

**Selections from
Sefer HaSichos
5701-5705**

Talks Delivered by
**RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAVITCH**



Rosh HaShanah

SELECTIONS FROM SEFER HASICHOS 5701-5705

TALKS DELIVERED IN 5701-5705 (1941-1945) BY
RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK SCHNEERSOHN

זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

THE SIXTH LUBAVITCHER REBBE



TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
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ROSH HASHANAH



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Dedication

THIS SEFER IS DEDICATED
IN HONOR OF

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DAVID ELIEZER HALEVI AND SARAH RACHEL POPACK
DOV HALEVI, NENA NECHAMA, HADAS
AND SHLOMO HALEVI

A PRAYER AND A WISH

The following unconnected selections are gleaned from Rosh HaShanah *farbrengens* of the Rebbe Rayatz, as translated in the eight-volume *Sefer HaSichos* series that includes: *Sefer HaSichos 5701*, *Sefer HaSichos 5702*, *Sefer HaSichos 5704*, and *Sefer HaSichos 5705*.

After quoting a brief *maamar* of the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz concludes: “Elder chassidim used to relate that by delivering that *maamar*, the Alter Rebbe uncovered in his chassidim the light of the soul. Within all of them, even within the most ordinary chassidim, their souls stood revealed.”

The prayer and the wish that we share with our readers is that in us, too, pondering over these selections will enable the soul within us, too, to stand revealed.



29 ELUL, 5700 (1940):¹
EREV ROSH HASHANAH, 5701 (1940)

1. Every Rosh HaShanah, comprehensive vitality for the entire year is drawn down² afresh.³ It provides both for matters related to the body and for matters related to the soul. Both for whatever concerns one's fleshly life and for whatever concerns one's spiritual life, it is on Rosh HaShanah that this comprehensive vitality is drawn down.

Hence the name *Rosh* HaShanah – literally, “the *head* of the year.”⁴ The head of every creature is its most vital organ, as in man, whose head is the source of the vitality both of the particular faculties that animate his various limbs, and of his spiritual faculties. The name *Rosh* HaShanah thus indicates that on that day, the comprehensive vitality for both spiritual and material matters is drawn down for the entire year. That includes the coming year's comprehensive vitality for one's spiritual life in the areas of Torah study and *avodah*. Hence the need for self-preparation during the month of Elul and the days of *Selichos*, so that this downward flow of vitality should be real.

The comprehensive vitality is first drawn down during *Maariv* on the first evening of Rosh HaShanah.

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1. During the last moments of the outgoing year *Taf-Shin* (5700), after *Minchah*, the Rebbe Rayatz quoted a classic prayer: “May G-d grant that the year with its curses will come to an end, and that there will begin a New Year with its blessings!” He then quoted a phrase from *Shmos* 30:12 and translated it literally, as follows: “May this coming year, א"ת (Taf-Shin-Alef), be a year in which ‘You will *raise up* (אָפֵן) the head of the Children of Israel!’ ” (The Heb. verb אָפֵן shares the same letters as the date of the upcoming Heb. year, א"ת.)
 2. In the original Heb./Yid., a *hamshachah chadashah fun a chayus klali*.
 3. See: *Tanya – Iggeres HaKodesh, Epistle 14; the beginning of Ateres Rosh; Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim, p. 46b.*
 4. See: *the beginning of Ateres Rosh; Likkutei Torah, Savo, p. 41c.*

2. Just as the vitality of the head is of two kinds, a comprehensive kind that relates to all the organs of the body and a specific kind that relates only to the head, so too, the head of the *year* comprises two kinds of vitality – a comprehensive kind that is drawn down on Rosh HaShanah for the whole year, and a specific kind of vitality that relates only to the specific day of Rosh HaShanah. The difference between the two kinds of vitality – the comprehensive and the specific – is that the comprehensive kind is obscured whereas the specific kind is revealed.

