

THE Kibbitzer

Rosh Hashana
Matok Special



The Shofar guy at our shul. I don't know what others are thinking. He really blew it.

You get it? You blow the shofar. 'He blew it' means he did a bad job. Didn't blow well. Double meaning.

RABBI ANSWERS HIS PUPILS

I am in Israel this Rosh Hashana. I heard that they use vegetation at the beginning of the meal to curse people. Should I be scared?

My Dear Pupil. Don't be scared. Be prepared. Simanim, the signs of fruits and vegetables, used for blessings and curses, are a beautiful tradition. I want you to be prepared, as I wasn't. Let me tell you of my experience.

•*America Didn't Prepare Me* I grew up with an apple in the honey and a pomegranate representing Mitzvot. That is all my Ashkenazik upbringing prepared me for: cute little blessings of a sweet new year and a stained shirt.

•*My First Interaction with Violent Fruit* The Israeli family brought out beautiful fruits and a fish head. Next I know, the whole table started focusing on enemies. They were using fruit to curse out our foes. And I knew to never mess with an Israeli while they are eating. They started taking carrots in their hands and saying that 'Gd should cut down our enemies like a carrot.' They went through all the fruits on the table. Even the gummy strawberry was used to mock those who try to bring us down. Personally, I would think that

if you give an enemy a stawberry gummy, they're going to be your friend. They'll stop attacking and start picking gumminess out of their teeth.

•*Don't Mess With Israelis* The shock continued when they pulled out squash. They talked of squashing our enemies. I started seeing our Jewish people in a whole new light. We are a relaxed people, passive in nature, but you throw fruit and vegetables into the equation and we get very violent. When we summon Gd while eating gourds, we're not a people you want to mess with. Work in a pun and decrees of judgment are raining down.

•*I Was Scared* The shock of my first Rosh Hashana in Israel turned into fear. I was picturing the horrors that carrots can do to people. With a Hebrew root that means 'decrees,' I was scared to eat. I had nightmares of cucumbers and tomatoes. I had flashbacks to pickled tomatoes I had growing up. I didn't eat Israeli salad for half a year. I was eating falafel with a pita, tahini, and that's it. I couldn't use Chumus either. At that last dinner, they said something about Chumus and Hamas... I hope that helps. Have a Shana Tova uMitukah

SERMON OF REBUKE - NITZAVIM

Shabbat Shalom My Congregants, Stand. Everybody stand... Bernie is still sitting... I know you're 92. Did the 90-year-olds not stand, when Moshe said 'all of you standing here today? You think they were saying 'I have a bad back'?... Maybe they were dead. Good point... The Levites didn't die... If they weren't killed, they were standing... How are we to become a nation? *Moshe tells us, (Devarim 29:9-10) 'You are standing today, all of you, before H'... The heads of the tribes, the elders, the police, the children, the women, the converts, from the wood cutter to the water drawer'...* Everybody stands before H'... Not just the Chazin. You fall asleep in the services and... You have to also do your part. Stand... You stand for the Amidah... When we do an action as one... Of course, the water drawers. You don't see water drawers because you don't invite them into the community. They're people too... 'Standing Today.' We stand before H' together... Stand... Together. Now, put your arms around each other... Let's sing 'Bilvavi' for a second... You build a Temple in your heart. Exactly... Now they're leaving shul... I said nothing about the pandemic... The CDC said we can't sway???

Everybody. Even the annoying people. And we all know how annoying the woodcutters can be... We have to accept them... We cannot leave Mr. Kirshnowitz out of shul activities. He gets in everybody's way. Brings up very offensive conversation. Yes he is annoying, but we still have to invite him to our children's bar and bat mitzvahs. He's part

of the community, though he's very irritating. The Fleishblooms too... Even with their dog licking everybody... And Max with his harmony... We have to accept him... He's loud. But we have to accept his annoyance to our prayers and how he throws off all the songs... That is what community is about. Annoying people. How much life do they bring? A lot. The annoying people in our congregation allow us the chance to complain. Which is why we joined this congregation to begin with. It's the annoying people that make us a nation... They give us something to do at Kiddish... An 'Am Kshei Oreph.' And how annoying are the stiff-necked people?! Thank you Mr. Kirshnowitz for being an annoyance. (29:11) 'To pass in the Brit (Covenant) of H' your Gd and His curses that H' your Gd seals with you today'... We have to stand together to pass in the Brit... It's today. It's always today. We have to be ready for the covenant... Yes. The curses are good. Ever got a good curse? Passion is in there... The Torah was not talking about the British. H' was not being derogatory against the commonwealth when He said 'Brit'... I know you don't like British people, Bernie... He was talking about the covenant... With the Jews. Not the British. The British people are not part of the covenant. They're not good woodcutters... We're going to be inviting everybody on Yom Kippur at Kol Nidrei... And we have to stand then too...

Rivka's Notes on R' Mendelchem's Drasha:

There are a lot of British people in our congregation. People standing for the rabbi's sermon really helped. Not one person fell asleep. For the first time. The rabbi seemed to be making up pandemic rules. I think he said that you can't catch COVID if you're standing. He said that was one of the CDC guidelines. With all the standing, I have a feeling there was a pandemic going on in the desert.



Proof. Max Stock is a Jewish store... The holidays are coming. That means, tins. They know that you don't cook for 80 people with pots and no leftovers... I bought 35 tins because I can care less about the environment when I'm celebrating. I also picked up the Costco plasticware bundle. I'm not cleaning anything.

The Rosh Hashana Special is dedicated in honor of the Kilimnick and Wernick ancestors, who still stand with us today.
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