



Kinder Torah

For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table

Dedicated in Memory of Zahava Bat Chaim Yosef o'h.

With love from the Glassman and Chernick Families



Decide Your Fate

"Mordechai, please tell me your secret. How do you stay so calm?"
 "Why should I be nervous, Shaya?"
 "You are going to court today, and your life hangs in the balance. That's enough to make anyone nervous."
 "I'll tell you why I'm so calm. This is no ordinary court case. The judge does not want to convict me. He will acquit me on condition that I regret the crime and promise to never commit it again. My fate is in my own hands. Therefore I'm very calm and happy."

Rosh Hashanah is *Yom HaDin* (The Day of Judgment). The books of life and death are open. It should be a day of apprehension, and fear, yet we treat it as a *Yom Tov*, with festive meals, special clothes, etc. Why? Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l explains that Hashem lets us decide our own fate. If we do *tshuva* (correct our mistakes), then He will write and seal us in the Book of Life. A person has no permission to harm himself; therefore he must do *tshuva*. He will surely be written in the book of life. There is no greater reason to be happy.

Kinderlach . . .

Rosh Hashanah is a happy day. We know that we have done *tshuva*.
 Starting today we will always listen to Abba and Imma. Starting today we will not fight with our brother.
 Starting today we will never speak Loshon Hora. It's a new year. A new start. You can write your name in the Book of Life.

Coronation Day

"Can you see anything?"
 "If I stand on tippy-toes I can."
 "What do you see?"
 "It's magnificent. The King is sitting on his throne in his royal garments. Silk, gold, jewels, everything sparkles."
 "Wow."
 "Above his head is the royal crown."
 "I can see that. It's gold, velvet, diamonds and emeralds. It sparkles like the sun."
 "Now they are lowering it onto the King's head. The official Royal Coronation. It is beautiful beyond words."

Rosh Hashanah is the ultimate coronation. Today we crown the Holy

One, Blessed Be He, King over the world. All of the royalty and pageantry of the royal coronation is expressed in the prayers of the day . . . "The King Who desires life . . ." "The Holy King." Yet, the idea seems a bit abstract. What has changed, now that Hashem is King? The Nesivos Shalom zt"l concretizes this idea with a passage from the Zohar HaKadosh. Every person must crown Hashem King upon every limb of his body. Today, every action that I perform, every step that I take, must be according to the word of Hashem. That sounds like a very tall order. How is it possible? "I am sick with love" (Shir HaShirim 2:5). There is an expression called lovesick. A person loves someone so much that they cannot stop thinking about them. This is a Jew's relationship with Hashem. We are lovesick over Him. This is what we can achieve on Rosh Hashanah.

Kinderlach . . .

Today is a glorious day. All of the beauty, pageantry and splendor of the Royal Coronation is reflected in the tefillos (prayers). Say them with great kavannah (concentration) and joy. Crown Hashem king over yourself. You are his servant to do His mitzvos, with a love in your heart so strong, that you are lovesick over Him. You can't stop thinking about Him, and about ways to get close to Him. That is the way to begin the new year.

The Forgotten Things

The *Mussaf* prayer of Rosh Hashanah has three special additions - *Malchios* (coronation), *Zichronos* (remembrance) and *Shofros*. The words of the *Zichronos* prayer include, "For You are the One Who remembers all of the forgotten things." If Hashem remembers, then He must also be capable of forgetting. Otherwise, remembering would have no significance. Yet forgetfulness is a human failing which does not apply to the Almighty. What does Hashem remember?

Rav Eliyahu Kitov, in the name of a nameless *tzaddik*, explains this rather poetically. What man forgets, He remembers. And what man remembers, He forgets. How can it be? If a person commits a sin, forgets about it, and does not do *tshuva*,

Hashem recalls that sin in judgment on Rosh Hashanah. However, if a person remembers his sin always, does *tshuva* and is careful not to repeat the sin (as Dovid HaMelech writes "My sins are always in front of me" [Tehillim 51:5]), then Hashem forgets the sin, because *tshuva* has corrected it.

Regarding mitzvos, the opposite is true - if a person does a mitzvah, and always remembers it because he takes egotistical pride in it, Hashem "forgets" that mitzvah. He does not consider it among the person's merits on Yom HaDin (judgment day). For Hashem dislikes those who have false pride. However, if a person humbly forgets about a mitzvah, and considers himself as if he did nothing, then the Almighty remembers, and adds this mitzvah to his merits on Rosh Hashanah.

Kinderlach . . .

"Abba, what should I do? I feel terrible." "What's the matter, Simcha?" "Every time I see my friend Shuie I feel badly, because I embarrassed him once, and never apologized." "Simcha, that's wonderful." "It's wonderful that I embarrassed him? I thought it was a terrible aveyra (mistake)." "It is a terrible aveyra. However, it is wonderful that you remember it, and feel badly enough to want to do *tshuva*. Someone who remembers his aveiros will always be able to point himself on the right path. I am sure that you will find the courage to apologize and that Shuie will forgive you." "Thank you, Abba."

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו

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