

OPENCHASSIDUS • RESHIMU EDITIONS

Standing as One, Taking Your Own Measure

שיחת ש"פ נצבים, כ"ז אלול, ה'שי"ת

Sichas Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim 5710
One sicha, nine sections

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LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 2, P. 398 FF. (YIDDISH, EDITED)
TORAS MENACHEM 5710, PP. 205-218 (HEBREW WITNESS)

RESHIMU EDITION — READING TEXT: ENGLISH ELUCIDATION WITH YIDDISH AND HEBREW ANCHORS
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METHOD: RESHIMU • ATZMUT OS • TEXT-FIDELITY METHODOLOGY

ABOUT THIS EDITION

On the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah 5710, the Rebbe delivered a sicha in nine sections on *Atem nitzavim*. He later edited it himself, in Yiddish, and it was printed in **Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, p. 398 ff.** The Hebrew rendering in **Toras Menachem** (5710, pp. 205–218) carries the same nine sections with added source references and a few details drawn from the unedited transcript. This edition works from both witnesses at once.

HOW TO READ THE PAGE

Left column **Bold** renders what the sicha itself states. *Lighter italic* is editorial elucidation — the connective reasoning, the implied step, the unstated premise. The two are always typographically distinct.

Right column The anchor rail. Hebrew from the Toras Menachem witness in serif; Yiddish from the edited Likkutei Sichos text in sans; a small Latin gloss under each anchor names it.

Deep dives Indigo boxes, placed at the point where the concept first does work — not parked in a glossary.

Summary Closes each section in one paragraph you can carry to the table.

Apparatus Back matter only. Textual notes, witness comparison, and citation status. Nothing inline.

WHAT THIS EDITION IS — AND IS NOT

This is an **elucidated study edition**: the English is written fresh for this edition, and the right-hand rail carries short anchor phrases from the two witnesses rather than a running reproduction of either text. It is **not** a full bilingual reprint of the Kehot Likkutei Sichos text. Readers wanting the complete Yiddish should read it at the source: mayanos.org — Likkutei Sichos Vol. 2, Nitzavim, Sicha 1.

The shape of the sicha

It is worth seeing the architecture before entering it, because the sicha is built as a single argument and the last section answers the fourth. Sections 1–3 establish what Rosh Hashanah asks for: not tolerance among Jews but mutual completion, held **with truth** — which means you genuinely cannot know whether you are the head or the foot. Section 4 shows why that is impossible by ordinary means, through a halachic problem in Arachin and a story in which the Alter Rebbe answers a question by naming who is asking it. Sections 5–6 supply the mechanism: what you give was never yours. Sections 7–8 are the Tzemach Tzedek's own account of a revelation earned by setting down his tallis. Section 9 turns the whole thing into an instruction, and closes by answering the longing that section 7 opened.



SECTION 1

Why this parshah, this week

It is stated in Likkutei Torah — and it appears also in the Rebbe Rayatz's reshimah for Nitzavim 5707 — that this parshah is always read before Rosh Hashanah. *The rule holds regardless of how the calendar falls: some years Nitzavim is read together with Vayeilech, some years on its own, but never after the New Year.*

The reason rests on a known principle: every Shabbos is bound up with, and contains, the days of the week it opens onto. *A Shabbos is not merely adjacent to the coming week; it holds it in advance. So the parshah read on that Shabbos is the parshah that belongs to Rosh Hashanah.*

"Atem nitzavim hayom" — "today" refers to Rosh Hashanah, the day of the great judgment. *The verse's "today" is read as a date, not a rhetorical present. And when that day arrives, there must be "atem nitzavim... kulchem" — all the souls must take their stand together before Hashem your God.*

This standing is identical in all souls: from "your heads, your tribes" down to "the hewer of your wood and the drawer of your water." *Rashi identifies the wood-hewers as Canaanites who came to convert in Moshe's days, as the Gibeonites did in Yehoshua's — and they were accepted only because of the oath. Even so, they too go up before Hashem together with the rest of Israel, in the manner of "kulchem," "la'achadim k'echad."*

The content of "kulchem," "la'achadim k'echad," is not merely that each bears with his fellow — *that one tolerates the other despite knowing himself to be a head and the other a simple man; toleration is a hierarchy that has agreed to be polite.* It is more than that: they receive from one another, and they complete one another.

As in the human body, where the head and the foot complete each other, and neither one — not the head and not the foot — has wholeness without the other.

