

PARSHA WITH

Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



WWW.ZEEVHATORAH.ORG

FOR SPONSORSHIP AND TO SUBSCRIBE PLEASE EMAIL ZEEVMAINOFFICE@GMAIL.COM

תשפ"ו RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS RE'AIH

ELUL THE MONTH TO MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE

The *parsha* begins with the *pasuk* וקללה היום ברכה. ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה. Why did the *passuk* have to mention "today"? Is it not every day that we are given the unique gift of *bechirah* to choose good or evil, and receive reward and punishment. The answer could be that each person is directed to examine only the day that is עכשו standing now in front of him. Even if prior to this day he had weeks that were full of bad choices for which he created cursed days, he should nevertheless know that this day now is open for one to make it *beracha* and start a contrary path different from his past.

The Torah commences with the letter ב of the word בראשית. The form of this letter is that above below and backwards there are walls and one cannot see beyond the walls. The only open space is in front of you. This teaches that every day we can make a new resolve to uplift ourselves to start with a new beginning by looking forwards for a better and deeper connection with Hashem and his Torah.

Parshas R'aih is the *hakdama* a preface to the month of *Elul* which starts next week. *Elul* is preface to the *Yamim Noraim* the time when we are judged and our verdict for the future year being one of *beracha* or cursed will be decided.

Being a preparation for the Judgement one should strive to employ this message of היום of the *Parsha* every day in *Elul* to fulfill the acronym of אלול which is אני לדודי ודודי לי I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me. Hashem's closeness to us during this month inspires even the wayward individual to return to Him and begin changing his distorted value system that steers his choices towards *kelalah* instead of *beracha*.

Many people when they hear the *Rosh Chodesh* benching with the month of *Elul* being announced, they start to shake their heads this is not for me. אי אפשר it is not possible for me to start making this love relationship with Hashem when my past shows a history of failures and shortcomings. I tried many times unsuccessfully. Therefore I have come to the conclusion it is אי אפשר for me it's impossible to change.

The truth is that *Elul* is the most efficient month of the year that can lead one to correct his limited dwarfed dimensions and build oneself anew. This unique month is alluded to in the *beracha* of אשר יצר which we recite a few times a day. We also mention there the words אי אפשר it is "not possible" in reference to the physical body of man. That if the apertures of the body would suddenly close up or the opposite if the closed parts were to open אפשר להתקיים ולעמוד לפניך it would be impossible to stand alive before you. Take note that starting from the words אפשר להתקיים ולעמוד לפניך spell the month of אלול. The word that precedes these words is אי which connects to the word אפשר the negative word "not" that it is not possible to stand before Hashem. That two lettered word אי that brings to darkness, immobility and stagnation might have been true all eleven months hinted in the gematria אי besides *Elul* the 12th. However when the month of *Elul* arrives don't look back at your



eleven months of failure of אי but rather look at the new possible you that says אפשר I can and I want to make the change.

Rav Dovid Sitnick my close chaver who was gabbai by the Ribnitzer Rebbe ztl told me that once when the Rebbe was very weak from fasting and he was lying in bed, Rav Dovid approached the Rebbe asking him in Yiddish is it possible for the Rebbe to *daven Maariv* now? The Rebbe answered איך קען נישט "I am not able to" he responded. A half hour later Rav Dovid made the same request and he got the same answer from the Rebbe, it is impossible. This routine continued a few times until the Rebbe surprisingly said יה אפשר איך קען it is possible to say yes. For the Rebbe to *daven* it would take tremendous *kochos* of גוף ונפש. I am sure *when* the Rebbe said it is possible that I can do it meant that I will act supernaturally in order to garner up the strength to *daven* a regular *Maariv* of לכתחילה. We see from here that even though in the past if one's take on a mitzvah was אי אפשר, with אשר אשר by using one's חכמה and self-introspection he can reframe the impossibility and transform it into possibility.

Our *minhag* is to blow shofar during the month of *Elul* in order to inspire us to say אפשר and not אי אפשר. This connection between the two is seen through the *gematria* of שופר which also equals אפשר including its four letters and *kollel*. The word להתקיים with the *kollel* also equals שופר and אפשר. Why is the shofar chosen to play the role of אפשר? We suggest that it stems from the *Akiada* test of *Avraham Avinu* where it says that Avraham sent out his hand to take the knife to shecht his son. What does it mean he "sent" out his hand when it should have simply said he took the knife? The answer is that the fatherly instinct of love for his only son destined to be the future of the Jewish nation was intensely aroused by the *yetzer harah* to the point and his hand became as if it was paralyzed from taking the knife. Avraham response was not אי אפשר but rather אפשר and he sent out his hand with a supernatural desire to take the knife even though naturally it was impossible.

Chazal say that the shofar of Rosh Hashana should come from a ram because at the *Akaidah* Avraham sacrificed the ram instead of his son. This was to represent that had Hashem not stopped Avraham at the last second he would have happily sheched him even though it was impossible to naturally do so because of the *yetzer harah*. Yitzchak's ashes are piled forever on the *mizbaiach* as if Avraham truly *sheched* him.

The Shofar of *Elul* is to arouse within every Yid this same *koach* that in this month אפשר להתקיים אי אפשר irrelevant of whether one's entire prior eleven months were driven by only אפשר. In the אשר יצר *beracha* we mention the *Kisay Hakavod* which is not mentioned in any other *beracha*. Our *neshamos* come from the *Kisay Hakavod*. If we have this reality in our consciousness, nothing can stop us from changing a perception of אי אפשר אפשר להתקיים ולעמוד לפניך.

Gut Shabbos,

Rav Brazil

PARSHA WITH

Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



WWW.ZEEVHATORAH.ORG

FOR SPONSORSHIP AND TO SUBSCRIBE PLEASE EMAIL ZEEVMAINOFFICE@GMAIL.COM