

# פרשת נצבים - ראש השנה

This adaptation is dedicated in memory of:

our dear friend - Avigdor Glaser a"h

לז"נ ר' יחיאל אברהם אביגדור זצ"ל ב"ר אליהו גלאזר שליט"א  
נפטר כ"ה אלול תשס"ה תנצב"ה

"אתם נצבים היום כלכם לפני ד' אלקיכם" (כט, ט)

**"You are all standing this day before Hashem, your G-d"**

Moshe Rabbeinu's message to the Jewish people: If you want to stand in this world – involve yourself in Torah study. Last week's *parsha* closed with the words, "and you shall observe the words of this covenant..."<sup>1</sup> If you do so, then you will "stand this day."<sup>2</sup>

## ראש השנה – גילו ברעדה Rejoice with Trembling

When a king is revealed – everyone trembles. From the perspective of our actions, we shudder. These are days that we stand in judgment. The anxiety of being judged is enormous. Yet, there is joy – the joy of hope, of *emuna* in the King's wondrous compassion and kindness, *emuna* and trust that our prayers shall not returned unanswered. We trust that Hashem, in His infinite benevolence, lavishes kindness on anyone who inspires himself to *teshuva* and asks for undeserved kindness. This causes bliss – "for the joy of Hashem is your strength."<sup>3</sup>

Joy and trepidation – like a wedding - there is immense happiness, yet everyone cries. Joy and trepidation – for there is a judge, yet there is abundant generosity.

Jewish people are fundamentally masters of *bitachon*. Anyone who observes Torah and *mitzvos* has faith in Hashem's love for us. We

<sup>1</sup> ושמתם את דברי הברית (כט, ח)

<sup>2</sup> אלה הדברים זוטא

<sup>3</sup> חדות ד' היא מעוזכם (נחמיה ח, י')

trust and have *emuna* that Hashem will adjudicate us favorably. Even if we are not judged completely satisfactorily, we know that Hashem will provide for us from His treasure of free gifts – His charity combined with judgment – and we will all emerge, with G-d's help, to a truly good life filled with authentic happiness and genuinely peace – both (i) general peace throughout the worlds and for the Jewish people and (ii) personal peace for each and every one of us, inside of our hearts, inside of our souls, within our families. With this joy we don fresh clothing and go to *shul* – for we are certain in our *emuna* that Hashem will judge us charitably. Only Hashem can perform such an amazing matter – to join two opposing forces and perform charity within judgment.<sup>4</sup>

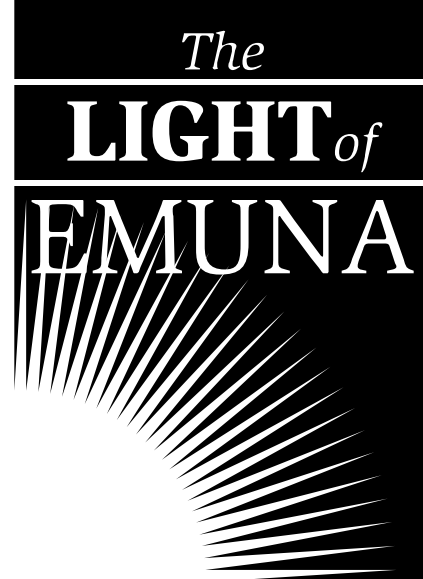
A Jew delights in the knowledge that Hashem loves him. This is the secret of the great exoneration of Rosh Hashanah. Hashem loves each and every Jew because every Jew is a piece of G-dliness. Each of us is a part of Hashem.

Every Jew seeks to improve a bit, to reach a higher plane - a place that bustles with true life, where there is greater closeness to the Creator.

Rosh Hashanah exclaims, "There is a King of the world." It invites all of us to the coronation. It is a day of remembrance – a day of reminding us

<sup>4</sup>

באר פני מלך חיים



Based on Harav Menachem Azolai's "Ohr Ha'Emuna"

that Hashem is G-d, that everything is kindness and compassion, and that there is nothing besides Hashem. When we recall, when we accustom ourselves to perceive things somewhat differently – it becomes much less difficult. When we learn to remember that everything is Hashem and we endeavor to accept everything with love, we ascend – for we succeed in guarding *emuna* and joy in the midst of the turbulence of life. Then, Hashem suddenly smiles at us and warms our hearts. The problem may not be immediately solved - but the heartbreak is suddenly eased. When Hashem observes a person overcome a challenge without falling into despair, while guarding his *emuna* and joy – He alleviates the crisis. If the person has overcome the challenge that was the purpose of the difficulty – the difficulty is no longer necessary. He remembered Hashem in the midst of his suffering. We must contemplate Hashem in all situations. We were created below so that we would think about Hashem above. The lower a person finds himself, the greater the merit for considering Hashem above. This is a very challenging test – thus it earns great merit. We earn greater proximity to Hashem, greater love of Hashem. “Master of the World, help me defeat the evil inclination. Help me overcome all of my passions and not fall again. Help me cling to You, twenty-four hours a day, for that is sweeter than anything the world has to offer.”

