



Totality of Teshuvah

“It is something that is very close to you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can keep it.” (Devarim 30;14) Ramban maintains that this refers to the mitzvah of *teshuvah* that is accessible to all and can be achieved by anyone. *Teshuvah* is about returning to the core of one's relationship with Hashem. The *Sefarim Hakedoshim* explain that the letters in the word *teshuvah* itself hints at the construct and attitude one needs to effectively follow through the *teshuvah* process.

ת is for "תמים תהיה עם ד' אלקיך" – indicating complete dependence on Hashem no matter what the future might bring. When one understands that his challenges and uncertainties are part of his individual path designed by Hashem, he can connect with Hashem profoundly despite the unknown.

ש is for "שויתי ד' לפני תמיד" - place Hashem before you at all times. The *Rema* begins *Orach Chayim* with this directive to feel as if we are in standing in Hashem's presence throughout our entire day. The word *שויתי* is related to the word *שויו*, equality.

No matter what we are doing or in what situation we find ourselves, we must recognize that Hashem accompanies us every step of the journey.

ו is for "ואהבת לרעך כמוך" – signifying the imperative to love every Jew with the understanding that we are all Hashem's children. The *Tanya* teaches (*chapter 32*), that the divine is found within each of us. Indeed, all our souls are connected at the root. When we relate to others on a soul level, we experience a unique relational closeness and ultimately significant closeness to Hashem.

ב is for "בכל דרכיך דעהו" - in all your ways know Hashem. The *Chazon Ish* explains that one should daven to Hashem to provide whatever he lacks. Nothing is ever too big or too small for Hashem to hear. When one has private *tefilot* and requests says the *Chafetz Chaim*, one should turn in the direction of the *Beit Hamikdash* where all *tefilot* ascend to heaven. In acknowledging that all our needs are endowed by Hashem, we become more deeply connected to Him and feel a greater sense of gratitude for all that Hashem does for us.

ה is for "הצנע לכת עם אלקיך" - walk humbly with Hashem. Many of the monumental moments in *Tanach* occurred in private settings. There was no audience to witness the *akeidah*, the struggle between Yaakov

Avinu and Eisav nor the Kohen Gadol's entrance into the Holy of Holies. Judaism highlights the private relationship between man and G-d. It is knowing that He is aware of our actions, however private they are and the awareness that we don't perform for public opinion. When we do a mitzvah with only Hashem as our witness, we cement this special holy bond. This is the essence of return; it is returning to this state of attachment and intimacy.

It is noteworthy that four of the five *pesukim* alluded to in the word *teshuvah* are associated with one's relationship with Hashem. There is only one *passuk* that suggests one's interpersonal relationships, yet if one would remove the letter *vav* from the word, it would result in two words, *תשבה*, that imply weakness. Only when we invest in treating others (Hashem's children) with sensitivity, can we expect to successfully connect to Hashem in a lasting, meaningful way.

To merit a favorable judgement on *Rosh Hashanah*, The Tolna Rebbe proposes developing a positive relationship with others. Whether displaying patience with a possibly annoying seatmate or not being judgmental of those around us, we can find ways to stretch ourselves *bein adam lechavero*. Additionally, we can look around our *shul*, identify those who are suffering, feel their plight and offer a heartfelt *tefila* on their behalf. When we strengthen the *vav* of connectedness, *Rosh Hashanah* will truly be a day of *teshuvah* and an authentic *Yom Teruah*; a day of *reut*, friendship and kinship. ■

US Citizenship for your Children and Grandchildren



Michele Coven Wolgel
Attorney and Notary

Specializing in American Immigration and Naturalization Law
for over 30 years

IMMEDIATE FILING CRITICAL TO QUALIFY FOR NEW STIMULUS!!!

www.wolgelaw.co.il
www.facebook.com/uscitizenshipinfo
lawyer@wolgelaw.co.il
 Tel: 02 590 3444

*Member, AILA (American Immigration Lawyers Association)
Of Counsel to Bretz & Coven, LLP*

www.bretzlaw.com

Bridge the Gap

Sending a child to Israel for the year?
Give them the support they need.





Dr. Alex Bailey

is a Jerusalem/Modi'in based clinical psychologist specializing in teens and young adults. Since making aliya three years ago, he has worked with dozens of gap year students at yeshivot and midrashot, helping them manage this year of independence, questioning, transition, and growth. Dr. Bailey provides parents with peace-of-mind that their children have the support they need to bridge their gap year successfully.

DR. BAILEY ALSO SEES COUPLES,
FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS AGE 16+

alex.baileysyd@gmail.com www.alexbaileysyd.com