

TISHREI TALKS

Avodah
Touching the Spiritual

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Essence
Tangible Spirituality

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Mazal
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Tribe
Yosef

Collection of Drashas from the
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Avodah of Touching The Spiritual

Tishrei and the Sense of Touch

What is the *avodah* of the month of Tishrei? It is brought in the *sefarim hakedoshim* that the month of Tishrei is the time to use our sense of touch (*chush hamishush*).

There are many ways how we can feel something through touch. One way is through our mind: our mind is the root of our five senses. Our mind sends messages through our body when we touch something. Another kind of touch is through our **heart**: our heart is able to feel something that is going on outside of us.

The regular sense of touch which we are familiar with, which comes from our brain, is, for example, when we want to feel if food is fresh, so we feel it if it is soft or hard. Our physical sense of touch can only feel the external part of something - it cannot feel the essence of something. Only our heart can feel the essence of something.

Our heart is able to sense what is going on in the inside of something. For example, when a mother hugs her child, not only does she feel her child physically, but she connects to his soul with her own soul. Her heart is feeling her child.

All of us need to become aware of our ability to feel something through our heart. Sometimes we feel through our physical sense of touch, and sometimes we feel through our heart; sometimes we use both. We need to become aware of how we feel something, and where it comes from.

Appreciating The Sense of Touch

Imagine if we wouldn't have the sense of touch, and we only have the other four senses. What would our life be like?

We wouldn't be able to hug or kiss anyone. We wouldn't be able to even feel someone's hand. The world would be a very cold, unfriendly place. And when we cook food, we wouldn't be able to put the fork in to feel if it's soft or not.

All of us enjoy going swimming. If not for touch, we wouldn't be able to feel the enjoyment in swimming around in the water or even taking a shower; we would only be able to drink it. On a hot day, everyone loves to feel a breeze. If not for touch, we wouldn't be able to feel a breeze.

Touch is called "*mishush*" in Hebrew, from the word "*mamash*" – "real." When we feel something, we are able to feel how it is real. Touch enables us to connect to something. Just like we use physical touch to connect to something physical, so does our spiritual sense of touch enable us to connect to spiritual matters.

We don't only connect to something through touch. The sense of sight, for example, can also connect us to something. Just by seeing the sky, we connect to the sky. But there are things which we don't feel connected to

unless we touch. A clear example of this is a mother who talks to her child on the phone when he is away. It's not enough that she's connected to him through hearing him; a mother wants to feel and touch her child.

We have so far described our need to touch the physical. It is because we have a need to connect ourselves outward to the world. Now we will discuss here the deeper sense of touch which we have: the heart's sense of touch.

Feeling Ruchniyus (Spirituality)

Where is the heart's sense of touch?

Let's say Reuven is talking nicely to Shimon, but he doesn't feel any love for him; really he can't stand Shimon. If Reuven would properly develop his spiritual sense of touch, he would be able to feel what's going on in Shimon's heart and see him in a whole different light, and then he would feel a love for him.

Our sense of touch in our heart is able to feel something that we can't feel with the other four physical senses. The only way we can connect to Hashem is through feeling Him with our heart; we cannot see or hear Him physically, but we can feel His existence with our heart. This is the power of our heart: it can feel the spiritual.

The Opportunity of the Month of Tishrei

During the month of Tishrei, and especially during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, our heart is more open to feel Hashem. Of the month of Tishrei, it is written, "Seek Hashem where He is found, call out to Him where He is close." Hashem is closer to us during these days. Not only is Hashem closer to us, but it is we who can feel Him more clearly, during the month of Tishrei.

The month of Tishrei are days in which our heart's sense of touch is more opened. We can feel things from our heart much more during these days than the rest of the year.

If we learn how to use our spiritual sense of touch, we can become close to Hashem during these days, to "feel" Hashem.

What Prevents Us From Feeling The Spiritual?

Men have the *mitzvah* to learn Torah, while women do not. This shows us the unique role of both a man and a woman in *avodas Hashem*. Men are mainly using the **mind** to serve Hashem, and that is their main role. Women are using mainly the **heart** to serve Hashem - and this is the main role of a woman.

However, the *sefarim hakedoshim* say that during these days of *teshuvah*, even men have to use their heart more than they use their mind. The days of doing teshuvah in the month of Tishrei is a time to become more in touch with our heart, with our feelings for *ruchniyus*, and this makes much more use of the heart than of the brain/mind. Therefore, during these days, even a man's main *avodah* is through the heart.

Men and women have different deterrents holding them back from accessing their hearts' sense of touch. With men, the issue is that since they are mostly involved with their minds and not with their hearts, they have a harder time relating to a sense of touch that goes beyond the physical; they are not familiar with the spiritual sense of touch, and it does not come naturally to them to feel the spiritual.

Women are much more easily open to feeling the spiritual; they can access it much more easily than men do. But women face a different issue that prevents them from accessing the heart: it is because they are so busy that they don't have any time for themselves. In today's times especially, where women are working, in addition to taking care of the home and the children, and in addition to many other things as well - they are being held back from accessing their hearts.

A woman in today's times is much busier than she was in the past. She has no time for herself; every second she is doing something else, whether it is work, being on the phone, or helping a friend, and they simply don't find the time to sit alone and feel what's going on in the heart.

But if any woman wants to improve her *ruchniyus*, she must set aside time every day to have total quiet and have time for her heart.

Setting Aside "Heart Time" Each Day

Every person – man or woman – needs times of quiet every day. This is no less necessary than our need for eating and sleeping; we all need a little *menuchas hanefesh* (serenity) every day.

We have to sit with ourselves alone, every day, with total quiet. We need time out to relax and think. Soon, we will speak about "what" to think, but first, we need the actual time.

This is not a time to learn *mussar*, or even to talk to Hashem. It is not a time for *cheshbon hanefesh* (self-accounting). All of these things are wonderful and necessary too, but we are not talking about this here. We are talking about a much more basic step: a time in which we silence our thoughts, so that we can access our soul.

We need this time every day in to tune in to what's going on inside of our heart. If we never think into what is inside our hearts, we will go our entire life living with a physical heart but without every using it for its inner purpose, which is as good as living an entire life without a heart.

What to Do During "Heart Time"

During this time of the day you set aside, sit down with a pen and paper, perhaps with light music playing in the background or by first reading light material, in order to create a more relaxed atmosphere.

When you feel relaxed, now, write down all your feelings. What do you feel all the time? Do you feel love, or hatred, or any other emotion going on inside you? Write down everything positive and negative you feel in your life; the good and the bad.