A person believes that when he does *teshuva* he weakens the evil inclination. To the contrary, the evil inclination intensifies. It fills a person’s mind with a variety of ideas. Prior to *teshuva*, the *yetzer hora* need not disturb one much because it deems him a good friend, always listening to its seductions. However, when a person desires to do *teshuva*, the *yetzer hora* begins to pursue him – in a way that the person has never experienced before. It becomes unrecognizable in its strength and abilities. We respond to it, “Now you want to start working – now I see you for who you are.” The virtue of a *baal teshuva* is in his humbleness. It is famously stated that in the place that *baalei teshuva* stand even the perfectly righteous cannot stand. The intent is not to imply that they are more

righteous but that they have the strength of their humility from all that they have endured. Via this humility they can stand their ground and accomplish great things. The intent is not that they are greater than the righteous, for it applies even to one who has just begun his journey of *teshuva* and is still mired in the mud – the intent is that they have prospects of reaching great heights.

Rebbe Nachman taught that on Rosh Hashanah we can receive corrections that are not possible throughout the rest of the year.

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**“אתם נצבים היום כלכם לפני ד' אלקיכם” (כ"ט, ט)  
“You are all standing this day before Hashem, your G-d”**

The key word is **“all.”** We are one nation.

Praised is the one who succeeds in loving *klal Yisroel*. The more a person cleaves to his love of his fellow Jews – the more he is affixed to Hashem. Sephardim, Ashkenazim, Chassidim, Litvishers – those who are frum and those who have not yet frum – we are all children of the same person. “We all have the same G-d, the same Father, the same Torah, the same laws. Why would we betray our brothers? Our languages and our backgrounds differ - so what? What is the difference between Sephardim and Ashkenazim - or any other types of Jews?”<sup>5</sup>

There are things that are concealed within our hearts – no one else can know them. Each and every Jew, even if his actions are not so positive – has a good heart. His desires are good. His soul is good. If he does something negative, he regrets it. Hashem observes everything – we do not. We must exert ourselves to connect to the holy souls of other Jews – and never be seduced by superficial characteristics that drive wedges between our souls.

“If we remove the trait of egotism and we acquire humility, we will attain the ability to

<sup>5</sup>

honor, love and connect to others. We will merit hearing the words of Moshiach, 'O humble ones – the time of your redemption has arrived.' Moshiach is not destined to call out, 'Ashkenazim, Sephardim, Litvishers or Chassidim – it is time for your redemption.' Absolutely not. He will yell, 'Humble ones' – those who have deference, humility – those who honor others. They will be redeemed.

Where fear of Heaven is found, fear of Hashem and his splendor – there one finds camaraderie amongst Jews. If there is a place in which Jews do not have solidarity – it is a sign that authentic fear of G-d is lacking. This is basic and simple."<sup>6</sup>

When Jewish souls gather for any holy matter, especially if it is in conjunction with a *tzaddik*, the inspiration is incredible – the sky is the limit. Rebbe Nachman said, "Merely strengthen yourselves together and you will be kosher Jews." Who does not want to be a kosher Jew?

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### **Thought from R' Shimshon Dovid Pincus zt"l<sup>7</sup>**

The primary mission of this time of the year is to begin anew – to start over.

The Alter of Kelm asked us to consider why amazing and wondrous concepts that we learned as children fail to impress us. We learned that Hashem created the heavens and the earth and that He orchestrates everything that happens within them. We learned about our Exodus from Egypt and the splitting of the sea. These are amazing stories and yet they no longer excite us.

The reason we are no longer affected by them is because they are not novel. We first heard these stories when we were five years old. We've heard them repeatedly through the years. We discern nothing original. If a person were created at full maturity (like Adam Harishon) and learned these stories, he would be overcome with awe and emotion.

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<sup>6</sup> "נקודות לעבודת ד' בעת הזאת", מס, 1

<sup>7</sup> Not from R' Azolai – I learned this with R' Ari Weiss.

