



As we approach the Yamim Nora'im, surely the following adjuration in our Parsha stirs us to ask ourselves, so what about us? For it is written:

"Lest there be among you a man or woman... that blesses himself... saying - 'I shall have peace although I walk in the stubbornness of my heart... as the watered [land] is swept away with the dry'" (D'varim 29:17-18).

Let us hope that any stubbornness we might exert is not based on one corollary deduced from the above sentence, namely, that a dry field attached to a wet field will willy-nilly benefit from the watered terrain (after the Akedat Yitzchak).

For instance, when we pray with a Minyan, do we not (sometimes) entertain the notion that since our personal petitions are so unworthy, we will nevertheless benefit from the supplications of the tzadikim in our midst?

Yes - Let us hope that we do not count ourselves among those who take themselves out, desiring the privileges of the community without accepting the responsibilities and duties that go with it.

For Hashem warns us that that is not the way because an entire people accepted His covenant.

Moreover, Nechamah Leibowitz, wisely following the Rambam's cautionary note, reminds us that if people perform but one sin or good deed they might tip the scales, not only for themselves but also for the entire world. What a sobering, if not overwhelming, thought to take us into Rosh HaShana. **MP**