We are not talking yet about *how* to work on yourself and self-improvement. We are simply writing down what is going on in our life, because we need to become aware of what's going on inside our heart. It can take months until a person figures out what's going on inside her heart.

We need to have this “heart time”, every day. If we don't feel what's going on inside our own heart, how will we be able to feel what's going on inside others' hearts....? How will we be able to use our heart to sense Hashem, if we don't even use our own heart....?

Just like a woman gets used to living with her husband and children, so must she get used to living more with her heart and experiencing more what's going on inside it. To do this, time must be set aside every day for this.

In Conclusion

If we do this, we will be able to utilize our heart's sense of touch and then we will feel what's going on in our hearts – whether it is love, hatred, etc. We will become aware of the feelings in our heart. From there, our sensitivity to feelings will be heightened, and we can feel what is going on in others' hearts. Eventually, we will be able to feel Hashem, Who is really found deep within every person.

May we merit to a *gmar chasima Tovah* (to be sealed for a good year), and to come to feel Hashem more in our life.

Questions & Answers with the Rav

Q1: *According to how I am understanding this, “heart time” is not a time to talk to Hashem, and it is a time to just be alone and write down our feelings. Is this correct?*

ANSWER: It is exactly as you have said; it is a separate *avodah*, which is besides for the *avodah* of setting aside time to talk to Hashem. However, it is not that this *avodah* is “instead” of talking to Hashem. Talking to Hashem is also an important *avodah*, but just as we can understand that a person also has to make special time to talk to Hashem - besides for the three times of *davening* each day - so can we understand that a person needs time alone with himself each day to sit with himself and discover what's in his heart, *besides* for talking to Hashem.

Let us emphasize again that this *avodah* of “heart time” is not meant to replace our *avodah* of talking to Hashem. Rather, it is another *avodah* which we need, *besides* for talking to Hashem each day.

Q2: *What does it mean to write down what's on our heart? Should we just write down whatever thoughts come into our minds?*

ANSWER: In order to understand yourself, you need to sit with yourself quietly and listen to what's going on inside your heart. This is the general concept, and it is hard to say exactly what to do. Basically, try to see if you feel happy or sad, as well as your other feelings. As time goes on, you will discover more and more about what you are feeling and you will come to better understand yourself.

Q3: *Should a person first talk to Hashem and then write down a list of how one feels, or should it be the other way around?*

ANSWER: It is better to first write down the list of what you are feeling, because first we need to calm ourselves down before we talk to Hashem, so that we can talk to Hashem from a calmer place in ourselves. In order to be able to daven properly to Hashem, we need to first be calmed, and then we are speaking with Him from a more genuine place in ourselves.

Q4: *Even when we have “heart time”, how do we know if we are understanding ourselves from our heart? Maybe we are only understanding ourselves from our mind?*

ANSWER: Excellent question. Even listening to our heart is problematic, because the *yetzer hora* resides in our heart (in the left chamber). The question is if what we are hearing from our heart is coming from the external layer of the heart (which contains the *yetzer hora*), or if it is coming from a more inner place in our heart that tells us the truth. But certainly we must be concerned that what we are hearing is perhaps coming from the *yetzer hora* present in our heart.

The general answer to this issue is that all good in our soul stems from either the “light of the *neshamah*”, which is present in our brain/mind, or from the “*Ruach*” that is present in our heart. All evil present in ourselves stems from the *yetzer hora* in the heart, and to be more specific, from the *nefesh habehaimis* (the animalistic layer in the soul), which contains the negative trait of *shiflus* (lowliness).

Our *avodah* is to get used to listening to what’s going on in our hearts. As you get used to listening to your feelings, you will be able to discern it as a physical sensation, and there are usually two places where you can feel it. There are feelings you can feel coming from your heart, and there are feelings you can feel coming from the lower section of the stomach, which is closer to the liver. When you feel it coming from this lower half of the body, it is usually a feeling stemming from the body, and if you feel it coming from your heart, it is usually a feeling linked to your *middos*. This is a very subtle matter. The question you asked was very good, and the answer to it is not always so clear.

It is entirely a matter of getting used to it. As you get used to listening to your heart and writing down its feelings, you will slowly be able to discern better what it is telling you, just as it took time for Shmuel *HaNavi* to discern the voice of Hashem and he had to get used to hearing it in order to recognize it.

Q5: *When we starting to do this, should we write down everything that comes to mind, and not try to discern where the thoughts are coming from?*

ANSWER: At first as you begin to get used to this, just write down everything that comes to mind. Only afterwards will you be able to discern which thoughts and feelings are coming from the *neshamah*, and which thoughts and feelings are coming from the *nefesh habehaimis*. Some things you can clearly identify as *nefesh habehaimis*.

For example, if you discover that you like to be lazy, you know clearly that this stems from the *nefesh habehaimis*. You can write it down on the list of negative desires you have in yourself. But as for any other thoughts and feelings that come to you which you don’t know if they are good or bad, write them down in a middle column on the page

and come back to it later, when you will be able to better discern if it came from the *neshamah* or the *nefesh habehaimis*.

In summary, your list should include three rows. One row will contain all the good *middos* and desires you discover in yourself, another row will contain bad *middos* and desire you discover in yourself, and a third (middle) row will be the parts of yourself which you're not sure about if they're good or bad.

Q6: Should a person say a tefillah before writing down this heart time?

ANSWER: Before anything we do, we can always *daven* to Hashem for help. In our case specifically, we can *daven* to Hashem before we do this that He should help us know ourselves.

The Raavad writes, based upon the verse “*From my flesh, I see G-d*” that we can only come closer to Hashem through understanding ourselves. Thus, we must bear in mind that we are only trying to understand ourselves because that is part of our *avodah* of recognizing Hashem, and not because we simply want to know who we are. The goal of trying to understand ourselves is so that we can come closer to Hashem through clearer self-knowledge. So a person should always *daven* before any *avodah* that Hashem should help him, because our goal is always to come closer to Hashem.

Q7: What should I do when I discover that I have many negative middos in myself and I see that I am very far from being close to Hashem?

ANSWER: If a person can only discover bad things about himself and he can't find any good in himself, it is a sign that he does not recognize anything about himself at all, and that he has never yet taken a deep look into his heart. This is because every person contains good qualities. As long as you reflect deeply into what is going on inside your heart, you will be able to find good qualities in yourself.

