



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

Sponsored by the Cypess Family Foundation

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Fruits of Our Deeds

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Director

The Gemara in Rosh Hashana (32b) describes Rosh Hashana as a day on which the "King sits on His throne of judgment and the Books of the Living and the Books of the Dead are open before Him."

Rav Yehoshua Heller is bothered by this description. That the Books of the Living are open before Hashem is understandable – after all, every creation passes before Him for judgment on this day. But why would the Books of the Dead be open on Rosh Hashana? What judgment is there for those who have already passed on?

Rav Heller offers a beautiful explanation, which he illustrates as follows. Imagine a person who inspired others through their words or actions. When this person arrives in the World to Come, they find themselves in a certain "section" based on their accomplishments. The next Rosh Hashana comes and the Heavenly Court summons them to be transferred to a more elevated place in the Next World. The same thing happens the next Rosh Hashana and the one after that. This soul is puzzled. *Why am I being elevated? I haven't done any more mitzvos since arriving in the World to Come. And if I was deserving of this the whole time, why didn't I get it from the beginning?*

The answer, explains Rav Heller, is that a person is judged not only for how their words and actions affected themselves, but also for the way they impacted others – for better or for worse. This could be the meaning of the Mishna in Pirkei Avos (3:1) that teaches that we must know "before Whom we will have a *din* and a *cheshbon* – a judgment and a reckoning." The judgment is for our actual deeds and the reckoning is regarding how they impacted others. Our actions are limited by our time in this world and once we pass, they no longer need to be revisited. The impact we make, however, can outlive us. Each year, on Rosh Hashana, Hashem opens up the "Books of the Dead" and examines how one's choices and actions continue to impact the world and adjusts the person's portion in the next world proportionately. This is the meaning behind the verse in Yirmiya (32:19), "For Your eyes are vigilant upon the ways of man, to give each person in accordance with his ways and the fruits of his deeds." We are judged not only for our "ways" but for the "fruits" they bear as well.

As we journey through Rosh Hashana, the Ten Days of Repentance and Yom Kippur, we should give thought not only to how we can improve our own conduct but how we could positively impact others. It could be by raising someone else's spirits, which can change their day, or by role modeling dedication to *mitzvos*. Even attending a shiur in person can be an inspiration for others to do the same. May we each merit to elevate not only our "ways" but also "the fruits of our deeds."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a Shana Tova!

Point to Ponder

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

Rav Ashi says if a non-Jew forced a Jew to eat matza on the first night of Pesach, even if the Jew did not have in mind to fulfill a mitzva, he has fulfilled his obligation. Rava adds that according to Rav Ashi's opinion if one blows a Shofar to hear music on Rosh Hashana, he has also fulfilled his obligation. (Rosh Hashana 28a)

If one eats matza without intent to fulfill his obligation (if he was forced by a non-Jew to eat the matza) he has fulfilled his obligation. (Rambam Chometz Umatzo 6,4)

However, the Rambam (Shofar 2, 4) says, "If one blows a shofar on Rosh Hashana to practice the art of blowing or if one hears from someone who is not intending to blow for the mitzva, he has not fulfilled his obligation." This indicates that the Rambam's position is that one must have intent to fulfill a mitzva in order to fulfill the obligation. If so why does one fulfill his obligation to eat matza even when he doesn't have intent?

When Rosh Hashana is on Shabbos we do not blow shofar, for we are concerned that one may carry it in the public thoroughfare (Rosh Hashana 29b). Which other three mitzvos are not performed on Shabbos for the same concern?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the greatest number of days (not including Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur) that Ashkenazim recite selichos in Elul and Tishrei in any year?

