



RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS KI SAVO – ELUL תשפ"ו

ELUL AND THE I'MPOSSIBLE BERACHA OF ASHER YATZAR

Did you ever use the expression this I can't do or it's impossible way beyond my reach? By saying to ourselves or believing that in the moral arena this is an absolute truth, we place limitations in our *bechirah* surrendering to the force of nature and shortchanging our personal growth and relationship with Hashem. Instead of looking at yourself and saying "impossible" rather say **I'mpossible**. Because as *Yidden* we believe in *Siyata Dishmaya* from above symbolized by the ' apostrophe, from which we can derive and acquire the fortitude and resolve to undertake a challenging spiritual goal which previously was totally unattainable in our eyes. It is through *emunah* הוֹלֵךְ מוֹלִיכִים אֹתוֹ we will see over time that you have achieved successfully the goal that you were ready to bury.

This concept is also hinted in the word apostrophe used in I'm. It is when you commit yourself not to surrender but rather to *daven* to Hashem for *Siyata Dishmaya*, you will surprisingly reach the goal to the point of the apostrophe to **post** and proclaim that after relentlessly seeking an upgrade in *ruchniyus* that you have acquired the spiritual **trophy**.

The month of *Elul* is a special period in which it facilitates one to actualize the success of the I'mpossible. The Baal Hatanya (Likutei Torah Parshas Rאה) gives an analogy to the month of *Elul* as מֶלֶךְ בַּשָּׂדֶה (King in the field) in contrast to the rest of the year especially starting from Rosh Hashanah מֶלֶךְ בְּאֶרְמוֹנוֹ the King in his palace. When the king leaves his palace to go tour his country and meet his countrymen his purpose is twofold, to see and to be seen. In this scenario the common folk who otherwise would not have any ability to have an audience with the king or even to see him are now granted the extraordinary opportunity to do so. In this situation they might even be able to ask for a pardon or freedom from taxes since the king is looking to find favor in the eyes of his countrymen. Not so when he returns to the palace. It would take nothing less than a miracle for a peasant to be allowed to speak personally with "Your Highness". So too the month of *Elul* which is the month replete with the Thirteen *Middos Harachamim* being said daily (Sefardim) is an open invitation to beseech Hashem for whatever one desires as he is now accessible in the status of מֶלֶךְ בַּשָּׂדֶה.

At the end of *Birkas Asher Yatzar* we say **אֵי אִפְשָׁר לְהִתְקִיִּים וְלַעֲמוֹד לִפְנֵיךְ** if any of the natural external openings of the body would close or the closed orifices would open it would be impossible to stand and exist before you. In these words we find an allusion to the month of *Elul* in contrast to the rest of the eleven months of the year. The acronym of the **אֵי אִפְשָׁר לְהִתְקִיִּים וְלַעֲמוֹד לִפְנֵיךְ** is **אֵלּוּל**. This teaches us that during the month of *Elul* we can yes exist and stand before you. *Elul* is the month when the king is in the field as we explained above which creates the atmosphere of *rachamim* and the 13 Attributes of compassion that Hashem bestows upon His people. It is only the preceding word of **אֵי** which means it is **not** (possible). Note that the *gematriah* of **אֵי** is eleven hinting to the other eleven months excluding *Elul*. It might be true that during the rest of the year one might feel that growing in spirituality is **אֵי** impossible for him. However when *Elul* arrives the **אֵי** is removed from our



vocabulary in order to possess the acronym of לעמוד לפניך. With *Siyatah Dishmaya* everything is possible.

