

## Live & Laugh

The Presbyterian Church called a meeting to decide what to do about their squirrels. After much prayer and consideration, they concluded the squirrels were predestined to be there and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will.

At the Baptist Church the squirrels had taken an interest in the baptistery so the Deacons met and decided to put a water slide on the baptistery and let the squirrels drown themselves. The squirrels liked the slide and, unfortunately, knew instinctively how to swim so twice as many squirrels showed up the following week. The Methodist Church decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God's creatures. So, they humanely trapped their squirrels and set them free near the Baptist Church. Two weeks later the squirrels were back when the Baptists took down the water slide. But the Catholic Church came up with a very creative strategy. They baptised all the squirrels and consecrated them as members of the church. Now they only see them on Christmas and Easter.

Not much was heard from the Jewish synagogue; they took the first squirrel and circumcised him. They haven't seen a squirrel since.

## Calendar

- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Shul Brocha in the Seeff Hall sponsored by **Owen Sher & Clayton Donnelly** in honour of their first Aliyah & belated Bar Mitzvahs.
- ◆ **Sushi & Black Label Farbrengen.**
- ◆ Mincha: 5:20 pm
- ◆ Pirkei Avos: Chapter 5 & 6
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 6:30 pm
- ◆ First Night of Selichos. See programme.
- ◆ Mincha next week 5:45 pm
- ◆ Shofar and Psalm 27 daily

EREV ROSH HASHANAH - WED 20 SEP

- ◆ Annulment of Vows
- ◆ Eiruv Tavshilin
- ◆ Candles: 5:45 pm (Blessings for Yom Tov & Shehecheyanu)
- ◆ Apples & Honey tonight

### URGENT!

#### RABBI'S YOM TOV APPEAL

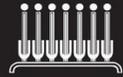
Thank you to all who have responded. If you have not yet, PLEASE make your contribution ASAP as many families are still waiting for help! *Rabbi Goldman Discretionary Fund*  
Cheques or Cash to Shul office or EFT to FNB Norwood:  
Branch Code 258624  
Account No: 503 600 89202  
Thank You and G-d bless you.

- ◆ The **Scottish Leader Signature** whiskey at Shul is sponsored by **Distell** & available for purchase at **Norman Goodfellows**.
- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
- ◆ **Vehicles wanted. Any make, any condition. Best prices. Phone ARNOLD ORKIN 082 823 7826**
- ◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org
- ◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.



# Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!

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## Why the Frenzy?

by: *Rabbi Yossy Goldman*

In Yiddish, they would always say *Nog a jobr in Afrika!* – ‘Another year in Africa!’ It seems pretty inane but we all seem to go through the very same performance annually. ‘Oh my G-d, it’s Rosh Hashanah already!’ ‘Where has this year gone?’ You’d think that by now we’d have gotten accustomed to it.

Yes, time does fly. In fact, the idea features in one of our most famous prayers on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Just after *Unesaneh Tokef* (‘who will live and who will die?’) we read a most eloquent paragraph about how finite we are and how short life is. ‘*Man was created from dust and our destiny is back to dust.*’ We muse about how life is *like withering grass, a fading flower...a dissipating cloud...and a fleeting dream.*’ Indeed, life is but a dream.

And the realization that it’s almost Yom Tov sends us into a tail spin; somehow it inspires a buzz of frenetic activity. But why is there such stress and pressure in our minds and hearts? Is it just the homemakers and *baalebustas* anticipating their big dinners, lunches and the rush for new recipes? Is it the selection process for the best seats at our preferred Shul? Or is it the knowledge that some very earnest, solemn, holy days are almost upon us?

For rabbis, this is certainly the high-pressure season of the year. Some of my colleagues even call it the ‘silly season.’ But it’s not just the demand to produce outstanding ‘keynote address’ sermons. There is the intense awareness that Judgment Day is coming. From the beginning of Elul, the month of preparation

for Rosh Hashanah, there is this anxious strain building up in the back of our minds. The trick, of course, is to get it to the front of the mind and actually do something about it. With each passing day this month, we become more aware that in just a short while, the heavenly court will be scrutinizing our past performance, not only professional but personal and spiritual.

