

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Less than 60 days to Chanukah - insights to help traverse the upcoming shorter days and longer nights

As we turn the corner into fall and winter, leaving behind the Yom Tovim that recharged our souls to serve Hashem, the light of Chanukah is only 60 days away. But during those 60 days, we will be plunged into the imbalance of darkness, and it will be up to us to keep alive our dreams and goals and spiritual yearnings.

What thought can we turn to consistently to pull us out of the tuggings of anger, despair, fear, worry and the whole ilk of negativity which feels so real in our inner beings? The one thought to help is that we can feel good about ourselves based on our effort and choice to judge negative thoughts and feelings as not precious to Hashem. It may seem inconsequential, but it is, in fact, deeply rooted in emunah and is precisely the sincere choice that the Nefesh HaChaim tells us to do in order to accomplish ein od milvado consciousness,

"It is a great matter and a wonderful direction to nullify all judgments and forces against a person (so that they who't be able to rule over aperson and won't have any effect on him) is when a person sets in his heart and resolves:

'Behold Hashem is the true G.d and that there is nothing else other than Him. Every force in the world and in all of the worlds is filled only with His simple unity."

When a person totally nullifies in his heart every power and force in the world and doesn't pay attention to them at all...and when a person subjugates and attaches the purity of his thoughts to the one Master only...Then Hashem will provide for him that as a result of his resolve will be nullifies all of the forces and powers in the world so that they won't have any power against him at all..."

Nefesh HaChayim Section 3 Chapter 12

If we can remember to attribute to our negativity its source as "the strange gd within us, the El Zar," then our effort and choice to yearn for connection and attachment to Hashem alone becomes the action we have control over that we can judge as precious to Hashem.

May this information be a support and blessing to us all as we are "put to the test" in the darkness we are entering, and may the light of Chanukah and Hashem's help in increasing our emunah bring us to a place of redemption and inauguration of the third Bais Hamikdosh.