



Rosh HaShanah - 071 Malchiyos In Action

Malchiyos, Zichronos and Shofaros: How Rosh HaShanah Is Unique To The Jewish People

We say in the prayers on Rosh HaShanah, "This is the day of the beginning of Your actions, a remembrance of the first day." Rosh HaShanah is called the first day of the Creation.

There is a dispute in the Sages if the world was created on the 1st of the month of Nissan or on the 1st of Tishrei. Elsewhere the Sages state that the world was created on the 25th of Elul. Rabbeinu Nissim Gaon asked: Why is Rosh HaShanah called the first day of Creation, if the Gemara says that it was created on the 25th of Elul? He answers that since man is the purpose of Creation, and man was created on the 1st of Tishrei, that is why the 1st of Tishrei is considered to be the beginning of the world. Hence, Rosh HaShanah is on the 1st day of Tishrei, and not on the 25th of Elul. It is the day of "The beginning of all Your actions", and man is the primary action of Hashem's Creation, who was created on the 1st of Tishrei. That is why Rosh HaShanah is on the 1st of Tishrei.

On Rosh HaShanah, Hashem judges all of Creation, even the angels. Everyone is judged on Rosh HaShanah, both Jews and gentiles. How, then, is Rosh HaShanah unique for the Jewish people, if even the gentiles are judged on this day? It is because on Rosh HaShanah, only the Jewish people recite the verses of *malchiyos*, *zichronos* and *shofaros*.

Malchiyos is uniquely the Jewish people's, for only the Jewish people declare Hashem as their *Melech*\King. The gentiles do not declare Hashem as King, and they don't even know when Rosh HaShanah arrives. Thus, the aspect of *malchiyos* makes Rosh HaShanah more unique for the Jewish people alone.

The verses of *zichronos*, which remembers the act of the *akeidah*, are also a unique merit for the Jewish people. Yitzchok's act of offering himself as a sacrifice is an eternal merit for his descendants, and this is only for the Jewish people, not the gentiles. What about Esav, though, who was a son of Yitzchok? Although Esav was Yitzchok's offspring, he did not receive the merit of the *akeidah*, because the Sages refer to Esav as a "*Yisrael mumar*", an apostate Jew, who didn't continue the ways of his father.

Shofaros are also unique for the Jewish people, because the gentiles do not blow *shofar* on Rosh HaShanah. Even if a gentile were to blow *shofar* on Rosh HaShanah, he wouldn't get any reward for it, because there is no *mitzvah* of *shofar* for him, and if a Jew would hear him blow *shofar*, he doesn't fulfill the *mitzvah*.

Thus, Rosh HaShanah for the Jewish people is unique in that only the Jewish people declare *malchiyos*, *zichronos* and *shofaros*. This sets them apart from the rest of the world.

Putting Malchiyos Into Action: Taking On Small One Act of Improvement

Through *malchiyos*, we declare Hashem as King. But, practically speaking, when a person hears shofar in shul on Rosh HaShanah, does he accept Hashem as King over himself? Often a person

doesn't understand what he is saying when he says these verses of *malchiyos*. Even if he does understand, he usually doesn't have *kavanah* in what he is saying. If he is not having intention in what he is saying, he cannot accept Hashem as King over him.

Let us ask a simple question. If not for the *nusach* (prescribed text) of davening, would a person accept Hashem as the *Melech*? If we wouldn't have a *nusach* for the *davening*, what would a person do, in order to declare Hashem as the *Melech*? How would the *Avos* declare Hashem as *Melech*, when there wasn't yet a *nusach* of *davening*? What would a person do without a *siddur* - would he declare Hashem as *melech*? People have been trained since they are children to recite the *nusach* of *davening*, but they often don't understand what they are saying. They come to *shul* on Rosh HaShanah, recite the *davening* in their *siddur*, they hear the *shofar* and they fulfill the *mitzvah* - and they think that this is called "Rosh HaShanah"!

Malchiyos is not merely some verses to recite. It must be a true resolution that a person makes, where he accepts Hashem as the *Melech* over him!

This step must be traversed before Rosh HaShanah, not on Rosh HaShanah itself. The *avodah* of Rosh HaShanah must begin, practically speaking, before it comes Rosh HaShanah. One must really make Hashem into the *Melech*!

1 - Taking Upon One Action of Change

There are many levels within *malchiyos*. But how can we do it, on a practical level?

A *melech*, a king, is an authority that we listen to. He is someone who gives an order or command, and his servants follow through with it, no matter what. Hashem is called *Avinu Malkeinu*, He is our Father as well as our King. On Rosh HaShanah, we relate to Him as a King, making Him King over us, through reciting the verses of *malchiyos*. In order to accept Hashem's Kingship over us, it is not realistic if we resolve to perfectly carry out all of His ways. No one can be on this level. Instead, each person at his own level needs to take upon himself on resolution, in which he will subjugate himself to Hashem, in at least one area that will be realistic for him to keep to. It must be something small, but which shows that you have progressed since last year.

