reminds you of the Creator, the King!

This apple?! A King?

Absolutely. Because how else could such a thing be? Can you make an apple? Can DuPont make an apple? Will they ever be able to make an apple? Never! Never in a million years. The apple is so full of wisdom and cunning and planning that they'll never know enough to create even one of these fruits. They'll never be able to replicate that machinery no matter how much they try.

A New Beginning

So while everyone is saying their tefillos – תְּהֵא הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת – you're adding another thought: "Look at this miracle apple sitting on the table!"

Such a remarkable phenomenon that the fruit is wrapped in a container, a wrapper that is actually waxed, a plastic waxed coating that's very thin. It's not too difficult for the teeth to bite through but still strong enough to maintain the fruit for a long time – not only during the many months that it hangs on the tree, but also for a long time after it's picked off the tree. If you don't breach the wrapper by cutting the apple into slices to give out, the apple will remain fresh on your table for days. It's a food wrapped in a protective covering and when the time comes to eat the food you eat the wrapper along with it!

And so this man who understands that the birthday of the world, that's the day to look at Creation and make the Creator king, he knows that the apple is only one example of millions. He knows that גְּדֻלּוֹ וְטוּבוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם, that Hashem's wisdom fills the world; creation is bursting with testimony to the King, and so he's preparing his mind for a successful year of proclaiming 'Hashem Melech'.

Part III. Shabbos With a New Mind

The Kindly King

But we're not finished yet because now we come to the second aspect of Hashem's Kingdom. Number one was גְּדֻלּוֹ – His greatness, His great Wisdom, מְלֵא עוֹלָם – that is evident in all of creation. That's the first part of Hashem Melech. But the *possuk* says that there are two things that fill the world: גְּדֻלּוֹ וְטוּבוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם. Because after Wisdom, the second thing that jumps out at us from Creation is *tuvo*, the Creator's kindness. Wherever you turn, in every natural object you can see that not only His greatness but also His goodness.

Now, it could be that it's not always apparent to us. People ask, why do you need snakes? Why do we need bees? Absolutely bees are *chessed* Hashem. Absolutely snakes are included in וְטוּבוֹ. One day we'll talk about that too. Skunks too. Skunks are טוּבוֹ. Only that it takes time to explain everything.

Study Required

That's why, in the *Sha'ar HaBechina*, the Chovos Halevavos commands us to take time to study all phenomena of the world. Just to look at the world

like a cow looks, you won't get too far. It takes a mind to discover not only the element of Hashem's wisdom, His purposefulness, but also טובו, His kindness. And even if there are some times where we are not able to explain it right now, as we get older and wiser, as we become more thoughtful and perceptive, we'll discover.

But at least the principle we should get into our heads. That's what Rosh Hashanah is for, for creating a principled mind. And this is an important principle – in addition to Him being the King of Wisdom, He's also the King of Kindliness.

Because the apple on the table is not only there to testify that there is a Designer Who makes apples. It's testifying also that included in the Grand Design of the world is that apples are good to eat! That's why apples when they become ripe they let go and fall down. Why don't they remain on the tree? Birds could fly up and eat them. No! The apples fall down because people can't fly. And so you see from the apple tree the purpose is they should fall down for us to eat. The King of Creation wants us not only to admire the apple but to enjoy it also, and so He made it fall down.

Newton Misses the Point

They tell about Newton that when he was sitting under the apple tree, an apple fell down on his head. So Newton started thinking, "Oh! Why did it fall down? Why didn't it fall up?" A wise guy; he's thinking why didn't it fall up? So he discovered the law of gravity. The earth is bigger than the apple, so the earth attracts the apple to itself. Oh! A very great *chochmah*!

But Newton didn't go far enough! He should have discovered the law of *Tuvo*! He should have asked, "Why did it fall at all? It should remain on the tree! Why don't the branches fall off? The leaves don't fall off until autumn. Why should the apple fall off when it gets ripe?"

"Why didn't it fall off when it was still green, when it was unripe? It waited until it was ripe and sweet and soft and then it fell off by itself. Oh! Because Hashem made this world for us to see His kindness, to taste His kindness and become more and more aware of the King Who created everything for us."

