



Because learning Torah is sweet

HADAR  
Children & Families



יום כּפּוּר  
Yom Kippur



יום כּפּוּר תשפ"ז  
Yom Kippur 5787



## בְּנֵי דִּיּוּקָא • The Calendar

### All About Teshuvah

The Torah (Vayikra 23:28) tells us that the 10th day of the 7th month is יום כּפּוּרִים (Yom Kippurim, "the Day of Atonement"). This day is designated for תְּשׁוּבָה (teshuvah, repentance or return), which means asking forgiveness, reflecting on our choices, trying to become better people, and coming closer to God.

Shouldn't we do teshuvah all year long? What's special about Yom Kippur? The Rambam (Spain and Egypt, 850 years ago) explains:

#### Rambam, Laws of Teshuvah 2:6–7

Although teshuvah and crying out to God are always good, during the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur they are especially good and are accepted immediately, as it says: "Look for God when God is most present" (Yeshayahu 55:6)...

Yom Kippur is the time of teshuvah for everyone, both individuals and the community. It is the ultimate time of forgiveness for Israel. Therefore everyone must do teshuvah and confess on Yom Kippur.

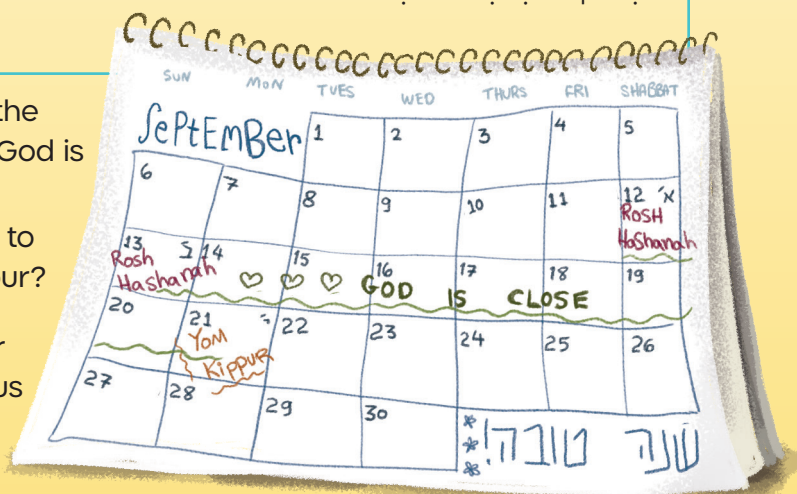
#### רמב"ם הלכות תשובה ב:ו-ז

אף על פי שֶׁתְּשׁוּבָה וְהִצְעָקָה יָפָה לְעוֹלָם, בְּעֶשְׂרֵה הַיָּמִים שֶׁבֵּין רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה וְיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים הִיא יָפָה בְּיוֹתֵר וּמִתְקַבֶּלֶת הִיא מִיָּד, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "דַּרְשׁוּ ה' בְּהִמְצָאוֹ" (ישעיהו נה:ו)...

יום הכּפּוּרִים הוא זְמַן תְּשׁוּבָה לְכָל, לְיַחִיד וּלְרַבִּים, וְהוא קוֹץ מְחִילָה וּסְלִיחָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל. לְפִיכֹךְ חַיִּבִּים הַכֹּל לַעֲשׂוֹת תְּשׁוּבָה וּלְהַתְדוּת בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים.

The Rambam explains that Yom Kippur is the best time for teshuvah because it's when God is especially close.

- What does it mean for God to be closer to us during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?
- Why would that make it a better time for doing teshuvah? What does that teach us about teshuvah?





## בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

How do you do תשובה (teshuvah, repentance)?

The Rambam (Spain and Egypt, 850 years ago) gives how-to instructions:

### Rambam, Laws of Teshuvah 2:2

What is teshuvah?

- (1) A person must stop their wrong behavior and remove it from their thoughts.
- (2) They must decide in their heart never to do it again...
- (3) They must regret what they did in the past...
- (4) They must confess aloud and say these things that they decided in their heart.

### רמב"ם הלכות תשובה ב:ב

ימה היא התשובה? הוא

- (1) שיעזב החוטא חטאו, ויסירו ממחשבתו,
- (2) ויגמר בלבו שלא לעשהו עוד...
- (ג) וכו' יתנחם על שעבר...
- (ד) וצריך להתודות בשפתיו ולומר ענינות אלו שגמר בלבו.

According to the Rambam, teshuvah is a very specific process with four parts. First, you stop doing the wrong thing in the present, then you decide to never do it again in the future, then you regret your past mistake, and then say it all out loud through ודוי (vidui, confession).



