

yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 29 Jun 2009 19:47

(any questions , insights & suggestions about this thread,feel free to email me at taryaga@gmail.com)

There are many reasons we need to be where we are and who we are,most are unknown.Why do we even have to be in a situation or have in our soul so much darkness and a pull toward self-destructing negative behaviors?

I saw once an amazing thought in a sefer.Moshe Rabeinu came from a union that after the Torah was given would have deemed him a mamzer(parents being an aunt & nephew).He could not boast of his lineage.This is one reason that let him be the greatest Anov that ever lived.

We who have to deal with the stuff that's in us that we would rather not have in the first place-this pain and shame over the course of time -makes us realize that even when we b'ezras Hashem pull out of the addictions-we will never look at another Yid that is struggling with this in a negative way

We catch a Yid looking where he shouldn't be looking and our hearts are full of compassion.We will daven for him,treat him with respect,gently try to get him out of it.We would never disgrace him-not even in our hearts-because we were there.We know what it's like.In our eyes he is a potential tzaddik.

This is surely one reason Hashem gave us this urge towards baseness with all it's shades of ugliness.Yes you are special-like every Yid is-but never ever judge harshly My son or daughter that is struggling-because I love him or her - he or she is part of Klall Yisroel.Just as indispensable as you are.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by kutan - 03 Sep 2010 15:24

Yechida?

what happened?

I disappear for a few months, come back, and find our resident philosopher/poet has turned rational scientist.

I know GYE is good at turning people's lives around... but this is WOW

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 03 Sep 2010 18:20

the philosopher/poet will never go away (for better or for worse) but there is a guy I know (and) that has that rational scientist side that I see to use sometimes, which is sort of like excerising my non-dominant hand.

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Sounds similiar and yet there are significant differences.

and this is one of the deeper reasons of Achdus

because its not like what people think ,that its just a matter of getting along ,and being kind,but rather there is the actual need to absorb the other person's positive points into oneself to become a more integrated individual.

So we can see from the Shevatim

No one will ever be as fast as Naftali but all the brothers need to integrate zerizus into themselves

No one will be the leader that Yehuda was , but there are certain leadership qualities that all the brothers needed to learn from him. Yehuda is the Melech, but there is a spark of malchus in all of them.

There may be that very rough customer that I don't particularly like, but I can still see that the fellow has some inner strength that I do not have, and it is that aspect which I need to learn from him

That is why a Rebbe cannot have arrogance or a sense of superiority towards his talmid.

Why?

because though outwardly it seems that the Rebbe needs to teach the Talmid, that may not be the true purpose.

In some cases, it's the very opposite

God sent to student to teach the Rav something.

That is why, in certain aspects, my 8 year old son, is actually my Rebbe for certain things. He has a certain in born optimism, that I do not have naturally, and that is something I need to learn from him. My obligation to be raise him properly is my responsibility, but it is an equally important responsibility to learn lessons from him that I need to integrate and learn from.

A father needs to know this

yes,he cant spoil his child or overlook character flaws that he or she may have

but he cannot ignore the special qualities too

and he must entertain in his mind the serious possibility that God sent him this particular child to teach him something.

so I'll never be that rational scientist type

that is not me.

but I need to learn that skill to a certain degree more than I have it now.

but I'm stuck with that philisophic ,poetic side which by the way is not the side that pays my bills

But Hashem does that anyhow

And that is one of the lessons of Rosh Hashana

Have a wonderful Shabbos,kutan,and all my esteemed brothers,be blessed all of you with a special and blessed year

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by kutan - 05 Sep 2010 14:44

Ah... a pleasure... good old Yechida just the way we like him!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 07 Sep 2010 12:28

May everyone of you have a truly blessed and sweet year

Rosh Hashanah

There is joy

Within the heart

Of a Jew who sees

His eyes open

To the true reality

Of the universe

In which he is placed

He walks to shul

in the streets of the King

how often do we realize this?

that we can only walk outside

because the King

is allowing us to do so

He comes home from shul

To his family

Given to him

By the King

And though he or she may feel alone

Either because they have no family

Or they have one that does not understand

What is in my heart

Tonight , no one is alone

The King is in the heart

Sounds fearsome, doesn't it?

But it's comforting as well

I fear nothing

For You are with me.

