



Nitzavim - נצבים

Coming up....

- Selichot are continuing every night at the London Bayit, Maariv at 9:30 followed by Selichot
- Rav Ari and his family will be going up to Manchester for Rosh Hashanah to join with the Manchester community for the Chag
- Join Bnei Akiva on Yom Kippur for an inspiring and uplifting service at the Manchester and London Batim
- Calling all Bogrim, join us in Manchester for Simchat Torah for our annual celebrations, stay posted for more info



Nitzavim and the Mitzvah of Teshuvah- Leah Fisher

כי המצוה הזאת אשר אנכי מצוה היום לא נפלות הוא ממך ולא רחקה הוא: לא בשמים הוא לאמר מי יעלה לנו השמימה ויקחה לנו וישמענו אתה ונעשה: ולא מעבר ליום הוא לאמר מי יעבר לנו אל עבר הים ויקחה לנו וישמענו: כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד בפיך ובלבבך לעשותו:

“For this mitzvah that I command you today it is not hidden from you and it is not distant. It is not in heaven, [for you] to say, “Who can ascend to the heaven for us and take it for us, so that we can listen and perform it?” Nor is it across the sea, [for you] to say, “Who can cross to the other side of the sea for us and take it for us, so that we can listen and perform it?” Perek 30, Passuk 11-14.

Parsha Nitzavim is always read on the Shabbat preceding Rosh Hashanah, a time when the Jewish People are focused on the mitzvah of Teshuva. Yet, how do these passukim relate to Teshuva, the mitzvah commanded in this passuk is very ambiguous.

The Gemara in Baba Metziah 59b and in Eruvin (55a), and as Nechama Leibovitch and Rashi explain, this passuk refers to the entire Torah. According to this line of thought, the Torah is not in heaven but rather, the Torah is accessible to all of us on earth no matter where and what we are doing.

With an alternative interpretation, Ramban and Sforno suggest that the passuk is alluding to the Mitzvah of Teshuvah. Ramban explains that the passuk teaches that the act of Teshuvah is not impossible to achieve and that we do not need supernatural powers in order to repent.

The Sefer Haikarim (Chapter 25 Maamar 4) agrees and explains that from the context of the pasukim immediately preceding this passuk, we see that the Mitzvah in this passuk refers to Teshuvah. Therefore, it would make sense for this passuk to continue the theme and also relate to Teshuvah.

Why then does the Gemara seemingly ignore the context of this passuk? The Nefesh Hachaim (Shaar 4 Chapter 31), explains that Torah and Teshuvah are essentially the same thing. Our entire life is a process of Teshuva, and the means to that process is the Torah. Therefore, we see that there is no contradiction between the two lines of thought since the Torah and Teshuvah are one of the same.

(Based on a shiur by Rav Milston)

Leah Fisher is in Shevet Lehava and was Seanit on Bet Base Machane

The Week that Was...

Bnei Akiva had the pleasure of joining the Chief Rabbi for an inspiring first night of Selichot on Motzei Shabbat.

Sunday night and all the nights after, Selichot were hosted at the Bayit, with Bogrim leading and giving thought provoking Divrei Torah.

Monday night was our first Limmud of the year with Chaburot being lead by Bogrim.

THIS WEEK'S SHABBAT TIMES

	ii	€
London	18:26	19:25
Manchester	18:32	19:33
Birmingham	18:29	19:32
Leeds	18:24	19:31
Liverpool	18:32	19:39
Jerusalem	19:54	19:09

To receive Shabbat Lashem by email every Friday, or for sponsorship details, send an email to shabbat@bauk.org

Selichot at the London Bayit



YOM KIPPUR AT THE LONDON BAYIT

OCTOBER 11 - EREV YOM KIPPUR
17:15 Doors Open
18:00 Kol Nidrei

OCTOBER 12 - YOM KIPPUR
8:45 Shacharit
15:15 Break (approximately)
15:45 Mincha
17:10 Sicha
17:20 Neila
19:03 Maariv

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED TO BREAK FAST.



Insight and Inspiration on the Parasha

Rav Ari Faust, Shevet Yechiam,
Rabbinical Shaliach for Bnei Akiva and the Jewish Agency

Teshuva, returning from what?

For nearly two-thousand years, our people dreamt of returning to Zion and living as a sovereign nation there. Generation after generation of Jews declared: “Next year in Jerusalem!”

But what is this dream meant to look like? For so long we could only dream in the macro, until the very recent past when we have achieved statehood and can begin defining the nature of our homeland-State in finer resolution. Why do we yearn for a State of our own in Israel? What function is this State meant to serve, and how does it intertwine so essentially with our destiny?

In our *parasha*, we read (Devarim 30:1-10):

“... You shall bethink yourself among all the nations, where Hashem your God has driven you, and shall return to Hashem your God, and hearken to His voice ... then Hashem your God will return your captivity, and have compassion upon you, and will return and gather you from all the peoples ... And Hashem your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it ... And you shall return and hearken to the voice of Hashem, and do all His commandments...”

This passage, known traditionally as “the Teshuva portion”, is the only one in the Torah which discusses the imperative of Teshuva. Teshuva, literally meaning “return”, is repeated here seven times throughout the few verses. The passage itself, however, and its context are quite unusual: First, why does the Torah state that we will do Teshuva twice? Second, what is the connection between Teshuva and the Land of Israel; why does the only passage in the entire Torah that makes mention of Teshuva do so specifically in correlation to exile and redemption?

