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## Droshos - Why be Jewish

### ***Do you want to be Jewish?***

When we all stood at *Har Sinai*, Hashem forced us to accept the Torah. The *Midrash* says that Hashem lifted up the mountain above us and said, "If you will not accept the Torah, I will bury you under this mountain." All of us were forced into the Jewish religion and to accept the Torah.

So, we keep the Torah and do everything a Jew is supposed to do. We were forced into this. But do we also want to be Jewish? That is the question.

The yeshiva bochur who found out he's not a Jew

Rav Ezriel Tauber shlit"א tells of a story that one time a *yeshiva bochur*, who was also a big *masmid*, in a top yeshiva -- found out that his grandparents had not converted properly according to Jewish law. That meant that he had just found out that he isn't Jewish.

His friends told him, "Quick - go convert!" He could have converted and become a *ger*. But shockingly, he decided not to convert. He was ecstatic that he had found out that he wasn't Jewish. He said, "Why should I remain Jewish?" Now, imagine if any of us would find out that we are not Jewish. What would we do? Would we go run to convert?

Imagine you find out that you are not Jewish. What would you do? Would you quickly take the next plane to Florida to relax at a non-Jewish beach? Would you go run to convert - or would you engage in some non-Jewish activities? If Hashem would give us the choice not to be Jewish, what would we decide?

Do we want the mitzvos?

Another question: If Hashem would let us decide which mitzvos to keep and which mitzvos we don't want to keep, what would we decide? If we had the ability to cut back some mitzvos and keep the ones that aren't hard, would we do it?

Do we want to be Jewish? That is the ***ultimate*** question.

### ***Elul -- Days of Will***

Do we really want Yiddishkeit? Elul is called *Y'mei Ratzon*, Days of Will. Do we have the will to be Jewish? Non-Jews are also judged on Rosh Hashanah. What is the difference between our Rosh

Hashanah and their Rosh Hashanah? There are non-Jews who also prepare for Rosh Hashanah. What is the difference between us and them when it comes to Rosh Hashanah?

Do we really want Rosh Hashanah, or would we rather be spared the pain of being judged? Do we feel forced into this day and rather do without it?

Yes, life is so hard – we don't like our job, or what we have to do in the house, and in general, our whole life doesn't go the way we want. But what do we really **want** in life anyway?

Another question (this is for men): When we learn Torah – are we learning because someone put pressure on us to learn, or because we really want this?

We need to do some thinking.

### ***What Rosh HaShanah means to a Jew***

There is an essential difference between a Jew and a non-Jew. A non-Jew might be very religious and take Rosh Hashanah seriously, but he'd rather do without it. We, the Jewish people – when we act in the true way we are supposed to be – we look forward to Rosh Hashanah. We want this.

Is Rosh Hashanah just falling upon us – like someone who falls into the ocean and is struggling to save himself? Or do we want it?

Rosh Hashanah is a day to declare Hashem's kingship over us. That means that we are declaring that Hashem rules our lives – every last detail. **Do we want that?**

Rosh Hashanah is essentially a day of happiness. It can be a day where we happily accept Hashem into our life if we choose and want to.

You don't need me to tell you this.

I did not come here to say a *drasha* for Rosh Hashanah. Rosh Hashanah will come upon us whether I speak or not. Even if we would not accept Hashem's kingship over us, He is still the king who rules over us. I am just asking you a question: Do we want that Hashem should rule over us, over all our life – every aspect of our life? This is the ultimate question before Rosh Hashanah.

Have you ever thought one day in your life what the purpose of life is? A person can learn Chumash and even the whole Tanach. That is a wonderful thing, but it can be just "history" to a person, because he has never thought about what the purpose of life is.

### ***The question we must ask ourselves is: Why are we living?***

I didn't come here to give a *drasha*. I think that eventually all of you will forget that I ever came here to speak, and you will forget me. Maybe you are a little inspired right now, but eventually you will forget this whole *drasha*. The year will come and go, and next year will be Rosh Hashanah again, and this year's *drasha* will be forgotten. I didn't just come here to speak and say a *drasha*. So what will remain of this *drasha*? Am I just wasting your time?

### ***What to Do***

For two minutes a day, just two minutes, think: Why am I living? What is my life about? If that is what results from this whole *drasha*, then that is enough.

I hope that what I have said are not merely nice "ideas", but that it will be practical for life.

Every day, think for a few moments: Who am I? Why did I come onto this world? What is the purpose of my life? (Before I know what Hashem wants from me – what do I want from myself...?)

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**Source:** <https://mail.bilvavi.us/english/droshos-why-be-jewish>