



# A Thought for Shabbat

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## Shabbat Shalom

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In this week's Torah portion, *Ki Tavo*, we read the continuation of Moses' sermon/lecture to the People as they are readying themselves to enter the Holy Land. Moses speaks of the blessings and curses that could come their way as they pass from one place to another.

At this time of the year, prior to the High Holy Days, we are instructed to take a *Cheshbon HaNefesh*—an Accounting of our Souls as we pass from one year to the other. We are to count the blessings we have amassed and to acknowledge the curses we have inflicted. Some of us claim not to be very good accountants. However, these ledgers require only two virtues; honesty and courage.

We must be honest with ourselves. We ought to be proud of that which we have accomplished during this year and at the same time be honest enough with ourselves to understand that we are not perfect. We have faults and, to be sure, those faults reared their ugly head at one point or another during this past year. People were affected by our behaviors. Be honest with yourself and admit it is so.

Once we have been honest, we must have courage to do something to turn that curse into a blessing of repentance. Our tradition admonitions us to immediately take responsibility for the wrong we have done, seek turn forgiveness from the aggrieved party and to promise never to commit the sin again. It takes courage to seek forgiveness, to say you are sorry. With fortitude, we must strive for higher levels of our humanity each year. Being honest with ourselves, and courageous enough to act upon that which we have discovered, will put us in very good stead for the days ahead.