Even though both these two kinds of vitality – the comprehensive and the specific – are specific kinds of vitality, insofar as they relate specifically to each individual person, they are nevertheless intrinsically distinct.

With the above broad introduction, we will be able to understand the *maamar* that the Alter Rebbe delivered on *erev* Rosh HaShanah, 5528 (1767).⁵

3. After the Alter Rebbe returned home from Mezritch,⁶ he began to plot the path of Chabad *Chassidus*. In the course of the following several years he defined its framework further, setting fixed times for his public delivery of *Chassidus* – on *Shabbos* throughout the year, on *Yom-Tov*, and on certain other special occasions.

The *maamarim* that he used to deliver in those days were short, and they were delivered with passion.⁷ The elder chassidim who recalled that era, in which Chabad *Chassidus* was first being revealed and crystallized, used to say that the Alter Rebbe set the world on fire with his exuberance and his service of the heart,⁸ and that he gladdened the hearts of Jews with his love of every fellow Jew.⁹

5. It appears in sec. 5 below.

6. Where he had studied under the Maggid of Mezritch.

7. In the original, *behislahavus gedolah*.

8. In the original, *avodah shebalev*; i.e., his *davenen* (cf. *Taanis* 2a).

9. In the original, "with his *ahavas Yisrael*."

4. A great number of chassidim converged on Liozna to spend Rosh HaShanah, 5529 (1768), with the Alter Rebbe, who used to *daven* together with the chassidim and was also the *baal keriah*. Since his *shul* was too small to accommodate them all, a “courtyard *shul*” was set up.

5. On *erev* Rosh HaShanah he delivered the following *maamar*:

“This is the day which is the beginning of your work, a remembrance of the first day.”¹⁰ Every Rosh HaShanah, a new, comprehensive illumination¹¹ from the first day of Creation is drawn down, and Rosh HaShanah is the day on which judgment is made for the revelation of *Elokus*¹² in all the worlds, from the highest of all the levels in the Worlds of *Atzilus*, *Beriah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*, in response to the *avodah* of the Jewish people – with an earnest arousal, with *teshuvah* from the depths of the heart that is voiced with an inner cry.

It is written,¹³ “For G-d has listened to the voice of the boy, *where he is*.” On this the Sages comment (*Rosh HaShanah* 16b): “R. Yitzchak said, ‘A man is judged only according to his deeds *at that time*.’” The day of Rosh HaShanah is a year, “a long day.”¹⁴ Throughout the two days of Rosh HaShanah one should be occupied with *davenen* and with words of Torah. The task of one’s *avodah* during the 48 hours of Rosh HaShanah is to annul the *kelipah* of אֲרָמָה¹⁵ and

10. From the *Mussaf* service of Rosh HaShanah.

11. In the original, *he'arah chadashah klalis*.

12. Cf. *Likkutei Torah, Derushim LeRosh HaShanah*, p. 56a.

13. *Bereishis* 21:17.

14. Cf. *Beitzah* 4b.

15. Those two letters refer to certain Kabbalistic permutations of the Divine Name *Elokim* that allow spiritual energy to be diverted to the *chitzonim*, i.e., to the *kelipos* metaphorically known as אֲרָמָה בְּנֵי חָם – “the land of the sons of Ham.” Cf. *Hosafos to Torah Or*, p. 109d.

to transform the heat (חום) of *kelipah*, and likewise one's innate, natural heat,¹⁶ to a *G-dly* ardor – which will fire one's Torah study, one's *davenen*, and the positive attributes of one's character.¹⁷

Elder chassidim used to relate that by delivering that *maamar*, the Alter Rebbe uncovered in his chassidim the light of the soul. Within all of them, even within the most ordinary chassidim, their souls stood revealed.



