

Dvar Torah for Elul/Teshuvah-Time

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August 5, 2010

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Based on *Likutey Halakhot*, *P'ru u'R'vu* 3:10

We're taking a break from the based-on-the-*parshah* dvar Torah. Don't fret none. With God's help we'll be writing and you'll be reading, just it won't (necessarily) be about the *parshah*. And, also with God's help, it won't be boring or uninformative, either.

Now, you've certainly heard and read a lot about *teshuvah*. You've seen the word *teshuvah* translated in different ways, sometimes return or returning, coming back-to God, that is-and sometimes as repent. When people said "repent" did you ever wonder what they meant?

Well, it means feeling contrite for doing the wrong things you've done (or said or thought), and it means amending your life so that you repeat your mistakes (aka sins) less and less. If you're like most people who want to be better Jews, you'll amend your life by doing, or not doing, something that you can measure. For example, you'll (try to): curse less; eat only kosher food; study more Torah every day; not steal or cheat, etc., etc.

Did it ever, ever occur to you that instead of just eliminating the (obviously) wrong and doing more good things, that you should change your attitude? Did it ever occur to you that you can accomplish more by improving your attitude than by changing your regimen? Maybe you should tell your self, "Self, I was thinking. I behave pretty decently. Yes, I have to cut down on my Internet gambling, and there's no reason I

can't make the minyan every day. But Self, what I really need to fix, what I must change if I really want to do *teshuvah*, is add *simcha* to each mitzvah I do. I've got to be glad to it. I will be happy when a mitzvah comes my way. I will enjoy each and every mitzvah I do!"

Rebbe Nachman teaches that two people can be sitting side by side in Gan (the Garden of) Eden. One will thoroughly enjoying it. The other will feel no enjoyment or anything special. Why? They both believed and they both did. They're in Gan Eden for crying out loud! The difference is that the former enjoyed doing mitzvahs, the latter did not (*Likutey Moharan* I, #191).

So, fer sure (as the young people like to say), tinker somewhat with your behavior. But start adding a genuine smile to your every mitzvah, as well.

agutn Shabbos!

Shabbat Shalom!

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