

THE MATZAV TODAY

By Binyamin Golden

When all the Yidden are living according to the Torah the atmosphere in the world is one of harmony, peace, and tranquility. When they live their lives in *sheker*, there is turmoil, distress, pain, conflict and disunity among brothers. This is our choice. It is black and white; either, or. We make the decision. Yes, yes.

All Jews, no matter where they are must return to their Father in Heaven. They must show Him who is their G-d, who is their Creator, Yes, Must show Him that they believe it deep in their hearts and nothing will shake it, No fears, no threats. It has to be a steadfast *bitachon* in Hashem that is immovable under any condition.

Jews, wake up. It's your last chance. Now or never. No time to waste. War or peace, turmoil or tranquility, upheaval or harmony. It's your choice. Do something together. Make a demonstration of devotion and maybe Hashem will change the *gezeira*. No time to waste, now.

In history, there were many *tekufot* of persecution and tzarot for Yidden. There were many times of uneasiness and terror. They were times when Hashem concealed His attention to us. They were times when Yidden felt that Hashem had deserted them .But really he was with them all the time. His Presence couldn't be felt because no one was attuned to it. They were far-removed from him.

Now in our times in this *tekufa* he is hidden from us. That is because we are in need of true *teshuva*. Not the kind people are doing today. It is a *teshuva* that we today have not yet accomplished.

Teshuva amitit is: **ONE** -- accomplished when one is totally immersed in his *avodah*, in Hashem's *derech*. It is total devotion to Hashem in Shamayim and *bitachon* that whatever He does is for our good. *Teshuva* accomplished with these things in mind has to be *teshuva amitit*. The problem today is that the preconceived ideas that people use as a prerequisite to their *teshuva* destroys that *teshuva*. Then it is no longer *teshuva amitit* and therefore doesn't bring the *geula* that we wait for with such longing.

When one is about to begin his journey to true *teshuva* one has to rid himself of all old baggage, all the old ideas that one has carried with him through one's lifetime, and start accumulating new valuable acquisitions that one can get from our former *talmidei chachamim* in their holy writings. There are all kinds of very important works written by *tzadikim* that help us realize who really is running this world. One does not have to be a *talmid chacham* to read these works. There is much written today in English as well that translates to us laymen the *Sodot Haolam*.

Number **TWO**: is to learn *Halacha*. We must know the correct way to do the *mitzvot* that we do anyway, but don't do right. All of us do *averot beshogeg* because we don't know *halacha*. We must all learn the fundamental basics of our Torah. One cannot be a good Jew without this. It doesn't come naturally to us like it did to Avraham Avinu. We must learn the *halachot* in order to do the *mitzvot*.

Number **THREE**: All good Yidden must get rid of all negative feelings against his fellow Jew. One cannot do true *teshuva* with negative feelings in one's heart against another Yid. Yidden must love one another. No choice. It is a commandment in our holy Torah, Just like eating kosher or putting on Tefillin, no difference. If one has difficulty with this, our *chachamim* have also set down guidelines how to accomplish this. One must work on this with the same diligence one works on his concentration in davening or any other *mitzva* that comes with difficulty. The feeling of accomplishment when one has conquered this is enormous.

Number **FOUR** is *chesed*. That is a *yesod* in our behavior with our fellow Jew; the way we behave with our friend is the way Hashem will behave with us. *Mida keneged mida*. We set the tone. Practice the love of your fellow Jew when doing *chesed*. It is easier to do *chesed* with one you love than one that disgusts you. When one has acquired love for all Jews then *chesed* comes easier.

Number **FIVE**: *Teshuva amitit* needs *tefila*. *Tefila* with a broken heart for Hashem to accept our tefilot beratzon. Hashem waits for His children to daven. He wants to hear our cries of anguish so that he can answer them with his kindness. Even Moshe Rabeinu had to ask Hashem to forgive His children in the *midbar* after the *chet ha'eggel*. It wasn't enough to just think those things. He had to plead with a broken heart for forty days before Hashem forgave His children.

Number **SIX** is *emunah* in Hashem that all comes from Him. This comes as a result of true Torah observance. It comes as a result of true *mitzva* doing. It is the vehicle to bring us to true *emunah* in Hashem. When one is on a path of *teshuva*, *emunah* is a must. If not, then there will be many setbacks to trip him, but with *emunah* he will push forward no matter what obstacles come in his way.

Number **SEVEN**: Yidden must be aware of their surroundings at all times. No *traifos* in the air. No *devarim asurim* influencing their delicate make up. Outside influences have a definite negative effect on a holy Jew. We must always protect our surroundings and guard that no *tumah* seeps in.

Now for number **EIGHT**. No Jew can accomplish true *teshuva* without learning Hilchot Teshuva. Again there are many sefarim written on this subject. It is very important to know the *Halachot* of *Teshuva*. Whole sefarim were written for this purpose. Use the direction of our holy *tzadikim* to guide us through the steps of *teshuva*.

Now number **NINE** is love of Hashem. Love of Hashem comes through his mitzvos as well. But the difference here (between this and acquiring *emunah*) is that in loving Hashem one must acknowledge that he is our Father, and loves us as a father loves a son, with no hesitation, no question, no interference, only true love of a parent to a child. Then we can return His love in the same way we get it. Without it being attached to the things we get. One can love Hashem out of poverty. One can love Hashem out of sickness. One can love Hashem even when one doesn't see the end of his *tzarot*. One must love Hashem no matter what one gets from Him. It is not depending in anything, Only in his own conviction to be devoted to the One who has created us and given us life.

Number **TEN** is *Simcha*. Without *simcha* there is no life worth living. It is void of all the things that Hashem has created us for. *Simcha* in one's heart comes from the awareness that Hashem is our Creator, our Lover, our Benefactor, and He is devoted to no one else but His children here. The whole world was created for us. The Torah was created for us. This awareness should bring us to such joy that we should be able to dance from morning to night. With *Simcha* one can conquer anything, even one's own heart. With *Simcha* we can accomplish true *teshuva* and bring Moshiach in the fastest way possible.