



The Weekly Parsha Shiur of Maran, Rosh HaYeshiva, the righteous Kabbalist,

Our Rabbi Benayahu Yissachar Shmueli, Shlit"a

An excerpt for the Parsha of Haazinu / Yom Kippur 5787 (2026)

They Tear His Commandments to His Face

Behold, we have already merit-fully passed the majority of the Ten Days of Repentance, and tonight we are already entering the seventh day—what remains for us? Seventh, eighth, ninth, and Yom Kippur. **But the main point is that now we also have before us Shabbat *Shuvah* (where Return, O Israel is recited)!**

"Return, O Israel, unto Hashem your L-rd"—and we need to do it with awe and love, strong with all our power. How important this is! How strong this is! What a great merit!

It is customary to study ten chapters of the **Rambam** during the Ten Days of Repentance, and I want to read to you a law in the Rambam, in ***Hilchot Teshuvah* [Laws of Repentance] chapter 7, law 7**, this is his wording: How exalted is the level of Teshuvah (repentance), **that previously this [person] was separated from Hashem the L-rd of Israel**—previously, before he did Teshuvah—as it is said **"your iniquities were separating between you and your L-rd,"** and he cries out and is not answered, as it is also said **"even if you increase prayer I do not hear"**—and the Rambam continues—**when he does commandments, they tear them in his face, as it is said "who requested this from your hand, to trample My courts."**

But today after he made Teshuvah and left the evil and said: "Master of the Universe, I have sinned, I have done iniquity, and I have rebelled, and I return in complete repentance", now his state is the difference between heaven and earth, and such is the language of the Rambam: **today he is attached to the Divine Presence [Shechinah], as it is said "and you who are attached to Hashem your L-rd", today he cries out and is answered immediately, as it is said "and it shall be that before they call I will answer", and [when] he does commandments, they accept them with gratification and joy—they roll out a red carpet for him—as it is said "for Hashem has already accepted your deeds", and not only that, but they yearn for them—for the commandments of this person—as it is said "and the offering of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasant to Hashem as in days of old and as in former years".**

What **golden language** of the Rambam! What is this virtue of repentance?! Before this they "tear his prayer in his face", "he cries out and is not answered", "separated from Hashem, L-rd of Israel". But now, after he made repentance?! "Come! You sweet one!" He only said "Master of the Universe, I have sinned, I have done iniquity, I have rebelled, I regret". **Everything reversed**, and the things are astonishing. How much a person who makes repentance merits great things. And if he does not make repentance, how many obstacles stand before his face.

He Got Down from the Plane and Looked for Mercedes...

In the Ten Days of Repentance, the Holy One, Blessed be He, says to us: **"Return, O Israel, unto Hashem your L-rd"—"Return to me!"** And if you do not come to Me—I am coming to you. In the Ten Days of Repentance, **the Holy One, Blessed be He, comes down to us.**

To what is the matter comparable? **There was a certain rich man** who had an only son, whom he spoiled very much. What would he do with the money? His pleasure was to give to his wife and son. **And indeed, he spoiled the only son** with everything possible: until he married him off to a good woman, built him a villa, filled up money for him in bank accounts, bought for him and for his wife Mercedes cars...

As time went on, not upon us, the rich man's wife passed away, and he was left alone. **One day the son says to his father:** "Dad, I want to move to live in America." The father said to him: "But I will stay here alone! Everything you need, I will give you everything, why America?" But the son said: "I am forced to go." And the father pleads: "But how will I see you?" And the son says: "We will come to visit once in a while." What could the father do? The wife was also pressing. And the son traveled to live in America.

The father waits for his son... that he should lift up [make] a phone call from America... But the mind of the son is already immersed in the vanities of

the new world. Until the father called him and pleaded to him: "Come visit me!" and the son would push [it] off—

And pushes him off, until one day the son said to him: "Dad, you know what? You so much want to see me? You come to me, to America."

Without choice the father agreed, and traveled to America. He arrived at the airport, thought that his son is waiting for him there with the Mercedes... No one waited. He thought: "Maybe he sent a driver"—nothing. He took a taxi, packed all the suitcases with the gifts, what didn't he bring for the closeness with his son... He traveled, and thought: **"Surely a welcome reception is waiting for me there with notices, signs, and a red carpet."** He arrived, sees nothing... He says, maybe balloons at the entrance of the house... sees nothing. **Knocks on the door, rings the doorbell.** And he hears the son: "Who is it?" And Dad says: "It's me, Dad!" And the son shouts: "Dad, sorry, it's hard for me to get up now, take yourself **a hotel opposite**, and tomorrow I will come to visit you..."