After the meal,

Some learning,

some prayers,

I lay down on my bed

It's time to sleep,

Resting a weary body,

A tired soul,

Awaiting renewal

For another day

The bed is there for me

every night,

Isn't it?

But tonight I realize

It's the bed

Owned by the King

Given to me

To rest my body and soul

To open my eyes

To a new world

The next morning

More blessed time

On this earth

As a gift

From my King

Repentance is within us

Deep inside

Yet no sin is mentioned on the lips

That begins again after today,

But not today,

My King's day

True, we ask the King

For a good and sweet year

But our hearts and minds

Yearn to hope

To give a good and sweet year

To my King

Who is also "wondering"

Will I receive a sweet year

From those unique souls

Whom I created?

King gave me eyes

Yes, I will sweeten this year

And not abuse the power of sight

That is being given to me

As a gift

To see the blessed sunrise

And hauntingly beautiful sunset

The meadows, valleys ,mountains,

The pure essence

Of another Jew's heart

And so it is with all our functions

Of body and soul

To stop the abuse

By taking care of those special gifts

The body and soul together

On loan to me

To enjoy intensely

Physically and spiritually

In accordance to His Will.

Rosh Hashana comes once a year

Yet it is timeless,

The root, the source,

That spreads out to the end of time

And so we carry this light with us

The Rosh Hashana light

Spreading out to the entire year

To any given day or night

So a plain simple old Wednesday

In Cheshvon or Teves or Tammuz,

Is held sacred

Basked in that aura of Rosh Hashana

Not just a mere memory

But a reality of the King

In our hearts

That very moment

He is in our heart

And He is our King

We sometimes feel oppressed

By the sound of the word “King”

There are times I felt it too

A burden that creates walls

Frozen in fear

Chaining us in a jail

Of our own imagination,

Of an angry face

Of bitter disappointment

Waiting to punish

Forcing us into submission

But over time I begin to realize

This is not real awe.

The King of Kings

As Great and Powerful as He is

Infinite in His might

Does not desire

That His creations

Have the eyes

Of a hunted and wounded animal.

Yes, He wants us to have that awe of Him

But that oppressive kind of fear

But rather it is an Awe

That has within it

An Infinite, Everlasting Love

The Yolk of heaven

Fashioned

With Endless love and Kindness

That is why

The joy of Succos

Is not separate

From the essence of Rosh Hashana

Because that joy,

The dancing and singing of Simchas Torah

Even the Purim's expansive joy

Is within

the inner expression of Rosh Hashana

Finally revealed and expressed

So outwardly,

An awed silence

But Inner Joy

Warms the heart

Because we see it clearly

That behind the royal garbs

Of the most powerful King

Is the essence

Of a most loving Father

That wants more than anything else

To embrace us and comfort us.

This is the awe of the true King

An intense love

That is just beneath the surface

Ready to be revealed

And that is what we all

Yearn and pray for

Show yourself, Our King

He will see us bow down to Him

And then He will hold us

In an everlasting embrace.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 08 Sep 2010 14:52

From Reb Shlomo

Another Rosh Hashona

It's another Rosh Hashona. It's another year & sometimes we're so old & so much not alive that we don't even have vessels for newness anymore. So I bless you, myself & all Israel & the whole world. Because to have vessels for newness is the hardest thing in the world. Because what's really different? It's the same as yesterday. Everything is always the same. So I want you to know that beginnings are the greatest gift from Heaven. Our holy rabbis tell us the middle is in our hands, but beginnings are only in G-ds hands. Then its up to me what I do with it.

How do I begin on Rosh Hashona? Sadly enough, a lot of people think Rosh Hashona & Yom Kippur, especially Rosh Hashona is a time to regret what I did wrong & to promise G-d I'll be better. All cute & sweet but don't waste your time with that on Rosh Hashona. Rosh Hashona is not a time for cleaning. Yom Kippur, G-ds laundry is open. Rosh Hashona is so much deeper. The beginning of all beginnings is connecting the deepest, deepest depth of your being to that which is above that that which is above the above of the above. Rosh Hashona is the beginning of all beginnings.

You know beautiful friends if someone said I promised G-d to be good last year& I didn't keep it its not my promise that wasn't real. It was my beginning that wasn't real because if I really began then I'm a new person & I have all the strength in the world to fix my entire life.

You know we live in such a broken world, marriages break apart, friendships are broken, parents & children don't talk to each other & its all because they don't know how to begin again.

