

## If Not Now, Then When?

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Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur remind us that we don't have all the time in the world. Rabbi Hayyim of Zans told the following story:

*There was once a poor countrywoman who had many children. They were always begging for food, but she had none to give them. One day she found an egg.*

*She called her children and said, "Children, children, we've nothing to worry about any more; I've found an egg. And, being a provident woman, I'll not eat the egg, but shall ask my neighbor for permission to set it under her setting hen, until a chick is hatched. For I am a provident woman! And we'll not eat the chick, but will set her on eggs, and the eggs will hatch into chickens. And the chickens in their turn will hatch many eggs, and we'll have many chickens and many eggs.*

*But I'm a provident woman, I am! I'll not eat the chickens and not eat the eggs, but shall sell them and buy me a heifer. And I'll not eat the heifer, but*

*shall raise it to a cow, and not eat the cow until it calves. And I'll not eat it then, either, and we'll have cows and calves. For I'm a provident woman! And I'll sell the cows and the calves and buy a field, and we'll have fields and cows and calves, and we won't need anything any more!"*



*The countrywoman was speaking in this fashion and playing with the egg, when it fell out of her hands and broke.*

*As valuable as it is to make resolutions of what we might do in the future based upon our examination of our past, it is even more important to actually put our plans into action. The rabbi's explanation of the story is blunt and to the point:*

*Said our master: "That is how we are. When the Holy Days arrive, every person resolves to do Teshuvah, thinking in his heart, 'I'll do this, and I'll do that.' But the days slip by in mere deliberation, and thought doesn't lead to action, and what is worse, the person who made the resolution may fall even lower. Therefore every person ought to exercise great caution so as not to fall even lower, God forbid."*

As Hillel said, if not now, then when?

May we all be inspired to live our lives on our best terms, and having made a plan for the upcoming year, to take the steps necessary to put it into motion. 