

Second Time Around

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April 8, 2024



Has it ever happened that one day you got excited and had a sudden impulse to draw close to God? This is because a holy spark within you began to blaze intensely, seeking to reconnect to its place of origin, Godliness. You began to make serious resolutions about mending your ways and correcting bad habits. But a short while later, it was déjà vu as you found yourself embroiled again in your past struggles. Yearning and retreating, aspiring and not succeeding, we become emotionally spent and give up hope of ever truly returning to God.

Why does it work this way? The reason is that we are always given a chance to correct our previous misdeeds. Similar circumstances are set up and we are faced with similar physical desires and pressures. If we can overcome the similar challenge, we know that we have truly changed our ways.

So how do we succeed this time around? It's all in the mind. We must overcome the negative thoughts that constantly attack us. Our evil inclination works overtime to overwhelm us with negativity. If we remain psychologically sound, we will eventually attain complete *teshuvah* (repentance). Remember, "No good thought is ever lost." Drink from the wellsprings of faith and encouragement that Rebbe Nachman left us and focus on those powerful thoughts instead. ([See Restore My Soul for further reading.](#))

This is why it is so important to connect to the true tzaddikim. They can coach us along the path of *teshuvah* because they've already travelled the path and are well aware of the many pitfalls along the way. Most importantly, they remind us that God is great beyond all comprehension, and that hope is never lost.

"On the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin should be circumcised" (Leviticus 12:3).

I once heard that the foreskin is the only excess body part that man was created with. So why were we created with it in the first place? The Midrash (*Bereishit Rabbah* 11:6) explains that this teaches us that everything in the world requires rectification. But why didn't God create everything in a perfect state and thus negate the need for rectification?

The answer is that when we face challenges and make the right choices, we actually reveal that God is with us the entire time – even when He is hidden in our most difficult moments. This is the power and the gift of *teshuvah*. We have been given the ability to undo all our previous bad choices and transform them into knowledge and awareness of God. Let's take advantage!

Based on Likutey Halakhot, Tefilat HaMinchah 7:8; Likutey Halakhot V, p. 67a