

# CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN

by Rabbi Yitzchok Rubin

I just read a lovely story and would like to share it with you. It tells of a little girl, who, after the birth of a baby brother, started begging her parents to let her spend some time alone with the new arrival. They worried that, like most four-year-olds, she might feel jealous and try to somehow hurt the baby. However, she showed no signs of jealousy and treated her little brother with kindness. Soon her pleas to be left alone with him became more urgent, and finally they decided to allow it.

Elated, she went into the baby's room and shut the door. Her curious parents opened a crack to watch and listen. They saw their daughter walk quietly over to her baby brother's bassinette, put her face close to his and say in a whisper, "Baby, tell me what G-d feels like. I'm starting to forget."

In Yiddish there is an expression, *Dos dekitchered der hartz*. Loosely translated, it means, "This moves one's heart," but, as is the case with most translations, it doesn't fully express the pathos Yiddish brings with it. In her sweet, naive manner this little girl was expressing what I believe we all experience from time to time. We all forget what Hashem feels like. We are so busy, so important, so beaten by the scourge of daily life that we become estranged from where we want to be.

As children of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, we have been blessed with a lifeline, something to hold onto no matter how hard the winds of life batter us. A Torah life is replete with spirituality. Each mitzva brings with it a unique connection to our Father in Heaven, and by actualizing this bond, we build a strong, sturdy bridge that awaits our slightest footstep. Every moment has its special potential for spirituality, and then there are those special times that create an ambience that gives light long after they are past.

Each Yom Tov is given by G-d at its particular time so that its essence can give maximum strength. Even afterward, the glow of its memory continues to illuminate our lives. It is the lifeline we cling to for true survival.

In kapitel 47, we find ourselves speaking of the sound of the shofar. Our Sages explain that this alludes to the shofar that will be blown at the time of the redemption of the Jewish people with the advent of Mashiach. Alternatively, the psalm is describing the shofar blasts of Rosh Hashana. Perhaps we can understand this as speaking of both dynamics, for the energy of Rosh Hashana can lead us to the final redemption.

*All the peoples, clap hands, shout to God with a joyous voice.* All the nations will one day clap their hands with the joy that comes with the knowledge of Hashem. They will be astounded that they

didn't see the truth before, and they will clap their hands with amazed happiness.

Until that glorious day, we blow the shofar on Rosh Hashana, the day all the nations of the world are judged. If they only realized that the sound of the shofar today could bring them ultimate joy, they would undoubtedly clap with cheerfulness now as well.

Shout to God, can also be translated as "sound the blasts of the horn to God." The shofar blasts on Rosh Hashana make a sound that is both triumphant and weeping. That is also the way it is when we lose our own personal way. We can feel uplifted if we acknowledge that real triumph comes through accepting that we are like children who weep from their lost place.

*For Hashem is Supreme, Awesome a great King over the entire earth.* When we feel distraught, we need just remember how on Rosh Hashana we stood in awe of Hashem's radiance and accepted His all-encompassing Kingship. This brings proper joy to the heart, for with this knowledge we can feel safe in His love. We have been at that level of devotion before and experienced it then, and we can relive its warmth again and again.

*Peoples will be unified under us, and nations will submit to our rule.* The final redemption will bring all the nations to the realization of Hashem's truth. This will be the greatest victory for us, His children, the Jewish people. It has always been our goal to bring kiddush Hashem into the chaos of the material realm. Throughout our history, the great souls among us have striven toward this one goal. Our victory will be the realization of this dream.

When we focus on this thought, we feel Hashem's Presence wherever we go. No matter how far we find ourselves from the heights reached on Rosh Hashana, we can still hold on, because there was that day, we did blow the shofar and Hashem did hold us close in His embrace.

*He will choose our inheritance for us the pride of Yaakov whom He loves, selah.* The shofar blast sears the heart. This piercing mark lasts not only for the day, nor even only for the season; it is part of our inheritance, and hence ours forever. We cry through its notes as children to our Father, and He answers with His eternal affection.

*God ascended with a blast; Hashem, with the sound of the shofar.* Hashem hears our cries and "ascends," taking to the heavens those feelings of pain we carry. He takes them to the heavenly abode, where all is spiritual, and where we find sweet solace.

*Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.* Each of us finds our path to Hashem. Some react to His Kingship, others to His Fatherhood. With most it is both, but no matter we sing praises to His Essence at every level.

*For God is King of the whole world. Sing praises, enlightened one. God reigned over nations; God sits on His holy throne.* This passage ties all the strands together. Hashem is King of all that exists; He reigns over all the nations and all the peoples that populate this teeming world. Yet, as we have seen, He comes down to our humble place and takes our cries up to His holy throne. What greater sweetness

can there be than this reality? The shofar cuts through all levels and reaches up to the heavenly throne.

Do you feel things are piling up on you and getting you down? Do you feel like you're losing that feeling of spirituality? Fear not remember the year's first moments, the sound of the cry. Realize that those cries are still resting under Hashem's throne. Grab onto the connection that started with those first new yearly moments. In this way, we will persevere, and soon, very soon, we will greet Mashiach with those same sounds.

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