So here our holy rabbis tell us that as long as our hearts are full of anger we don't have the vessels for new beginnings. As long as your heart is filled with sadness there is no way for you to begin & as long as your heart is filled with jealousy, beginnings will never help you.

So friends in these few days we still have left before Rosh Hashona & on Rosh Hashona itself, I bless you & me & I'm begging you & I'm begging myself -- let's get all the *anger* out of our heart... all the jealousy... all the pettiness. You know if I'm petty with other people, G-d forbid, then G-d is petty with me. But if I'm big enough, the more I open my heart for other people, the more I open the gates for myself. Friends, the blessing people give each other on Rosh Hashona is so deep, so forceful, so very awesome.

On Rosh Hashona every person can open gates for another person if you really mean it. I want to bless you & me that we should open gates for our husbands, wives, children & the entire world this Rosh Hashona. Friends, I'm begging you, I'm begging you, don't be angry, not even at yourself. Just lets cleanse our hear, lets cleanse our thoughts... our holy rabbis tell us, the greatest joy in the world is when you "fargen", you rejoice when something good happens for another person. On Rosh Hashona, the acid test is, how much are you praying for someone else? In the Rosh Hashona prayers, its never singular, always plural. Because I'm standing before G-d & I'm saying unless you give life to the entire world, please don't give it to me. Unless you make everyone rich, please I don't want to be the only rich man. Unless you give peace to the whole world, don't give me anything, unless you give it to my husband, my wife, my children, unless you give it to Yerushalayim.

Friends! Let this year be a *real* beginning not the same beginning we go through every year. Let's not begin the old record over again -- let there be a *new* record. New teachings. New words. New thoughts. Let every breath we take feel like we never breathed before. The holy Sochachover says when we blow shofer, G-d *absolutely* blows a new soul into us. Lets keep this new soul so *holy* & so beautiful & let's inscribe each other into the book of life. GOOD YOM TOV!!!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 15 Sep 2010 15:54

from Reb Shlomo

The deepest connections

Niggun: V'Yivtechu B'cha Hashem never disappoints us, And I bless you and me, we shouldn't disappoint Hashem either.

You know friends, if we would have thousands of hours, and I wish I could tell you everything our holy rabbis teach us about the 10 days you make tchuva the 10 days of Repentance. And every day we recite Shir haMalos Master of the World, I call you from the deepest depths, [Niggun, hazaanut style: Shir haMalos:] It's the 130th Psalm; and friends, please make it make it into a habit, the 10 days, walk around, and just pray this 130th Psalm, it's so deep, to call Hashem out of the depths, the depths of my heart, with the depths of despair, with the depths of hopelessness, or the depths of love, the depths of hope all those depths in the world So everybody knows: The 10 days, I'm really trying my best to change my life, to bring out the deepest depths of Me. All those 10 days, I look at the world with different eyes.

And you know friends this is so deep : How do you know if you're coming to your own house or to somebody else's house. Very simple: Imagine I'm dirty and filthy and it's late at night and I'm drunk, and I knock on the door of my best friend. Yeah, he'll open the door, and he will let me in, but he'll say `Listen brother: why do you come so late? Why are you so dirty; please take a shower. my whole house?' You know what the people in my house tell me? Oh, we are so glad you came, we worried about you. You know, a lot of people do tshuva, but they don't go back to their own house. The people [in the other houses to which they go] say: Where were you so much? So long? Why are you so dirty, why are you so un-Jewish, why do you know so little. But when you come back to your own house, you just say Ai, we missed you so much. So when make tshuva, we come back to our own house. Mamash we're so glad with every person who finds his way back to Hashem .

And then comes Yom Kippur.

KAPPORET: And you know friends, it would be too long to go into it. But the morning before Yom Kippur we find something some people some people take a chicken and slaughter it, and then give it to the poor to eat. But today it's a little bit hard sometimes to find a chicken and what most people do today is take some money, and say that this money go for charity, and me, Master of the World, bring me in into a year of good life. And the truth is, the day before Yom Kippur is already a little bit Yom Kippur. As much as we eat and drink, but ah just there's something in the air so holy, so awesomely beautiful, and so pure. And I'm sure everybody's

going to the mikveh. Every man and every woman, Once they immerse themselves in rain-water, water from heaven, water which is untouched by human hands. Because on Yom Kippur, you know what is shining into us, the deepest depths of our neshama, which is untouched, unseen. Ah, it is so deep, it's so deep.