16. I.e., the heat of the animal soul.

17. In the original, *middos tovos*.

THE SECOND NIGHT OF ROSH HASHANAH, 5701 (1940)
AT THE SEUDAH

6. From my childhood years I remember how he conducted himself during the lengthy *avodah* of his *Maariv* on Rosh HaShanah. As he sang, I remember how his heartrending voice expressed the yearning and trusting tone of the Alter Rebbe's *niggun*. I remember his holy, tear-stained face, all aflame. I remember the *ahavas Yisrael* with which he used to express his blessing, "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year!" And I remember his holy, pensive face during the first twenty-four hours of Rosh HaShanah.

7. Only after the *maamar* of *Chassidus* that he used to deliver on the second night of Rosh HaShanah did my father begin to speak. He told me that the first words that one utters after accepting the Yoke of Heaven on Rosh HaShanah should be words of Torah and *avodah*. That, after all, is the intended goal of *Chassidus*. As in the folk expression, "Let it be said, but also *done*" – in the *avodah* of refining and upgrading one's *middos*. When one has done that, he is worthy of being called a chassid who is connected to the light of *Chassidus*: he is connected to **luminous Chassidus**.

10. When my grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash, used to sound the *Shofar*, each *teruah* comprised 42 brief staccato blasts, and the *tekiah* following the *shevarim-teruah* lasted as long as the *shevarim-teruah* and the *tekiah* that preceded them.

The *rav* of Kremenchug, R. Yitzchak Yoel Rafaelovitch, was once present when a *teruah* comprising 42 brief blasts was being sounded in the *beis midrash* of the Rebbe

Maharash. Curious as to the explanation for this, he decided to ask the Rebbe at his next *yechidus*, but did not breathe a word of his intention to anyone. When that moment arrived, the Rebbe said: “Do you really think that ‘alien thoughts’¹ means only foolish trivia?! If a person thinks about things that he shouldn’t be thinking about, even in the realm of holiness,² that, too, is called ‘alien thoughts...’”

11. The revered elder chassid, R. Chanoch Hendel,³ once related that on *Motzaei Yom Kippur*, 5644 (1883), my uncle, the Raza, asked my father why his *davening* that day was so prolonged.⁴

My father replied: “Every year, when I used to *daven* together with our father out of the same *Siddur*, it was easy, but this year I had to go and look for him – and that takes time.”

12. The Alter Rebbe taught my great-uncle, R. Baruch Shalom,⁵ the *nussach* – the musical modes – for the reading of the *Kesuvim*, and he in turn taught it to [his youngest brother], the Rebbe Maharash. Whenever the Rebbe Maharash finished reading a chapter of *Kesuvim*, he would clutch his heart for breath, despite his capacious lungs. The Raza would have to pause even in the middle of a verse. My father would derive real pleasure from hearing him reading the Torah or the *Megillah*. His musical style resembled the tradition that had been handed down from the Alter Rebbe.



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1. In the original, *machshavos zaros*; i.e., distracting thoughts during *davening*.
 2. The Kabbalah speaks of a Divine Name of 42 letters.
 3. See *Sefer HaSichos, Kayitz 5700*, pp. 43 and 85, and elsewhere; and in Eng.: *Sefer HaSichos 5700*, pp. 91-92, 155, 330.
 4. This was the first Yom Kippur after the passing of their father, the Rebbe Maharash.
 5. Acronym: Rabash; eldest son of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, and greatgrandson of the Alter Rebbe. See: *Likkutei Dibburim, the farbrengen of 25 Shvat, 5696 (1936)*, sec. 6 (and in Eng.: Vol. 2, pp. 141-142); *Sefer HaSichos 5703 (1943)*, the *farbrengen of Pesach*, sec. 63.

EREV ROSH HASHANAH, 5702 (1941)
AFTER HATARAS NEDARIM¹

May² the One Above³ grant everyone a genuine arousal for *teshuvah* – to accept and internalize the yoke of G-d's Kingship. This Rosh HaShanah must be observed joyfully. True, the year is "starting in poverty,"⁴ and this calls for inward *avodah* from the depths of one's heart – but that, too, must be done joyfully.

