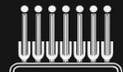




Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!

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“Keep Knocking on the Door!” by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

The other day I was sitting and working in my office at Shul. It was Friday afternoon, the secretaries downstairs had gone home, and I was the only one left in the building. I was preparing my sermon and *shiur* for Shabbos when I heard the bell ringing. Now to be honest, knowing from experience that whoever was ringing the bell was not coming to see me, I had no intention of going all the way downstairs to get involved in someone else's business. Usually at these times, it's either a wedding booking for next year or a congregant wanting to pay an account. I knew I had no appointments, so I carried on minding my own business and kept working on my sermon.

But the bell didn't stop. And then I heard loud banging on the front door. So I thought - what if it's an emergency? Maybe somebody really needs the rabbi, who knows? So eventually when the ringing became quite persistent, I went downstairs to check it out.

Sure enough, it was a young man who had a problem and very much wanted to speak to the rabbi.

I did my best to try and help him and then went back to my office. Before wishing him a Good Shabbos, though, I asked him why he was so persistent. Why didn't he give up when for some time he was receiving no reply? He said very simply that he knew I was inside. I asked how he knew and he answered, "Because I saw your car parked outside." Now I understood why he didn't

give up. I thought to myself; look at the tenacity and determination of this young man. He simply had to make contact and so he did.

How many of us would have given up? How many of us have tried reaching out to G-d and didn't get an immediate reply or the answer we were looking for and have since resigned ourselves to not hearing from Him forever?

How many have tried to pray now and then and have given up because they didn't get instant results? "What's the use?" we argue. I called out but there was no reply.

It reminds me of the new Dial-a-Prayer for atheists. You call this number and it rings...and rings...and rings.

The story of that Friday afternoon and the young man who just had to see the rabbi, reminds us not to give up, not to surrender to impatience. The very act of prayer is beneficial to our inner peace, our serenity, our very soul.

We know G-d is there. Just keep knocking on the door until you get an answer.

We are now at the very end of the month of Elul. Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi used a famous illustration where he compared this season to a time when the "King is in the field." There are occasions when the king leaves his royal palace to visit his subjects. At these times, he travels through the countryside and anyone and everyone is given the opportunity to approach the king and is received with a warm, smiling countenance. Elul is a time when the supreme King of

"Not enough," Luke replies. "They said I have to go back tomorrow."

Calendar

Welcome to our guest Chazan **Shmuli Brill**.

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:45 am (one minyan)
- ◆ Brocha across the road.
- ◆ **Sushi & Black Label Farbrengen.**
- ◆ Mincha: 5:20 pm
- ◆ **Pirkei Avos:** Chapter 5 & 6
- ◆ Shabbos Ends: 6:29 pm
- ◆ Mincha from Wednesday: 5:45 pm

EREV ROSH HASHANAH - SUN 9 SEP

- ◆ Annulment of Vows
- ◆ Candelighting: 5:40 pm (Blessings for Yom Tov & Shehecheyanu)
- ◆ Apples & Honey tonight

Thank You
to all who responded to the
Rabbi's Yom Tov Appeal.
G-d bless you.
If you haven't yet,
it's not too late!

Cheques to Shul office or EFT to:
Rabbi Goldman Discretionary Fund
FNB Norwood
Branch Code 258624
Account No: 503 600 89202

- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of Ideal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
- ◆ **Vehicles wanted. Any make, any condition. Best prices. Phone ARNOLD ORKIN 082 823 7826**
- ◆ **Lisa Milner**, Rental Consultant 082 362 4870 e-mail: lisam@jawitz.co.za
- ◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org,
- ◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.

a ritual; the Rebbe blowing the shofar once each day for little Tzvi. On the day before Rosh Hashanah, Tzvi was there, awaiting his daily blast, but he was disappointed.

"Today is the day before Rosh Hashanah," his grandfather explained. "Today we do not blow the shofar. Tomorrow morning, we will blow the shofar in the synagogue."

