

Hashivah shofteinu k'varishonah. Restore our judges as we had originally.

In the brachah of Hashiveinu, Return us, we asked Hashem for personal, individual teshuvah, return. Each Jew should find it in his heart to realize that he is distant from where he should be, from where Hashem wants him to be. The blessing of Hashivah shofteinu, Restore our judges, our leaders, is a plea for collective teshuvah, for all of Am Yisrael, wherever they may be spiritually, physically, geographically distant from Eretz Yisrael, to all come together as one nation, under Hashem, serving Him in a unified and united manner. We understand that it is all about leadership – from motivation through follow-up; we require guidance and counsel from a leadership that is committed to its followers – not to itself. Corruption, for a host of reasons, is a scourge that can, and does, creep into the most noble and well-meaning people. It begins with insecurity, goes on to pride and honor, financial security and power. It happened in the time of our First Temple where weakness led to avarice and corruption. We ask for such leadership that is understanding and welcoming – who will embrace each and every Jew, regardless of his distance from the nation and the reason that he has strayed.