

פרשת האזינו – ראש השנה

This adaptation is dedicated
in honor of my wife, Devorah,
whose birthday is this Friday.
Happy Birthday !!!

ראש השנה – שבת שובה

When a person talks about his friend, it is an aspect of Rosh Hashanah – because he is sitting and judging his friend. We must take great caution to avoid this because when we judge others, and thereby consider ourselves more favorably – we must ponder whether or not we are really worthy of judging others. Judgment belongs to G-d – He alone is capable of evaluating people. The *Mishnah* teaches, “Do not judge your fellow until you have stood in his place.”¹ Who is able to understand and reach another’s place – only Hashem, for He is the “Place” (המקום) of the World – and every individual has a place with Hashem – therefore, only Hashem is qualified to judge others.²

!!!"המלך"

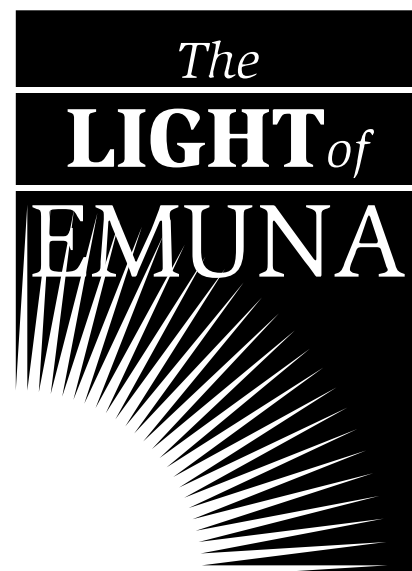
Rosh Hashanah is the day of Hashem’s coronation. Hashem created the world so that he would be sovereign over it and the ones who can accomplish this for Him are us.

“Master of the World - true, we have not acted properly throughout the year. True, we deserve severe punishments for our behavior. But, Father! Before you seal our fate, we scream – ‘The King’!!! ‘The King who sits on an exalted throne!’ ‘The holy King!’” When our Father, our King, observes sincerity in our mouths, that we truly coronate him upon us and desire and intend to improve our deeds – he allocates a good year – a good inscription and seal.

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אבות ב, ד
ליקוטי מוהר"ן חלק ב, א, יד



Based on Harav Menachem Azolai’s “Ohr Ha’Emuna”

What does it mean to coronate Hashem? It means desiring only what Hashem desires. It means having *emuna* that whatever occurs, whatever we are missing, whatever is not organized in our lives is all by Hashem’s design and we accept it with love. If everything is from Hashem, it is certainly for our very best. That does not mean to suggest that we are prohibited from wanting our lack to be filled, things to be better arranged and that we be successful. We must continue to pray for our areas of deficiency – for that is exactly why Hashem withholds from us – so that we *daven* for them, so that we raise our heads towards Him, so that we stay connected with Him. But, so long as we have not yet received, we must have complete *emuna*, with joy and love, that everything is from Hashem and for the best.

Coronating Hashem is in all aspects of life. We must accept, with love and joy, every interaction of Hashem towards us. We must forego our honor and increase the glory of the King. When a person walks in the street and he wishes to gaze upon all manner of things - but the King wishes otherwise. That is restrictive, it is difficult, even a bit unnatural – but that is devotion to the King.

A person arrives to *shul* and wishes to finish quickly. The King wants otherwise – He wants us to *daven* enthusiastically. “Master of the World, we really do want You, we truly long to do Your will, we very much wish to be close to

You – more than anything else – but, we are weak, it is challenging, we are submerged in this world – in the base urges and negative attributes. Have compassion on us.”

We must cry to Hashem like a child who cries before his father. Slowly, we begin to regret the past and shed tears. We must implore and pour out our hearts to merit performing complete *teshuva*, to correct all of the blemishes that we have caused and beg to avoid further defects.

We must not cause separations among Jews. We must perceive others favorably – every single Jew, even if their actions are not admirable. Their hearts are virtuous. If they act improperly – they surely regret it immediately.

"כי שם ד' אקרא הברו גדל לאלקינו" (האזינו לב, ג.)
“When I call out the name of Hashem, ascribe greatness to our G-d.”

What does a person do during times of suffering? To Whom does one turn? Who can help? Who can save? Among all of the compelling messages of the song of Haazinu – this is possibly the most potent message.

Here, stuck in a human body, with of the problems of childrearing, with all of the troubles with spousal relationships, with all of the challenges of earning a living, the difficulties involved with matchmaking, crises with neighbors, with ourselves – in the midst of all of it – turn to Hashem. Hashem desires a dwelling in the lower world, He wants his chosen nation to be below, to struggle here – never despairing – to recognize that our greatest option always is to raise our heads heavenward – and Hashem can reveal the greatest light.

