

# Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

פרשת

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## Accessing The Essence of Rosh Hashanah

*Based on the weekly Shmuess given by HaRav Shaya Cohen, Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Zichron Aryeh*

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנחם | הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר | רפאל חיים דוב בן בן-ציון שלום | ר' ברוך בן ר' יהודה | שרה בת ר' יחזקאל | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע | דב בעריש בן פסח צבי  
לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל | יעקב אליעזר בן חנה נשא

Rosh Hashana's inclusion in the Aseres Yemei Teshuva requires clarification. On Rosh Hashanah we don't say Viduy, and there is no special focus on Teshuva. The emphasis is on accepting Hashem's sovereignty over the world. Where in Rosh Hashanah lies any connection to Teshuva that seems to be the springboard to the entire Aseres Yemei Teshuva?

The answer to this question can be found in an essay written on the topic of Rosh Hashanah by Rabbeinu Bachya, in his Sefer Kad HaKemach. He writes: "A Baal Teshuva is obligated to be submissive in his heart, and that his heart be broken and downtrodden for rebelling against Hashem. Dovid said something similar to this when Nosson the Navi came to him. In this Mizmor, Dovid confessed his sins and he says in the end, 'The sacrifices to Hashem are of broken spirit, a broken and down heart, Hashem will not turn away'...Submission is part of the fundamentals of Teshuvah.....Similarly it says in the Medrash, Dovid says to Hashem, 'Turn to me and have compassion on me, because I am alone and poor!' Was Dovid alone?! The Pasuk writes, 'Ozem the sixth and Dovid the seventh.' Was Dovid poor?! The Pasuk writes 'And behold in my suffering you prepared for the house of Hashem one thousand talent of gold, etc.' Rather, Dovid was saying before Hashem, 'Because You made me king over Your children I am alone against them.

They all need me, and their eyes are looking to me, and my eyes are looking towards You. Therefore, I am alone and poor."

It seems that the Rabbeinu Bachya equates the submission needed for Teshuva to Dovid Hamelech's expression, that he is poor because he is relying on Hashem. We often think of submission exclusively in terms of a broken heart, and not acting haughty. This submission that Dovid Hamelech refers to as being completely reliant on Hashem is groundbreaking, as it gives us a window into the cause of our sins. We can infer that if this is the corrective action necessary for Teshuvah, it would imply that an essential part of a person's sin is his thinking that he is independent, and he doesn't need Hashem. However, when a person realizes he is fully dependent on Hashem, he will not be able to sin, as he is sinning against the one that he is totally dependent on.

Based on this insight we can explain Rosh Hashanah's integral role in the Aseres Yemei Teshuva. On Rosh Hashanah, we accept and internalize that Hashem is our King and He is completely in charge of everything. This realization is the foundation of Teshuva, as sin is predicated on the mindset that, "I am in charge and independent." Through this realization we become totally reliant on Hashem and are deterred from sin.



## Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

*...For the Lord desires you, and your land shall be inhabited... and the rejoicing of a bridegroom over a bride shall your G-d rejoice over you.*

*(Haftorah Parshas Nitzavim, Yeshaya 62:3-5)*

The owner of the wedding hall looked on in amazement. He had been taken by surprise when he was informed that the Chosson and Kallah were remarrying each other after having been divorced for years. Usually, such a celebration would be low key, however, what he was now witnessing was the happiest Chasuna he had ever seen. He pulled a close friend of the family, who happened to be an acquaintance of his, aside and asked him for a little more background to the story. What he heard explained it all. The reason the husband and wife had originally divorced was the exact opposite of the usual cause. Their love for each other was actually the envy of many a couple, however there was a medical issue that had forced them to separate. Following their divorce, they had both fallen into a tremendous depression as they both could not imagine going on in life without the other. After five long years of unbelievable suffering, doctors had discovered a cure for the medical issue that had caused their separation and they had immediately booked a hall for a Chasuna like no other!

The Malbim explains the above Pasuk: *The rejoicing of a bridegroom over a bride shall your G-d rejoice over you*, as follows: Usually, when a divorced couple remarries, the happiness is lower key than a regular wedding. However, when Hashem will take us back to Him with the coming of Mashiach, *“The rejoicing of a bridegroom over a bride shall your G-d rejoice over you.”* Why is this so when we in fact we have suffered so terribly during the thousands of years of our being distanced from Him? For just as in the above analogy, it was only out of His infinite love that Hashem had been forced to send us away for our own good. In truth, His love for us had never diminished and deep down neither did our love towards Him. Rather, we both suffered for thousands of years refusing to give up on each other even on pain of death, such as when we suffered countless times rather than forsake Him. Therefore, when the time finally comes when we can return to each other, the celebration will be literally the happiest day since the creation of the universe! *The rejoicing of a bridegroom over a bride shall your God rejoice over you* for all eternity!



## ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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*He’s your typical good Jew. Every morning he wakes up early to daven with a minyan in shul. Upon completing a heartfelt Shacharis, he approaches the Aron Kodesh, kisses the Paroches, and pours out his heart to the Creator of the world. He says another perek of Tehillim in order to merit Siyatah d’Shmayah at work and throughout the day. Before he leaves shul he returns again to the Aron Kodesh, kisses the Paroches, and “takes leave” of Hashem, Who “is left” in shul until Minchah. He begins his day of work talking and acting like any other businessman on the street. Hashem, he’ll meet again at Minchah. The time for Minchah arrives and he again prays with all his heart to Hashem... but then again leaves Him in shul until Maariv...*

The above is how the Chazon Ish described to Rav Elazar Turtzin zt”l the seemingly innocent conduct of a typical good Jew that can eventually lead to his abandoning Yiddishkeit chas v’shalom! The Chazon Ish said, “This isn’t the proper way to serve Hashem. A Jew must take Hashem with him everywhere.” The Chazon Ish then continued to describe how this is done:

*Let’s say, when he leaves shul he goes to purchase a pair of shoes. He seeks a good quality shoe that will fit him well. He can waste much time searching for the shoes he seeks at the right price, He needs siyatah d’Shmayah! He pauses for a moment, turns to Hashem in his own words, as a son talks to his father. After all, He went with him to purchase a pair of shoes, and he says, “Please, Master of the world! Help me quickly find the right shoes, that it should be of good quality and the right price, that the seller shouldn’t mislead me etc.”*

The Chazon Ish continued, “A Jew must accustom himself to “live” with Hashem, to turn to his Father in Heaven at all times of the day and night. One who “leaves” Hashem in shul is one who is at risk of eventually leaving Him entirely, G-d forbid!”

(Adopted from the Hebrew sefer “Vihigadeta” as told by the Maggid Rav Yaakov Galinsky zt”l)