The Onion Speaks Up

That discovery would have made Newton a great man. But he wasn't big enough to do that. The law of gravity, yes, but the law of חֶסֶד ה' מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ, that Hashem's kindness fills the world (Tehillim 33:5), that he didn't discover.

But we *do* have to discover it! And not only apples. Potatoes too! Onions! A man asks me – I had to laugh when I heard that question – but it’s an important question. “Why did Hashem create onions?” he said. “Who needs them?”

And the answer is because they taste good. You know, when I walk in the street and I pass a fruit store, sometimes I see outside the store a big sack full of onions. I get excited! Ah! Onions! They add so much to so many cooked foods. And to other foods as well. What would this world be without onions?! It’s not a world!

And so why do we need onions? So that we should have another thing to help us proclaim Hashem King! You never heard such a thing before? It’s good you came here tonight. Onions are for *Hashem Melech*!

Tashlich Tidbits

Fish too. We don’t only look at fish in the water or in the fish tanks and admire them. We eat them too. That’s why when it comes to *tashlich* I’m excited. You want to know why? I’m thinking, “Look at what Hashem is doing for us! In the ocean the fish come together without *shadchanim*. They’re *parim veravim bayam*. They get married in the ocean and they produce offspring. And it’s for one purpose, to give us more fish to eat.” That’s what I’m thinking by *tashlich*. “It’s a *neis* how fish meet each other in the depths of the ocean and produce more fish. It’s a *niflaos haBorei* for *chessed Hashem*.” We have to marvel at that.

And you shouldn’t wait for *tashlich*. When you pass a fish store and see the fish in the window, that’s a good time to stop and look. The fish in the window, they weren’t made in the store; they come from the ocean. And so when you pass a fish store *erev Shabbos* and you see big juicy fish lying there, a big carp, a big salmon, a big trout, stop a half second and take a look at them. Ahh! What a wonder it is that it happened in the middle of the ocean that they came together and produced such tasty tidbits for the people to enjoy and to appreciate the *chessed* of Hashem.

Ah! That’s what *Shabbos* is for! That’s why all Jews eat fish on *Shabbos*. Fish are a *taanug*. It’s part of the happiness of *Shabbos* in order to learn the *chessed* of Hashem.

A Fortuitous Calendar

And that brings us to this year’s calendar. It’s a special opportunity when *Rosh Hashanah* falls out right before *Shabbos*. Now some people, they complain about that. A man calls me on the phone; he says “What am I going

to do three days straight?” He says he has a feeling of cabin fever, like he’s locked up for a three day siege.

Oh no! It’s exactly the opposite. It’s a fortunate calendar when it happens. We’re especially blessed with the opportunity to take the lessons of Rosh Hashanah and go immediately into *kedushas Shabbos*. We can take all of the work we put in on Rosh Hashanah – that’s what we’re studying tonight, that’s it’s an *avodah* – all the work of changing our mind and we can get to work right away.

The First Shabbos

We can get busy right away because Shabbos is also for remembering: *זִכָּר לַמַּעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית* – Shabbos is for the purpose of remembering *briyas haolam yesh me’ayin*. Just like we say on Rosh Hashanah, *hayom haras olam*, that today is the birthday of the world – on Rosh Hashanah He made the world and became King – Shabbos also celebrates Creation. Shabbos is a special day, once a week, for taking the new mind that we achieved on Rosh Hashanah and making it stick; on Shabbos we get busy cementing it in.

On Shabbos we remind ourselves that before Creation there was nothing at all: *Ayin*. Only Hakadosh Baruch Hu existed alone, and when He said “*Yehi*” He caused everything to come into existence. That’s when He became King because it is Creation, the *חִכְמָה עֲמֻקָּה שְׂאִין בָּהּ קֶץ*, that proclaims the King. So Shabbos is a time for *malchus Hashem*.

Success With Pleasure

You’re sitting at the table on Shabbos, and you’re enjoying the *chulent*. You’re smacking your lips. It’s delightful. It’s delicious. But don’t think it’s *gashmiyus*. It’s *kulo ruchniyus*. *טועֶמֶתָּהּ* – You’re tasting it and enjoying it, *חַיִּים זָכוּ* – and you’re *zocheh to chaim*. It means *chayei Olam Haba*.

