

Silent Cries

The young boy shifted uneasily in his seat. Actually, it was more like a small stool. As the stream of people passed by they seemed, more than usual in a *shivah* house, to be at a loss for words. The tragedy was incredible - a young father of four had passed away so suddenly that this Yerushalmi family could not react at all other than with pure, utter numbness.

Their lives had been shattered unexpectedly and now they did not know where or to whom to turn. And sadly, neither did anyone else. No one was able to find the right words for them. No matter how many people stopped by, they would all enter the small room and wait for the *avelim* to speak, just as the *halachah* dictates. They did not want to begin the conversation and so often they would just sit there as a thick, uncomfortable silence filled the room.

Rav Shmuel Salant, one of the foremost *gedolim* of Yerushalayim in the mid to latter part of the 1800's, was known as a stalwart *halachist*, never compromising on the exact letter of the law. And so when he came to be *menahem avel* it was with the hope that he would somehow find the right words to bring some peace to the bereft family.

As Rav Shmuel entered the small room, the crowd that had gathered immediately made way for the elderly sage. The age gap was evident – he was an old man and these young orphans were still nowhere near their *Bar Mitzvah*. The room was quiet until he arrived, the result of the mourners still not able to open up to share their sorrow. And perhaps that was what made it so sad. With their painful emotions trapped deep inside, how would they ever come to grips with this tragedy?

Surprisingly, Rav Shmuel barely waited a moment to initiate the conversation with the children. Soon they each wanted to share their thoughts and emotions with the well-known *saddik*. Rav Shmuel told them who their father was and how special he had been. He explained to them where he had gone and how he would always be watching over them. It was amazing to watch the scene; even small smiles crept their way onto the children's devastated faces.

An hour or so later Rav Shmuel got up to leave, the family now on the road to healing. He offered the appropriate words of comfort and wished them no more pain. And as he walked out accompanied by his closest disciples, one asked Rav Shmuel why he had bypassed the law requiring the *avel* to begin speaking first. Rav Shmuel stopped in his tracks and looked surprisingly at his students.

"Didn't you hear them?" He hinted at the fact that they had indeed spoken first and he had not sidestepped the *halachah*. But as they looked back at their Rebbe, their faces were filled with bewilderment as they had no idea what he was talking about.

"I can't believe you did not hear their painful cries. The moment I walked in I was so hurt by their crying. You really didn't hear it?"

And then the amazing truth became apparent. Some people hear with their ears, but there are those special people who are able to hear with their hearts. (One Shining Moment)

The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאַה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

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SHABBAT NISABIM ☆ שַׁבַּת נִסְאִיִּם

Haftarah: Yishayahu 61:10 - 63:9.

SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2019 28 ELUL 5779

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **6:20 pm**

Candlelighting: **6:27 pm**

Evening Shema after: **7:25 pm**

Shaharit: **5:49, 6:40, 8:10, 9:00**

Morning Shema by: **9:04 am**

Minhah Gedolah: **1:30 pm**

Shabbat Classes: **5:05 pm**

Shabbat Minhah: **6:05 pm**

Shabbat Ends: **7:24 pm (R"T 7:56 pm)**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Weekday Minhah: **4:05, 6:20 pm**

Hatarah will be this Saturday night at 7:34 p.m. One should say "Baruch hamabdil ben kodesh l'hol - Blessed are You Who separates from Holy to mundane" before driving a car.

Please join us for Midnight Selihot this Saturday night at 12:30 am

A Message from our Rabbi

"One should launder [and wear fine clothing] and groom oneself on the eve of Rosh Hashanah" (*Shulhan Aruch* 581:4)

On Rosh Hashanah we dress ourselves in our finest clothing, and we eat lavish meals. How does this jibe with this awesome day, a day of judgment when everything hangs in the balance? Furthermore, on the days leading to Rosh Hashanah, we confessed our sins. On the days after Rosh Hashanah we continue the same, working hard to improve our ways. Yet on Rosh Hashanah we pause from focusing on our sins, and we focus on the kingdom of Hashem. What exactly is going on here?

There are many possible ideas, but I would like to suggest the following explanation by Rabbi Moshe Kestenbaum.

In the Yeshiva of Novardok, the students would work on their humility. Some would go around saying, "I'm a nothing." One time, a new student came to the Yeshiva and soon began to imitate the practice. He was quickly put in his place. "Who are you to be a nothing?"

While the *teshubah* process includes humbling ourselves before Hashem, there is a prerequisite to this process. We need to understand who it is who is humbling himself.

We need to realize how important we are and how significant our place in this world is. We need to know how much Hashem loves us.

While Rosh Hashanah should and does invoke fear, it also speaks volumes about our greatness. The entire world is being judged. Yet, those on the outside are blissfully unaware of what the day holds. Incredibly enough, we are privy to what is happening in Heaven. While they are going about their mundane activities, we are busy proclaiming Hashem as King over the universe. Only we are the ones invited to this special coronation. We should feel quite proud and important.