And Yom Kippur night we come to shul, we ask each other for forgiveness. And then, you know, my beautiful friends: last year we promised Hashem so much, but we kept so little. We lost our self confidence; we don't even trust ourselves any more. So Yom Kippur night we take out the Torah, and we walk around, and we ask the Torah for forgiveness. Please, holy Torah, forgive me for not keeping you. Forgive me for not being immersed in every word and every letter.

And then the davening. We're praying Yom Kippur night. It's most probably one of the highest of the whole year. So much joy, with so much singing and dancing. What a day, what a day. And I always tell my friends, in the most simple way: Imagine I owe the bank 10 million dollars; there's no way for me to pay back. Then I get a telegram from the bank: not only you don't have to pay, we're giving you a new loan of 10 million dollars. Let me ask you friends: am I walking around kreftzing and crying, "oy yoy yoy, last year I didn't pay my bill." What do you want, the bank says they're forgiving you, giving you new loan. This is a time to rejoice. So all the Rebbe's say: that basically Yom Kippur is most probably the most joyous day of the year. And in my own neshama - in my own neshama is there like ai yi yi so happy, full of joy, full of bliss.

And you know friends: On Yom Kippur we don't eat, not because we are fasting but because the energy which is coming down from heaven is so deep, it's like manna from heaven. And the fact is, you know friends, Yom Kippur, the later it gets, the less hungry you are. The last few minutes of Yom Kippur, we're not hungry at all. Have you ever asked anybody in shul, at the end of Yom Kippur, are you hungry. No, I'm not hungry, I could fast another week.

And I bless you friends, the last few minutes of Yom Kippur,, Ne'ilah, this is the time really, to pour into our hearts, to be so close to Hashem, to be so close to the people we love. And our holy rabbis teach us: You know what Ne'ilah is: it's like, Hashem says to every one of us: All day long we were together, with all of Israel, but now the last few minutes, let's go into a room, just you and I, let me lock the doors, Hashem is alone with every one of us, we can ask of Hashem everything there is, and Hashem is telling us also, what he wants of us. I bless you and me, we should remember what 'HE' says. It should be so deep in our hearts. I bless you with the best year, best Yom Kippur. Good Yomtov; good Yomtov.

THE BRIDGE FROM YOM KIPPUR TO SUKKOT:

You know my beautiful friends, by Ne'ilah before Hashem is closing the gates `HE' never closes the gates, but `HE' takes us in to the highest place in the world, to the innermost chamber every Jew is alone with Hashem, and Hashem says to us: I have an invitation for you: please come for one week to my Sukka. Humanely speaking: to Hashem's summer house, to Hashem's Spa.

Come there for one week, and I will cure your heart, cure your soul, give you strength. And if you really want to know, if Hashem forgive you on Yom Kippur, the question is: are you coming to the Sukka. Are you feeling at home in the Sukka, did you hear Hashem's invitation.

I bless you, please, parents, please parents bring your children to the Sukka and the Sukka's, our hearts are bursting with joy.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by kutan - 15 Sep 2010 16:03

Thanks Yechida.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by 7yipol - 15 Sep 2010 21:51

Listened to a shiur by Rav Wolfson today, and he kept speaking about the highest level one can reach - "yechidah"!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by Dov - 17 Sep 2010 05:38

Thanks again, Yechida! Happy new year!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by kutan - 17 Sep 2010 12:18

[7Up wrote on 15 Sep 2010 21:51:](#)

Listened to a shiur by Rav Wolfson today, and he kept speaking about the highest level one can reach - "yechidah"!

On Yom Kippur, we connect to the Yechida (if we are zoche)

That is how the selicha comes about, because that part of the soul, which is connected and one with all other Jews (and Hashem) remains unsullied.

Talk about coming out of isolation!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by Efshar Letaken - 17 Sep 2010 12:24

Hi,

Long time no speak!

I want to wish you & the rest of the GYE Family A Gmar Chasima Tova & a Gut Gebenched Yur.

Keep up the good work!