The father almost fainted, and said with anger: **"Now I am traveling back to the Land [Israel]!** I exerted myself and came unto you, and you tell me go to a hotel? Have you no shame?!" **So the Holy One, Blessed be He, waits for us, misses us**, and in the Ten Days of Repentance says to us: "I am coming to you!"—**"Awake, sleeping ones! The voice of my Beloved knocks, open to Me, My sister, My beloved."**

In the Song of Songs, the Holy One, Blessed be He, calls the people of Israel – "my perfect one" (*tamati*). Which is "My twin" (*te'omati*) – you are my twin, I love you! But what can be done, sometimes our heart is hard like stone. Therefore, at least now return! Sir! The gates of heaven are open! "Return, O Israel, to Hashem your L-rd" – **Do we have no shame?** Now is the time to draw close to our Father in Heaven!

"Where Am I Alluded to in Ha'azinu?"

On this Sabbath we read the song of **Ha'azinu**. **The Ramban** writes, that the song of **Ha'azinu** is a "very honored matter," for Moshe our teacher mentioned in it all the good things and all the virtues that Hashem, May He Be Blessed, bestowed upon the people of Israel before the giving of the Torah, in Egypt, in the sea, in the wilderness, and also the good things that the Holy One, Blessed be He, is destined to bring to the nation of Israel going into the Land of Israel, and likewise he mentions in it, what will be in the future, in the days of the Messiah—"that He will avenge His enemies."

And the Ramban continues, that he also mentions in it, the good hidden for the righteous in the time to come, the resurrection of the dead, and the World to Come, and all these events are hinted at in Parshat **Ha'azinu**, and so too all the souls of the nation of Israel are hinted at. And the Ramban says "there is no end to the hints that are in this Torah portion." And one of the disciples of the Ramban who heard this, said to the Ramban: "Where am I hinted at in the portion?", and the Ramban showed him.

The Shulchan Aruch rules that the song of *Ha'azinu* is written in the Torah in two columns, that each line is divided into two, and in the middle of each line, there is a space. And there are in it **seventy lines**, an allusion to the seventy nations of the world that the Holy One, Blessed be He, subdues them. And there are in it **52 verses**, corresponding to the fifty-two portions of the Torah, excluding Parshat *Ha'azinu*. And also, Eliyahu comes up in gematria to fifty-two. For in the future to come, Eliyahu will come and tell us all the hidden things of the Torah and its secrets. And the **count of the words** that are in Parshat *Ha'azinu*, it is 613 with the *Kollel* [inclusive unit]. Corresponding to the count of all 613 commandments. And also "the heavens [HaShamayim] and I will speak" (*V'adaberah*) is equivalent in gematria to 613 (*Taryag*). Therefore, there is great power in this parsha. And this year, it is read on the **eighth day** of the Ten Days of Repentance.

Who is Listening and Who is Hearing?

"Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth" – Moshe said this parsha on the day of his death, and he said to the heavens and to the earth: "Give ear, O heavens, and let the earth hear" – I want you, the heavens and the earth, to be witnesses regarding my children.

And behold, there is an **interesting matter**: Moshe uses the expression of "ear" (*Ha'azina*) for the heavens – "Give ear" (*Ha'azinu*), and for the earth the expression of "hearing" (*Shemi'ah*) – "and let [it] hear" (*Ve-tishma*). But regarding Yishayahu (Isaiah), we saw the opposite: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth" – hearing for the heavens and giving ear for the earth, and why is this so?

Rather, our Rabbis say: hearing is from a distance, but giving ear is from up close. And Moshe was close to the heavens and far from the earth, for it was the day of his death, and he was closer to the upper realms than to the lower realms; therefore, he used the expression of "giving ear" for the heavens and "hearing" for the earth. But **Yishayahu the prophet** was far from the heavens and close to the earth; therefore, he said hearing for the heavens and giving ear for the earth.

Keep for Me and I Will Keep for You

It is written in the **Midrash** that at the hour Moshe spoke the song of *Ha'azinu*, the upper realms and lower realms were silent. The whole world was quiet, like at the giving of the Aseret Hadibrot (*Ten Commandments* – Ten Statements). Therefore, it is written "These are the words that Moshe spoke", at the hour Moshe spoke, no sound was heard in the world. A bird did not fly, a bird did not chirp, as at the giving of the Torah.

