

FROM THE PUBLISHER AND EDITOR

CREDITS



"Teshuva, tefillah and tzedakah remove the harsh decree." Teshuva – returning to the ways of Torah; tefillah – turning to G-d through 'avodah' or Divine worship; and tzedakah – doing benevolent acts, lovingkindness.

Throughout the Yomim Noraim we ask repeatedly for Hashem to show us mercy. Reading the Chofetz Chaim's *Ahavas Chesed* (Love of Kindness) brings home the great need to do good deeds; lend money and do kindness to our fellow Jews through our actions and also our words. Stressing that such acts of righteousness are a Torah obligation and highlighting the great blessings one receives from Hashem for doing them – as well as the severe punishment for not – the Chofetz Chaim, poses the

following sobering thought. Not just at Rosh Hashanah, but in our daily tefillah, we ask Hashem to "grant peace, welfare, blessing, grace, lovingkindness and mercy to us".

The Chofetz Chaim asks: "How can one lift his face to the Holy One and ask this if he has no desire to deal with his neighbour in compassion and kindness. G-d would hardly accept his many requests if he himself does not practice chesed."

Hashem repays measure for measure. With so much emphasis today on "me", the i-generation and the ubiquitous social or often antisocial media, Rosh Hashanah is the oasis where one can focus on oneself in a different way. A New Year, when we connect to Hashem as servants of the King with an even clearer realisation that our entire lives are dependent on His chesed, after all, He is the One who "sustains life with kindness". Our deserving Hashem's mercy is very much tied to the chesed we do for others all year round, and particularly so at this time when the Book of Life is open.

I hope you enjoy this special edition – it comes with the sweat of a few brows, under the editorship of Robert Sussman, who has dived into his new role with great skill and professionalism. I am grateful to him, my wife Liz, as well as to Linda, Chandrea, Rizelle, Heidi and the many superb contributors who help create the magazine. Without our advertisers, though, it wouldn't be in your hands, so a massive thank you to all our loyal supporters and the many new companies who have made *Jewish Life* their medium of choice at this time and throughout the year.

Shana Tova

MARTYN SAMUELS, PUBLISHER



Yom Kippur was the one day of the year that the Kohen Gadol would enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple, where the Aron HaKodesh (the Holy Ark) was located. We would think that, while he was in there, he would linger, praying until he couldn't think of anything more to ask for. But, instead, he was extremely brief, out of concern for the feelings of those waiting outside, who literally feared for the Kohen Gadol's life in case he had erred in his performance of the service. So, what did he pray for?

"May it be Your will, Hashem, our G-d, that if this year will be warm, let there be much rain; and don't let the rulership pass from the House of Yehuda; and may your nation, the House of Israel, not need to provide each other with sustenance; and don't listen to the prayers of travellers (regarding rain)."

What does a traveller pray for regarding rain? He prays that it shouldn't rain; that he should be able to travel without getting wet, without having to detour/delay or suffer damage to his belongings. Obviously, the traveller isn't concerned with the greater good or even his own long-term benefit; he's not thinking about how the rain will cool things off, water the fields, fill the wells, and ultimately help everyone. He's focused on his own immediate comfort. So the Kohen Gadol, after having been kept awake all night, fasting, in the midst of his one-man, all-day service, immediately composes his thoughts and beseeches Hashem.

Does he ask for anything for himself or his family? No; only for his people. And what does he ask for? There should be sufficient rain. But he doesn't stop there, because someone else might one day pray for just the opposite. So, he also asks Hashem to ignore the prayers of those who pray that it shouldn't rain.

The profound lesson for us: Prayer – any prayer, by anyone – is powerful. Hashem hears our prayers and actually changes our world as a result.

On behalf of everyone here at *Jewish Life*, we wish all our readers a sweet, happy, healthy new year. K'siva v'chasima tova (May you be written and sealed for good). And mazeltov to Martyn and his family on the birth of a granddaughter!

ROBERT SUSSMAN, EDITOR

* Yoma 53b

ON THE COVER: PIC BIGSTOCKPHOTO.COM
OF THE MANY SYMBOLIC FOODS CONSUMED ON ROSH HASHANAH, APPLES DIPPED IN HONEY – IN THE HOPE THAT OUR NEW YEAR WILL BE A SWEET ONE – IS BY FAR THE MOST UBIQUITOUS. SHANA TOVA U'METUKA – A GOOD AND SWEET NEW YEAR FOR EVERYONE, PLEASE G-D.

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