E.L.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by Dov - 20 Sep 2010 05:10

...and now, a guten kvittle!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 20 Sep 2010 12:20

Thank you dear friends

wishing you a Succos filled with pure joy

May Hashem bless you all with endless overflowing berachah

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 20 Sep 2010 14:25

The deepest Sukkes Torah

The Sukkah is a Beis Hamikdosh for us

this is the Torah of the fallen Leaves (Schach)

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San Francisco October, 1968

When the sky has grown dark and the air chilly, there are two hundred people in the Succah, standing around with paper plates in their hands, talking to each other, eating. A thick October fog, the kind that leaves your clothes damp, has blown in and immerses us. I don't know where all the food has come from. I don't know where all the people have come from.

Shlomo starts singing. People nearby immediately join in. It's a lyrical niggun (song without words). The "A" melody is low, soft, in a minor key, like fog. The "B" melody is bright and soars up high, in the corresponding major key, like sunlight. The endless repetition encompasses and balances the universe. Everyone breathes together. The fog swirls around us.

I'm watching Shlomo. His eyes are darting around the succah, taking in everything. There are two small electric lights tied to the poles, and dozens of candles everywhere. Shlomo recognizes someone at the back of the succah, smiles. Then he closes his eyes and repeats the melody yet another time, lowering the volume. Soon everyone is humming softly. He opens his eyes again, looks around the succah with a serious look on his face, and lowers the volume even further. People are humming so softly you can barely hear it. Two hundred people, most of whom don't know each other, standing and swaying with their arms around each other, nearly silent.

Finally Shlomo speaks. "My sweetest friends," he says. "I have to tell you something very deep. Everybody knows, by us Yidden, among the Jewish people, Yom Kippur is the holiest time of the year, right? We're bringing our souls to God's laundry and He's washing us clean.

Everything that's been going on with me that's maybe not so holy and beautiful, God's taking it away, and my soul is shining from one end of the world to the other. It's the ultimate holiness, right?

"But along comes our great spiritual master and teacher, the holy Baal Shem Tov, more than 200 years ago, and we learn something different. We learn that, unbelievable as it sounds, Succos is even holier." People are sitting close, touching each other. We're like one being, absorbing Shlomo's words. I have accepted Shlomo as my teacher. When he is speaking words of Torah, the words are true. My mind is calm and receptive. I can allow the ancient wisdom coming through him to carry me, like a boat drifting serenely in a wide river.

"Okay, listen to this. Where is God's holiness revealed in this world? What is holy space? According to the Midrash, on one level there's the world that God made, which is so sweet and so beautiful. But sadly on another level, I can walk the streets of the world all my life and never really find my place. Imagine that I would be Rothschild and build a big castle somewhere with the most beautiful paintings, and the most beautiful gardens outside. But if I feel like a stranger there, and it's not really my place ... saddest thing in the world, right? The level of Israel, the level of Holy Land means, simple as it is, to be in this world where I am really at home, where I am really in my place. That's a higher level of holy space. Then there is the level of the Holy City, Yerushalayim, Jerusalem, where I mamish know that my space is also God's space. And I can keep going deeper and deeper inside. In the middle of Yerushalayim there is the Holy Temple, the Beis HaMikdash, and in the middle of the Beis HaMikdash is the Kodesh Kodeshim, the Holy of Holies, where the Cohen HaGadol, the High Priest, would go inside once a year, on Yom Kippur, and stand alone with God, and say God's Name.

"Okay now, this is the deepest and most heartbreaking thing. The Gemorrah says that, since the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, the Holy Temple, the Jewish people are in exile, and the whole world is in exile, and there is no place for God's holiness to be revealed in this world. Unbelievably sad.

"The only thing is, by the holy Baal Shem Tov, since the destruction of the Holy Temple, in order for there to be a place for God's holiness in this world, we have to make it ourselves. How do we do this?"

Fog from the San Francisco night drifts into the succah, making little halos around the light bulbs and the candles.

"The holy Zohar says there are two kinds of light. The Or Pneimi, the Inner Light, is contained in a vessel." Shlomo closes his eyes and rocks back and forth. Then he opens them again and looks around. "There are, so to speak, two levels in this world. One is the level of vessels. There are people who are very strong on vessels. Maybe they live in beautiful houses. Maybe they wear beautiful clothes. Everything I'm doing is also a vessel. I can keep all the commandments in the Torah, I can do all the mitzvahs, I can do all the right things. Strong vessels, right?

"Then there are people who are maybe aren't so strong on vessels. Maybe their house isn't so beautiful, and their clothes haven't been to the laundry in a couple of weeks." Shlomo laughs. He looks over at Alex and Moishe and Nadine. They're laughing too. "And maybe they're not exactly always doing the right thing. But when you're with them, you can see, the light is shining so strong.