Of course, we must also discover our bad *middos* that we have too, but first we must reflect on the good *middos* that we have. When we begin to work on ourselves, we first need to work on our worst *middah*. The time now is too short to explain how to do this, because it a deep *avodah*. To say it briefly: we must first begin to work on our worst *middah*, or, we should first work on an area that is easiest for us to improve in.

I must repeat, however, that if you are only finding bad *middos* in yourself and you are not discovering any good in yourself, it is a sign that you are not reflecting properly into your heart, because every person contains good. There is always your best quality, but besides for this, there is also many other good points which you can discover about yourself, and you must discover all of these good points in yourself.

Q8: Should we begin to work on our bad middos when we discover them? Or should we leave that for later?

ANSWER: Absolutely **do not** begin to work on your bad *middos* right away. You have just started to get to know yourself, and before you discover lots of good in yourself, it is detrimental for you to work on your bad *middos*, because you will become overly focused on the bad in yourself and you are unaware of the good in yourself. You would be working on yourself with a lowly view towards yourself. Only after discovering lots of good about yourself can you begin a healthy kind of self-improvement. You must begin from a place of finding many good points in

yourself, and if you have not yet found any good in yourself yet, you must keep looking for it. If you still cannot find any good about yourself, ask someone else to point out to your strengths. Either way, you can only begin self-improvement after you have found a lot of good parts about yourself.

Q9: *When the Rav talks about the “heart”, is this referring to the “nefesh” (the basic life-force of the soul)?*

ANSWER: Whenever a person feels some emotion, like if he is happy or sad, where does he feel it coming from? Does he feel it coming from his toenails? He feels it coming from his heart. Of course, there is depth upon depth within our heart. We discussed here how one can enter the place in his heart which feels things. All of us can relate to what the “heart” is, each on our own level. We must first begin to recognize what our heart is, as much as we can on our current level. This is only the beginning stage, where we are first beginning to enter our heart. It is not yet the “heart” itself. The “heart” actually is experienced differently with each person, depending on what level he has reached. But what we all have in common is that all of us have some understanding of the heart, and that is where we can begin from.

Q10: *The Rav has said that at first a person can get to feel what is in his heart, and then he can feel what is going on in others’ hearts, and then a person can feel Hashem. Is this order specific, or can it be the other way around also? Can a person begin with feeling what is going on in others, and from there he can get to know himself better, and then feel Hashem?*

ANSWER: This is a good question. There are some people who are born with more of a feeling for others’ hearts, and they can get to know themselves better by understanding others. Most people, however, need to use our method, which is by first understanding what’s going on inside their own hearts, before they can feel what is in others’ hearts; and after that they can feel Hashem.

There are a third group of people who are born only with feelings for Hashem, but they do not feel what’s going on inside their own hearts, nor do they feel what others are feeling. For them, the order will have to be different than how it was explained here. Here we were addressing most people, who usually are not born with a strong sense of knowing what is going on in their hearts or in others’ hearts, and certainly they can’t feel Hashem yet. The order presented here, which applies to most people, is: To first get in touch with your own feelings, then with others’ feelings, and then you can begin to feel Hashem.

Essence of Tangible Spirituality

Tishrei – The Month of Spiritual “Touch”

We are now with *siyata d’shmaya* in the *Yamim Noraim*, in the month of *Tishrei*, which is called *Yerach Aisanim*, “the month of giants”, due to the many festivals in this month – Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Succos, Simchas Torah.¹ There is surely one point, however, that connects all of this together, which describes the very essence of all these days.

Our Sages teach us that each month contains a special power, and that the month of *Tishrei* especially contains the power of *mishush*, the sense of “spiritual” touch.²

We have five senses, and according to the Vilna Gaon, it really extends into twelve senses. The five senses are sight, hearing, smell, speech, and touch. When we see something from in front or behind us, we do not come into actual contact with what we are seeing. When we hear something or when we smell something, we also are not coming into actual contact with it. But when we touch something, we can feel its very existence. Thus, the sense of touch puts us into direct contact with the essence of something.

Our body can feel things by touching them, and our emotions can feel things. If we get even more specific, touch is mainly accessed through our fingers, especially through the very endpoints of the fingers. On a more subtle level, the sense of touch is represented by the *Bris Kodesh*,³ which enables man to achieve connection. Touch enables man to connect outward; not only does he touch what he is touching – he can connect to it. Touch enables a person to feel the essence of something, and this enables a person to connect to the essence of something.

Being that the Ten Days of *Teshuvah* are in the month of *Tishrei*, it follows that *teshuvah* is connected to the concept of touch, the ability to feel the essence of something. Thus, when we embark upon doing *teshuvah*, we must come to feel the essence of our actions - and this is what enables us to do *teshuvah*.

Physical touch enables us to feel and touch things that are outside of us, but the soul’s power of touch feels things that are within the soul. The eyes, ears, and nose can sense things from the outside, whereas the soul’s power of touch is the power to feel things from within ourselves. When one feels something from within himself, he is enabled to feel the essence of that which he comes across.

1 Rosh HaShanah 11a and Rashi ibid

2 Sefer Yetzirah 5:3

3 Bris Kodesh – the male reproductive organ, the sign representing the guarding of the Holy Covenant

"Aisan" – Sensing The Spiritual

The month of *Tishrei* is called "*Yerach Aisanim*". The word "*aisan*" (giant) connotes "might". The simple understanding of why it is called *Yerach Aisanim* is because these are days of judgment, *middas hadin* (the attribute of justice). But this is just the external meaning.

The inner implication of "*aisan*" is that there is a power in the soul to be strong and mighty; it is in fact the strongest and innermost power of the soul.⁴ The Sages describe a concept of the "*aisan*" in the soul as being the inner power in the soul which all other powers in the soul stem from. *Aisan* exists both in the planes of time and soul. In time, it is found in the month of *Tishrei*: the month of "*Yerach Aisanim*". In the soul, it is the power of "*Aisan*" in the soul. The power of "*Aisan*" in a Jew's soul is essentially the power to feel the essence of something. The word for touch is *mishbush*, similar to the word *mamash*, actual, because when a person feels something, he can feel how it is tangible and actual.

Using The Soul's Sense of Touch To Feel Our Beginning State

Everything in time also exists in the soul. If there is a beginning of time, there is also a beginning of the soul. What is the beginning of the soul? It is the ability to feel something, tangibly.

Rosh HaShanah is called *HaYom Haras Olam*, the birth of the world. It is a day which reveals beginnings, a power to reach the beginning of everything. Hashem created the world, and in the beginning of Creation, there was no man yet. First He created the heavens, earth, the skies, etc. Man was created on the sixth day and was given the power to reach the beginning of Creation even though he wasn't there. That is the power of touch in the soul – the power to actually feel a spiritual reality, to feel the reality that one came from, which was his very beginning state on the sixth day of Creation, when it was before the sin and man fully sensed the Creator.