Moshe instructed the Jewish people to learn from him. He testified that everything that he had attained in this world was due to the fact that he has constantly called out to Hashem. “When I call out the name of Hashem” – do the same and – “ascribe greatness to our G-d.” His

intent was to strengthen their *emuna* and *bitachon* in Hashem and to call out to Him, as he had done throughout his life.³

No one has it easy, neither spiritually nor materialistically – everyone faces their own obstacles, from varying directions – there is no peace of mind. Everyone has their own tribulations and there is no point in looking at what happens to others – why did he get that and I did not. Everything is from the Creator, Who knows precisely what we need to draw closer to Him.

There is but one relevant fact – there is a Creator of the world. Turn to Him, speak to Him, ask of Him. That is the path on which Hashem guides us and we must have complete *emuna* that it is best for us – that no other course would save us.

There is external kindness and there is internal (hidden) kindness. All of the difficulties, suffering, humiliations and events that we must endure are all powerful, inner, hidden kindnesses. Hashem purposefully arranges things so that we reach our potential, in the most amazing way - not that everything should proceed smoothly and wonderfully. Hashem wants tears and crying – so that we can attain necessary corrections, so that we introspect.⁴

Personal prayer is tremendously powerful. It can accomplish anything. The *Rebbe* of Peshischa advised that every Jewish person can avoid lacking anything by clinging incessantly to the service of Hashem – habituating ourselves to constantly *daven* and plead for everything, from the inconsequential to the essential. We should not think that this must be done only when we don our *tallis* and *tefillin* – it can be anywhere, even in the market – we can turn to Hashem and ask for all of our heart’s desires.

The famous Chozeh of Lublin was once travelling to spend Shabbos with some of his students. He got lost and was forced to spend Shabbos in a

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ליקו"ה עורלה ד, טז
באור פני מלך חיים

small town with just barely a *minyán*. After *davening* on Friday night he went home with a poor man from *shul*. During the meal, he said he was from Lublin and his host asked him if he knew the Chozeh. The Chozeh asked him why he asked and he explained that he used to live in Lublin and he remembered a child who used to impress him with his *davening* and learning and who he kept tabs on. He had heard that that child became the Chozeh and for the last thirteen years he had been *davening* to Hashem to allow him to meet the Chozeh before he died. The Chozeh told him who he was and remarked how amazing Hashem's ways were in fulfilling the prayers of Jews.

There was a simple villager who did not know the daily prayers. He would visit his *Rebbe* in Yerushalayim every week and his *Rebbe* would

tell him what to say each day of the upcoming week. One week he arrived and noticed that all of the shops were closed. Nervous that he had accidentally arrived on Shabbos; he asked a passerby why the shops were closed. He was told that it was a fast day. Annoyed that his *Rebbe* had not told him that there was an upcoming fast day when he had visited him the prior week, he approached his *Rebbe* with his complaint. The *Rebbe* explained that it was not a scheduled fast day, but was instituted for the lack of rain. The villager was stunned – “why do you need a fast day for that, when I need rain, I simply go into my field and ask Hashem for rain. And it always starts raining right away.”

Personal prayer is not greater than the set prayers each day – but, the *yetzer hora* knows about those and works harder to disturb them.

תפילה

Master of the World! I request of You that the upcoming year be a year of joy. That I merit realizing how everything that I have, including the most inconsequential, are all gifts from You, Father – nothing is automatic, not the clean and pressed clothing in my closet, not the food in the refrigerator, not the smallest *mitzvos* that I manage to perform. Everything is a gift from You – help me see things this way and to be happy and ecstatic. Help me be like those people who constantly murmur, “Praised is His Name,” “Thank G-d,” Hashem is compassionate” – for they succeed at being impressed by every motion, every little thing that they accomplish or is arranged for them. They recall You, Father, at every moment. Even when things do not go well, help me think immediately, at that exact moment, that it is definitely for the best – because whatever You do is calculated to bring me closer to You.

I request a year of peace with and love towards everyone – that I learn to judge every person favorably, even those who have hurt me. Help me remember that one who has *emuna* does not hate anyone because he knows that they are all Your messengers, Father. Help me also not forget that even those things that appear to be unpleasant can transform into the very best, because everything is in Your hands.

I request a year in which I will have firm *emuna* in the power of prayer and that I will finally understand that everything that I want, every change in circumstance that I pine for, can be achieved through *tefilla*.

Master of the World! Help that anything that distanced me from You until now ceases to exist and I merit clinging to you continuously. Save me, Father, from challenges because I am afraid, because I am weak. Let this be a year without difficult corrections, for I have no strength. Let everything flow wondrously – that all those for whom we pray for their recovery, *shidduch*, rectification - receive their salvation quickly and may we all have only good and merit the final redemption.

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 - any inaccuracies, omissions or confusion should be attributed exclusively to me. I still hope you enjoy and it provides some *chizuk*. Thank you Mordi Blass for your help with some of the Hebrew expressions.

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To receive this adaptation by weekly email, email me at LightofEmuna@dovelias.com