

**Chapter 6 - THE HORN BLOWS, THE GATES SWING OPEN, AND WE FEEL THE  
WINDS OF HEAVEN: ROSH HASHANAH**

**THE THREE BOOKS ARE OPENED IN HEAVEN.** *When the shofar sounds one hundred times, it blows open the gates of heaven. When the shofar sounds one hundred times, it forms a bridge between heaven and earth, and we enter heaven on that bridge. When the shofar blows one hundred times, it cracks the shell of our awareness wide open, and suddenly we find ourselves in heaven. When the shofar blows one hundred time, we hear the voice of heaven in it. We experience Revelation. God's voice comes down to earth on the same bridge we used to go up to heaven. ON Rosh HaShanah, all the inhabitants of the earth pass before God in heaven. Rosh HaShanah is Yom Harat HaOlam – the Day the World is Born; the day heaven gives birth to earth. Rosh HaShanah is Yom Ha-Zikaron – the Day of Remembrance; the day we remember that our roots are in heaven, the day heaven remembers us. Rosh HaShanah is the day of kingship, the day we acknowledge the sovereignty of heaven over our earthly lives.*

*We are reminded once again of the vast gulf separating our earthly existence from the heavenly expanse we glimpse on Rosh HaShanah. Our origin is dust and our end is dust. We spend our life earning bread. We are like a clay vessel easily broken, like the withering grass, like a fading flower, a passing shadow, a fugitive cloud, a fleeting breeze, scattering dust, a vanishing dream, BUT YOU ARE KING, ETERNAL GOD. Your years have no limit, Your years have no end, Your sublime glory is beyond comprehension, Your mysterious name is beyond explanation.*

*If we have been paying attention for the past seven weeks, none of this should come as a surprise. At Tishe B'Av we became aware of our brokenness; during Elul we cultivated an awareness of our actual circumstances, the dust we will return to, the fragility and impermanence of our life. If we succeeded in awakening to our lives, we saw clearly how every moment of our lives, every breath, every thought, is only a passing shadow, a fugitive cloud, a fleeting breeze, a vanishing dream. This being the case, how do we acquire a toehold in this world sufficient to do Teshuvah? How do we achieve the transformation our contemplation has shown us we need to make? As Selichot dawns, there is a sense of urgency, even desperation, about our plight, but we have also become aware of the limits of our own powers. We are completely unprepared for this. We don't know how to do Teshuvah. We are incapable of transforming ourselves.*

*For this, we need to enter a realm beyond the one we usually occupy, a consciousness beyond our own. For this, we need the limitless, the endless, the incomprehensible, the measureless, the mysterious. In short, we need heaven. This is where Rosh HaShanah carries us.*

### GUIDED QUESTIONS TO REFLECT UPON

- 1 – When “we experience Revelation, God’s voice comes down to earth on the same bridge used to go up to Heaven.” Where else in the Jewish tradition have we witnessed similar ascending and descending movements around Revelation?
- 2 – Do you experience “the vast gulf separating our earthly existence from the heavenly expanse on Rosh HaShanah?” What other realm(s) may the vast gulf separate?
- 3 – How do you fulfill the need “to enter a realm beyond the one we usually occupy – a consciousness beyond our own?”