- ♦ Why might each step in this process be important? Which step do you think is the hardest, and why?
- ♦ According to the Rambam, what is the main point of teshuvah? What does this teach us about Yom Kippur?
- ♦ **Try it out!** Is there a behavior you could change? Map out how you could apply each of the Rambam's four steps to make that change.

But is teshuvah only about fixing mistakes? Here's a completely different description of teshuvah, from many centuries after the Rambam. It comes from R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi (Eastern Europe, 250 years), who was also known as the Ba'al ha-Tanya (author of the Tanya).

### Likkutei Torah, Shabbat Shuvah 66b

Teshuvah is not only about sins. Rather, teshuvah is returning the soul—which went way down and became covered in physical things—back to attach to God, where it came from...

Therefore the Ten Days of Teshuvah and Yom Kippur were established even for completely righteous people... This is a higher kind of teshuvah that comes from the depths of the heart... In this way, you should put love of God in your heart from the greatest depths of your self and your heart.

### לקוטי תורה שבת שובה סו:ב

כִּי הִנֵּה תְּשׁוּבָה אֵינָה מַעֲבֵרוֹת  
שׁוֹבְדֵי דִּוְקָא. אֲלֵא תְּשׁוּבָה הִיא  
לְהָשִׁיב בְּפֶשֶׁוּ שְׂרִידָה מִטָּה מִטָּה,  
וְנִתְּלַבֶּשֶׁה בְּדִבְרֵים גִּשְׁמִיִּים, אֶל  
מְקוֹרָה וְשִׁרְשָׁה לְדִבְקָה בּוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ...

וְלָכֵן נִתְּקְנוּ עֲשֶׂרֶת יָמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה יוֹם  
הַכְּפוּרִים גַּם לְצַדִּיקִים גְּמוּרִים...  
וְהוּא בְּחִינַת תְּשׁוּבָה עֲלֵאָה מַעֲמָקָא  
דְּלִבָּא... כִּדּוּ יִשִּׁים אֶל לְבוֹ אֶהְבֵּת ה'   
מְקָרֵב אִישׁ וְלֵב עַמּוֹ.

According to the Ba'al ha-Tanya, teshuvah is not really about sins or mistakes. It's about something bigger: attaching our souls to God and loving God in our hearts. Every person—even those who didn't do anything wrong—can always try to come a little closer to God in their hearts.

- ♦ What does it mean for the soul to be "covered"? What kinds of thoughts or actions might help you feel more attached to God?
- ♦ Why might the Ba'al ha-Tanya suggest that love of God is a "higher" kind of teshuvah than focusing on sins or mistakes? What can this teach us about Yom Kippur?
- ♦ Can the Rambam and Ba'al ha-Tanya both be right? How? What's something important they each add to our understanding of teshuvah?
- ♦ According to the Ba'al ha-Tanya, why do even totally righteous people need Yom Kippur?







## תּוּשָׁבָה • Hasidut

Fixing mistakes is hard work, and it can sometimes be discouraging. If we spend too much time focusing on things we do wrong, then that can lead to a very negative attitude. For some people, that's not the most effective way to change and grow. Rebbe Nahman of Breslov (Eastern Europe, 250 years ago) teaches that there's an alternative: focus on growing the positive parts of yourself! This can be a more meaningful way to do teshuvah for some people:

### Likkutei Moharan 282

A person must search and seek to find within themselves some little bit of good...

A person must judge themselves favorably and find within themselves some point of goodness, in order to strengthen themselves and not fall completely, God forbid. Rather, they should give themselves life and bring joy to themselves through the good they find inside (even if it's only a little bit)—like any mitzvah or good deed they were fortunate to do in their lives. And then they should look for even more (good withinin)!

### רבי נחמן, ליקוטי מוהר"ן רפב

צריך האדם לחפש ולבקש  
למצא בעצמו איזה מעט טוב...

שצריך לדון את עצמו לכה  
זכות, ולמצא בעצמו איזה  
נקדה טובה עדין, כדי לחזק  
את עצמו שלא יפל לגמרי, חס  
ושלום. רק אדרבא יחיה את  
עצמו, וישמח את נפשו במעט  
הטוב שמוצא בעצמו, דהיגו  
מה שזכה לעשות מימיו איזה  
מצוה או איזה דבר טוב, וכמו  
כו צריך לחפש עוד.

If we only notice what is wrong with us, we may give up. But if we start from a place of seeing the good within ourselves, we can build on that, adding more and more goodness—and that will help us to keep growing.



- ♦ Why do you think Rebbe Nahman wants us to focus on our good qualities?
- ♦ How can noticing your strengths help you do teshuvah?
- ♦ What's joyful about teshuvah?
- ♦ What's something you're proud of from the past year? How can you build upon the goodness inside you?