



## RETURNING AS A COMMUNITY Farbrenge – 6 Tishrei, 5742-1981

Seemingly, Teshuvah should be a personal Mitzvah practiced in private.

For in doing Teshuvah one must make an honest accounting of one's deeds. How does one ascertain the truth? He must isolate himself to avoid distractions, and meditate deeply. As in the Code of Jewish Law regarding the daily prayer: One must meditate on "the greatness of G-d and the lowliness of man"; this is surely required when one wishes to do Teshuvah.

And yet we say that being part of a congregation is helpful to Teshuvah?!

The general rule in all aspects of Halacha; is that factual evidence is the most valid possible proof. We see in the nature of people that when Yom Kippur arrives, Yom Kippur being the main day for Teshuvah, as the Maimonides writes that Teshuvah is "good all year round" – and "all of ones days should be spent in Teshuvah." The entire year is an auspicious time to do Teshuvah, but it is not at all comparable to Teshuvah as it is on "the One Day of the year" – Yom Kippur itself.

We see in human nature, that as much as they may run to be in the synagogue every day, it is not comparable to their efforts, to be in Shul on the Holy Day, on Yom Kippur.

In fact, there are even some people who for reasons Such as "a child raised by Gentiles": he cannot be held accountable, being a victim of circumstances before the age of responsibility.

Yet, when Yom Kippur comes, his soul, too, is aroused. In fact, this awakening is not only within his soul; it affects his feet as well; they carry him into a synagogue, to be together with other Jews, because it is Yom Kippur, a day of Teshuvah.

This behavior can be understood logically as well, since we wish to understand everything in our own minds: Teshuvah is connected with making an honest accounting. One may ask: Since "man partial to himself," he cannot possibly be totally objective about himself. And yet, it is demanded of him to make an account, and that it should be an honest account!

The solution is to get together with another Jew, another G-dly soul. As the Mittlerer Rebbe expressed it, "two G-dly souls against one animal soul." In practical terms, the



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other Jew, being objective, can determine whether he made an honest accounting, or is his self-love expressing itself, and "covering all his sins."

However, only one or two other Jews may not suffice. We see in human nature, that although a healthy person comprises all of the senses, limbs, and sinews, there is always one particular area that stands out. Every person has a special talent for one specific thing, even though he may be complete in everything else as well. It may be an intellectual area, an issue of understanding, or some activity in which he is involved — whether it is the act of charity, the act of giving good advice, the act of healing, and so on. Everybody has their particular talent and the particular area, in which they exhibit "extra care."

Therefore, when one is together with one other Jew; you have two G-dly souls against one animal soul, yet this second person has one specific area in which he excels, but may lack expertise and ability when it comes to helping his friend in other areas, in which he is not so involved.

When a person is together with the community, however, although each person has a unique opinion, together they combine all of the different talents, perspectives, inclinations, and abilities. This grants a person the greatest likelihood to be shown, if he will only ask -as Teshuvah should be done willingly, lovingly, out of a true love- he will then be shown all the areas which he must still perfect.

"It is not hidden from you, nor is it distant." Rather, as the Torah of Truth proclaims, "this matter is very near to you, in your mouth and your heart to perform it." Nachmanides and the Alter Rebbe interpret this verse as referring to the Mitzvah of Teshuvah.

Says the Torah: It is still true. It "is very near to you, in your mouth and your heart." All that is demanded of you is "to perform it," to bring it down into practical action.

When one does so, G-d assists him. In addition to what a created being can achieve on his own, he also receives "G-d's blessing, it is what grants wealth"; he does everything in a "rich and wealthy manner," in the most complete and perfect way possible.