Answer: 14. 8 before Rosh Hashana and 6 after.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Haazinu* (32:13), the Torah states: "He (Hashem) would suckle him (His nation) with honey (*devash*) from a stone." The term *devash* appears numerous times in the Bible, and there is often disagreement about its translation: it has been variously translated as bee honey, date honey, fruit sweetness in general, and cane sugar. With respect to the *devash* in our verse, the *Sifrei* understands it to refer to a sweet effusion of dried figs; the *Tosefta* (*Shabbos* 9:14) seemingly understands it as referring to bee honey; and the Rashbam understands it as referring to the honey of dates (and cf. Bechor Shor).

At least as far back as the medieval period, honey has been closely associated with Rosh Hashanah, particularly in Ashkenazic sources. The *Tur* (OC 583) records that in Germany, "they are accustomed to eat at the beginning of the meal a sweet apple in honey, to express 'May we have a sweet new year.'" The *Hagahos Ashri* (*Rosh Hashanah* 1:5) states "We are accustomed to eat the head of a ram and raw honey, and we dip the head in honey." Later sources mention a custom to dip the bread on which the blessing of *Hamotzi* is recited into honey (see *Mishneh Berurah* *ibid.* s.k. 3).

Some more recent Sephardic authorities were opposed to the consumption of honey on Rosh Hashanah, for a variety of reasons. R. Chaim Palagi and his son R. Avraham Palagi maintain that the apple should be eaten with sugar rather than honey, since honey (as produced in their environs by non-Jews) may contain non-kosher wine (*Ruch Chaim* *ibid.* 2; *Moed l'Chol Chai* 12:16; *Yafeh La'Lev chelek* 2 *ibid.* os 8 pp. 53a-b). R. Avraham raises several other symbolic and kabbalistic reasons as well not to use honey (*Yafeh La'Lev Kuntras Acharon* *ibid.* os 2 p. 118a and *chelek* 3 *ibid.* os 1 p. 18a). The Ben Ish Chai (year 1 *Nitzavim Rosh Hashanah* 4) writes that one should eat an apple cooked with sugar and ask for a sweet new year "but we do not say 'like honey.'" Other authorities, however, defend the traditional use of honey and argue that it is actually preferable to sugar (see the sources cited in *Ratz Ka-Tzvi*, *Devash Melach v'Sukar b'Achilas Hamotzi b'Rosh Hashanah*).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I will be for Moshiach.
2. I am for inauguration.
3. I am for repentance.
4. I cause Hashem to move.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am of the year.
2. Not the tail.
3. I am on the shoulders.
4. I am not ahead but a...

Last Week's Answers

#1 Torah (I am called a song, I am called a testimony, I mean teaching, I am married.)

#2 Selichos (I am for Elul and the Ten, I contain the thirteen, For some I am a month, Mincha and I have something in common.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Aseres Yemei Teshuvah Daily Learning Program

Weekday Mornings | Mon. Sept. 14 - Thurs. Sept. 17
at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah, 1132 Arcola Ave.

	Monday Sept. 14	Tuesday Sept. 15	Wednesday Sept. 16	Thursday Sept. 17
For Men	9:30-10:00am Yom Kippur Prep Rabbi Hillel Shaps	Yom Kippur Prep Rabbi Menachem Winter	Yom Kippur Prep Rabbi Menachem Winter	Yom Kippur Prep Rabbi Elihu Abbe
	10:05-11:00am Gemara Sukkah Rabbi Elihu Abbe	Gemara Sukkah Rabbi Elihu Abbe	Gemara Sukkah Rabbi Elihu Abbe	Gemara Sukkah Rabbi Elihu Abbe
For Women	Monday Sept. 14	Tuesday Sept. 15	Wednesday Sept. 16	Thursday Sept. 17
	9:30-10:30am Teshuvah Workshop Mrs. Channah Cohen	Sefer Yonah Rabbi Hillel Shaps	Teshuvah Workshop Mrs. Channah Cohen	Sefer Yonah Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Pre-Yom Kippur Learning Buffet

Wednesday, Sept. 16 | 7:45pm
at Kemp Mill Synagogue

Mrs. Sharon Freundel | Rabbi Elihu Abbe
Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Open to the entire community!