

Rabbi Moshe Wolfson's shoomzen have been translated into English. He has a beautiful shmooze which he quotes from the אמרי אמת, the Gerrer Rebbe, on הושענא רבה.

commemorates the final חותם of the year. On ראש השנה, the גזר דין is written, on יום כיפור it is sealed. Now, there are certain situations where we need a חותם בתוך חותם. If you remember your גמרא, if you leave food unsupervised, and that's how we have כשרות today, you have to have a double seal, חותם בתוך חותם.

What is the difference between יום כיפור and הושענא רבה? On Yom Kippur, all of our ציבור are forgiven through the method of תשובה בציבור. As we work together with the ציבור, all of our עבירות are forgiven and we baruch Hashem get to that level of כפרה. However, there are certain people who are apart from the ציבור. נועבעך, today we know the vast majority of Yidden are far away from the ציבור. What can they do?

That was question number one. Question number two is, for those of us who remember the אושפיזין, whose אושפיזין is רבה? דוד המלך. That's an interesting fact. We're sort of at the end of the יום טוב and we're sort of climbing down from דוד אהרן, משה, יוסף, יעקב, יצחק, אברהם, and we think we're going down. No, we're not going down. We're going up. דוד המלך did an עבירה as a יחיד. He felt himself separated from the עיבור because of the enormity of his עבירה, and he did תשובה for that עבירה. He did so much תשובה for that עבירה that he took that ערבה that we use to do תשובה and reconnected it to כלל ישראל. As the מדרש says, on הושענא רבה we reattach ourselves to the נשמות of one of the greatest people, בן ישי, and we can pour out our hearts and have a תשובה. As we climb up in תשרי, Rosh Hashana brings us up to a mountain, Yom Kippur allows us to climb up higher. On הושענא רבה, we go above the level of Yom Kippur to the level of משיח, so high that we are able to go down to the lowest of the low and show them the path to תשובה.

What do we do with the ערבה after we beat it up and we threw it on the floor? We all know that מנהג we take it and we fling it on top of the ארון קודש. משה knows how to take the lowest suffering נשמה and bring it up higher until they become the top of the ארון קודש. We don't come on הרשענא רבה to show Hashem that we're worthy. We come to show Hashem that we are nothing. We stand before Hashem, aware that we are nothing and we have nothing. We're not just regular ערבות, we're battered and broken ערבות, we're on the floor. דוד המלך is able to pick us up with the level of מלכות and bring us up and come up to Hashem.

Now, what's fascinating is that the calendar is set up, שבת הושענא רבה never comes out on שבת. We need this שבת. We need to bang up this ערבה, we need to pick up this ערבה, which we could not do if it were שבת. Now what's fascinating is, we don't worry about that with סוכות. We don't even worry about that with ראש השנה. We lose the מצוה of שופר on ראש השנה because it doesn't supersede שבת. On Shabbos סוכות, we don't take the לולב. When it comes to ראש השנה and סוכות, Shabbos supersedes them. But חז"ל understood that שבת, while it can take the place of the שופר and the לולב, cannot replace the ערבה. Shabbos is so far removed from this; it cannot help the ערבה that is stretched out on the ground. And guess what? It's only through the ערבה יְרִים אֶפְרַיִם אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ. ערבה. Hashem will not leave us in the dust and the dirt, He will lift us up through the medium of the ערבה. The מנהג of the ערבה had to be protected, and therefore the חכמים made it come out that way that that ערבה will never be abandoned, and the ערבה Jew will never be abandoned. As long as we try our best, no matter how low we have sunk, we can bring ourselves back up in the דוד המלך of זכות and the ערבה.