It was for this reason that Hashem gave man the power of touch in his soul. All other powers in the soul are meant to help a person tangibly feel the Reality, that there is a Creator, Who is the Root of all reality.

How can man connect to this Reality? There are many ways, but it not only about praying to Him, crying to Him, or learning His wisdom [Torah]. The depth of connecting to the Reality of the Creator is for one to **feel this reality, in his heart**. The month of *Tishrei*, the beginning from which the world was created, contains the power to feel reality. One can feel closeness to Hashem where He is found, meaning, Hashem is found with one who feel Him as reality, in his soul.

The soul's power of touch is given to a Jew so that he can feel the essence of reality, which is our complete *emunah* that there is only One Reality. We can all say it with our mouths, but the true, complete *emunah* is to feel this reality in our heart, to feel it absolutely and tangibly. We can only feel it in our heart, not with our hands. The month of *Tishrei* is a month of spiritual touch, because without this ability to feel, we wouldn't be able to become close to Hashem. Our purpose on this world is become attached to the Creator, and for this, we need to feel a closeness to Him.

⁴ See Tefillah #0149 – The Source of Your Strength

We may all be able to say this and think about this, but we must feel it, in order for our *emunah* to be complete. The intellect of man cannot grasp the Creator, but our hearts can feel Him very strongly. That is the soul's power of touch. Any person can feel that his feet are standing on the ground, even though the feet are the least feeling part of the body. In the soul, in the heart, a person can feel as well, the reality. This is a gift from Hashem given to man, as soon as he was created, on the first day of *Tishrei* – the power to feel the reality. It is a very part of his creation to feel this reality.

If one doesn't merit it, his power of touch can only feel the sensory and the fantasies, which remove him from the spiritual. But one merits to touch holiness, and he sanctifies his senses, he can then always feel Hashem, at all times.

To all of us, it was given the soul's power of touch. Why is it that we naturally don't feel Hashem, if this is such a simple reality? Why is this so difficult to attain, if it is such a simple truth? Ever since Adam and Chavah touched from the *Eitz HaDaas* and ate from it, the sense of touch has been damaged, and it cannot always feel the truth, that there is only one Reality, Hashem. The sense of touch became callous to the spiritual, and ever since, it can only feel physical things. It doesn't easily feel the spiritual, matters of the soul, and certainly it doesn't feel *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

Depth of Teshuvah In Tishrei – Returning To Our Simple Sense For Hashem

Each person on his own level can reflect what the root of all ruination is, so that he can properly do *teshuvah*. Surely each person needs to do *teshuvah* over his various sins, but the main *teshuvah* should be over the root of all sin, when Adam ate from the *Eitz HaDaas*. We all ate from the *Eitz HaDaas*; we all lost our spiritual sense for touch. We each have our own private sins which we need to do *teshuvah*. But there is a root, general *teshuvah* which applies to every Jew – we all need to do *teshuvah* over the root of all sin, which is that we ate from the *Eitz HaDaas* and thereby lost our spiritual touch.

Our *avodah* now is to return to a clean, pure state where we only feel the Reality of Hashem. We cannot reach it completely, because we currently found after the sin. Before the sin, Adam could naturally feel Hashem's reality, without any deep thinking or feeling. Currently, this has become very concealed from our awareness. It is written, *“And you will know today, and you settle the matter your heart”*⁵ - we have an *avodah* to internalize our mind's knowledge of Hashem into our hearts, because our hearts cannot naturally feel it in our current state, and it takes a lot of reflection until it sinks into our hearts and internalizes.

One of our principles of faith is that we believe in the coming of *Mashiach*, even though he tarries. This can only be possible if a person acquires a simple sense of feeling the Presence of the Creator. *Mashiach* is from the word *masiach*, as in the term *masiach l'fi tumo* (conversing casually), which is when talks naturally and simply.

It certainly takes effort to reach this simplicity. But our point here is to know where we must return to, when we do *teshuvah*. We lost our simple sense for Hashem ever since the first sin, and our *avodah* to find Hashem in these days is mainly to return to this simple sense, through the soul's power of touch. That is the holy sense of touch in the soul.

One who guards this ability in his soul, making sure to sanctify his ability of touch, both through guarding his speech and guarding his *Bris Kodesh* – his senses become safeguarded and sanctified, and he will feel spiritual realities, such as the difference between truth and falsity is. Such a person will clearly sense that only Hashem is the true Reality. All of the *tzaddikim* throughout the generations had a clear sense of Hashem and that was how they were able to reach all of their high levels.

Rosh HaShanah - Yearly Return To Original State of Simply Sensing Hashem

Rosh HaShanah is the first day of the Ten Days of Repentance, it is the day of judgment, but why is it also the first of the days of *teshuvah*?

It was the day Adam sinned, and it was the day where *teshuvah* first took root. (On a subtler note, the moon was the first to sin, and the earth also sinned. But here we are talking about the first sin of man). It is a day of *teshuvah*, of seeking closeness to Hashem, of declaring Hashem as the King, and it is the day of judgment. These are not four separate aspects of our *avodah* on Rosh HaShanah – rather, they are all one. There is only one point on this day of Rosh HaShanah: it is the day when Hashem made man, and the Sages⁶ explained that Adam fully sensed Hashem until he sinned.

Every day on Rosh HaShanah, this point in time returns, where he can simply feel Hashem. During the rest of the year, this sense of Hashem comes only through exertion to most people (some rare individuals can sense Him simply, because they acquired this ability through *mesirus nefesh*, an intense level of devotion to Him). But on Rosh HaShanah, every person can feel simply the reality of Hashem, as a natural ability, just as one can feel something with his body, as long as he has opened his soul even a bit.

“One cannot come to the king in sackcloth” – how must we come before Hashem on Rosh HaShanah, when we declare Him as our King? It will not suffice by declaring Him as King with our mouths alone, or with our minds alone, but with our heart - from a simple sense that He is the King. Only from that depth, can we truly accept Him as our King.

This is the depth of the judgment on Rosh HaShanah, besides for the simple meaning that all is written and sealed for a good year. One is judged on how much he has accepted Hashem as King, from a simple sense of the heart.