It’s a remarkable statement. Here is a person who is not fasting. He’s not praying. He’s not saying Tehillim or studying Gemara. He’s sitting and eating the good *machalim* of Shabbos. He’s enjoying this world, tasting all of the delicious dishes his wife prepared. And he’s gaining *Olam Haba*! How is that? Because he’s fulfilling his function; he’s studying the lesson of *גְּדֻלּוֹ וְטוֹבוֹ מֶלֶךְ*, of recognizing Hashem’s Kingship, by means of His creations.

But not only by seeing. They’re so beautiful the *challos*; such an exquisite display of the *chochmas Hashem* – it’s a shame we have to eat them. But actually it’s not a shame at all because it’s by means of eating that the lesson will go down; the lesson of *טוֹבוֹ* goes down best with tasty food.

After Seudah Success

Not only the *cholent* and *challah*. When you take a nap too. I'm not recommending that you should climb into your pajamas and remain there all Shabbos. But *שְׁנָה בְּשִׁבְתָּ תַעֲנוּגוּ*; a nap for a half hour on Shabbos afternoon is a pleasure. A *geshmakeh* sleep is better than eating the most delicious things. You get up, you're refreshed, a new person. And Who makes it a pleasure? Your Creator.

And so, like Rosh Hashanah, Shabbos tells us both things: The world was created by the Great Designer. *וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה* – Hashem saw everything that He made; He made everything with His Wisdom. Yes, number one is *אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה*. But right after that, right on its heels, is *וַהֲלֵה נָחַד טוֹב מְאֹד* – and behold it's all very good (Bereishis 1:31). Not just 'good'. "Very good!"

If Hashem said that, you could believe Him. It's a very good world! And when we think that, that's a Shabbosdike *machshavah*; it's an excellent beginning to the New Year. It's a *kiyum* of the commitment you made on Rosh Hashanah.

A Fortunate New Year

And so, to sum it up, Rosh Hashanah is a day when we prepare our mental attitudes in order to be ready to face the new year. Of course, everyone is busy also with his own thoughts. Each one is thinking about asking for a good year. He wants *parnassa*. He wants good health. He wants good *shidduchim* for his children. No harm. No harm in thinking about all these things.

But the primary purpose of Rosh Hashanah is the *teshuvah* we make in our minds; to go back to the truths. To go back to all of the fundamental Torah principles that we'll need to use all year long. We have to come back to that. And therefore, the building up of the mind on Rosh Hashanah is the biggest of all functions. And when we have the opportunity, already on the day right after Rosh Hashanah to bring that function to life, that's the most fortunate beginning of the year.

Now, our time is up for tonight, so I say to you all:

תַּכְתְּבוּ וְתַחַתְמוּ בְּלִבְכֶּם לְאַחֲתֵר לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם בְּסַפֶּרְךָ שֶׁל צְדִיקִים גְּמוּרִים

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

522 – Rosh Hashanah: Hashem in Nature | **892** – Aspects of Rosh Hashanah

978 – Preparing for Yom Hadin | **E-27** – Birthday of the Universe

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7

Pick a random face
and think:
This is a צלם אלוקים

8

Smile at someone

9

Say "מלביש ערומים"
Think about the fact
that we wear
clothes. Clothing are
a testament to the
nobility of man.

10

Remember ירושלים
אם אשכחך ירושלים
תשכח ימיני

A New Year, A New Start

"It's important not
to waste another
day but to start
immediately! These
ten suggestions are
not difficult to do
and will bring
guaranteed
results."

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TEN STEPS TO GREATNESS

Once a day...

1

Think about עולם
הבא

Spend 30 seconds a
day thinking about
the world to come.

2

Say "I Love You
Hashem"

Spend a few seconds
each day in a private
place and say to
Hashem "I love You".

3

Do a secret act of
kindness

Every day do one act
of kindness that no
one knows about.

4

Encourage
someone.

5

Think about
yesterday

Spend one minute a
day thinking about
what happened
yesterday נחפשה
דרכינו ונחקרה

6

Say: "I am doing this
to serve Hashem"

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