And so that this avodah should be possible on "hayom," we read the parshah in advance on the Shabbos before, because the reading in the Torah itself supplies the power to bring the matter into actuality. *This is the same logic Chassidus gives for saying the verses of Malchiyos, Zichronos and Shofros on Rosh Hashanah: by bringing a proof from Torah that the Holy One*

איתא בלקוטי תורה

שכל שבת שייכת וכוללת

את ימי השבוע שלאח"ז

אתם נצבים היום

יומא דדינא רבא

אלע נשמות דארפן זיך צושטעלן

מ"ראשיכם שבטיכם" ועד

ל"חוטב עציך ושואב מימך"

לאחדים כאחד

ניט נאר וואס זיי זיינען

סובל איינער דעם אנדערן

מקבלים זה מזה,

ומשלימים זה את זה

ראש ורגל

הקריאה בתורה מהוה

נתינת יכח

מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות

must be King and must remember — and with what, with a shofar — one effects that it be so in fact.

SUMMARY • SECTION 1

A Shabbos holds the week it opens onto, so *Atem nitzavim hayom* lands on the Day of Judgment. What the day requires is a unity in which every soul stands identically — heads of tribes and wood-hewers in one act — and that unity is not forbearance but mutual completion: head and foot each incomplete without the other. Reading the parshah beforehand is not commemoration; it is the supply of power to do it.

SECTION 2

What a covenant is for

After "atem nitzavim... from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water," the verse continues, "to bring you into the covenant of Hashem your God" — meaning that the avodah of "atem nitzavim... kulchem" constitutes the preparation for that covenant, for the cutting of a covenant between the Holy One and Israel on the day of Rosh Hashanah.

The content of cutting a covenant, as we see it in material terms: two faithful lovers cut a covenant between them so that their love should not cease. *Note what motivates it. Their love rests on a reason — either because one recognizes the other's virtues, or because he loves him so that he will be loved in return and something good will come of it.*

So when he sees some deficiency in himself and fears his friend will sense it, and that this will cause a slackening in their love — *and all the more so when the deficiency is in essential matters, which could void the love entirely or even turn it into its opposite* — the remedy is this: while their love is still at strength, they cut a covenant between them, that the love should endure forever.

Because the cutting of a covenant is above reason and knowledge — that is, one sets the intellect aside — and they cut a covenant for an essential bond, such that nothing in the world will weaken the love, and it will endure forever and for all time.

The move is precise and easy to miss. A covenant does not argue the intellect out of its assessment. It relocates the bond off the faculty that made the assessment in the first place. Whatever the intellect concludes tomorrow about the deficiency it detects is now simply not where the relationship is held.

The same holds for the love between the Holy One and Israel. When Rosh Hashanah comes, the love is at great strength — since one stands after the avodah of the month of Elul, which removes the sins that conceal the love — and at that point the covenant is cut: Israel bind themselves to the Holy One in an essential bond above reason and knowledge, such that nothing in the world will be capable of weakening it.

לעברך בברית

הוי' אלקיך

צוויי אוהבים נאמנים

אהבה מצד הטעם

רפיון באהבתם

בשעת זייער אהבה איז

נאך שטארק

למעלה מטעם ודעת

מען לייגט אוועק דעם שכל

אן א זייט

התקשרות עצמית

חטאים המעלימים

על האהבה

אן "אוועקגעב"

שלמעלה מטעם ודעת

אין קשר ושייכות בין

"ראשיכם" ל"שואב מימך"

בכל מאדך • המ"אד"
העצמי

And in order to arouse the Holy One, as it were, to bind Himself with the souls of Israel above reason and knowledge, this is accomplished through the avodah of "kulchem," "la'achadim k'echad" — because that is the self-surrender that is above reason and knowledge. *By intellect there is no relation or connection between "your heads" and "the drawer of your water"; a head and a water-carrier have nothing in common that reason can name. To stand with him as one is therefore already an act above reason — and it is what draws the same from Above.*

This is on the model of what is explained regarding "b'chol me'odecha": through your own "me'od," limited though it is to being yours alone, one draws down the essential "me'od."

SUMMARY • SECTION 2

Love that rests on a reason is undone by evidence, not by argument — the first visible flaw turns its own ground against it. A covenant is cut while the love is strong precisely to move the anchor off the assessing faculty. Elul strips the concealments; Rosh Hashanah cuts the covenant. And the way to draw an above-reason bond from Above is to perform one below: to stand as one with a man to whom reason assigns you no relation at all.