The Depth of Being Sealed For A Good Life – A Life of D'veykus In Hashem

Three books are opened on Rosh HaShanah, and the *tzaddikim* are written in the book of life.⁷ What is the meaning of a *tzaddik*? Is it someone who doesn't commit sins? The depth of this matter is that a *tzaddik* is one who has *d'veykus* in Hashem. The spiritual sense of touch is the natural level of *tzaddikim*, who feel the reality of Hashem.

6 Sanhedrin 38a

7 Rosh HaShanah 17a

This is the secret of the “personal *Beis HaMikdash*” which one can build in his heart.⁸ It means to “see” and sense, palpably, the Reality that is Hashem.

This is what “seals” one in the book of life. The word “seal” is the word *techum* (domain, or boundary), which implies that one needs to “stay in the *techum*” of Hashem, permanently, where one becomes part of that *havayah* (reality), of being connected to Hashem all day, amidst *d'veykus*. That is the deeper meaning of being “sealed for a good life”.

In Conclusion

We are far from the birth of the world. But we see from the concept of the exodus that one must view himself as if he is leaving Egypt, as if he is there. So too, each and every one of us must try, as much as he can, to feel what he was like at the time of the birth of the world, when he did not know of any reality other than Hashem, and he felt this simply. The more we draw ourselves closer to this inner place, of our very beginning - we cannot reach it completely, but we can reach it to some level, of our beginning – in turn, we merit to be signed for a good year.

May Hashem merit us that we should feel, for at least one moment of our life, to feel simply the Presence of Hashem. And may we merit to submit all our actions, feelings and thoughts to this simple recognition. Then we will merit to be written - whether we are like “sons, or like servants” - permanently, for a good year.

⁸ Editor's Note: Refer to Nefesh HaChaim 1:6

Mazal of The Scale

The Mazal of Tishrei: Moznayim (Scale)

The *mazal* of the month of *Tishrei*, as is well-known from the words of *Chazal*, is “*moznayim*”, the [Heavenly] “scale”.⁹

The Ramban explains that the connection between the *moznayim*\scale and the month of *Tishrei* is because “It is a time of *din* (judgment), when Hashem weighs all the deeds of people on a scale (a *moznayim*).” Let us reflect more into this, to understand what the depth of this is - besides for the simple meaning of it, which is that Hashem weighs all of man’s deeds on a scale.

Moznayim\Oznayim\Ears – A Higher Mode of Conduct Than Af\Nose

The word *moznayim* is from the word *oznayim*, “ears”. The ears are in a higher place of the body than the nose.

When one is a *tzaddik* and he does the will of Hashem, he gives a *nachas ruach*¹⁰ to Hashem, which is like a pleasant “smell” to Hashem, whereas the *rasha*¹¹ gives off a “foul odor” to Hashem through his evil deeds. The nose is called *af*, and Hashem’s anger is also called *af*. One of Hashem’s traits of mercy is that He is “*maarich apo*”, He delays His anger, both towards the *tzaddikim* and towards the *reshaim*. How does Hashem delay His anger, His *af*? It is clear that He uses His trait of *erech apayim*, when He makes Himself slow to anger (as it were), towards *reshaim*. But how is Hashem *maarich apo* even towards *tzaddikim*? This matter is explained as “Hashem stretches out His *af* (His “nose”, so to speak), to His *oznayim* (His “ears”, figuratively speaking).

This means that Hashem uses a different mode of conduct, switching from the mode of *af* to the mode of *moznayim*. This is the *mazal* of *moznayim* of *Tishrei*. Hashem’s merciful trait of *erech apayim* is thus the revelation of His mode of conduct called *oznayim* (“ears”), from the word *moznayim*.

Moznayim Is Kaf HaMedameh – The Imagination

In order to understand this concept better, we will need to examine the words of the Gemara: “In the future, Hashem will slaughter the evil inclination. To the wicked, the evil inclination will appear like a hair, and to the righteous, the evil inclination will appear to be like a mountain.”¹² In either case, the Gemara says that the evil

9 Sefer Yetzirah 5:4

10 pleasantness

11 wicked person

12 Succah 52a

inclination “appears”, it is *nidmeh*, to both the righteous and the wicked. The word *nidmeh* is, related to the word *medameh*, imagination, implying that both the righteous and the wicked experience the evil inclination in terms of the imagination.

Nidmeh fantasy is also called “*kaf hadimyon*”. The letter *kaf* in the *Aleph Beis* represents the concept of imagination, because imagination makes things appear to look “like” something else, and the letter *kaf* of the *Aleph Beis* implies the term “like”. Therefore, the letter *kaf* is referred to as *kaf hadimyon* – the letter that implies the concept of imagination.

In a scale, a *moznayim*, there are two sides – a *kaf yemin*, the right side of the scale, which symbolizes merits and righteousness, and the left side of the scale, the *kaf sm'ael* (also called *kaf chovah*) which symbolizes sin and wicked deeds. Any time where we find the term *kaf*, it implies *kaf hamedameh* – the use of the imagination. This implies that the *moznayim*, the scale, is an example of *kaf hamedameh*.

The *kaf hayemin*, the right side of the Heavenly scale, weighs the merits of *tzaddikim*, and the *kaf sm'ael*, the left side of the scale, weighs the acts of the wicked. On a simple level, it is the righteous acts of the *tzaddikim* weighed against all of the evil fantasies of the wicked which fuel their wicked deeds. The *kaf moznayim*, the Heavenly scale, is the point in the middle that weighs the two sides.

However, since the “*kaf*” *moznayim* (the scale) is an example of “*kaf*” *hamedameh* (the imagination) –for they are both in the category of “*kaf*” - this implies that even when the *kaf* (the middle part of the scale) is pointing towards the side of the *kaf yemin*, the side of the *tzaddikim*, it is not a true judgment - for it is ultimately a *kaf hamedameh*, a scale that weighs good imagination versus evil imagination. It is all within *medameh*, the imagination, and therefore it is not a true judgment.

Hishtavus \ Equality – Through Nullifying The Will

The *Gra* says an amazing insight, that those who are in the category of *beinonim* are the very “scale” that decides between the righteous and the wicked, and therefore, in this aspect, the *beinonim* are on a greater level than *tzaddikim*. Certainly, the *Gra* does not mean that *beinonim* are on a higher spiritual level than *tzaddikim*. But there is definitely an angle where the *beinonim* are at a higher level than *tzaddikim*. In what way are the *beinonim* at a greater level than *tzaddikim*?

