



פרשת ראה

שבת מברכים אלול

מנחם אב תש"פ

MIVTZA HALACHA 5780

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This week's Haftorah is the third of the Haftaros of consolation from the prophecies of Yishaya Hanovi. These prophecies describe the future redemption and ingathering of exiles which are the ultimate comfort.

Yishaya says that in the times of the Geulah: וְשִׁמְתִי כְדָכָד שְׁמֹשֶׁתֶיךָ וְשַׁעֲרֶיךָ לְאֲבְנֵי אֶקֶדָח וְכָל־גְּבוּלְךָ לְאֲבְנֵי־חַפְצֵי

And I will make your windows of Kadkod and your gates of carbuncle stones and all your border of precious stones.

Kadkod refers to a type of precious stone. But which stone is it?

According to the Gemara, the identity of *Kadkod* is debated by the two great archangels, Michael and Gavriel. One says that it is Shoham (translated as onyx) and the other says that it is Yashfeh (translated as jasper). Hashem adjudicates, "let it be like both!"

Chassidus explains that there is something deeper going on here. The angels are not debating what materials should be used in the rebuilding of Zion. They are debating the way in which the redemption will be realised and how the light of Hashem will be revealed within our world.

The word used for window is שְׁמֹשֶׁתֶיךָ, related to the word שֶׁמֶשׁ (the sun). The metaphor of the sun represents the revelation of Hashem's presence. Presently, the physicality of our world conceals G-dliness. But in the times of Moshiach, the Divine light will shine openly within our worldly reality. At that time, the world and G-dliness will be perfectly united.

But how will this come about?

Imagine two friends, one standing at the top of a mountain and the other at the bottom. They can come together and reunite in one of two ways. The one standing below can climb up to the top or their friend at the top can come down to the ground.

The same is true with the future unification of the world and G-dliness. One possibility is that the revelation of Hashem's presence will come down from Above. Even though the world will remain lowly and limited, the Divine light will shine here openly.

Another possibility is that the Geulah will come through our world being elevated to greater spiritual heights. This is achieved through our efforts of refin-

ing and elevating our world so that it becomes receptive to G-dliness.

Each of these two possibilities has an advantage.

Revelation that comes purely from Above is far greater than one aroused from below. It is not limited by the level of our Avodah or our capacity to receive the revelation. But because it is beyond the world, it will always remain beyond our experience and grasp.

In contrast, by elevating the world from below, the world becomes a fitting Keili to receive the light. Even though the revelation may be on a lower level, it will be internalised within the world and unite within it.

There were 12 precious stones on the Choshen of the Kohen Gadol on which the names of the 12 Tribes were engraved. The Shoham was the stone of Yosef and Yashfeh was the stone on Binyamin.

In Kabbalah, Yosef is referred to as Tzaddik Elyon (literally the higher Tzaddik). Binyomin is the Tzaddik Tachton (the lower Tzaddik).

Yosef, the Tzaddik Elyon draws down G-dly revelation into the world from Above to below. Binyomin, the Tzaddik Tachton is about lifting up the world and from below to Above.

Revelation from Above is associated with the Sefirah of Chesed, which gives indiscriminately. Therefore Michael, the angel of loving kindness, emphasises that the revelation of the redemption should take place in this manner; The light of the redemption will be like the Shoham of Yosef.

Gavriel, the angel of Gevurah argued that the revelation of Moshiach will come through the elevation of our world from below like Yashfeh, the stone of Binyomin. Elevation from below to Above is the attribute of Gevurah.

Hashem responds let it be both. Hashem transcends all limitations and can bring the redemption in a way that combines the advantages of each possibility; The greatest, loftiest G-dly revelations which are completely beyond the world, will come down and be received and internalised within the world.

The world and G-dliness will meet at the top of the mountain and the bottom of the mountain simultaneously and the light of redemption will shine brilliantly through windows of onyx and jasper.

