

Hey! It Ain't Over Yet

By HaRav Ariel Bar Tzadok

Copyright © 2009 by Ariel Bar Tzadok. All rights reserved.

OK, so we have now made it past Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur. Most now figure that they can return to their bad habits and improper behavior without Heaven paying too much attention. After all, G-d has forgiven us and we can now “sin” for another year without having to worry about repenting. Right? Now come on! I know that no one is going to admit to these words, but I also know that there are a lot of people out there who feel this way and maybe not to beneath the surface believe this as well. Well, guess again! It ain't over; not just yet.

Our Sages have taught us that Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur would not be complete without the final night of Succot, Hoshanna Rabbah (remember Shmini Atzeret/Simhat Torah is a separate holiday). Rosh HaShana, Kippur and Hoshanna Rabbah form a relationship which we can summarize as one's annual, destiny being “signed, sealed and delivered.” Our course is set on Rosh HaShana, it is sealed by our choice of repentance or not on Yom Kippur; but then we still have some final days to be tested to see if the teshuva we made on Kippur is real and stays with us. So, at midnight on Hoshanna Rabbah, the verdict passed on Kippur is updated, finalized and handed over into the hands of the Irin Kadishin to execute.

So, while we believe that we have been so religious and so good that Heaven will now smile on us for the entire year, the truth is that Heaven is still watching us and waiting to see just how sincere and honest our religiosity and goodness really is. It is a horrible thing knowing that every movement you make is being watched. And I am not referring to the ever stretching eye of big government be it in Washington, London or Jerusalem. We must remember that the Real Big Government of HaShem is watching us all, including and especially those behind the cameras in Washington, London, Jerusalem and everywhere else.

Yes, we are being watched and the books are still open. They always are. We do not have much to fear from the Big Brother of any nation; but the “Big Daddy,” our Heavenly Father is not one we can ever escape from. His Gaze is not only upon our movements, but also upon our very souls, upon every thought we think and every feeling we feel. HaShem knows us inside and out and knows who is sincere and who is the hypocrite. There is no escaping the correctness and righteousness of Divine Justice. It will pursue us, for good or for evil, and it will reach its target (us) right on, without fail, and without delay.

Our recent teshuva needs to stick. It cannot be a temporary show of religiosity just to get us through the holidays. This New Year of 5770 is going to be a “roller-coaster” of “interesting events.” How we will fare during the hard times to come is being decided right now. Do not be so arrogant into thinking you are master of your own destiny. This is not true for any of us. How we will be able to handle what is “coming down the pike” is decided by He who is watching us right now. Whether or not we will merit to be in the right place, at the right time in order to act in the right way is being decided right now. What we do now will plot our course for the year to come.

It ain't over yet, my dear friends. Our teshuva must continue. It must be real and it needs to stick. Only real change on the inside will manifest in a real course correction on the outside.

Go into Succot with joy. Go out in your free time and bond with nature. Go hiking. Go take some nature walks. Get out of the crowded urban areas and spend some hours in a quiet place where you can hear yourself think again. Succot is all about remembering our dwelling in booths long ago and how we were so absolutely dependent upon Heaven for everything. Well, nothing has changed. We still need to relearn this most vital of lessons. Get back to nature and see what HaShem has made. Maybe this can remind you of who really is in charge and how indebted to Him we really are. Give thanks to HaShem, for He is good; for His mercy is forever.

שְׁנֵיתֵי ה' לַעֲגֹדִי תָּמִיד
KosherTorah.com
כַּמֶּב"א