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Two Elements to a Sin:
(Shmuz #113)
Rabbi Bentzion Shafier

One can take a vow to be a Nazarite, prohibiting themselves from various things. There are people, a father and a husband of a woman that if they hear her vow, can annul it. The passuk says “*va Hashem yislach lah*” if she breaks the vow. Rashi asks, but it was already annulled! Why did she need forgiveness? Imagine I think I'm eating a cheeseburger but it's really something kosher, I didn't sin. When Shabbat and Rosh Hashanah coincide the blowing of the shofar is annulled. Why? Because one person may carry the shofar and violate the Shabbat. He may go to an expert to teach them how to blow the shofar. But this doesn't seem so common. It says that the shofar awakens a person to the Day of Judgment and it reminds God of Akeidat Yitzchak and changes the judgment. On Rosh Hashanah, my entire future is being decided. My livelihood, my health, my family.

A tip on Rosh Hashanah is to look backward is to see the last year, review everything good and bad and see that it was all decided last Rosh Hashanah. Rosh Hashanah is a very serious day, and shofar is a powerful tool to change things for the better. The Satan is the angel that brings claims against me. The shofar prevents him from complaining. A person escapes death by a second, now is decided on last Rosh Hashanah. There are skills for different types of things, we are much more exact in weighing diamonds than we are in weighing potatoes. Our sages measure mans actions by a much more sensitive and exact scale than we do. We are all diamonds, one small flaw can take it diamonds and dramatically reduce its value. Our sages realize that one Jew carrying the shofar is not worth us blowing the shofar. The Peleh Yoetz says that any sin is rejecting God. “*Kofer Bahashem*” but we all sin! We aren't all “*kofrim*”?

There are levels to emunah: (1) God created the world (2) God is involved in major big picture issues (3) God sees through everyone to their essence and knows what I'm thinking as I'm thinking it.(4) God is intimately involved in my life, everything. Imagine I reach the fourth level and I revisit an event that happened to me a few years back, I ate at

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dominoes. While a meeting that slice, I am denying the existence of God and denying that he is watching me.(5) No action can happen in the world without God willing it. God decides what happens to everyone, if he decides that will live this year, he is with me all the time protecting me from death.(6) Imagine a cold day, you're standing at a bus stop. You close your eyes and imagine a beach with beautiful sand, a hot sun, and the seagulls flying by. All of a sudden the bus splashes water on you, and you awaken. The Nefesh Hachaim says that it's the relationship between God and the world. God wills its existence, if he stopped for a moment, he would cease to exist. One man stands, God still keeps him in existence, therefore, the man is denying that God is keeping him in existence. God gave us commands so we can grow, not only do we not keep his command, we "so to speak" spit in his face.

There are two elements to a sin come the damage done to me as a disgrace done to God. The woman who doesn't keep her vile is disgracing God although there is no damage being done. Every memory and action one does is etched in our brains, this is not only in our sages writing this but also scientifically proven. There will come a day when one will go to the next world, at the time one will remember all the experiences and actions during one's life. This say that we committed are seeing clearly, but the problem is that now, I have no evil inclination, I see the truth but I'm really saying what I thought at that point and it's a big confusion that's why repentance is so important, it becomes like it didn't happen. Teshuvah is a miracle because naturally actions and memories are not erased. God set up a day for us to be able to focus on this teshuvah process- such a big chessed. On Yom Kippur we can get rid of the flaw on the diamond. But when Yom Kippur comes, we may be a bit overwhelmed -- how can I go over one year of actions, every second in that year, in one day? Just like the way bankruptcy works, we tell Hashem, plead to him to forgive our sins because they are too large and heavy. If done sincerely, Hashem will accept it. The secret of life is to wake up and do Teshuva before we die. Rabbeinu Yonah says that one of the worst sins a person can do is not to do Teshuva. Not only did you do the act, you didn't try to get rid of it?

How is the Satan confused by the shofar? We blow standing and sitting. The Satan's job is to seduce man, but when moshiach comes, he won't have that job anymore,

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he will be destroyed. The time of moshiach is assured in with a big shofar blast. The first blow, the Satan knows is for Rosh Hashanah. But the second, he's terrified. The Satan is very intelligent, this happens every year! The Satan doesn't look at our lives as we do, he sees the extraordinary capacity that each and every one of us have and that in one move we can do Teshuva for all our sins and inquire olam haba and change our entire existence. The same with Klal Yisrael, the geukah is so close that the Satan is afraid of this every year. If we can wake up and understand life through the eyes of the Satan, we would see the awesome power of teshuvah and the awesome of fact that we can have and we would live our lives very differently.

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