The weekly Halacha analysis

When do we start blowing Shofar?

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

The Ram"o in Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim Siman 581, records the custom of blowing the Shofar after Shachris during the month of Elul, starting from the day of Rosh Chodesh.

According to our calendar, Av is always a full month of 30 days (מלא). Therefore there are 2 days of Rosh Chodesh Elul; the 30th of Av and the 1st of Elul. So which day of Rosh Chodesh do we begin blowing Shofar?

The Mishna Berura records that there are divergent practises. Some authorities rule that we begin blowing Shofar from the first day of Rosh Chodesh, Others rule that we begin from the second day of Rosh Chodesh.

Why do we blow Shofar in Elul?

The Tur gives the reason for this Minhag, quoting Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer;

"On Rosh Chodesh Elul, Hashem said to Moshe עלה אלי ההרה, *come up to Me on the Mountain*. He went up then to receive the second set of Luchos. At that time they blew the Shofar in the camp to tell the people that Moshe had gone up, so that they wouldn't mistakenly sin with Avodah Zarah again."

(When Moshe went up to receive the first set of Luchos, the Jewish people sinned with the Golden Calf due to a miscalculation.

They knew that Moshe would be up on the mountain for 40 days and began counting on the day that he ascended. However, the 40 days had to be full days, inclusive of their nights. Since Moshe went up in the morning, that day could not be counted and the 40 days would only begin the following day. When their count ended and Moshe did not return, they proceeded to make the Eigel

They sounded the Shofar when Moshe went up to get the second Luchos to remind them not to make the same mistake).

Just as they blew Shofar on Rosh Chodesh of that year, it became customary to blow the Shofar every year on that day. The reason we continue blowing Shofar throughout the month is to awaken us to Teshuvah.

Which day of Rosh Chodesh we begin blowing Shofar will depend on what day Moshe went up Har Sinai at that time.

Rashi (Shemos 33:11) writes that Moshe went up Har Sinai for the 3rd time on Rosh Chodesh Elul and returned 40 days later on Yom Kippur with the second Luchos.

The calculation of the R'em

Rabbi Eliyahu Mizrahi (the R'em) questions this

Rashi and his calculation of the 40 days;

(His question is based on a number of premises; In our calendar, and indeed since the time of Ezra, Elul has always been only 29 days. Additionally, Chaza"l teach that each time Moshe went up on to Har Sinai it was in the morning).

If we count from the 1st of Elul until Yom Kippur, there are only 38 full days inclusive of their nights since the 1st of Elul itself could not be counted as it did not include a night.

Even if Rashi means the first day of Rosh Chodesh, i.e. the 30th of Av, there would still only be 39 full days inclusive of their nights.

The R'em answers that we must say that Moshe actually went up Har Sinai on the 29th of Av (in the morning). Since this day didn't include the night, the count of 40 days would begin from the 30th of Av. Even though Rashi writes that Moshe ascended on Rosh Chodesh, it means that the count of 40 days began then.

This view that Moshe went up on the 29th of Av is also the opinion of Seder Olam Rabbah, Chizkuni, Daas Zekeinim and Levush.

The calculations of the Bach

The Bach challenges the resolution of the R'em. Firstly, Rashi clearly says that Moshe went up on Rosh Chodesh Elul and not the 29th of Av. Secondly, if Moshe went up on the 29th of Av, why don't we blow Shofar on that day?

The Bach presents two alternative resolutions;

1. Moshe went up on the 30th of Av (the first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul). But unlike our calendar, that year Elul was a full month of 30 days (מלא). From the 1st of Elul until the day of Yom Kippur is 40 full days including their nights.

2. In his second answer, the Bach reconciles the calculation even according to our calendar where Elul is only 29 days.

When Chaza"l say that Moshe went up Har Sinai in the mornings, they are referring to when he went up on his own. However, when Hashem summoned Moshe to ascend, he went up immediately. Hashem's command עלה אלי ההרה to ascend Har Sinai for the 3rd time, was issued on the night of the 30th of Av. Since Moshe ascended that night, the 30th of Av can be counted as the first full day with its night.

