

"I have sinned this time, Hashem is the righteous one and I and my people are wicked." (9:27)

We do not find Pharaoh making any such concession after any of the other plagues. Was *makas barad*, the plague of hail, so "enlightening" that Pharaoh was inspired to condemn himself and his nation, while simultaneously offering plaudits to Hashem? *Horav Aharon Rotter, Shlita*, offers a very pragmatic response. *Rashi* explains that the physical composition of the hail was unique in that two chemically opposed substances mixed together. Indeed, the hail was viewed as a *neis b'soch neis*, miracle within a miracle. Fire and hail, which is essentially water, made "peace" with each other to do the will of Hashem. The symbolism of two opposite extremes cooperating in a harmonious relationship, melding together to perform the will of Hashem, evoked within Pharaoh a feeling of respect and admiration for Hashem. This is the uniqueness of the *mitzvah* of *shalom*!