Also, Give ear, O "heavens" (*ha-shamayim*) is in gematria "soul" (*neshamah*). And also, heavens is the aspect of the male, and the earth is the aspect of the female. And on Rosh Hashanah we say, **"that we should be as the head and not as the tail."** What is the head? That we should follow after the head, after

the soul. And not after the tail – after vanity and nonsense – after the body which is drawn to the vanities of the world. Let the soul rule over the body.

And as Moshe says "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth", and it is necessary to understand, behold Moshe our teacher, was humble, and how does he say to the heavens and to the earth be silent for I am speaking?

Rather, Moshe our teacher, wanted to say to the nation of Israel, I will show you what is **the power of a Jew**, every Jew has it in his ability to silence the heavens and the earth, and even to make the sun and the moon stand still, "Sun, stand still at Givon (Gibeon); and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ayalon." **How does one do this?** If a person **rules over his limbs!**

For example, it is written in *Ha'azinu*: "He guarded him as the pupil of His eye", what is the explanation? Our Rabbis say, the Holy One, Blessed be He, protects – guards man as the **pupil of his eye** – just as a person guards his eye, so the Holy One, Blessed be He, guards him. "Keep for me and I will keep for you." Keep for me – your eyes, as I say "do not stray after your heart and after your eyes", and I will keep for you – I will guard you from all pain and from all distress. And this is "He guarded him as the pupil of His eye", as you guard your eyes, I will guard you.

He Opened to Me! What Do You Want?"

And truly, every speech of a Jew has an effect. A person should not think: "So I spoke, what happened?" That is not correct! Every speech of a Jew has immense power! If it is good speech, words of Torah, this speech sustains the entire world. And also, if it is speech that is not good, that too has power.

For example, sometimes the Holy One, Blessed be He, sees that the Satan opens his mouth and prosecutes: "Your children did such and such..." and the Holy One, Blessed be He, says to him: "What is with you? Close your mouth! *CARPAS* (acronym for Clal, Rishon, Peh, Satum) – a first rule, keep your mouth shut... What are you talking about?" Seal the mouth of Satan and let him not prosecute against us... But the Satan says: "Sir, your son so-and-so opened his mouth to me. He spoke not nicely, and the moment he spoke not good, he opened up my mouth, what do you want from me?" This is the immense power that exists in every speech, and this is what Moshe wanted us to learn.

Even When Hashem Appears "Against Me"

"The Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice; a faithful G-d and without injustice" – a person needs to know that there are things that a person is not capable of understanding, only the Holy One, Blessed be He, who watches and looks from end to end of the world, from beginning to end, He can act.

For we are similar to an ant carrying a grain of wheat in her mouth, and suddenly she encounters a small mound, and she thinks there is a giant barrier before her, and she searches for other paths, and it does not enter her mind that above her eye level, there is a whole world with completely different concepts...

We have not accustomed ourselves to the fact that the world does not start and finish at our eye level. If only we live in the knowledge that the Holy One, Blessed be He, looks from end to end of the world, and He does everything, then we will know that many things we are not capable of understanding. How is it written? "The judgments of Hashem are true, they are righteous together" – when they see all of them as one unit, together, then they understand that they were righteous, but we see only small parts.

Therefore, we need internal recognition in our heart that everything is only for the good of man, for He is our Father, and He knows what He is doing. A student of the Ramban once said to his rabbi that he had troubles, the **Ramban** said to him: "It is all Hashem, blessed be He, He sees everything and it is for your good."

The Maggid of Dubna used to say about this: **a parable of a tailor** who received for his hands a special silk fabric, with gold threads, to make from it a beautiful suit. He took this fabric, began to cut it. Cut here, cut this, a person who sees from the side might think: "Oy va'voy!, This one has gone mad, why is he cutting? How can a thing like this be? What is he doing?" But after he finishes the garment, he will see what beauty of a garment, and everything he cut was in order to sew.

The same thing: troubles and problems sometimes visit a person, it is similar to the tailor's cutting, for the Holy One, Blessed be He, cuts, but you need to know and to believe that in the end everything will be good. Everything He cut from the fabric into pieces is for the ultimate purpose of sewing a handsome garment.

The Rebbe of Ruzhin used to say: what is the meaning of "I have set Hashem always before me" (*Shiviti Hashem le-negdi tamid*)? "Hashem before me" – this is the attribute of mercy, these are times when a person sees the attribute of mercy, when everything goes fine; but sometimes it seems to a person also "against me" (*le-negdi*) – as if the Holy One, Blessed be He, Heaven forbid, is against him, meaning the attribute of judgment. And concerning this says the verse "I have set Hashem before me" – equal (*shavah*) to me are times of Hashem [mercy] and times of "against me," for truly the Holy One, Blessed be He, always does good, and one must always accept with joy.

