

The Obstacles to reach Uman in 2020

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✖ Here's a pic of my cancelled flight to Kiev for Rosh Hashana.
Thank God, I already booked a new flight.

In a number of places, Rebbe Nachman talks about **מנייז**, (*meniyos*), the obstacles that prevent us from attaining *kedusha*.

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“A 天 (heaven) is an aspect of the sky, which is a covering. It separates and blocks a person from reaching something. Like it says, ‘Let there be a sky, and let it separate..’. Because the sky is similar to an obstacle that separates between the desirer and what he desires...The main desire comes from the obstruction to it.”

(Torah 61)

Reb Nosson (*Nizkei Shchenim* 3:8) says that when someone wants to act on something holy that he's been thinking about, what they call וואס ווען ער וויל, Heaven sends down walls, difficulties and obstructions to stop him from doing it.

Meniyos are something that Breslovers talk about a lot. Anyone

who's been to Uman for Rosh Hashana can't help but hear everyone talking about the *meniyos* they experience in getting there. Some lose their luggage, others all of a sudden have unexpected large bills right before booking. Most of my friends who go every year can't manage to bring themselves to book the ticket until the last minute because of all the *meniyos* they see and feel.

The Rebbe said **"My Rosh HaShanah is above everything else"** (Chayei Moharan #403). With a statement of that magnitude, it would make sense that the *meniyos* to getting to his Rosh Hashana would be large ones. Jews have been experiencing these *meniyos* for many years. Don't forget that maybe only a minyan of Jews were able to get to Uman during the years of the Iron Curtain. Even regarding the Tikkun Haklali, which constitutes saying just ten chapters of Psalms, the Rebbe said "It may seem like an easy thing to say Ten *Tehillim*. But it will actually prove to be very difficult in practice."

In comparison to recent years, this year's Covid-19 *meniyos* seem to be quite extreme. Considering how Uman Rosh Hashana has been exponentially growing, many people who now "go to Uman" haven't had these level of difficulties in the past. Every day both the Ukranian, Israeli, and Jewish news outlets are sharing different statements from the two governments and their opinions. In general people are fearful of traveling, exposing themselves and others to the virus, and the required 14 day quarantine when returning to Israel. Then there are the fears of civil unrest in Uman from the Ukrainians who don't want the Jews there, especially this year. Some of my friends who don't go to Uman think I'm crazy and reckless for wanting to go this year. Other's are calling it a suicide mission or grossly irresponsible. To be honest, I get it. I understand the concern. It's legitimate.

But if you believe in Rebbe Nachman, then you believe that he said **"My Rosh HaShanah is above everything else"**. Period. Nothing else is greater. It's not something I understand. It's

not something logical. It's faith. Faith in the tzaddik, faith in his Rosh Hashana, faith in Hashem. Sometimes faith comes before reason. I don't mean to belittle anyone who believes in the Rebbe and is not going. It's not my place to judge. My intention is only to encourage those who plan on going to stay strong in their belief, and to encourage those who are wavering to re-engage with their *emunah* and allow it to outweigh their reasoning and sophistication.

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