SECTION 3

The foot's advantage

However — the matter of "kulchem," "la'achadim k'echad," must be with truth. A person has to know that this is in fact how it stands.

For although he thinks himself one of "your heads" and the other a simple man: first, it is not possible to know who is the head and who is the foot, since as a rule a person assesses his fellow at a level lower than he truly is, and himself at a level higher than he truly is. *The error is not random noise around a true value. It is directional, and it runs the same direction every time — which is exactly what makes it invisible from the inside.*

And second, apart from that — even if the reality is indeed such that he is the head, there is an advantage in the foot over the head, in that the wholeness of the head comes about only through the foot.

On this basis one can explain why it was specifically the Gibeonites who were made hewers of wood for the Mishkan and the Mikdash.

Not all Israel were in the Mikdash, and not all lived in Jerusalem. There were only the anshei ma'amad there, the delegates of all Israel. Whereas the avodah of the Gibeonites was in the Mikdash. *Read the asymmetry carefully: ordinary Jews were present by proxy; the Gibeonites were present in person.* And the reason: because the true wholeness of the advantage lies specifically in the foot.

This also explains the connection to the oath — the oath that was in force at the time the Gibeonites were accepted — since an oath is above reason and knowledge, and reaches the essence of the soul; and the essence of the soul expresses itself specifically in the foot.

חייב להיות באמת

דארף זיין מיט אן אמת

מעריך אדם את הזולת
בדרגה פחותה ממה שהוא
באמת, ואילו את עצמו...
נעלית

שלימות הראש באה

אך ורק ע"י הרגל

חוטבי עצים למשכן

ולמקדש

אנשי מעמד,

שלוחי כל ישראל

אמיתיות שלימות המעלה

טמונה ברגל דוקא

שבועה... מגיעה

לעצם הנפש

SUMMARY • SECTION 3

The unity has to be held with truth, not performed. Two reasons: you misjudge in a fixed direction — others lower, yourself higher — and even granting that you are the head, the head's wholeness arrives only through the foot. Hence the Gibeonites served in the Mikdash while most of Israel were represented by delegates, and hence the oath, which works above reason, is the instrument that admitted them: it reaches the soul's essence, and the essence surfaces in the foot.

SECTION 4

On what standing do we ask?

When a Jew contemplates, before the tekios of Rosh Hashanah, that he is about to ask "yivchar lanu es nachalaseinu, es ge'on Yaakov asher ahev selah" — where "yivchar lanu" means "thus and not otherwise" — and contemplates that the matter of choice comes from Atzmus itself, since only He, His Essence, is above all measures, above all limitations, free;

and contemplates further the "ein aroch": that beyond the way Asiyah is incommensurate with Atzilus, and Atzilus with the Infinite, no relation of "ein aroch" that could be described constitutes a parable at all for the "ein aroch" between the Creator and the created — how does one make bold to ask of His very Essence, "yivchar lanu"?!

When a person contemplates this and takes his own measure, no leisure will remain to him to take the measure of the other. *Not: he will nobly refrain from judging. There will be no time and no vantage point left from which to do it.*

Reb Hillel of Paritch longed to see the Alter Rebbe. But every time he arrived in a town where the Alter Rebbe had appeared, he did not meet him, because the Alter Rebbe had already left.

It occurred to him to move faster and arrive first, and when he heard that the Alter Rebbe was to reach a certain place, he travelled there before the Alter Rebbe came. Nor was he content with that: seeing that obstacles to seeing the Alter Rebbe's face always arose, he feared that this time too he would not be let in, so he outwitted the problem, came to the lodging where the Alter Rebbe was to stay, and hid under the bed.

Reb Hillel had prepared a difficulty in Maseches Arachin, in order to discuss it in learning with the Alter Rebbe. The moment the Alter Rebbe entered the room, before Reb Hillel managed to come out of hiding, he heard the Alter Rebbe saying, in the known niggun:

"When a young man has a difficulty in Arachin — he must first take his own measure."

Reb Hillel fainted on the spot. By the time they found him and revived him from his faint, the Alter Rebbe had already left.

