



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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ראש השנה

Teshuva on Rosh Hashana

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First Day of Rosh Hashanah, after davening

Yitzy and Shimmy waited patiently for Totty to finish saying the Shir Shel Yom.

“OK, let’s go, boys,” Totty said as he closed his machzor. “That was a really geshmakeh davening! And now we get to go home and eat the geshmakeh seudah that Mommy prepared for us! Saba and Savta will be at the seudah, so don’t forget to thank them for the beautiful Rosh Hashanah machzorim they bought for both of you.”

“Of course,” said Yitzy as he proudly held onto his new machzor. “With the English words right underneath, it was so much easier to daven.”

“Yeah,” said Shimmy, “it was nice knowing what I was saying. The only problem is that mine is missing some pages, I think.”

“Oh,” said Totty, “I’m sorry about that. But I’m sure we can still exchange it. Motty’s Judaica is very good with that. And my friend Nachum knows the manager, so it shouldn’t be a problem. What was missing?”

Shimmy skimmed through the pages to show his father. “Look, Totty! All the AI Cheits are missing.”

“But Shimmy,” said Totty, relieved that nothing was actually wrong. “We don’t say the AI Cheits on Rosh Hashanah – we don’t ask Hashem for forgiveness on Rosh Hashanah. That’s for the rest of the Aseres Yemei Teshuvah — especially Yom Kippur.”

“But I don’t understand,” said Shimmy. “In yeshivah, Rebbi was telling us how important the Aseres Yemei Teshuvah are; how it’s the best time of the year to try to do teshuvah for all the mistakes we made during the past year because Hashem accepts our teshuvah much easier during these ten days. And he said that we shouldn’t forget that Rosh Hashanah is the first day of the Ten Days of Teshuvah! We shouldn’t start doing teshuvah on Tzom Gedalyah because then we lose out on two whole days of doing teshuvah. So shouldn’t we be saying the AI Cheits on Rosh Hashanah too?”

“You’re right,” said Totty. “Rosh Hashanah is the Yom HaDin — we’re being judged! And that means that the only thing we should be doing on Rosh Hashanah is teshuvah. We should be busy doing the biggest teshuvah today! That’s a great question, Shimmy!”

“And you want to know why I especially like your question?” said Totty. “Because it’s the same question I once asked Rav Avigdor Miller during one of his famous Thursday night question and answer sessions. I’m so happy you asked the question because it brings back such good memories. We were able to ask him questions on any topic, and that was the question I asked!”

“What did Rav Miller say?” asked Shimmy and Yitzky at the same time.

“He said that we **are** doing teshuvah all day on Rosh Hashanah!”

“Did he have a different machzor than we do?!” asked Yitzky. “Because ours doesn’t have anything about it!”

“Of course he had the same machzor as us,” said Totty. “The whole day he was saying, ‘Hashem Melech!’ just like we do. That’s the main idea of our Rosh Hashanah davening. We’re constantly repeating that Hashem is the King. *Hashem Melech, Hashem Moloch, Hashem Yimloch L’olam*



Va'ed. We sing about it, we talk about it — we even blow the shofar, just like they did in the olden days when they appointed a king!

“But Rav Miller explained that saying ‘Hashem Melech’ is the biggest teshuvah we can do! Because the biggest aveirah we do is that we forget that we have a real king over us. We see all kinds of powerful people, and we think they are in charge. And that’s the biggest mistake we need to do teshuvah for.

“If you think your principal is the boss, you’re wrong. If you think that President Trump is the boss, you’re wrong. We have a real Boss! Hashem made this entire world out of nothing, and He’s the real King! He’s wiser and stronger and kinder than anything or anyone else! He’s watching over us all the time, and He’s the only One Who can help us! And that’s why nothing else in the world matters except what He wants! That’s what it means ‘Hashem is our King.’

“And that’s why we spend the whole day making Hashem our king. He doesn’t need us to say it; He’s the King, no matter what we say. We’re saying it again and again because we have to get that message into our heads. We need to say over and over again that Hashem is our King, because understanding that — I mean **really** understanding that — is the most important teshuvah we have to do.

“Of course, after Rosh Hashanah is over, we still have eight days left to do teshuvah for all the other aveiros we did. And we’ll do that, because we can’t ignore even the smallest thing that we did against Hashem. But Rosh Hashanah is a day set aside for the biggest teshuvah — it’s the day of understanding that Hashem was always our King, He is our King still today, and He will be our King forever and ever.”

Good Yom Tov!



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