May G-d grant you and your families a good and sweet year, in which the [Alter] Rebbe's teaching will be fulfilled – that "the materiality of Jews is spirituality, and the spirituality of the One Above is [expressed by providing] materiality for the Jewish people."



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1. I.e., the Annulment of Vows.
 2. **This chapter was compiled from the unauthenticated notes of those present.**
 3. This phrase translates the fond Yid. term, *Der Eibershter*.
 4. I.e., in an era of distress (see *Rosh HaShanah* 16b). The date was late 1941, at the height of World War II.

THE SECOND NIGHT OF ROSH HASHANAH, 5702 (1941)

1. Every movement of my revered father, [the Rebbe Rashab,] and every aspect of his conduct, was based on an inbuilt orderliness and on a particular rationale according to the revealed levels of the Torah. In this, to borrow the well-known phrase used by chassidim, he exemplified “a *Shulchan-Aruch* Jew,” a person whose every word, even on weekday matters, and whose every physical move, is part of his *Shulchan-Aruch* conduct.

The customs practiced by our Rebbes were handed down as a tradition from the Alter Rebbe. When he was still a child, the Alter Rebbe spent the whole of the first twenty-four hours of Rosh HaShanah, from the end of *Minchah* on *erev* Rosh HaShanah until *Maariv* on the Second Night of Rosh HaShanah, reading *Tehillim*.¹ He had observed his father, R. Baruch, practicing this custom, and as an adult he followed it likewise.

2. When the Alter Rebbe was studying at the feet of his mentor, the Maggid of Mezritch, he had observed how the Maggid *davened Minchah* on *erev* Rosh HaShanah at great length, in a voice that expressed an arousal of the soul, and with the intense weeping of someone who is about to be parted from a dear friend. The Maggid, deeply bestirred, had already begun to read *Tehillim* by day, and had continued until *Maariv*.

After *davening Maariv* in that manner on the First Night of Rosh HaShanah, the Maggid would partake of the *Yom-Tov* meal. At that time he did not utter a single word, not

1. According to *Sefer HaMinhagim* (in Eng. translation: Kehot, N.Y., 5752/1991), p. 117, *Tehillim* is read throughout the two days, beginning “from an hour before *Minchah* on the eve of Rosh HaShanah.”

even a Torah teaching. The wine that remained in the goblet over which he recited the Grace after Meals, he shared with his disciples, and then replenished it so that it would reach the quantity that required the recitation of the concluding blessing.

After the Prayer before Retiring at Night, which was also a time of deep arousal and which lasted several hours, the Maggid spent the night reciting *Tehillim*.

3. This was the course of conduct which the Alter Rebbe taught his children and grandchildren, and which was followed by our forebears, the Rebbes, over the generations. They did not publicly deliver *maamarim* of *Chassidus* until after *Maariv* on the Second Night of Rosh HaShanah. Later, at the table, they would relate stories and describe the spiritual lifestyle and customs of the Baal Shem Tov and his disciples, and of the Rebbes, and of revered elder chassidim. They would also describe the way in which ordinary, unlettered market folk and village peddlers lived their lives.

4. On *Yud-Tes* Kislev, 5649 (1888), my father said: "The lifestyle of chassidim traditionally included the group study of *Chassidus*, and earnest and prolonged attention to their *davenen*. It was accompanied by a Chabad *niggun*, and was followed by a favor to help a fellow Jew earn his livelihood. These people became *chassidische daveners*. By living such a lifestyle, even unscholarly village peddlers and owners of market stalls became *baalei madreigah*, men of spiritual stature in whom the light of the soul glowed visibly."