Any person on his own level should do this, to accept Hashem's command and will upon himself, in at least one area that he can keep to. He should try to do it for a year, or few a months, or a few weeks, or at least for the ten days of repentance.

2 - Applying The Heart

That is all the first part, and it concerns action, which is the external level. There is also a second part, which is the internal level: to apply the heart. A person's heart has become closed throughout the course of the year, and when it comes Rosh HaShanah, it is time to reopen it. So when one accepts himself to make one small change in his life, in order to show that he is accepting Hashem's kingship over him (as explained above), he also needs to do so from the depths of his heart.

Often a person is used to doing the *mitzvos* since childhood, but his heart has remained on the level of a child. For that reason, in order for a person to better himself, it is not enough for a person to merely do the *mitzvos* - he also needs to put his heart into it.

Putting Our Heart Into Torah Learning

Baruch Hashem, we merit here to sit and learn Torah all day. You are praiseworthy, and praiseworthy is your lot. Many people don't merit this. Certainly, you can take upon yourself to learn with a little

more exertion than before, but you also need to put in some more heart into your learning, by adding some enthusiasm and joy, into your learning. This is an inner *avodah*.

Practically speaking, we all stood at Har Sinai and accepted the Torah. When we learn Torah, is this the same as learning other wisdoms? Is learning Gemara the same thing as math? Is the entire difference because learning Gemara is a mitzvah and math isn't? Is it because Gemara is holy and math isn't? The *Ramchal* in *sefer Derech Etz Chaim* says the difference. It is because when a person learns other wisdoms, he is learning something new which he has never yet encountered before, but when a person learns Torah, it is like blowing on a coal with tiny embers – a person already has the entire Torah in a potential state, because he learned it from an angel in his mother's womb, and when he learns Torah, he is revealing the Torah that he has already acquired in the womb.

The Torah has been found within every Jewish soul ever since we accepted the Torah at Har Sinai. It is found deep, deep inside our *neshamah*, in a hidden place. When a baby exits the womb upon birth, an angel strikes him on the lips and he forgets all the Torah that he learned in the womb, but this is only an external forgetting of the Torah. The Torah learning still remains, on a very internal level, deep in one's *neshamah*. Thus the Torah is not a new wisdom which we need to acquire. Rather, when we learn Torah, we must understand, that the Torah is coming out from inside of us! The entire Torah exists within every person, on a potential level, and we need to bring it out from potential.

When one opens his heart to Torah, he can reveal the Torah from within him. This is the difference between a true Torah scholar and one who isn't. A true Torah scholar is not someone who learned and remembers a lot of Torah. A true Torah scholar, besides for learning and remembering a lot, is one who learns Torah because he recognizes it is a different wisdom and that it is part of his *neshamah*. Exertion in Torah is entirely meant to bring the Torah out of one's potential state. This is the secret behind all exertion in Torah.

When one is aware of this, he understands that deep within him there is an awesome treasure. The Torah is not found outside of you, it is found deep within your *neshamah*!

How do reach this deep place in our *neshamah*? It is through learning and putting in effort, and thinking, and reviewing, our Torah learning, and then receiving *siyata d'shmaya*, but in addition to the above, and more importantly, it is through opening the heart to Torah: to yearn for the Torah.

The Jewish people received the Torah not only long ago, but as a power of the soul, and when Rosh HaShanah comes, we should understand that all spiritual growth is based on the power of learning Torah. All the levels of spiritual growth start with Torah. That is what Rabbi Pinchos ben Yair said, that Torah leads to watchfulness, which leads to alacrity, which leads to cleanliness, etc. The entire ladder of spiritual growth is footed in the Torah, because all is built on Torah.

One should understand that if he really wants a good year, he must reach the root of man's task on this world, by increasing some exertion in Torah, even if it is a little bit – and along with this, he should also put more of his heart into learning Torah.

When we merit this, with *siyata d'shmaya*, to put our hearts more into learning Torah along with increasing some exertion in our Torah learning, the light of the *neshamah* can be revealed within us. This changes one's life entirely – that is, if one truly absorbs this point, as opposed to just hearing these words with his ears.

In Conclusion

May the Creator merit us to recognize the worth of our souls and what is contained in it, and the more one learns Torah, the more elevated these days become, and may we merit to connect our souls to

the Creator, to accept His Kingship from our own will, to yearn for the words of Torah and to increase our exertion in learning Torah, and from the light of the holy Torah which comes from Hashem, may we all merit a good year, and a *kesiva v'chasima tovah*, for everyone.

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