

BILVAVI

BUILDING A SANCTUARY IN THE HEART

LIVING THE PARSHA לחיות את הפרשה

SHOFTIM #462

"Be Simple With Hashem Your G-d"

The first concept of teshuvah is: תמים תהי' עם ה' אלוהיך, "Be simple with Hashem your G-d".

Each of us, when we are born, is born with a quality called temimus (earnestness). As we grow older, naturally, this temimus gets covered over. We can see clearly that young children are pure and trusting, and as they grow older, they begin to know the world around them, and they see that they cannot trust the world that much as they used to. They get used to seeing a world that is far from temimus, and as a result, they learn to stifle their own temimus, so that they can fit into their surroundings.

A child will naturally do anything that others do, believing that everyone around them is pure and acting correctly. There is a deep place in the soul as well, our temimus, which is pure and trusting. But this temimus becomes hidden from use with the more we grow older and we want to mimic our surroundings. But the temimus that remains inside us, deep down, remains dormant in us, as a holy power, a power to be completely trusting of Hashem.

If we wouldn't be born with this power of temimus, it would be too difficult for us to acquire this power, because it wouldn't be in our resources. But Hashem, in His great mercy, imbued us with this natural ability, from birth, so that we can regain this nature whenever we need it. We don't need to acquire this quality of temimus from scratch. Rather, all we need to do is return to our original purity which we are born with. It has merely become covered over and hidden from our conscious awareness. But it is there, deep in our soul. In this time of the year, when our avodah is to do seek atonement and do teshuvah, anyone with a Jewish soul that is a bit opened, will cry tears to Hashem.

Who usually cries, a child or an adult? Generally speaking, a child cries more than an adult. During this time of the year of teshuvah, each and every one of us can naturally return, on some degree, to a state of mind that resembles our pure, childlike state. That is why we can easily cry during these days, epitomizing the verse, "And purify our hearts, to serve You in truth."

These days are the time of which it says, "Before Hashem, be purified", where we return to a place of simplicity in ourselves, the inner child in ourselves, of trusting in Hashem. This temimus is still in us and it is especially apparent during these days of teshuvah, and it enables us to cry to Hashem, simply, and earnestly. Once a year, we have this opportunity to return to our childlike state. As Dovid HaMelech said, "Like an infant on his mother's lap." We can return to this simple, earnest place in ourselves.

During the rest of the year, it is hard to be in this state of mind. But when we are in front of Hashem during these days, we can let this part of ourselves out from hiding, setting our inner childlike state free, and to let it run to Hashem and cry. To access this power in ourselves, we may employ the use of our imagination, such as by imagining a child crying in his or her mother's lap, and to further imagine how the parent lovingly fulfills the child's request. The blow of the shofar of Rosh HaShanah is considered to be a form of crying, the Gemara says. When a child is born, he cannot say a thing, and all he can do is cry to his parents. The sound of the shofar is like the child's cry, and it is a hint that one should be like a child, who can easily cry to his parents; to be able to naturally cry to Hashem. This concludes with Yom Kippur. On Yom Kippur, there is also crying, but it is not a crying of sadness and mourning, which is the crying we have in the month of Av. Rather, it is a crying of longing for Hashem, like a child who cries for his parents when he sees his parents leaving the house and leaving him alone.

That is the first part of teshuvah: "Be simple, with Hashem your G-d." It is our temimus. Sit quietly with yourself, and return to a place in yourself which is childlike, pure and trusting, the purest place that exists deep inside you, which is always there. From there, from that place in yourself, turn to Hashem, and let your crying come forth, letting it flow from your innermost depths. Let us feel that this is the depth of the avodah during these days – "Be wholesome with Hashem your G-d" – and to live with this temimus.

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