The sicha then adds, in brackets: [Reb Hillel never again managed to be by the Alter Rebbe. He travelled to the Mitteler Rebbe and to the Tzemach

יבחר לנו את נחלתנו
את גאון יעקב

אזוי און ניט אנדערש

הבחירה... מעצמותו ית'
דוקא

אין ערוך
אינו מהווה משל כלל

לא ישאר לו פנאי
להעריך את השני

רבי הלל מפאריטש
השתוקק לראות את
אדמו"ר הזקן

האט ער זיך מתחכם געווען

והתחבא תחת המטה

קושיא במסכת ערכין

"כשיש לאברך קושיא
בערכין — עליו להעריך
עצמו תחלה"

ומיד התעלה רבי הלל

Tzedek, but by the Alter Rebbe this was the single time he was there — and even then he did not see him.]

And the meaning of the story in avodas Hashem, as it bears on us, is to be explained:

Arachin is a matter not founded on intellect — for the law in Arachin is that a person's value is fixed by his age, and not by human merits. All people of the same age have equal value.

This is the fulcrum. Everything turns on the fact that the tractate the young man was studying is the one place in Torah where a person is priced and merit is not an input.

And on the face of it, someone could raise a difficulty: I have occupied all my years with Torah and avodah — with matters in which the Holy One takes pleasure, in which the heavenly household takes pleasure, and which even by human reason are worthy of esteem; my years therefore have great value. Whereas so-and-so's years were squandered on nothing, "and it were better for him not to have been created" — how, then, can it be that the years of the two of us have equal value?!

And the answer to this is: when someone has a difficulty in Arachin — he must first take his own measure, properly — and then the difficulty will dissolve of itself.

Read the answer as an answer. It does not dispute the objector's premises; it observes what producing that objection required. To feel its force you had already placed your years on one side of a scale and his on the other, and read off a result in your own favour. The question is not refuted. Its author is identified — and the question was only ever available from a position he should not have been standing in.

ערכין — הו"ע שאינו

מבוסס על השכל

שערך האדם נקבע ע"פ

גילו, ולא ע"פ מעלות

בני האדם

כל האנשים שבאותו גיל

יש להם ערך שווה

אני עסקתי כל שנותי

בתורה ועבודה

שנותיו של פלוני בוזבזו

לריק וטוב לו שלא נברא

עליו להעריך עצמו

(כדבעי) תחלה, ובמילא

תתבטל הקושיא

SUMMARY • SECTION 4

Before the shofar we ask *yivchar lanu* of Atzmus itself, across a gap for which no incommensurability we can construct is even a parable. That should silence the request. Reb Hillel, hidden under the bed with a question in Arachin, receives the answer before he can ask it: first take your own measure. And Arachin is the right tractate, because it prices a person by years and not by merits — so the objection anyone would raise turns out to require the very self-elevation the ruling denies. Assess yourself properly and the question dissolves; there is no longer a vantage point from which it can be asked.



SECTION 5

The deposit

Regarding the month of Elul: beyond the general acronym "ani l'dodi v'dodi li," there are several particular acronyms — which describe the manner in which "ani l'dodi" is done — and in general they fall into three groups, corresponding to the three lines of Torah, avodah, and gemilus chasadim.

(a) "inah l'yado v'samti lach" — corresponding to the line of Torah, since words of Torah are absorbed. (b) "ish l'rei'eihu u'matanos la'evyonim" — corresponding to the line of gemilus chasadim, that is, tzedakah. (c) "u'mal Hashem Elokecha es levavcha v'es levav zar'echa" — corresponding to the line of avodah, prayer and teshuvah in general, as the verse concludes "l'ahavah" — and it is explained in Kuntres HaAvodah that the essence of the avodah of prayer is love, not fear.

Torah and avodah were explained on another occasion. Now the matter of tzedakah will be explained — "ish l'rei'eihu u'matanos la'evyonim."

On the face of it this is not understood: since the allusion to tzedakah lies in the words "u'matanos la'evyonim," why were the initial letters of "ish l'rei'eihu" included as well — words which speak of mishloach manos and not of tzedakah? And on the other hand — why were only the initials of the last words, "ish l'rei'eihu," included, and not those of "mishloach manos"?

And the explanation is to be said as follows.

The wording is "u'matanos la'evyonim," and not "la'aniyim." The difference between aniyim and evyonim is this: an ani is one who is not wealthy — and not even of middling means — but who nonetheless has something. Whereas an evyon is one who, as Rashi explains, "craves everything": he desires every trifle, because he has nothing at all.