"You know, sadly, we're living in a world of empty vessels. How many times do you see someone in the street or at the schul and they say, 'How are you?' but you look at their eyes and they don't really want to know. They don't really want to know. Maybe they're thinking, I wonder how much he's donated to the building fund? Or can I get her to help with the lox and bagel brunch?" He laughs, and people around him laugh too. He smiles and flashes a "V" at Donna, who is standing off to the side. She smiles back and shakes her head back and forth.

"Empty vessels, right? But let's say you see someone who really loves you and they say, 'How are you?' You can see that they're shining. Mamish, they really want to know, they really care. Same words, right, same vessels -- so what's the difference? So much inner light. So much holy inner light."

"Okay, friends, stay with me," he says. "As beautiful as it is to have inner light, the Zohar says that there is a second kind of light that is beyond all that. It is too infinite to be contained in vessels. This is the light from before creation, which in the Zohar is called the Or Misavev, the Surrounding Light. This light has nothing to do with our actions, with what we're doing in the world. It's literally not of this world of creation. Imagine I can do everything right a million times over, I can do every mitzvah in the Torah, and still not begin to touch the Surrounding Light. This is also the level of Shabbos. Completely beyond doing.

"The Holy Baal Shem Tov says the most heartbreaking thing. By definition, the Surrounding Light cannot be contained in any vessels, right? But as long as we're in this world, we need vessels to receive anything. Without vessels, I couldn't stay alive. Listen to this, friends, open up your hearts. The Holy Baal Shem Tov says, what vessel is big enough to contain the Surrounding Light? The only vessel big enough to contain the Surrounding Light is a broken heart."

"Okay friends, listen to this," Shlomo says. "Everybody knows, everybody knows, that when we make a succah, it's gotta be beautiful. That goes without saying, right? But what makes it kosher, what makes it real? Simple as it is, the Mishna says that it's gotta have schach, it's gotta have leaves for the roof. And it can't be attached to any plant that's still growing. It's gotta be fallen leaves. Do you know how deep this is?"

"Imagine if somebody told you you've gotta make a house for, chvayss, I don't know, somebody very important, a great president, a great scientist, the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, who was coming to visit, you'd want to buy the finest materials, right? But by us Yiddalach, what do we do when we're building a dwelling place for the King of the World? We find little fallen leaves. Maybe they were lying on the ground. Maybe yesterday somebody was stepping on them. So what do we do? We take these leaves and we lift them up above our head. Then for seven days we sit underneath them.

"On Rosh Hashanah, so to speak, we had the awesome experience of standing at the entrance to the King's palace. We were blowing the s'hofar, saying all the special prayers, doing all the special mitzvahs for Rosh Hashanah, letting the whole world know, letting each other know, that we know we're not in charge here, that no government or president or leader is in charge here, that there's only one Master of the World.

"Succos, we invite the King to come with us into the Succah, to sit with us under the fallen leaves. Unbelievable! Can you imagine? Mamish, we're gathering up all the fallen leaves, and all the broken hearts of the world, and we're sitting underneath them. Why? Because, by Baal Shem Tov, this is the Holy Temple for us when we're in exile. This is the Holy Temple for everyone whose heart is broken. This is where the Surrounding Light is shining. This is where the Queen is dwelling. This is where God is sitting.

"What makes us safe; what makes us secure? All year long, I would say it's a strong house, right? The bricks protect me, and the roof over my head keeps me dry. The only thing is, one

time in the year, one sweet, precious week, I leave my house, and move into the little succah.

"The mitzvah on Succos is the simplest thing in the world: to eat and sleep in the succah. One week in the year, one holy week, God is revealing to us, and we have the privilege of knowing, that bricks and roofs, money and bank accounts and jobs and honor in this world, are not what make me secure." Shlomo looks around the succah, slowly, lovingly, taking in every detail. The fog is thick, moving over our heads, drifting through the succah. It's getting chillier and some people are huddled up together against the cold.

"Succos we are privileged to live in the holiness of space and the holiness of time. This is the greatest thing in the world. When the wind blows through the walls, maybe we feel a little bit cold, and when it rains maybe we get a little wet. But living under the shelter of the wings of the Almighty, we know, we mamish know, what it is to be safe, what it is to be home in this world."

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