The *Chovos HaLevovos* says that the greatest quality is *hishtavus*, to be equal, between two different sides. One’s *avodah* is not merely to become more leaning towards good, but to be at an equal stance between the sides of good and evil. Why? The *Rambam* says that a person’s main *avodah* is to stay in the middle between two extremes. In order to improve, one must go to the other extreme, but ultimately he must come back to the middle point. Becoming extreme in a good character trait is only a temporary stage, and it is not the purpose. The purpose is to become more balanced between the two extremes of good and evil – to stand in the middle point.

What is the understanding of this? It is because when one is extremely pointed towards good, this really comes from his own *ratzon*, his will, and even though it is a holy will, it is still within the category of his *medameh*, imagination. Therefore, there is a level greater than having a holy *ratzon*. This greater level is called *hishtavus*, equality, which is by returning to the middle point between two extremes. It is described by *Chazal* in the

expression, “Nullify your will, for His will”,¹³ meaning that one should have no will of his own, other than the will of Hashem.

Leaving Medameh\Imagination

The concept of the *moznayim*, the scale, in terms of the soul, means that we go above the level of *kaf*, above *medameh* – above even the *kaf yemin* which leans towards good.

Ever since Adam ate from the *Eitz HaDaas* (the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), he entered in an existence of *medameh*\imagination¹⁴, into the *kaf moznayim*, and man’s *avodah* ever since is to rise above the level of *kaf moznayim*, above *medameh* – which means that he must strive to transcend his own *ratzon* (will), so that he can reach the *moznayim*\scale itself. Clearly, we first have the *avodah* to leave the *kaf chovah* (or *kaf sm’oel*) the side of the scale that leans towards evil, and to cause the scale to be tipped towards the *kaf zechus* (or *kaf yemin*), but after that, the *avodah* is to rise to the *moznayim* itself, above either *kaf*.

This is the secret of the *avodah* we have during the 40 days from Elul to Yom Kippur. It is 40 days of leaving the *kaf hamedameh* – firstly, to leave the *kaf chovah*, and even more so, to leave the *kaf yemin*.

According to the above, we can understand the depth of Hashem’s trait of *erech apayim*, where Hashem is *maarich apo* (He stretches his *af*) all the way until the *oznayim*, the “ears”. The “ears” symbolize balance, because *oznayim* is from the word *izun* (balance).

The 40 days of Elul to Yom Kippur begin with hearing the sound of *shofar*. The *shofar* is a higher form of prayer than verbal prayer. The sound of the *shofar* is a simple, undivided sound, with no verbalization, which is only heard. It comes from a higher place, which is not broken up into words. Through *shofar*, “Hashem removes Himself from His Throne of Judgment and moves to His Throne of Mercy.” The *shofar* elevates a person from the level of verbalized prayer to the “ears”, a higher point than the mouth. That is the depth behind the *mitzvah* of hearing the *shofar*. It reveals the mode of conduct of the “ears”, which is a higher mode than the mouth\verbalization.

That is the depth of how Hashem switches to His Throne of Mercy. The awakening of Hashem’s mercy on Rosh HaShanah, through hearing the *shofar*, is because there is *hishtavus*, an equality between two sides – and because of this, it follows that there is no punishment for sin. Hashem’s conduct of mercy on Rosh HaShanah, its inner root, comes from the mode of “ears”, above the mouth and above the nose.

We blow *shofar* to remember the *akeidah* of Yitzchok, to awaken the merit of Avraham’s deed of being willing to give up his only son for Hashem. What was the great test of the *akeidah*, and why was it the most difficult of all tests? Simply, it was because he had to overcome his great love for his child, by loving Hashem more than his child. But the deeper reason is that since his entire future and legacy would be through Yitzchok, by giving up Yitzchok he was prepared to give up all that he stood for. He had to uproot his holy *ratzon*\will, and become totally nullified to Hashem.

¹³ Avos 2:4

¹⁴ As explained by the Sforno and Gra

First one has the *avodah* to become like a *tzaddik* and develop a holy *ratzon*\will. After that, the *avodah* is to sacrifice even the holy *ratzon*\will for Hashem, so that one has no will of his own, totally nullified to Hashem.

To illustrate this idea, there was a story with the Brisker Rov that one year he couldn't get an *esrog* for Succos. That year, when everyone came to *shul*, they thought that the Brisker Rav would be especially sad, because he was known for his love of *mitzvos*. But to everyone's surprise, the Brisker Rov looked very happy, much happier than he ever was. When asked why he was so happy, he said that until now, he couldn't be sure how well he was fulfilling Hashem's will. Now that he didn't have an *esrog*, he is certain that he was doing the will of Hashem, because this is what Hashem wanted from him, that he shouldn't have an *esrog* this year.

The depth of this story is that while the *tzaddikim* have attained a holy will, they are prepared to forego even this, if Hashem wills it. They are ready to sacrifice their own will for Hashem's. This is the depth of the matter that Hashem will slaughter the evil inclination even for the righteous – it means that He will slaughter even the holy will, which is ultimately a branch of the imagination, and in its place, they will have no will of their own, only Hashem's.

The depth of these days, which are called *Y'mei Ratzon*, “days of will”, is to leave our own will – to leave the negative *retzonos* represented by the *kaf chovah*, but even more so, to leave even the *kaf zechus*, which represents the holy *retzonos*, and to instead become like the *beinonim*, who stand equally between the sides of good and evil, the state of *hishtavus*\equality. It is to enter a state where we have no will of our own, because there is only the will of Hashem. [We can now understand why the *Gra* says that the *avodah* of a person during the Ten Days of Repentance is to be like the *beinonim*, and how the *beinonim* are on a greater level than the *tzaddikim*, to a certain extent].

There is a dispute in the Gemara¹⁵ how the *beinoni* merits to be written for a good judgment: Is it by doing one more *mitzvah*, which makes him more meritorious because he increases the *kaf zechus* in his favor, or is it by refraining from sin, which weakens the *kaf chovah*. The question in the Gemara is, how Hashem “leans” Himself more towards His trait of “*rav chessed*”, of showing great kindness: Either it is through increasing one more good deed, or it is by avoiding sin.

What is the difference? Simply speaking, it is because if a person does one more *mitzvah*, his merits outweigh his sins, and if he refrains from one more sin, his sins will not outweigh his merits. But the deeper understanding of “increasing the *kaf zechus*” is that a person increases the *kaf hamedameh* in the side of holiness, and refraining from one more sin means lessening the *kaf hamedameh* in the side of evil. If one increases the *kaf zechus*, he is increasing the *medameh* in the side of holiness, which is the will of the righteous, and if one lessens the *kaf chovah*, it means he is weakening *medameh* in the side of the evil, or the will of the wicked. These are two different ways of how Hashem leans Himself towards kindness.