And since a person might think that he is the wealthy one, and that when he gives the destitute man something — whether a large thing or a small one — he is giving from what is his, therefore the verse says "ish l'rei'eihu u'matanos la'evyonim": to teach you that even the "gifts to the destitute" are in the manner of "a man to his fellow."

That is, the recipient is his fellow, and stands in the same condition as he does — as the giver does. Neither needs to approach the other, since the

אני לדודי ודודי לי
אנה לידו ושמתי לך
איש לרעהו ומתנות
לאביונים

ומל הוי אלקיך את
לבבך ואת לבב זרעך
עיקר עבודת התפלה
(לא יראה, אלא) אהבה

משלוח מנות
ומתנות לאביונים
ולא לעניים
עני... יש לו משהו

אביון — שתאב
לכל דבר
צו יעדער קלייניקייט

מחזיר לו מה שנמצא
אצלו בדרך פקדון
"דיינער ווי מיינער"

giver is not giving from what is his; he is only returning to him what was found with him on deposit.

The word to hold onto is pikadon. Not a gift, not even a loan: property belonging to someone else that happened to be lodged with you. On that construal, generosity is not a virtue you exercised — it is an obligation you discharged, and late.

And as the saying of the early chassidim ran, in the Alter Rebbe's time: "the piece of bread that is found in my possession is yours as much as mine" — and they would put the word "yours" first.

And as Chazal said: "more than the householder does for the poor man, the poor man does for the householder." And as Chazal said further: "the soul of a poor man you have sustained... tomorrow your son or your daughter... and I save them."

**יותר משהבעל הבית
עושה עם העני, העני
עושה עם בעל הבית
נפשו של עני החיית...
ומציל אני אותם**

SUMMARY • SECTION 5

Elul's acronyms line up with Torah, avodah and tzedakah; this sicha takes tzedakah. The verse says *evyonim*, not *aniyim* — one who craves everything, at either extreme, because he has nothing or because he cannot function without what he is used to. And it prefixes *ish l'rei'eihu* to keep the giver from mistaking his role: the recipient stands where you stand, and what you hand over was on deposit with you. The early chassidim said the bread is yours as much as mine — and said *yours* first.

SECTION 6

Tzedakah in the other register

And the same applies to tzedakah in spiritual terms — since a person is composed of a body and a soul, the matter of tzedakah exists in spiritual terms as well.

By way of introduction: just as tzedakah in material terms is an obligation upon every single Jew, even upon a poor man in Israel, so too tzedakah in spiritual terms is an obligation upon every single Jew — even one who is poor in spiritual terms is likewise obligated in tzedakah, since every Jew has something to give.

And the very fact that he met so-and-so constitutes an instruction that he must help him and give to him — since every matter is by particular Providence, and the Holy One created nothing for nothing; it is therefore certain that this came about by design, so that he should give the other something.

This is the operative test, and it replaces judgment with observation. You are not asked to determine whether the person in front of you is deserving, or whether you are the right one to help. That he is in front of you at all is the ruling. Nothing is arranged idly, so the encounter is not raw material for a decision — it is the decision, already made, addressed to you.

And just as in material tzedakah it is not that he is the one giving to his fellow, but rather that he is doing himself a good — as above — so too in spiritual tzedakah: through the influence he gives to another, he is in fact the one receiving from him, since the true wholeness comes only through the inclusion of the head with the foot, as above.

Section 3 is now doing its work. If the head's wholeness arrives only through the foot, then giving downward is not condescension performed well; it is the only route by which the giver becomes whole. The direction of benefit is the reverse of the direction of transfer.

האדם מורכב מגוף ונשמה

אפילו עני ברוחניות...

גם הוא מחוייב בצדקה

יעדער איד האט וואס

צו געבן

עצם העובדה שנפגש

עם פלוני מהוה הוראה

שעליו לעזור ולתת

בהשגחה פרטית •

לא ברא הקב"ה

דבר לבטלה

ההשפעה לזולת —

הרי הוא מקבל ממנו

התכללות הראש והרגל

SUMMARY • SECTION 6

Body and soul, so tzedakah has a spiritual register — and there too the obligation falls on everyone, including those poor in it, because every Jew has something to give. How do you know whom? You met him. Nothing is created for nothing, so the encounter is itself the instruction, and no assessment is required or permitted. And as in the material case, the one who gives is the one who receives: the head is completed through the foot.