According to these opinions, we should blow Shofar on the 30th of Av, the first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul.

Starting on the 2nd Day of Rosh Chodesh

However the Magen Avraham records the Min-

hag of starting on the 2nd day of Rosh Chodesh.

This custom is based on an allusion in the Posuk תקנו בחדש שופר. This hints that we should blow the Shofar for a total of a month of days; The 2 days of Rosh Hashona and 28 days of Elul (we don't blow Shofar on Erev Rosh Hashona). Additionally, Tosfos (Bava Kamma 82a) following Midrash Tanchuma writes an opinion that Moshe ascended Har Sinai on the 1st of Elul

Chabad Custom

Hayom Yom records the Frierdike Rebbe's instruction that on the 1st day of Rosh Chodesh we blow 'to practise'. We begin the official Minhag of blowing the Shofar from the 2nd day of Rosh Chodesh.

(Whilst this appears to be a form of 'compromise' between the 2 customs, see Likutei Sichos vol 34 for a deeper explanation)

R'EM		BACH 1		Bach 2	
Av 29	●	Av 29		Av 29	●
Av 30		Av 30	●	Av 30	
Elul 1	1	Elul 1	1	Elul 1	2
Elul 2	2	Elul 2	2	Elul 2	3
Elul 3	3	Elul 3	3	Elul 3	4
Elul 4	4	Elul 4	4	Elul 4	5
Elul 5	5	Elul 5	5	Elul 5	6
Elul 6	6	Elul 6	6	Elul 6	7
Elul 7	7	Elul 7	7	Elul 7	8
Elul 8	8	Elul 8	8	Elul 8	9
Elul 9	9	Elul 9	9	Elul 9	10
Elul 10	10	Elul 10	10	Elul 10	11
Elul 11	11	Elul 11	11	Elul 11	12
Elul 12	12	Elul 12	12	Elul 12	13
Elul 13	13	Elul 13	13	Elul 13	14
Elul 14	14	Elul 14	14	Elul 14	15
Elul 15	15	Elul 15	15	Elul 15	16
Elul 16	16	Elul 16	16	Elul 16	17
Elul 17	17	Elul 17	17	Elul 17	18
Elul 18	18	Elul 18	18	Elul 18	19
Elul 19	19	Elul 19	19	Elul 19	20
Elul 20	20	Elul 20	20	Elul 20	21
Elul 21	21	Elul 21	21	Elul 21	22
Elul 22	22	Elul 22	22	Elul 22	23
Elul 23	23	Elul 23	23	Elul 23	24
Elul 24	24	Elul 24	24	Elul 24	25
Elul 25	25	Elul 25	25	Elul 25	26
Elul 26	26	Elul 26	26	Elul 26	27
Elul 27	27	Elul 27	27	Elul 27	28
Elul 28	28	Elul 28	28	Elul 28	29
Elul 29	29	Elul 29	29	Elul 29	30
Elul 30	30	Elul 30	30	Elul 29	30
Tishrei 1	31	Tishrei 1	31	Tishrei 1	31
Tishrei 2	32	Tishrei 2	32	Tishrei 2	32
Tishrei 3	33	Tishrei 3	33	Tishrei 3	33
Tishrei 4	34	Tishrei 4	34	Tishrei 4	34
Tishrei 5	35	Tishrei 5	35	Tishrei 5	35
Tishrei 6	36	Tishrei 6	36	Tishrei 6	36
Tishrei 7	37	Tishrei 7	37	Tishrei 7	37
Tishrei 8	38	Tishrei 8	38	Tishrei 8	38
Tishrei 9	39	Tishrei 9	39	Tishrei 9	39
Tishrei 10	40	Tishrei 10	40	Tishrei 10	40