5. On the Second Night of Rosh HaShanah, 5651 (1890), my father related that on the Second Night of Rosh HaShanah, 5633 (1872), his father, the Rebbe Maharash, related something that he had heard from his father, the *Tzemach Tzedek*, who had heard it from the Alter Rebbe on the Second Night of Rosh HaShanah, 5559 (1798), together with his uncle and father-in-law, the Mittlerer Rebbe. During the Alter Rebbe's first stay in Mezritch, the Maggid had relayed

this teaching, which he had once heard from the Baal Shem Tov on the Second Night of Rosh HaShanah.

These were the words of the Baal Shem Tov: “Our Father in Heaven wants to hear His mortal children speak of His lofty attributes. By recounting His *real* praises, they bring Him intense pleasure.² True, the understanding of the angels is in a separate category above and beyond mortal understanding;³ so, too, even the *Sefiros* of the lofty World of *Atzilus*.⁴ However, [since] the angels and the *Sefiros* are linked to the intellectual perception⁵ of the [lower] Worlds of *Beriah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*, they cannot appreciate or understand the extent of the pleasure that is generated Above [by the praises sung by G-d’s mortal children].”

6. The hidden *tzaddikim*,⁶ the colleagues and disciples of the Baal Shem Tov, used to wander on foot from town to town and from village to village. Wherever they went they would relate in warm friendship to the unlettered townsmen, and would highlight the positive qualities of the ordinary market folk and the craftsmen.

One of those hidden *tzaddikim* was R. Kehos, a close disciple of the Baal Shem Tov. Encountering a group of horse and cattle dealers in a market place on the day of the weekly fair, he once heard one of them tell his fellow Jew: “In *Tehillim*⁷ it is written, ‘Don’t be like a horse or a mule, that doesn’t understand why its mouth has to be held back by a bit and a bridle...’⁸ A horse thinks that the bit is placed

2. The praises sung by the angels relate only to His influence in the various worlds as screened and filtered down via *tzintzum*. The angels’ praises hence cannot equal the *shoachim atzmi’im* (“the *real* praises”) which are sung by G-d’s mortal children, for the latter praises address His unfiltered Essence, His *etzem*.

3. This is why the angels are called *sechalim nivodalim* – lit., “*separate* intellects.”

4. In the original, *Atzilus HaElyon*.

5. In the original, “the *Chochmah* and *Seichel*.”

6. In the original, *tzaddikim nistarim*.

7. 32:9.

8. In the original, the opening words are אַל תְּהִי כִסּוּס כְּפָרָד, and their meaning is as translated above. This horse dealer, however, did not know that *kefered* means

in its mouth in order that it shouldn't forget how to chew. It doesn't understand – but don't you be like a horse. You should *understand!*"⁹

When R. Kehos met his Rebbe and shared this piece of horse dealers' conversation, the Baal Shem Tov's intense elation found expression in a soulful melody.

7. The above episode is the source and history of the *dveikus-niggun*, the melody that expresses a soul's yearning to cleave to its Source, which accompanied the *davenen* of the Alter Rebbe, and later of all his successors as Rebbe, on the First Night of Rosh HaShanah. It was sung with a cleaving of utter devotion, and with the heartrending tears of one who laments the departure of a dearly-loved friend.

8. My great-grandfather, the *Tzemach Tzedek*, once related that on the First Night of Rosh HaShanah, after his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, returned home from Mezritch, he *davened Maariv* at great length – and that year was indeed a blessed year.

The abundant spiritual blessing that was felt in the *avodah* of chassidim during that year aroused Satan's accusatory voice [in the Heavenly Court] against the Alter Rebbe's style of *avodah*, which sprang from the innermost nucleus of his soul.¹⁰ However, the Alter Rebbe was a new soul¹¹ that had been devoted to the point of self-sacrifice to disseminating the ideal of loving every fellow Jew; he had promoted the principle of serving G-d through the *avodah* of *davenen*; he had extended a welcoming hand to plain, unlettered Jews; and he had publicly pointed out the admirable value of their artless simplicity. And it was these endeavors that silenced the voice of the Accuser.