We are amazed when an origami artist folds a piece of paper into a six-winged airplane and pulls on the tail, causing the wings to flap. We are astonished by his skill and talent. Yet, we observe six-legged ants, not made of paper, with brains, hearts, eyes – and we hardly notice. And those are just ants – not to mention the millions of more complicated creations that exist.

We are apathetic because the first time we saw ants was when we were two years old and we remain stuck with that two year old's perception.

If a person wishes to purchase something that costs fifteen dollars but only has ten dollars, he is pained by his lack. By contrast, a wealthy man who wishes to purchase a fifteen dollar item but has only ten dollars on him at the moment feels no pain, because there is no real deficiency.

Each of us is, fundamentally, extremely wealthy. Imagine a very sophisticated camera that captures living, vivid colors. Imagine that this camera operates continuously for eighteen hours a day for eighty to ninety years. Everything is stored on one small disc, never requiring replacement or additional memory. The lens cleans itself regularly. How valuable would this camera be?

Each of us has two such cameras – our eyes!

What is the value of a brain?

What is the value of a heart?

How much is a child worth?

So why are we not happy? Our net worth is in the billions.

Visualize an elderly Jew of 150 years ago describing Gan Eden to his grandson: "there is a contraption on the wall that provides cold water, another one for hot water ... no need to draw water from the well. If you want to cook, you do not have to build a fire, you simply place the pot on a designated location and it cooks. When

clothing gets dirty, you will place them in a special box and they will emerge clean ...”

Our “regular” life is essentially “paradise on earth.” Yet, we are indifferent because we have grown accustomed to it. We maintain our five year old perspective.

We *daven* without noticing so many amazing concepts<sup>8</sup> because we have been repeating the identical words since we were children.

This is our duty in Elul – to uproot the feelings of routine and repetition. We must awaken our affection towards the service of Hashem, like the love of a groom towards his new bride. We must instill a feeling of freshness - as if this is the first time we are seeing a *siddur*, to appreciate every *halacha*, to experience every *bracha*

Renewal is the power of *teshuva* – we aim to become new people.

How can we possibly speak poorly of another Jew knowing all of the evils of *loshon hora*? It is only possible because we still maintain the sensitivity and insight into the concepts of *loshon hora* that we first picked up as children.

The challenge is for us to feel like new people – nothing that happened before has any relevance to how we proceed. We approach the *siddur* as if it is our first time. We enter *shul* as if it is our first time. We ponder what *shul* is - Who resides there – Hashem – and we enter to meet Him for the first time.

*Teshuva* means beginning again.

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## תפילה

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**Master of the World!** Save me from falsehood, from trying to present myself as more than I am.

Help me be careful with what escapes my mouth – not to alter the truth, not to exaggerate – even if it doesn’t feel like lying because I intend it differently. For example, if someone asks me what time I woke up this morning – to tell the truth, even if it was later than usual and I am a bit embarrassed by it.

Help me be ashamed before You – at least as much as I am ashamed before human beings – and to cease concealing activities that I do for fear of people seeing me, even in my own home.

May there be no difference between how I act when I am alone and how I behave when others are watching. May there not even be the slightest extra motion meant to impress others. For example, when I *daven* or eat or walk in the street and I lower my head when I notice someone coming to greet me to feign piousness.

**Master of the World!** Help me be precise. Not to say something took five hours to complete when in reality it only took two. Not to criticize others for the purpose of exalting myself. Not to alter the truth to avoid obligation. Not to say things merely to ingratiate myself with others.

**Master of the World!** Help me be a man of truth, for only through truth can one become close to You.

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

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Notice: The foregoing is based on my limited understanding of the Parsha Sheet, *Ohr Ha’Emuna*, disseminated by Harav Menachem Azolai Shlita and is not a complete or exact adaptation of *Ohr Ha’Emuna* and is not necessarily even a reliable interpretation of the ideas presented therein. *Ohr Ha’Emuna* is published in Hebrew; in translation, accuracy is always compromised. Rav Azolai has not reviewed this material and is not even aware of its existence. Any inaccuracies, omissions or confusion should be attributed exclusively to me. I still hope you enjoy and it provides some *chizuk*.

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To receive this adaptation by weekly email, email me at [LightofEmuna@dovelias.com](mailto:LightofEmuna@dovelias.com)

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<sup>8</sup> e.g. in the fourth *bracha* of *bentching* alone there are fifteen unique requests that we hardly notice:

לחן, ולחסד ולרחמים, ולרווח, הצלה והצלחה וגו'.....