SECTION 7

The tallis set down

The Tzemach Tzedek once spoke about the virtue of tzedakah — how great is the worth of helping a Jew with his livelihood, and how much the thing assists in avodas Hashem, for the opening of the mind and the heart to receive the revelations from Above.

And the Tzemach Tzedek told his son — the Rebbe Maharash — that "with me it happened":

When I travelled from Dobromysl to Lubavitch, I was greatly gladdened by the inner closeness of the Zeide — the Alter Rebbe — and I hoped that on my arrival in Lubavitch I would merit to see the Zeide with a shining countenance (in a vision — this was many years after the Alter Rebbe's passing). Meanwhile several questions had arisen in me, in matters of nigleh and matters of Chassidus, and I had arranged the matters in my mind.

On arriving in Lubavitch I went straight to the place the Zeide had told us about on the road to Liadi — that he had learned in the shul which stood there. As I have recounted, the ground was then empty, after a fire that had occurred. My father-in-law the Mittlerer Rebbe told, of this place, that fifty-seven years earlier the Alter Rebbe had made Lubavitch a place fit for the leadership of Chabad chassidim, with length of days and years, and an everlasting standing until the coming of Moshiach.

From the fact that on my arrival in Lubavitch the Rebbe concealed himself from me — says the Tzemach Tzedek — I was badly broken and fell in spirit. I had the sensation of a fall, God forbid, from a high roof into a deep pit. I had prepared myself for an inner closeness, and in the end I had such a distance.

I was greatly pained, and I searched through my deeds to examine what thing might have caused this distance — in order to do teshuvah, so that I might merit to see the Zeide's holy face and to hear matters of Torah and avodah.

On Wednesday, 20 Elul, the Tzemach Tzedek went to shul to pray. On his way he met one of the townspeople, by the name of Reb Pinchas, who asked him for an interest-free loan of three rubles, so that he could buy a little at the market and sell, and earn something for the Shabbos

מעלת הצדקה... פתיחת
המוח והלב

בדידי הוה עובדא

פון דאבראמיסליא
אין ליובאוויטש

קירוב פנימי

(במחזה — הדבר היי

שנים רבות לאחר

הסתלקותו)

השטח פנוי, לאחר שריפה

לפני חמשים ושבע שנים

מאיגרא רמה

לכירא עמיקתא

ופשפשתי במעשי

ביום רביעי, כי אלול

הלואת גמילות-חסד

בסך שלושה רובלים

expenses. The Tzemach Tzedek told him to come to his house after davening, and he would give it to him then.

While the Tzemach Tzedek was preparing for prayer, and had laid his tallis on his shoulder, he recalled Reb Pinchas's words — that today was market day, and the market opens in the morning, and Reb Pinchas surely needed the money at once.

The Tzemach Tzedek removed the tallis, went home, took five silver rubles, and handed them to Reb Pinchas, so that he could trade a little and earn.

He had been asked for three.

When the Tzemach Tzedek returned to the minyan and washed his hands at the basin, in order to stand for prayer — the Alter Rebbe revealed himself to him, and resolved his doubts for him, and his holy face shone.

והניח טליתו על שכמו

פינף זילבערנע רובל

התגלה אליו אדמו"ר

הזקן, ופתר לו את

ספיקותיו בפני קדשו אורו

SUMMARY • SECTION 7

The Tzemach Tzedek, decades after the Alter Rebbe's passing, arrives in Lubavitch hoping for a vision of his grandfather, questions arranged in his mind. Instead: concealment, and the sensation of falling from a roof into a pit. Then a Wednesday, 20 Elul, a man in the street named Pinchas, a request for three rubles to buy at the market. The tallis already on his shoulder, he remembers the market opens early — takes the tallis off, goes home, and brings five. At the basin afterwards, the Alter Rebbe reveals himself and answers everything.



SECTION 8

Reading the story precisely

We see from this story that tzedakah acts in spiritual matters as well.

The Tzemach Tzedek — with all his own qualities, and in particular the closenesses he had merited during the period of the Alter Rebbe's passing, when he was alone with the Alter Rebbe — *the Mittlerer Rebbe was in Kremenchug; Reb Chaim Avraham was unwell; and Reb Moshe had remained on the other side of the front and could not come, because of the war* — and he had many closenesses from the Alter Rebbe, and beyond that he undertook various measures to see the Alter Rebbe — none of this availed.