That’s why this is, traditionally, a time of *Cheshbon Hanefesh* - the season for soul-searching, introspection and personal spiritual stock-taking.

So I believe that the deeper reason behind the frenetic rush of adrenaline in the Jewish bloodstream at this time of year has more to do with trying to work out who we are and where we are in life than what we are serving for dinner or our what is our seat number in Shul.

So where do we find ourselves? How many young people have gone off to uncharted frontiers in an effort to find themselves? They may search all over the world but at the end of the day we are not to be found in the mountains of Tibet or the ashrams of India. And we certainly won’t find ourselves by escaping to Sun City for Yom Tov.

A fellow once told me that his son decided to go off in search of himself. So he said goodbye to his parents and set off on his motorbike across South Africa in an effort to finally discover his true inner identity. Sometime later, the father called his son and asked him, ‘Nu, my son, did you find yourself?’ ‘Yes, dad,’ he replied. ‘Really?’ asked the father. ‘That’s fantastic. So where exactly did you find yourself?’ ‘Just past Bloemfontein, dad.’

In the Torah reading shortly before Rosh Hasha-

## Selichos

@ Sydenham Shul

Join us for a  
**Pre-Selichos KUMZITZ!**

**THIS SATURDAY NIGHT!**

**Music**  
by Yudi Cohen & Friends

**Stories and Inspiration**  
with Rabbis Goldman and Stern

**Drinks & Refreshments**  
**Starting at 10:30 PM.**  
Elk Hall | No charge

**Followed by the First Selichos Service**  
led by Rabbi Yossy Goldman  
in the Sydenham Shtibl

Ladies and gentlemen welcome



SYDENHAM HIGHLANDS NORTH  
HEBREW CONGREGATION

nah, (Deuteronomy 22) we read about the mitzvah of *Hashovas Aveidah*, returning lost articles to their rightful owner. You may not have known this but 'Finders Keepers' is not exactly a Jewish idea. These laws are outlined in great detail in the Talmud (Bava Metziya, Chapter 2). While there are occasions when we may indeed keep what we find in the public domain, generally we are taught to make every effort to find the rightful owner and return the lost articles to them.

Historically, the biggest Lost & Found Department in the world was located in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. During the three pilgrim festivals, Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot, people who had found things would assemble at a special demarcated point to announce what they had found. Those who were looking for their lost valuables would have an opportunity to reclaim them provided they could identify them as theirs by sharing some of the unique characteristics of the objects in question.

It makes perfect sense that where Jews would congregate in their masses was the ideal place for this *mitzvah* to be observed.

Today, the Synagogue has taken the place of the Temple in Jerusalem, albeit to a much lesser degree. Clearly, we long for *Moshiach* and the *Beit Hamikdash*. But the synagogue is an obvious place for a Jew to go to find people who may have seen his or her lost article. And the genius of Judaism in identifying the Synagogue as the 'congregation' and the place to find each other, goes way beyond finding a lost *talit*, umbrella, watch or wallet. It is in Shul that we also find G-d. We can also rediscover our faith, our people, and our community. And perhaps most importantly of all, we find ourselves. It is not only material things we find in Shul. We find spirituality - our true, inner self, our soul, the real me, the real you, the real Jew comes out in Shul.

So, you don't really need an airline ticket to the Far East or even a motorbike ride to Bloem. All you need is to come to Shul. But it does require some quality time in G-d's House. Don't just chat to the neighbour you haven't seen since last Yom Kippur. Open a

book, whisper a prayer, and listen to an inspiring word. Close your eyes and reflect on life and its meaning while the beautiful music provides some spiritual 'surround sound.'

And I want to ask you all to keep on the 'lost and found' trail – for yourselves and for each other. Find some missing Jews. Find a Jew who may be lost spiritually, or simply does not have a Shul to call home, and bring them home. Bring them to Shul. There are so many people out there who would love to come but may just need someone to invite them, welcome them, and acclimatise them until they feel comfortable.

Please G-d, in the days leading up to Yom Tov we will take the time to find ourselves and to reach out to others who would love to join us on the journey.

I wish you *Shana Tovah* - a meaningful New Year.