The child did not comprehend the reasons. He knew no reason. He kicked and screamed, "Just one blast! Just one blast!"

After a while, the grandfather softened at the sound of his favorite grandchild crying, and he took the shofar and blew one blast.

On Rosh Hashanah, the custom in Munkacs was that the Rebbe spoke before blowing the shofar. That year, the Rebbe went up before the ark, opened it and said: "Master of the Universe, I have to repent. It's written that on the day before Rosh Hashanah one mustn't blow shofar, yet I did."

He began to sob uncontrollably and called out: "Master of the Universe, do you know why I transgressed this custom? It was because my young grandchild lay on the floor begging and crying that I should only blow one blast of the shofar for him. My heart melted, I couldn't bear to watch him cry like that, so I blew once for him, though I shouldn't have.

"Tatte (Father), how can you stand by and see how millions of Your children are down on the floor, and crying out to You, 'Tatte, just one blast! Sound the blast of the great shofar which will herald the final Redemption!?' Even if the time is not right for it yet, even if the time for *Moshiach* has yet to arrive, Your children cry out to You: how can You stand by idly?!"

Rabbi Baruch cried as he recounted the story, and recalled how at that time the entire crowd cried along with the Rebbe. The sounding of the shofar was delayed, and for a long time. "They could not regain their composure... loud wailing was heard throughout the synagogue..."

Live & Laugh

Luke comes home from his first day of school, and his mother asks, "What did you learn today?"

Kings is eminently approachable

Now, more than ever, He will respond when we call. Please don't stop knocking on His door!

Rochel and I wish each of you a *Ksiva v'Chasima Tovah* – May we all be inscribed in the Book of Life for health, happiness, peace, prosperity, and please G-d, lots of *Yiddishe Nachas* too.

Parsha Pointers

*Nitzavim: Artscroll Chumash pg 1086;
Living Torah pg 1011*

The Parshah of Nitzavim includes some of the most fundamental principles of the Jewish faith:

The unity of Israel: “You stand today, all of you, before the L-rd your G-d: your heads, your tribes, your elders, your officers, and every Israelite man; your young ones, your wives, the stranger in your gate; from your wood-hewer to your water-drawer.”

The future redemption: Moses warns of the exile and desolation of the Land that will result if Israel abandons G-d's laws, but then he prophesies that in the end, “You will return to the L-rd your G-d . . . If your outcasts shall be at the ends of the heavens, from there will the L-rd your G-d gather you . . . and bring you into the Land which your fathers have possessed.”

The practicality of Torah: “For the mitzvah which I command you this day, it is not beyond you, nor is it remote from you. It is not in heaven . . . It is not across the sea . . . Rather, it is very close to you, in your mouth, in your heart, that you may do it.”

Freedom of choice: “I have set before you life and goodness, and death and evil: in that I command you this day to love G-d, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments . . . Life and death I have set before

you, blessing and curse. And you shall choose life.”

Standing Firm

By Rabbi Mordechai Wollenberg

This week's Torah reading begins *Atem nitzavim*, “You are standing here today, all of you... from the heads of tribes... to the woodcutters and water-drawers.”

The commentaries explain that *nitzavim* in Hebrew means “standing firm.” This verse teaches us that our standing firm is conditional upon it being *all of you* standing together. Each of us, from the highest to the lowliest, has our part to play and our own potential to fulfill.

The Talmud's *Ethics of the Fathers* tells us, “Who is rich? He who is happy with his lot.” Rather than worrying about why we are not standing in somebody else's shoes, our task is to fulfill our potential at the level we are at, in the situation where we are now, knowing that even if it may seem insignificant, each of us contributes on our own level and in our own way to the greater picture. In order to “stand firm” as a nation, we need the contribution of each person, on every level.

The story was told of Rabbi Aryeh Levin (known as “the tzaddik from Jerusalem”) who informed the doctor that “my wife's leg is hurting us.” This idea applies to all of us, as a community. When one person suffers, another feels the pain, even at a distance. When an event takes place in a distant country, this affects us as much as if it were to happen next door.