But the trait of *erech apayim*, as explained, is deeper than Hashem's trait of *rav chessed*. When Hashem leans towards *cheded*, there is no revelation of *hishtavus*\equality. Only through His trait of *erech apayim* does Hashem “stretch the *af* (nose) all the way until the ears”, meaning that He conducts Himself above the level of *af*\nose and instead He conducts Himself on a level of *oznayim*\ears. When Hashem uses His trait of *rav chessed*, a person remains in either side of the *kaf moznayim*, either side of the scale. He may be on the side of the *kaf chovah*, which represents the *yetzer hora* and the will\imagination of the wicked, or he may even be on the side of the *kaf zechus*, which is the will\imagination of *tzaddikim*, but either way, he is within the *kaf hamedameh*.

Yom Kippur – Rising Above *medameh*\Imagination and Entering Havayah\Reality

This is the depth of Yom Kippur as well. There is a teaching that Yom Kippur is *k'Purim*, it is “like Purim”.¹⁶ Therefore, Yom Kippur atones for all *kaf hamedameh*, it is the atonement for all *medameh*\imagination. Yom Kippur is the atonement for the “*kaf*” itself which makes itself *medameh*\comparable to Purim. It is not simply an atonement for sins – rather, it atones for the very *kaf hamedameh* itself - the “*kaf*” that is *medameh*.

The depth of the atonement for the soul, and the way it is cleansed and purified, is when the soul is cleansed out from the *medameh*\imagination. That is the whole *avodah* of Yom Kippur, where one goat is sent for Hashem and the other is sent to *Azazel*. Through the *goral*, there was a sorting process, between two seemingly equal looking goats. The *goral* says: “No. that they are not equal. One is for Hashem, and the other goes to *Azazel*.”

Man is called *adam*, from the word *medameh*\imagination. On Yom Kippur, man has the *avodah* to elevate himself to the level of an angel - meaning, one leaves behind *medameh*, on this day. That is the depth of the atonement on Yom Kippur.

Leaving the Imagination Enables a Person to Sense Hashem's Presence

The depths of the *avodah* during this month of Tishrei, and especially Yom Kippur, is to reach this inner place of “*moznayim*”, the scale.

Certainly, it entails leaving behind the *kaf chovah*, the side of the scale which houses all of the wicked deeds, but it even entails leaving behind the *kaf yemin*, the right side of the scale which contains all of the merits. This is because one needs leave behind all *medameh* in the soul – he must leave the imagination, the root of the will, so that he has no personal will of his own, in order that his own will has become nullified to the Creator's. And then, one will be able to sense *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

As long as one's *medameh*\imagination is active, he cannot sense Hashem. When one leaves *medameh*, he goes above his initial level which is called “*adam*”, and then, he can feel the reality of Hashem.

These are days of cleansing out the soul from the *medameh*\fantasies, and in its place, to instead reveal the true reality, *havayah*, which is only One. That is how we prepare for Yom Kippur, that the only true reality, the *havayah*, is G-d: “*Hashem, hu haElokim*”, “Hashem is G-d”.

May we merit together with all of the Jewish people to purify ourselves from *medameh*, to reveal the *elokus* (G-dliness) in our souls, and to be written and sealed for a good year, and to the complete Redemption. Amen.

¹⁶ Tikkunei HaZohar 57b (tikkun 21)

Tribe of Yosef

The Connection Between Yosef and the Month of Tishrei

The month of *Tishrei* is called *Yerach HaAisanim*, “month of the giants”.¹⁷ The Gemara gives two reasons for this. One reason for this, the Gemara says, is because it corresponds to the three “giants”, our forefathers Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. Another reason, the Gemara says, is because it is a “giant” in terms of *mitzvos*, and *Rashi* explains that this is because it contains the many *mitzvos* of the festivals Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, and Succos.

We find that the Torah says the word “*Aisan*” (giant) regarding Yosef HaTzaddik, in the verse, **וַתֵּשֶׁב בְּאִיתֵן קֶשֶׁתוֹ** (“*But his bow was firmly emplaced*”)¹⁸ The Sages state that Yosef was great enough to be one of the *Avos* (forefathers), and he would have had 12 tribes, but he lost this merit due to the ten droplets of seed that escaped him when he was running away from the wife of Potiphar.

The *Gra* says that the month of *Tishrei* corresponds to Yosef.¹⁹ Therefore, if *Tishrei* is called *Yerach HaAisanim*, “month of the giants”, and Yosef is called *Aisan*, and he could have been one of the *Avos*, who were called “*Aisanim*” – we can now understand another reason why the month of *Tishrei* is called *Yerach HaAisanim*. It is because the month of *Tishrei* corresponds to Yosef, who was great enough to be called *Aisan*, and who could have been one of the *aianim* (giants), one of the *Avos*.

Yosef was eligible for the title of *Aisan*, but in the end, he is not actually called *Aisan*, because he lost this merit when he was escaping from Potiphar’s wife and ten droplets of seed escaped him.

Yosef Represents The Transformation of Din\Judgment to Rachamim\Mercy

The Gemara says that on Rosh HaShanah, Hashem “remembered” Sarah, Rivkah, Rochel, and Channah by making them conceive on this day. From Hashem’s “remembering” of Rachel, she bore Yosef.²⁰

Elsewhere, the Sages state that when Leah bore Dinah, immediately Rachel gave birth to Yosef, and that Hashem remembered Rachel on this day because it was Rosh HaShanah, the day that Hashem was judging the world.²¹ The name “Dinah” is from the word *din* (judgment). Hashem remembered Rachel on that day and opened her *rechem*

17 Rosh HaShanah 11a

18 Beraishis 49:24

19 peirush haGra: Sefer Yetzirah 5:3

20 Rosh HaShanah 10b

21 Berachos 60a

(womb), from which Yosef was born. The depth of this is that Yosef was borne from the *Yom HaDin*, the day of judgment, where Leah bore Dinah, who represents *din*\judgment.

Dinah's name, which is rooted in the term *din*\judgment, represents the *middas hadin*, the attribute of judgment, whereas Yosef represents the *middas harachamim*, the attribute of mercy, for he was born from the miraculous opening of the *rechem* of his mother Rachel (hence the connection between *rechem* and *rachamim*). On a deeper level, this means that since Yosef was born due to the birth of Dinah, the *middas hadin* became transformed into *middas harachamim*. From the birth of Dinah, the birth of Yosef was enabled, therefore Yosef represents the concept where the *middas hadin* is transformed into *middas harachamim*.