Only when he met a Jew in the street — not within the Tzemach Tzedek's own four cubits (that is to say, not that the man came to the Tzemach Tzedek), but within the other man's four cubits, Reb Pinchas's; and not at a time when he was saying Tehillim or the like, but at a time when he was thinking how to obtain an interest-free loan so that the man could earn —

and for the sake of this he set aside the matter of prayer, and in particular the prayer of the Tzemach Tzedek, which is "a time of expanded intellect above and also below," and whose advantage over Torah is great, since through it a change is effected in physical matters, healing the sick and blessing the years, as explained in Iggeres HaKodesh —

through having set aside prayer in order to do a Jew a material good, he merited to see the Alter Rebbe.

צדקה פועלת גם

ברוחניות

כשהי' לבדו עם

אדמו"ר הזקן

כל זה לא הועיל

לא בד' אמותיו של

הצ"צ... כי אם בד'

אמותיו שלו, של ר' פנחס

ולא בשעה שאמר תהלים

שעת מוחין דגדלות

למעלה וגם למטה

רופא חולים

ומברך השנים

SUMMARY • SECTION 8

Everything that should have worked did not: his own qualities, the closenesses of the histalkus period when he was alone with the Alter Rebbe, and the deliberate measures he took. What worked had none of the marks of avodah. Not his four cubits but Pinchas's; not Tehillim but a calculation about a loan; and it cost him his prayer — the prayer whose advantage over Torah is that it changes the physical world. Strip all four away and one act is left, and that is the one that opened the vision.



SECTION 9

In practice

As to practice:

Since the yeshiva students have an advantage in two things — (a) they have what to give, being situated within the four cubits of Torah, and (b) they have the quality of vigour, which is the nature of the young — *and this is why they are called by the name elem*, from the word for strength — it is fitting and correct that they should go on Rosh Hashanah to the shuls, in order to rouse Jews.

And since Rosh Hashanah is two days, and each of them has its own particular advantage: on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, "stern judgment," and on the second, "mild judgment"; the first day from the Torah, the second from the Rabbis — and since "the words of the Sages are the weightier," each day has an advantage over the other, and they complete one another, until they become "one long day" — one must go to the shuls on both days.

Someone is liable to argue: since I have such a tangled accounting of a whole year — I do not know what stems from the good inclination and what from the evil inclination — and now I have been given forty days of favour in which to work out my reckoning, how can I devote that time of mine to others?

And the answer to this: "ish l'rei'eihu u'matanos la'evyonim" — even the "gifts to the destitute" are "a man to his fellow," and through going to rouse his fellow, it will be added to him as well.

The objection assumes the forty days are a fixed quantity to be allocated. Section 5 already dismantled that: what you hand over was never a holding of yours to spend. The days behave like the five rubles.

Every one of us wants to see the Rebbe, my father-in-law — so that he should resolve his questions; for every single person has questions (even one who does not know that he has questions), and in order to resolve them one must see the Rebbe.

And the counsel for this is — the going on Rosh Hashanah to the shuls to rouse Jews, souls in bodies. For in this one fulfils the Rebbe's will, and

בנוגע לפועל

יש להם מה לתת ·

סגולת המרץ

"עלם" מלשון כח

דינא קשיא ·

דינא רפיא

חמורים דברי סופרים

יומא אריכתא

חשבון מסובך של

כל השנה

ארבעים ימי רצון

ועי"ז שילך לעורר את

חבירו — יתוסף לו גם הוא

כל אחד מאתנו רוצה

לראות את הרבי... כדי

שיפתור את שאלותיו

גם מי שאינו יודע

שיש לו שאלות

through this he will merit that the Rebbe resolve his questions in the manner of a soul in a body.

This is the sicha's last line, and it closes the circuit. Section 7 was never a story about the Tzemach Tzedek; it was the reader's own case, told at a safe distance. He too came with questions arranged in his mind. He too got concealment. What ended it was a man in the street and a loan — and the instruction here is the same road, now named: go and rouse souls in bodies, and your answer will come in a body too.

לעורר את בניי,

נשמות בגופים

באופן של נשמה בגוף

SUMMARY • SECTION 9

To the yeshiva students: you have what to give and the energy to give it — go to the shuls on Rosh Hashanah, both days, since each day holds an advantage the other lacks and together they are one long day. To the objection that forty days barely cover your own reckoning: the days are not yours to hoard, and rousing another is how it comes to you. And the way to have the Rebbe answer your questions is the road the Tzemach Tzedek took — rouse souls in bodies, and the answer arrives in a body.

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