There are times when a person sees mercy, but sometimes a person does not see, and he meets with the attribute of judgment. How is it written? "Hear, O Israel: Hashem is our L-rd, Hashem is one." Hashem – this is mercy; our L-rd – this is the attribute of judgment. Even if you see "Hashem," and even if you see "our L-rd," "Hashem is one" – know that the Name *Havayah* (tetragrammaton) – is one name, One is our L-rd that is in Heaven; so one needs to know that everything is from Him, blessed be He, and everything is for the good of man.

Killed in a Terror Attack and Came in a Dream

In the year 5763 [2003], there was the terrible terror attack on a Bus on the line 2 route, on Shmuel HaNavi Street: more than 20 killed, all of them righteous. One of them was Rabbi Segal, who lived in Bnei Brak and was an educator at the "Torat Chaim" Talmud Torah. After he was killed, he came in a dream to his brother's son and said to him: "You live in Bnei Brak, go to Chazon Ish Street, there is a family there, such and such, their son studied with me, and I owe him 15 shekels. Return it to him." The young man woke up in the morning and thought: **"Dreams speak falsehood."** On the following night, the deceased returned to him in a dream: "Have you no mercy on me?! All you have to do is cross Chazon Ish Street, go upstairs to the young man, return 15 shekels to him." The young man said: "I will do it, I didn't think it was serious."

The next day he went, knocked on the door of the house on Chazon Ish Street. The mother opened to him. "Are you family so-and-so?" "Yes." "Do you know Rabbi Segal?" "Of course, he educated our son." "Which son?" "Moishy." "Call him." The young man came, [and the nephew] said to him: "The Rabbi was killed, you know." "Yes, we were very grieved over him." "He owes you 15 shekels?" **And then he remembered:** "Yes! There was an annual trip, and I gave him 15 shekels to participate in the trip, but he was occupied with studying and didn't write it down, and afterwards he didn't remember that he received it, he thought that I didn't pay, so in order to participate in the trip I paid a second time."

The young man said to this Moishy: "They do not allow him into his partition Above until this debt is paid." He received the money, and immediately was able to enter. The Rabbi returned in a dream once more: "Thank you very much, you saved me!" **See what this is! The dread of judgment!** How much one must try with all one's heart and with all one's soul!

Did Not Eat Poultry All Year – Except on (the day before) Yom Kippur

First of all, *Kaparot*. Whoever wants to do *Kaparot* with a rooster, that is good, provided there will be a good slaughterer and someone to eat the rooster [it can even be himself, there is no problem with that]. **The main thing is the time:** rising early, before morning, starting *Selichot* around four, dawn is around five, and half an hour before it, performing the slaughter, **and the main thing is the slaughter itself.**

Our Teacher the Ari writes: On Erev (the day before) Yom Kippur there are strict judgments (*Gevurot*) that need to be sweetened. The slaughter of the rooster on Yom Kippur Eve sweetens the *Gevurot* that are in the sphere of *Yesod*, and on Yom Kippur itself [by means of the goat] they sweeten the *Gevurot* that are in the sphere of *Malkhut*. This power exists only during the time window between the end of *Selichot* and dawn. The moment they slaughter the rooster at this time, they sweeten the five *Gevurot*. This is the time, and therefore it is important to be precise in it. We here at the yeshiva

pray and do this, but if it is impossible to bring a rooster for each person; then they bring one rooster for each group: let's say ten roosters for ten groups, each group slaughters and divides [**there is no slaughterhouse here**, this is only to merit slaughter at the correct time without losing the roosters]. And whoever cannot [and this is hard] at this time, **shall do Kaparot with money**: puts the money on his head instead of a rooster.

I used to see our Teacher, Chacham (Torah Sage) **Yitzchak Kaduri**, all year long he did not eat **poultry**, not meat, not fish, and on Erev Yom Kippur he takes his rooster, the slaughterer slaughters, salts it, and the Rabbanit prepares from it a small piece of poultry for him, a piece of the poultry. He eats it. **There is no problem at all to eat the poultry of the Kaparot**, and on the contrary, one can also take it home. The main thing is the slaughter. Whoever finds it difficult, here in the yeshiva they slaughter 10–15 poultry, someone from the young married scholars (*avreichim*) will salt them, each one takes his own to his home afterward.