Now we can understand better the *minhag* to blow shofar during this entire month of *Elul*. The sound of the shofar helps to shatter the *אפשר* mindset of helpless paralyzation and transforms it into *אפשר*. This can be explained by understanding the *Chazal* that say that the shofar of Rosh Hashanah and *Elul* symbolize the shofar sounds that were heard at *Matan Torah* as it is written וקול שופר הולך פסקה. It was at *Matan Torah* that *Chazal* say that the *chait* of *Adam Harishon* was repaired and *Yisrael* returned to the level of *Adam Harishon* before the *chait*. Hashem's blowing of the heavenly shofar symbolized the blowing the breath of Hashem into the nostrils of Man to give him the *neshmah* from the most deepest and inner place ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים. This is what transpires every Rosh Hashanah when the shofar is blown as the *Pachad Yitzchak* explains. In that state of purity and connection there is no room or wiggle space for an *אפשר* reality, only an *אפשר* one. All the stops have been pulled out - אין דבר עומד בפני הרצון -

Another *Chazal* learns the shofar of Rosh Hashanah from the *Akaida* where Avraham was willing to sacrifice Yitzchak to fulfill Hashem's wishes. At the last second Hashem stopped him and said you have passed the test of ultimate loyalty to me and it is deemed as if you sacrificed Yitzchak. The ram will be in his stead. *Chazal* say that the *אפר*, ashes, of Yitzchak are piled on the altar of which Hashem sees constantly and serves as an unshakable merit to *Klal Yisrael*. Both Yitzchak and Avraham knew that Hashem prohibited human sacrifices of *avodah zarah*. They also certainly knew that Hashem doesn't change His mind and yet they both were willing to go against the *אפשר* the impossible reality, Avraham to *shecht* Yitzchak and Yitzchak to allow himself to be *shechted* to Hashem. The sacrificing of the ram and the ashes of Yitzchak symbolized the outstanding *mesiras nefesh* to make the impossible *bechira* *אפשר* – as the incredible outcome demonstrated that the ashes of Yitzchak lay on the *mizbaiach* without Yitzchak even being sacrificed (Bereishis 22,14 Rashi). This is hinted in the word *אפשר* which contain the letters of *אפר*. The blowing of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah symbolizes the ability of the Yid to make an *אפשר* reality transform into an *אפשר* one, but it surely requires the accompaniment of self sacrifice.

The *minhag* is to have an entire month with the preparation of לעמוד לפניך to become nullified totally to the *ratzon* of Hashem. This is hinted in the *gematria* of שופר which is the same as *אפשר* with its four letters and kollel. (Yeshaya 58 1) בשופר הרם קולך the sound of your voice should be like a shofar which arouses within a Yid the declaration of *אפשר* in the place of *אפשר*.

In this *beracha* of אשר יצר we also mention the concept of כסא הבודד which is not mentioned in any other *beracha*. *Chazal* say that the *neshomas* of *Yisrael* originate by the *Kisay Hakavod*. *Chazal* also say that *teshuvah* reaches to the *Kisay Hakavod*. Many people erroneously think that if one sinned so much there is no way he can repent as if he never even did anything wrong in the first place. However, here too the impossible is possible because *Teshuvah* reaches the *Kisay* which is the source of *Yisrael*, therefore with *teshuvah* every sinner in *Yisrael* can start again with a clean slate from the very beginning.

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In this *beracha* of אשר יצר we also have an allusion to *Shabbos Kodesh*. The *gematriah* of נקבים equals שבת. On Shabbos when we receive the *neshamah yesairah* we are spiritually empowered to think אפשר I can actualize my potential further even though it looks like an unsurmountable achievement. The acronym of חלולים חלולים חלולים נקבים חן חן is חן חן which is based on the passuk Zecharaya 4,7 חן חן לה. This can be hinting to Shabbos by the way of our *neshamah yeshairah* through which we find a double חן in the eyes of Hashem and even in our own eyes concerning the positive אפשר *bechirah*. What was אשר אי during the week becomes אפשר להתקיים Shabbos. This too is hinted in the *gematriah* of חן חן לעמוד עה"כ which adds up to ביום השבת. The אפר of Yitzchak and his negation to Hashem is especially felt on Shabbos. This can be seen from the *gematria* of אפר with its inner letters פא ריש אלף which adds up to שבת.

Gut Shabbos,

Rav Brazil