## Parsha Pointers

*Nitzavim-Vayelech: Artscroll pg 1086; Living Torah pg 1011*

The Parshah of *Nitzavim* includes some of the most fundamental principles of the Jewish faith:

The unity of Israel: "You stand today, all of you, before the L-rd your G-d: your heads, your tribes, your elders, your officers, and every Israelite man; your young ones, your wives, the stranger in your gate; from your wood hewer to your water drawer."

The future redemption: Moses warns of the exile and desolation of the Land that will result if Israel abandons G-d's laws, but then he prophesies that, in the end, "You will return to the L-rd your G-d... If your outcasts shall be at the ends of the heavens, from there will the L-rd your G-d gather you... and bring you into the Land which your fathers have possessed."

The practicality of Torah: "For the Mitzvah which I command you this day, it is not beyond you nor is it remote from you. It is not in heaven... It is not across the sea.... Rather, it is very close to you, in

your mouth, in your heart, that you may do it."

Freedom of choice: "I have set before you life and goodness, and death and evil; in that I command you this day to love G-d, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments... Life and death I have set before you, blessing and curse. And you shall choose life."

The Parshah of *Vayelech* ("And He Went") recounts the events on Moses' last day of earthly life. "I am one hundred and twenty years old today," he says to the people, "and I can no longer go forth and come in." He transfers the leadership to Joshua, and writes (or concludes writing) the Torah in a scroll which he entrusts to the Levites for safekeeping in the Ark of the Covenant.

The mitzvah of *Hak'bel* ("Gather") is given: every seven years, during the festival of Sukkot of the first year of the shemittah cycle, the entire people of Israel -- men, women and children -- should gather at the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, where the king should read to them from the Torah.

Vayelech concludes with the prediction that the people of Israel will turn away from their covenant with G-d causing Him to hide His face from them, but also with the promise that the words of the Torah "shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their descendants."

## Insights from the Rebbe

*Compiled By Rabbi Mordechai Rubin*

### The Individual and the Community

***You are all standing this day . . .***

Deuteronomy 29:9

Parshat Nitzavim is always read on the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah.

The Torah addresses every Jew in these words, "You are standing today, all of you, before the L-rd your G-d: Your heads, your tribes, your elders, your officers, even all the men of Israel... from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water."

This is something of a contradiction. The verse begins "You are all standing"—without making any distinctions. But immediately afterwards, it proceeds to detail the different classes of Jew separately. Why, did it need to do so, when the phrase "all of you" already encompasses them all?

It did so in order to make a fundamental point: that on the one hand, there must be unity amongst Jews; and, at the same time, each has his unique contribution to make, his own individual mission.

But, if there have to be distinctions amongst Jews, how can there be true unity amongst them?

The verse supplies its own answer: "You are standing today, all of you before the L-rd your G-d." It is as Jews stand before G-d in the full recognition that He is the author of their powers and the ground of their being, that they are one. With the assurance implicit in these words, each Jew, comes to the coronation of G-d on Rosh Hashanah, the acceptance of His sovereignty and the proclamation of His kingship over Israel, and over the entire world.

### The Strength to be Successful

This week's Torah reading begins: "You are all standing today." "Today" refers to Rosh HaShanah, the Day of Judgment. The Torah is telling the Jews that they "are standing," triumphant in judgment. This is the blessing for the month of *Tishrei*, and in a larger sense, the blessing for the entire year.

More particularly, the word *nitzavim* — the core of the blessing given by G-d — does not only mean "standing." We find the term: *nitzav melech*, "the deputy serving as king." the use of the term *nitzavim* indicates that G-d blesses us to stand with the strength and confidence possessed by a king's deputy.

This blessing enables us to proceed through each new year with unflinching power; no challenges will budge us from our commitment to the Torah and its mitzvos. On the contrary, we will proceed from strength to strength in our endeavor to spread G-dly light throughout the world.

When a person identifies with G-d — the G-dly core within his own being and the mission of revealing G-dliness in the world at large — he discovers indomitable resources of strength. This enables him to overcome all obstacles and appreciate the bountiful good with which G-d has endowed the world.

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