Elsewhere, the Sages state that when Dinah bore a child to *Shechem*, she named her Osnas, and the angel Gavriel came down and arranged for Osnas to be sent down to Egypt, and later, Osnas the daughter of Dinah became the wife of Yosef. The depth behind this is that Osnas was born from Dinah*din*\judgment, so was Yosef borne because of Dinah*din*\judgment. Therefore, they were destined to be married, for they were came from the same source – both of their births were because of Dinah, and on a deeper level, they were both borne from *din*\judgment. Dinah represents *din*\judgment, and both Yosef and Osnas represent the concept of the transformation of *din* to *rachamim*, for Yosef was born due to Dinah's birth whereupon Hashem immediately remembered his mother Rachel [and Osnas was rescued after being born from Dinah, which was also *rachamim*].

Yosef's Lost Status

Going deeper with this concept, the *Mishnah*²² states that the gentile kings begin counting the new year from the month of Nissan, whereas the kings of the Jewish people begin to count the new year from the month of Tishrei. As mentioned above, the month of Tishrei corresponds to Yosef. *Chazal* also list ten kings who ruled the entire world.²³ The first four were Hashem Himself, Nimrod, Yosef, Shlomo. Who did Yosef rule over? He only ruled over Egypt. Unlike Shlomo, whose rule spread from Jerusalem to the rest of the world, Yosef's rule began in Egypt, a gentile nation of the world.

Chazal state that Yosef escaped prison on Rosh HaShanah, which is in the month of *Tishrei*, as opposed to the month of Nissan. If Yosef's rule would have begun from the Jewish people, then his rule would have had to begin in the month of Nissan, but since his rule began from the gentile nations, from Egypt, therefore it had to be that he would leave prison in the month of Tishrei.

Hashem arranged that Yosef become ruler over Egypt, over the nations of the world, and in Egypt, he lost his title of "*Aisan*" as well, by the episode of the wife of Potiphar, when he was escaping her and ten droplets of seed escaped from him. Thus, even when he became king in Egypt, his rule was destined not to last, for his royal status had already been damaged when the ten droplets left him.

Had Yosef retained his title of "*Aisan*" [by totally avoiding the wife of Potiphar and not letting himself become ensnared by her at all], the *middas hadin* would have become completely rectified and the transformation to *middas harachamim* would have been completed, and then there would be no more need for *middas hadin*. Instead, Yosef

²² Rosh HaShanah 2a

²³ Megillah 11a

lost his title of *Aisan* because ten droplets of seed escaped him when he was running away from the wife of Potiphar, and because of this, he would only have 10 children come from him, instead of 12 tribes which would have come from him.

Tishrei – A Time of Din\Judgment

Therefore, these days of Tishrei contain a strengthened *middas hadin*, because the *middas hadin* did not become rectified by Yosef, it was not turned into the *middas rachamim* as it should have. Although though Yosef was borne due to the birth of Dinah, which was a transformation of *din* to *rachamim*, this was not yet a complete rectification for the *middas hadin*. Yosef had the task to complete this transformation of *din* to *rachamim*, and because he lost the title of *Aisan*, the transformation of *din* to *rachamim* was never completed and therefore the *middas hadin* of Tishrei, which corresponds to Yosef, remains as *middas hadin*.

In the month of Tishrei, there is Rosh HaShanah, the head of the entire year, and therefore, Tishrei is the root of all of the months of the year. Since Tishrei corresponds to Yosef, and Yosef's great status became damaged, this means that the month of Tishrei, as well as Rosh HaShanah, became damaged as well. Tishrei is the root of the year that became spiritually damaged, due to the ten droplets that accidentally escaped Yosef.

This is a deeper reason why there are ten days of *din* (judgment) between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, and why the judgment is first signed on Rosh HaShanah and only later sealed on Yom Kippur, with ten days of judgment in between. It is because Yosef did not complete the transformation of *din* to *rachamim*, which he could have accomplished, had he not lost the title of *Aisan*. The ten days of judgment in between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur correspond to the ten droplets that escaped Yosef. The *middas hadin*, represented by Dinah, returns during this time of the year - instead of the *middas rachamim* represented by Yosef.

Rectification of Yosef's Damaged Status – Through Shofar

Of Yosef it is said, “*Ben poras Yosef, alei ayin*”, “A charming son is Yosef, he is above the eye.”²⁴ Chazal give different meanings of the word “*poras*”: It is from the word *pharaoh*, and the verse is saying that Yosef became like a *pharaoh* of Egypt; another meaning is that it is from the word *poter*, “interpreter of dreams”, the talent of Yosef which ultimately enabled him to ascend to power; and another meaning is from the word *hefarah*, to annul.

Rosh HaShanah is called *Yom HaZikaron*, the “day of remembrance”, when Hashem remembers the merits of the Jewish people. The Gemara says: “And how is there a remembrance? Through *shofar*.”²⁵ The depth behind this is that Yosef's great status became damaged, which made him lose the title of *Aisan* and he was no longer able to be included as one of the *Avos*. The *shofar* comes to rectify the damaged greatness of Yosef, which is described as “*poras Yosef*” (the charm of Yosef), and a hint to this is that the word *shofar* is from the word *meshaper*, to beautify – it comes to beautify the damaged “*poras Yosef*”.

²⁴ Beraishis 49:22

²⁵ Rosh HaShanah 16a

This also another insight into the teaching of the Sages state that when Hashem hears the *shofar* on Rosh HaShanah, “He passes from His Throne of Judgment and transfers to His Throne of Mercy.”²⁶ On Rosh HaShanah, Hashem remembered Rachel and made her conceive, by opening her *rechem* \womb, from which Yosef could be born. In doing so, He changed the *middas hadin* to the *middas harachamim*. Rosh HaShanah is the time when Hashem remembers Rachel and that He made her conceive – but what exactly is it that awakens this remembrance? It is precisely through *shofar*. This is because the *shofar* comes to rectify the damaged status of Yosef, and this is somewhat of a rectification to the damaged title of “*Aisan*” that was given to Yosef.

In Conclusion

May we merit with *siyata d’shmaya* the return to the title of “*Aisan*” to Yosef, when *Tishrei* will be the completed *Yerach HaAisanim*, the month of the giants which corresponds to our three “giants”, our forefathers Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov – joined with Yosef. Then we will have the complete level when we will merit that the *middas hadin* should become completely transformed to the *middas harachamim*.

²⁶ Tikkunei HaZohar tikkun 18, Vayikra Rabbah 29:10



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