"or like a mule." He innocently assumed that the Psalmist was explaining *kesus* ("like a horse") by translating it into Yiddish, in which *ferd* means "horse" and commonly serves as a metaphor for brainless insensitivity.

9. I.e., you should cultivate a sensitivity to spiritual matters.

10. In the original, *avodah atzmis un pninis*.

11. I.e., never previously incarnated.

9. The Alter Rebbe adopted the above-described mode of *avodah* when he returned from Mezritch. He explained that he had learned it from the Maggid, who in turn had received it from the Baal Shem Tov. They had taught that when plain, ordinary Jews exclaim *Shema Yisrael!* and [the response in *Kaddish*], “Blessed be He and blessed be His Name,”¹² their exuberance brings spiritual pleasure to the very Essence of the Supernal Emanator.¹³

10. On the Second Night of Sukkos, 5652 (1891), my father recalled a celebration of Simchas Beis HaShoeivah in 5638 (1877), when his father, the Rebbe Maharash, had commented in *farbrenge* style on the statement in the *Gemara* that the Jews in the days of Chizkiyahu¹⁴ were great scholars. At that time, “[The Sages] searched from Dan to Be’er-Sheva¹⁵ and did not find one boy or girl [...] who was not familiar with the [complex] laws of ritual impurity and purity.”¹⁶

[On this, the Rebbe Maharash commented:] “In the days of Rashbi,¹⁷ mere children were thoroughly familiar with the *pnimiyus*, [the innermost mystical dimension,] of the Torah. And in the days of the Baal Shem Tov, there were people who appeared to be plain and unscholarly, such as market dealers, village peddlers and wagon drivers, who were serious scholars, expert in the revealed levels of the Torah¹⁸ and in Kabbalah – people in whom the light of the soul shone in a revealed manner, just as it shone in its pristine state, in the World of *Atzilus*.”

* * *

12. In the original, *Baruch Hu u’Varuch Shemo*.

13. I.e., the Supernal Emanator of the graded, chainlike process of Divine self-screening that is known as *Seder Hishtalshelus*. The phrase in the original is, *Atzmus HaMaatzil HaElyon*.

14. I.e., Hezekiah, King of Judea in the era of the First *Beis HaMikdash*.

15. I.e., the whole of the Holy Land from north to south.

16. *Sanhedrin* 94b.

17. Acronym for R. Shimon Bar Yochai (second century BCE), author of the *Zohar*.

18. In the original, *nigleh*.

11. There is an extensive halachic discussion as to whether the blessing of *boreh pri ha'etz* which is said over the apple dipped in honey on the First Night of Rosh HaShanah includes fruit, such as apple compote, that is eaten at the end of the meal as dessert. I am now going to say that blessing over the dessert, because from the outset I made a point of not intending to cover it with the earlier blessing.



THE SECOND NIGHT OF ROSH HASHANAH, 5704 (1943)
AT THE SEUDAH

1. On the Second Day of Rosh HaShanah, at both the evening and the daytime *seudos*, my revered father used to relate something brief – or relay a brief Torah teaching – relating to the Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid of Mezritch, the Alter Rebbe, the Mittlerer Rebbe, the *Tzemach Tzedek*, and my grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash.

2. My father had undertaken some of his standard modes of conduct on Rosh HaShanah even before his *bar-mitzvah*; others dated from a later time. Starting from the year 5635 (1874),¹ he undertook not to speak throughout the First Day of Rosh HaShanah until after the *maamar* had been delivered on the Second Night of Rosh HaShanah. That was a personal decision. When he later undertook the *nesius* he continued likewise. On the Second Day he did speak, though very little – just enough to repeal his previous abstinence – and likewise throughout the Ten Days of Repentance he spoke sparingly.

It once happened that when a meeting concerning local affairs had been proposed for that period, my father deferred it until later.