While knowing one's greatness is a wonderful feeling, it also carries a hefty responsibility. My actions count. I have a tremendous responsibility to live up to my greatness and utilize it to its full potential.

If only one recognized how great he is, he would not sin. He would understand: How could someone so special succumb to such trivialities?

On Rosh Hashanah we dress in distinguished clothing and have festive meals because we are recognizing and celebrating our incredible place in this world. Yes, we humble ourselves in front of our King, but what greater honor can there be than for our King to desire our coronation of Him?

This is the first step towards *teshuvah*. We take a break from focusing on our sins and focus on what our mission is about – bringing honor to Hashem's Name. We are so filled with joy over our elevated status and purpose that we want to sing *Hallel*. But we can't, because our joy is tempered by the judgment hanging over our heads. After Rosh Hashanah, we are charged with new invigoration to improve our ways and become closer to Hashem.

I want to wish everyone a year filled with happiness, good health and livelihood, and most importantly, incredible growth in our service of Hashem.

Shabbat Shalom and *Tizku Leshanim Rabot*.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

On A Different Track

”פְּרִי־שׁ בָּכֶם אִישׁ...אֲשֶׁר לִבּוֹ פִּנָּה...לְלַכֵּת לַעֲבֹד אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַגּוֹיִם הָהֵם
פְּרִי־שׁ בָּכֶם שְׂרֵשׁ פָּרָה רֹאשׁ וְלַעֲנָה”

“Perhaps there is among you a man...whose thoughts stray...to go serve the gods of other nations; lest there is within you a root producing gall and bitter fruit.” (*Debarim* 29:17)

The Torah groups together two strikingly different individuals in this *pasuk*. The first is a full-fledged idol worshipper, a believer in paganism. The second merely has a “bad root” in him. These two types are seemingly at opposite ends of the spectrum. One is a heretic, the other, a loyal and faithful Jew. The second should be among the righteous members of Israel, not alongside the idolater. Why does the Torah mention them together in the same breath?

Rav Henoch Leibowitz zt”l compares this to two students sitting next to each other in class. They may appear identical with similar backgrounds and experiences. Yet, if their paths diverge, even slightly, years later they can end up being worlds apart. Even if there is no drastic difference between the two, they will inevitably raise their children differently. Somewhere down the line, day will turn into night.

The second individual mentioned in the Torah therefore deserves to be listed with the sinners. He is at the beginning of a track that starts at the same point as the rest of the G-d-fearing Jews, but ends up miles away. The Torah teaches us that when a bad seed exists in one's heart, it may lay dormant for many years but it will eventually

germinate. We must scrutinize ourselves to insure that not only must our actions be proper, but our motivations, too, should be equally pure. (*Torah Tavlin*)

The Bell

Sarah and Leah were about as different as twin sisters could be. Sarah was neat, prompt, and meticulous about everything. Leah, on the other hand, was a bright, pleasant girl, but didn't pick up after herself, paid very little attention to detail, and treated everything with a this-too-shall-pass attitude.

Whenever the girls were given an assignments in school, Sarah would rush home to work on the project and complete it quickly. Leah, in contrast, would not treat the assignment with any sense of urgency at all. If their mother asked Leah why she was not doing her homework, the child would be quick to respond, “It's not due tomorrow. I will get to it when I have a chance.”

The two girls were not only different in performance, they differed in outlook and philosophy as well. Sarah approached every day as if it were her last. “If not now – when” could have been her credo. Leah, on the other hand, was one for whom life seemed never-ending, stretching ahead to eternity and giving her the chance to do what she wanted whenever she wanted.

In children, this difference may seem insignificant and even cute. People mature at different ages, and it is entirely possible for someone like Leah to one day develop a real sense of the fragility of life.

When it comes to adults, however, too many hold on to their childish immaturity and chase after toys and fun at an age when they should realize the value of a minute of life. Every moment can be an opportunity to accomplish and earn eternal reward, gain insight, and grow. A sense of value and eternity usually come with maturity.

In *Pirkei Abot*, Rabbi Tarfon reminds us all that there is so much to do and so little time in which to do it. “The day is short, the task is great, the workers are lazy, the reward is much, and the Master is insistent” (*Pirkei Abot* 2:15).

A professor once gave his class a final exam. The students were instructed to form a figure that represented the way they would like to be for eternity. The figure would be judged, explained the professor, only if it was put in the oven to harden before the final bell rang.

One student raised her hand and asked, “When does the bell ring?”

“I don't tell you that,” replied the professor. “That is part of the test.”

Will *you* get the job done before the bell rings? (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

For Every Action There is a Reaction

“The esophagus is a comparatively narrow tube, but it is lined with a mucous membrane so that food does not get stuck. Also, the movement of swallowed food down this channel does not depend on gravity. Even if a person is lying down, the food will be pushed along because the channel is lined with muscle that contracts to produce a narrowing and then propel the narrowed portion slowly down to the length of the organ.”

Every decision we make has consequences. For Every Action, there is a Reaction. Proper nourishment of Torah and connecting to Hashem can will automatically feed our tubes in a healthy manner. (By Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael.)