


CHABAD

RESEARCH UNIT

שבת..... *for Friday nights* קדש

Wed. Night 24 Sept. 2014 - Rosh Hashana 5775
Rosh Hashana - Sedra Ha'azinu

WE COMPLETE THE CREATION

WHY DID G-D CREATE THE UNIVERSE? CHASSIDIC TEACHINGS EXPLAIN that “G-d desired a dwelling in the Lower World”¹. This idea will help us understand the significance of our own role as human beings in the grand spiritual event of Rosh Hashanah and the days which follow.

The kabbalists tell us that there are many spiritual dimensions of existence beyond this physical universe. They are ‘higher’ because G-dliness is more apparent in them. Our finite, physical realm is ‘lower’ because here in our world G-d is generally hidden. G-d’s desire is to have a “Dwelling” in our finite, physical world, the world of human beings.

What is meant by a “Dwelling” for G-d? Surely G-d is everywhere? A “dwelling” means a place where G-d is recognised and expressed. In the home of a person the decor and furniture are arranged in the way that he or she wants, expressing their character. When we human beings recognise G-d and express His will in the details of our lives, we are making this world into a Dwelling for the Divine.



In Memory of Mrs Chawa (Evelyn) Loewenthal ע"ה - Rosh Hashanah 5752. Dedicated by her son שי, daughter-in-law תהי' and grandchildren שי

We do this through keeping the laws of the Torah, and helping others to do so as well. When the Jewish people properly observe the 613 Commandments, and the non-Jew observes the Seven Noachide Laws, then the world as a whole will become a true Dwelling for the Divine.

This process was begun by Adam and Eve, on the first Rosh Hashanah, the day they were created. They recognised the Majesty of the Divine, and through this they began making the world into a Dwelling for G-d. Every year on Rosh Hashanah we re-enact this, declaring that G-d is King. The particular way we express this, in addition to our stirring prayers which speak of G-d's Kingship, is through blowing the Shofar, the Ram's Horn.

Why a Ram's Horn? On one level the deep call of the Shofar is beyond human intellect. On another, we can understand very well. The Shofar proclaims the Kingship of G-d and our personal pledge to follow His laws. It reminds of Abraham who loved G-d in a way transcending Reason, and was ready to offer his son Isaac to G-d, but then was told to offer a ram instead.

G-d's initial desire to create the universe is beyond human understanding. Yet at the same time we know that it is up to us human beings to proclaim G-d as King and truly make the world His Dwelling. Similarly, there is the call of the Shofar. Like G-d's desire to Create the world, the Shofar is beyond understanding. Yet at the same time we can also understand its message very well, and seek to implement it in our lives.

The Shabbat following Rosh Hashanah and the days leading to Yom Kippur are a time to think about this: how our personal human effort is needed in order to fulfil G-d's desire in Creation. Our good resolutions and our good actions, will indeed help to make this world into a dwelling for the Divine. It is up to us.²

1. See Midrash Tanchuma Naso, 16. 2. Freely based on the Lubavitcher Rebbe's *Likkutei Sichot* vol. 14, pp. 122-4.

THE CRU WISHES YOU AND YOURS A HAPPY AND SWEET NEW YEAR, WITH PEACE IN ISRAEL AND THE WHOLE WORLD!

Torah teachings are holy - please treat this page with care

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ROSH HASHANA

THE MEANING OF NAMES

The Weiss family was walking together down the street. It was the afternoon of the first day of Rosh Hashana and they had just finished “Tashlich”. They had gone to a river, together with many other Jewish men and women, and lots of children. They read something from their Rosh Hashana Prayer books near the water’s edge. Now they were walking back home.

“I didn’t see any fish in the water,” little Nellie complained.

“Don’t worry,” her older brother Benjamin assured her. “There were fish there, trust me. They were just hiding.”

“Not fair,” Nellie pouted. “I was so looking forward to seeing them.”

“Mommy,” eleven year old Sheila asked thoughtfully. “What is Tashlich? What does Tashlich mean?” Sheila was a curious girl and always enjoyed learning new things.

“Well,” Mrs Weiss told her. “The word ‘Tashlich’ means ‘throw away’. We go to the river and we sort of throw away our sins”.

“And the fish eat them up” said Benjy. “Poor fish!” said Nellie. “Why should they have to eat our sins?”

“I don’t think they do,” said Mrs Weiss. “One reason why

it's good if there are fish is because it is a kind of sign that we should increase like fish."

"Fish always have lots of baby fish" said Mr Weiss. "In the same way we should have lots of children".

"Mummy", said Sheila, holding her mother's hand. "What does Rosh Hashana mean?"

"You know what Rosh Hashana is darling, it's the New Year". "Yes, but why is it called by that name?"

"Rosh means 'head' and Hashana means 'the year'. Rosh Hashana means the Head of the Year. It is the beginning of the year, but it is also the head. Just like our own head and brain controls everything in the body, so Rosh Hashana contains the whole year to come."

"In which way does it have the whole year to come?" asked Sheila? "I know," said Benjy. "Because G-d blesses us with a good year in all kinds of different ways, and that will all be seen during the year in the months to come."

"That's right, Benjy" said his father. "I also heard we have to try be like the head, and not like the tail" said Benjy. "Yes," said their mother. "That's why we had the head of a fish last night at the meal."

"I saw its eyes!" said Nellie. At that moment they reached their home, and Mr Weiss was just opening the front door to their house. "Fish do not have eyelids," he said, "reminding us that Hashem is always watching us, to look after us."

"And give us lots of blessings!" said their mother.

"Amen!" the children chorused together.

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