3. My great-grandfather, the *Tzemach Tzedek*, did speak at the *seudos* of Rosh HaShanah – on the affairs of the ministers of the regime. Concerning his father's words at the time, my great-uncle *Maharil* remarked: "He's now running the show in Petersburg..." And my grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash,

1. The Rebbe Rashab was almost fourteen years old at the time.

commented in the same spirit, “He’s prodding the wagon along [in the direction that *he* determines...].”²

On Rosh HaShanah 5641 (1880) my grandfather said: “In fact we could have got rid of the suffering of the Jewish People, but what can be done, since Jews want the bitter medicine. For there are two kinds of medicine: (a) the sweet kind that makes a child ask for more, because he lacks the ability to understand that he is sick, whereas if he is given (b) a bitter kind of medicine, he realizes that he is sick.”

6. Before *Maariv* on *erev* Rosh HaShanah 5640 (1879), the Rebbe Maharash instructed R. Levi Yitzchak, his attendant, to go and tell the chassidim in his name: “It is taught in *Chassidus* that Sounding the *Shofar* is like crying out, ‘Father, Father!’ And what matters most is not the Father but [the arousal within] the person who is crying out.”

That teaching stirred up such an arousal of *teshuvah*, not only among the chassidim who had arrived in Lubavitch for Rosh HaShanah but also among the [ordinary] local men and women, that throughout both days of Rosh HaShanah the whole town was turbulent with tears of repentance.

7. My grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash, once said to my father, [the Rebbe Rashab]: “People think that accepting a *pidyon*³ is difficult, and can be done only by a Rebbe. In truth, however, every Jew can do it, by saying a word of praise about someone – but this must be done truthfully. On Rosh HaShanah, hundreds of angels eagerly wait for a Jew to say a word of praise about someone, because they know that the Holy One, blessed be He, yearns to hear *words of*

2. Interestingly, on *erev* Rosh HaShanah of the year 5744 (1983-1984), the Rebbe told of how the *Tzemach Tzedek* used to “set things in order in Petersburg,” and in that year Andropov, Brezhnev’s successor, died. A year later, on *erev* Rosh HaShanah of the year 5745 (1984-1985) the Rebbe repeated what he had previously told about the *Tzemach Tzedek*, and in that year Chernienko died, and was succeeded by Gorbachov.

3. See footnote 1 on p. 5 above.

praise about His People – not [so much] the prayers of tzaddikim, but words of praise about His People.”



THE SECOND DAY OF ROSH HASHANAH, 5704 (1943)
AT THE SEUDAH

8. The vintage chassidim of Liozna, who remembered the Alter Rebbe's return from his first visit with the Maggid of Mezritch, related that at that time he relayed a teaching of the Baal Shem Tov that he had received from the Maggid. This is the teaching that was inspired by the words, *Ashrei ha'am yod'ei teruah*.¹

"Praise and gratitude to G-d, for the fact that all Jews – regardless of whether they are scholarly giants,² or whether they study *Midrash*, or whether they listen to the public reading of *Ein Yaakov*, or whether they read *Tehillim* – are familiar with the sound of the trumpet that calls them to do battle with their animal soul, and are deeply sensitive to the yearnings of their G-dly soul."

Jews in general, chassidim in particular, and especially Chabad chassidim, ought to praise and thank G-d for the fact that every Jew, whoever he may be, has been endowed with a soul that is truly "a part of [G-d] above."³ It is by virtue of that soul that he is counted among those "who know the sound of the *shofar*." It is different in the case of a *ger*, a convert to Judaism, in whom a new soul is invested at the time of his conversion.

A sinner is a Jew only at the level of "Yaakov."⁴ True, there is a verse that says, *Shuvah Yisrael* – "Return [in

1. *Tehillim* 89:16. The plain *pshat*-meaning of the words is: "Fortunate is the People who know the sound of the *shofar*."