There is no “us and them.” Anything which undermines decency and the sanctity of human life, the very fabric of our community, has an effect on all of us, whether we are directly involved or not. Each person needs to be intact, in order for us to achieve our communal potential. If one person is suffering or is otherwise affected by something, this has an impact on all of us.

The Fireman

A Parable

Many, many years ago, before there were any fire engines and fire brigades and electric fire alarms, and most houses were built of wood, a fire was a terrible thing. A whole town, or a good part of it,

could go up in flames and smoke. And so, when fire broke out, everyone left his business or work, and rushed to help put out the fire. There used to be a watchtower that was taller than the other buildings, where a watchman kept a lookout all the time. As soon as he saw smoke or fire, he would sound the alarm. The townspeople would then form a human chain between the fire and the nearest well, and pass on to each other pails of water with which to put out the fire.

Once it happened that a lad from a small village came to town for the first time. He stopped at an inn on the outskirts of the town. Suddenly he heard the sound of a bugle. He asked the innkeeper what it meant.

“Whenever we have a fire,” the innkeeper explained to the lad, “we sound the bugle, and the fire is quickly put out.”

“How wonderful!” thought the village lad. “What a surprise and sensation I will bring to my village!”

Thereupon, the village lad went and bought himself a bugle. When he returned to his village, he was full of excitement. He called all the villagers together. “Listen, good people,” he exclaimed. “No need to be afraid of fire any more. Just watch me, and see how quickly I will put out a fire!”

Saying this, he ran to the nearest hut and set fire to its straw roof. The fire began to spread very quickly.

“Don't be alarmed!” cried the lad. “Now watch me.”

The lad began to blow the bugle with all his might, interrupting it only to catch his breath, and to say, “Wait, this will put out the fire in no time!” But the fire did not seem to care much for the music, and merely hopped from one roof to another, until the entire village was in flames.

The villagers now began to scold and curse the lad. “You fool,” they cried. “Did you think that the mere blowing of the trumpet will put the fire out? It is only the call of an alarm, to wake up the people, if they are asleep, or to break them away from their business and work, and send them to the well to draw water and

put out the fire!”

We are reminded of this story when we think of the *shofar* that is sounded many times on Rosh Hashanah. While sounding the *shofar* has intrinsic value as one of G-d's commandments, there is another element to the mitzvah. Some people think like that village lad, that the sound of the *shofar* itself will do everything for them. They think that they may continue to “sleep,” or go about their business, there being no need to change their way of life and daily conduct; the *shofar* sounded in the synagogue will surely bring them a happy new year.

But, like the bugle in the story, the *shofar* is the sound of an “alarm.” It has a message: “Wake up, you sleepers, think about your ways, return to G-d, put out the ‘fire’ that is threatening to destroy your Jewish homes. Go to the well, the well of living waters, the Torah and *mitzvot*. Hurry, before it is too late!”

That is why, immediately after the *shofar* is sounded, we exclaim: “Happy are the people who understand the meaning of the sound of the *shofar*; they walk in Your light, O G-d.”

“Just One Blast!”

By Hirshel Tzvi

For a period of time, Reb Baruch and his wife lived in Warsaw. Later, when the Minchat Elazar became ill, he begged them to come back to Munkacs, in Czechoslovakia, which they did. Rabbi Baruch had a son named Tzvi Nosson David. Baruch would often recall that his father-in-law loved this boy—the Minchat Elazar's dear grandchild—in an “exaggerated way,” in part due to the fact that they had waited a long time to have that first child. He would play with and “spoil” the child, and Tzvi would sit on his grandfather's lap at the Shabbat gatherings.

In the final year of his life, the Minchat Elazar took the *shofar* on the first day of the month of Elul and tested it to see whether it was in good condition. Tzvi was in the room and was visibly excited by the shofar and its sounds.

He asked his *zeide* (grandfather) for one more blast, and his *zeide* gladly obliged. From then on, for the remainder of the month, this became

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