On Rosh Hashana 5694, Rav Kook delivered a chilling sermon before the sounding of the shofar in Jerusalem. It was September 21, 1933, some eight months after Hitler had become chancellor of Germany in January of that year. The sermon was based on the prophecy that says (Yeshayahu 27:13):

“It shall come to pass in that day, that a great shofar shall be blown; and they shall come that were lost in the land of Assyria, and they that were dispersed in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Hashem in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.”

What is a ‘great’ shofar, asks Rav Kook? He explains that in *halacha* we find three levels of validity of the shofar: Preferable is a ram’s horn, but one can recite the blessing on the horn of any kosher animal (provided it fits the *halachic* definition of a “shofar”). If none of these are available, one may fulfil the *mitzvah* with a horn of a non-kosher animal, but they mustn’t recite the blessing on this. The first level – a ram’s horn – is considered a ‘great shofar’; it is the optimum means of fulfilling the *mitzvah*.

Rav Kook explains exegetically that the levels of the shofar of Teshuva sounded on Rosh Hashana parallel those of the shofar of redemption referred to by the prophet: There are three catalysts that propel our return to Israel, and as such three different ways to imagine what this State would look like: Preferable is the realisation that our sovereignty in Israel is intertwined with our destiny, and a Jewish State in Israel is the basis for the fulfilment of our divine charge; this is the ‘great’ shofar of redemption. The next level is the basic desire for every nation to materialise their right to self-determination. But there is a third scenario that only arises when the first two are not actualized:

“Israel’s enemies blow the shofar of redemption in our ears. They coerce us to heed the shofar, and give us no rest in the exile. Thus, the shofar of a non-kosher animal transforms into the shofar of Mashiach. Amalek, Petliura, Hitler and others arouse us towards redemption ... And against our will we will hear the shofar of this non-kosher animal, we most certainly will.”

Teshuva is a process of return to our natural, essential state. It is a basic and natural sentiment for Am Yisrael to strive to materialize its basic right to self-determination in our historical homeland; and for us to yearn to fulfil our divine charge and destiny in Israel is indeed the most natural sentiment.

In this vein, Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk explains “the Teshuva portion”: Complete Teshuva occurs in two stages: The first is to become stirred to our land, to our basic nationalistic rights. The second level is to return to Hashem, and implement the divine purpose of our statehood.

Continued from previous page

It is not enough to return to our land. Our two-thousand year yearning has not merely been to escape the exile. The vision of redemption is much more far-reaching than that. Our return is intertwined with our divine purpose and destiny and it promises a future of hope and ultimate fulfilment, as we return to our natural, essential self.

We live in an epoch when the shofar is sounding to rouse us towards our destiny. We are blessed that we have the opportunity to embrace this destiny out of choice, and not out of force. This year on Rosh Hashana, when we hear the sounding of the shofar, our Tefilla is: “Our God and God of our forefathers, sound the **great shofar of our redemption.**” We pray earnestly to be awakened and inspired to embrace the Jewish destiny, and advance our great story – in the Land of Israel.

שנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו.



Yamim Noraim



Rosh Hashana - Matan Ozin

Rosh Hashanah is the “birthday” of the world, where we not only recognize that today is the day Adam was created, but is also “re-election” day for Hashem, where we once again, proclaim that He alone is G-d, the Creator of the Universe. During this day, one of the things we do is ask Hashem to “write” to give us a good year, full of sustenance and growth. Hand-in-hand with that concept is the fact that we also show Hashem how we truly wish to repent from our past sins and wrongdoings, and to turn ourselves around, into better, well-rounded people.

Throughout the Jewish calendar, different “forces” are at work. For example, the month of Av (when the Bet HaMikdash was destroyed) is not a good time for the Jewish people. Tishrei (this new month), on the other hand, more specifically, Rosh Hashanah, is a time of commencement. Considering the birthday of the universe is on Rosh Hashanah, this certainly makes sense. As we know, when a woman is pregnant, if she drinks, smokes, or takes drugs, that will cause irreversible damage to the foetus. Yet, for the most part, the same amount of drinking or smoking will not cause irreversible damage to a grown person. Why is this? Because when a human being is in a foetal stage, the smallest things will do quite a bit of damage. And when that individual grows, so will that damage.

Rosh Hashanah is a time when we are at our spiritual “foetal” stage. Our spiritual genes, as it were, are being laid out over the next two days, and these genes will grow throughout the year. This is the importance of Rosh Hashanah and using it wisely. When we use our Rosh Hashanah in a proper manner, with repentance, and living up to our potential, it will be these qualities that will be imprinted in our spiritual genes. It's brought down that one should not sleep during the day on Rosh Hashanah, for this exact reason. We don't want sleep to be permanently coded; rather, we want a Torah lifestyle. Rosh Hashanah is the day that we can label ourselves - and our lives throughout the year will be attempting to live up to this label. May we all use Rosh Hashanah in a truly wise way. May we use it to learn Torah, to repent our ways, and to live a true Torah lifestyle, so that our spiritual genes may be written correctly without any stain and that we may all have a year of true servitude to Hashem.

Matan Ozin is in Shevet Eitan and was a Madrich on Bet Chalutzi 5776