

## TESHUVAH OF YOUR SOUL MEDITATION

This is a meditation specific for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, for we know that the spiritual mantra of the High Holidays is “who shall live and who shall die.” On Rosh Hashanah, it is written who shall live and who shall die. However, during these days, through teshuvah, through good deeds and through prayer, we can change the decision of the prosecutor. This meditation is a Kabbalistic meditation for the High Holidays only. It is called RETURN OF THE SOUL. Just earlier we had the RETURN of the HEART meditation. Here is RETURN TO THE SOUL. These three instruments are so powerful, that even if 999 sins argue for punishment and only one good deed argues in the person’s favor, the person is saved. (Shabbat 32A)

This meditation is asking us to make CHESHBON HANEFESH, a reckoning of the NEFESH aspect of our soul. Remember, the NEFESH aspect of our soul is responsible for the functioning of all our organs and limbs. This meditation is done during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The purpose of this meditation is to gain insight on how we are doing spiritually and to find new directions for achieving a higher spiritual life.

1. Find a comfortable place to sit – your miat meekdash.
2. Be conscious of your breathing in and out. Let yourself imagine you are standing in a field. Near you is a ladder that reaches into the heavens; the ladder is very sturdy and safe to climb. You begin your ascent.
3. You arrive at a plateau. It’s like an amphitheatre with two tables in the middle. You are standing near one of the tables. There are numerous angels all around.
4. But there are two other beings. One is an accuser. The other is a defender. The accuser is the prosecuting attorney. The defender is your defending attorney.
5. Both the accuser and the defender—they know everything you have done this past year. The accuser wants to close the book on you. The defender will do everything he can to keep the book open for another year. Use your mind’s eye. Visualize—see the accuser clearly. See the defender clearly, and see the Presence of God as a shining light. You are also remembering “Who shall live and who shall die.” This is the mantra of the High Holidays. Remember it is your soul that goes to the heavenly worlds, during your sleep. And a reckoning of your soul is taking place so that you can be given still another year. This meditation is powerful. You want to visualize your defending lawyer inspire Hashem.
6. The accuser makes three accusations about you --how you have lived your life up to now, especially this past year. Listen carefully to his accusations. You know in your soul where you have missed the mark at least three times. Visualize those three times and hear the accuser saying them.
7. Now visualize the defender responding to those three accusations, arguing in your defense. Visualize how the accuser and defender look.
8. Notice how you feel as the accuser speaks. Notice how you feel as the defender speaks.
9. The accuser sums up.
10. The defender sums up.
11. Visualize this with a clear crisp picture. Now speak in your own defense. It is time for you to make a prayer vision for the New Year. In this prayer vision is included a vision of spirituality, a vision in which we promise and visualize our doing good deeds, mitzvot and prayers this coming year. In your prayer vision, you are saying to God, “Hashem, it’s worth investing in me, in my life.” Here are some ideas for your prayer vision:

- A. I will give more to charity, for example the food pantry of my temple.
  - B. I will pray every day, and talk with You every day, and go to temple at least once a month. The RETURN on INVESTMENT (ROI) is worth your while.
  - C. I will pray with faith. When you pray, you pray as if your prayer is already answered.
  - D. I will read at least one book on Judaism this year.
  - E. My prayers won't be demanding a free blessing, but I will give both again and again this year.
  - F. I will promote among my friends the importance of going to shul, praying regularly, giving charity regularly, studying with the Rabbi regularly.
  - G. All this will be included in my PRAYER VISION
12. Visualize you articulating this prayer vision to God. Reflect on your own Defense, on the accuser's words, and on the Defense Lawyer's words—understanding that you can't remember everything they said or you said—but FOCUS ON YOUR INTENTIONALITY.
13. Climb down the ladder. You are back in the field. The meditation is over. Open your eyes.