2. In the original, *geonim*.

3. *Iyov* 31:2, cited in *Tanya*, ch. 2.

4. The name "Yaakov" denotes a person who serves G-d [only] out of awe (*yir'ah*), like a servant, whereas the name "Yisrael" denotes a person who goes beyond that, and serves G-d [also] out of love (*ahavah*), like a son.

repentance], O *Yisrael!*"⁵ However, this should be understood only in light of the folk expression that when a person hurts his foot, it is his head that feels the pain.⁶

9. My father used to urge people to rouse themselves on Rosh HaShanah inwardly, to the point of tears, to plead that Heaven's mercies grant success to their endeavors to correct their *middos* and to conduct their lives in the spirit of *chassidishē middos*.

Once, when I entered my father's study towards the end of the Second Day of Rosh HaShanah, before he delivered the *maamar* in public – that was one of the times when I used to enter his study – he said: "Grasp the opportunity! You still have 22 minutes!" That is, until sunset. With that he set out, late, to deliver the *maamar*.

As a rule my father delivered the *maamar* of the Second Day of Rosh HaShanah very late, at dusk, in order to draw the blessings generated during the 48 hours of Rosh HaShanah into the mundane world, so that the radiance of *Chassidus* should light it up, and be perceptible in everything.



These two levels are hinted at in the very spelling of these names in the Holy Tongue. Thus, the name יַעֲקֹב (Yaakov) comprises the letter ך (yud), which signifies G-d, and the letters of אָכָב (akev), which means "heel" – and thus signifies the lower mode of Divine service, awe. The name יִשְׂרָאֵל (Yisrael) comprises the letters which, when transposed, spell the two words לִי רִאשׁ (li rosh), which allude to the Jewish People as a "head" – and thus signify the higher mode of Divine service, love.

5. This verse (*Hoshea* 14:2) appears to suggest that even someone who is worthy of the name "Yisrael" can have sins that call for repentance. Hence the continuation of the above paragraph.
6. That is to say: Although it is the "Yaakov" within him that sins, it is the heightened spiritual sensitivity of the "Yisrael" within him that feels the anguish of his consequent detachment from *Elokus*.
7. The Yid. adjective means more than simply "chassidic": it embraces all the positive qualities of character that distinguish a person imbued with the teachings of *Chassidus*.

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AT THE SEUDAH

5. **“Father, rescue me!”** [Another question was asked:] The *maamar* beginning *Min hameitzar* that was delivered on Rosh HaShanah this year cites a teaching of the Baal Shem Tov – that the cry of arousal which is uttered by the Sounding of the *Shofar* and which resembles the way a son calls out, “Father! Father!” should not spring from a sense of pain. It should be the cry of a son who calls out, “Father, rescue me! Father, have pity on me!” What is the meaning of this concept?

[The Rebbe responded:] This becomes clear in the light of *Tanya* – *Iggeres HaKodesh*¹ concerning suffering (G-d forbid), where it is written that a person should believe that suffering is G-d’s hidden love, and it should be accepted joyfully² – because the above teaching of the Baal Shem Tov was a basis for what the Alter Rebbe wrote in *Tanya*. That is the explanation in brief.

6. **A Cry from the Heart.** As a rule, our master the Baal Shem Tov would be present for the Sounding of the *Shofar* together with the members of the Holy Brotherhood.³ On one such occasion, however, he joined a congregation of simple folk and boys. (He had asked the author of *Toldos*⁴ to be with the Brotherhood at that time.) When it came to the Sounding of the *Shofar*, the Baal Shem Tov’s unlettered fellow-congregants cried out spontaneously, “Father in Heaven, have pity on us!” And it was their unsophisticated cry from the heart that created the greatest stir Above.

1. **Epistle 11.**

2. *Berachos* 9:5.

3. In the original, “the *chevraya*.”

4. R. Yaakov Yosef of Polonnoye, a senior disciple of the Baal Shem Tov.