He Wept at "We Have Neglected Your Torah"

Afterward, during the day, as we spoke: the meals, goes to the mikvah (ritual bath), and there is a practice to receive even (symbolic) lashes on that day [this corresponds to four deaths of the court, not for nothing]. A person prepares himself strongly toward Yom Kippur, **with weeping in all the prayers: "Hear, Hashem, the voice of my weeping."** And if a person cannot weep literally, at least he should speak in a voice that sounds like weeping.

Sage Ovadia. Just talking with him, he would shed streams of tears, so sensitive, in all the prayers of Yom Kippur. And especially when he said **"We have neglected Your Torah,"** what weeping he had! For did he neglect Torah?!

Another piece of advice for you: midnight of the night of Yom Kippur is very important. A person should prepare an alarm clock. Want to sleep? Go to sleep, but let it wake you up fifteen minutes, ten minutes before (halachic) midnight, so that at the point of midnight you will be awake. Cry out to the Holy One, Blessed be He, a few prayers, a few chapters of Psalms, and do this until ten minutes past midnight, thus you cried out fifteen minutes, return to sleep, and wake up whenever you want to pray. **This is a very great thing.**

To Learn About Rabbi Akiva!

Also, as I told you, to prepare ourselves and to do Pidyon Nefesh (*ransom of the soul*), you have envelopes here, this is very good. Every person should prepare himself and study the entire order of the High Priest's service (*Seder HaAvodah*), **a wondrous thing**. I say to the students: draw for me, bring me a model of the Temple, I want it to be before me, from where the High Priest enters, from where they enter the Temple, what after what. So that every single thing studied about the High Priest will be grasped by me, so that I will know every detail and all the explanation. That a person knows the order, and when he understands it, it atones for him for all his sins. **Is it not worthwhile?**

Afterward, in the afternoon, it is good to **read about Rabbi Akiva** [as Rabbi Yosef Chaim brings down] about his passing, when they combed his flesh with iron combs, and about the prophecy of Yechezkel the Prophet concerning the Third Temple that will be built with Hashem's help. All this happened on Yom Kippur, to see this, it is a great thing.

And then, **Ne'ilah** [the closing prayer]. This is the peak! What merits. Is there such a thing? The Holy One, Blessed be He, opens, now everything opens, multiple amounts over other times! At *Ne'ilah*. **The greatest time of favor (et ratzon) in the world.** And would a person sleep? No! **To awaken, to do everything!** Therefore, it is an obligation upon us in these days to study *mussar* [ethics], that a person should awaken in repentance, draw close to our Father in Heaven, utilize these days and Yom Kippur, how much this atones for man, what a merit.

And then, when Yom Kippur ends, do not think "we finished." What finished? **Now it begins.** Now take hold of yourself, the prayer on the night after Yom Kippur will be a good prayer, go home, eat well, study the *Shulchan Aruch* laws of the Sukkah, and go out to do something to prepare the Sukkah. Tomorrow morning, go and buy yourself an *etrog*, *lulav*, and *hadas* (myrtle), and prepare yourself for the holiday of Sukkot.

And with Hashem's help, during Chol HaMoed [the intermediate days] we will make a big party here, that we merited to the great light, *Simchat Beit HaShoeva*. May Hashem merit us to all these things, it is not "automatic." Everything comes from Hashem that he will grant us the privilege to do His will as our will, that we merit to sanctify ourselves and purify ourselves. **"For on this day he shall atone for you"** – to draw close to our Father in Heaven. What a great merit this is!

We will bless all the holy congregation, and also whoever listens to us via satellite, via telephone, via Radio Moreshet, Radio Darom, Channel 2000, **the King of the Universe will bless you:** a good inscription and sealing (*ktiva v'chatima tova*), a good and sweet year, a year of flourishing, satisfaction, and much Torah, much Torah, that we merit to receive the Torah with 248 limbs and 365 sinews, to be faithful servants to Hashem blessed be He, and to walk in His ways.

May each one merit everything that he needs, that the Holy One, Blessed be He, give him on this day of Yom Kippur. Needs satisfaction? Give him satisfaction. Needs a wife? Give him a match. Needs a livelihood? Give him a livelihood. Needs health, health will come to him. Everything that each one needs, May Hashem fulfill all your heart's desires for good, for healing and for salvation. May everyone have, with Hashem's help, **a good sealing, great salvation and good tidings**, and the best year, a year of redemption and salvation. **And so may it be His will, and let us say Amen.**