

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Purim in Cheshvan? We finished Yom HaKippurim, but spiritual renewal is not fully completed until our physical beings accept it at Purim when we saw the defeat of Haman!

Rabbi Moshe Weinberger, in shiur 36 of the series Menuchas Hanefesh, teaches from the Vilna Gaon that Purim completes Yom HaKippurim. He explains from the Gra that on Yom HaKippurim, we spiritually accept Torah and are rejuvenated. Yet on Purim, the Jews accept once again the Torah, from a comprehension within their bodies, with deep love, for having been saved. Rabbi Weinberger explains that the acceptance of Torah from the guf on Purim is likened to revival of the dead – with the defeat of Amalek, we see the resuscitation of the dead as our bodies with love accept the Torah.

Rabbi Aryeh Nivin teaches in his Personal Development chaburas, based on the writings of the Leshem, how the Jewish year brings us from Yom Kippur back to Elul, cycling through the year and bringing spiritual growth. In Cheshvan, we plant the seed we formed in Elul and Tishrei, our spiritual potential. It begins to sprout by Chanukah and just after Purim, three weeks before Passover, begins the 72 days of chesed where we can bring ourselves from slavery to freedom and to harvesting our spiritual growth for the year.

If all of this seems too esoteric for you, be assured THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY NOT ESOTERIC but rather crucial information we need TODAY to properly respond to our lives.

We are told that we must eradicate Amalek. The external Amalekians from the 1940's, the Nazis, were defeated, but once again, we see external representatives of the philosophy of Amalek, who wish to wipe us off the map.

The Nefesh HaChaim explains that we have a soul that produces influence in the world. If we are seeing Amalek, is it not prudent for us to consider if we are influencing the world with our souls with choices and actions that might strengthen that negativity?

How many of us are willing to face that inside every person is a magnetic pull towards rebelling against Hashem that we may not even realize is affecting our choices? Part of us is not willing to give up that very last drop of cynicism, and we do not even realize that it has control over us! The stronghold it has on us seems to be to encourage us to comprehend the need to deal practically with the reality of this world. What could be false about THAT?

Eternity is reality, Hashem is absolute truth, and this world, the lowest world in which Hashem is hidden, gives the appearance of being real but is the most unreal of all the worlds, filled with illusions and images that stimulate our imagination and take us far away from seichel (absolute truth of Torah). Without having our seichel embedded in our hearts, we have no chance at all to withstand the pull from that cynical part of us, the Amalekian part of us, that seems to be presenting a far more logical and practical picture.

And so we fall deeper and deeper into unreality thinking it is reality, the only reality we know, the world that impacts upon our physical being. When we embed in our hearts the knowledge that Hashem in a blink of an eye can change the world that impacts our physical being, then we have engraved emunah within our guf and THAT is the beginning of resurrection of the dead – for we redeem from within our heart the hidden light of Hashem that can then influence the very way the world appears. People have no power unless we believe they do. Nuclear bombs have no power unless we believe they do. How do we ever come to believe that a nuclear bomb has no power? We must remember that there is no other power than Hashem and He is the Ruler of the world. the place of the world is the mind of Hashem and He is thinking up the world every moment. He can change the way He thinks up the world at will.

And THAT is what we need to destroy the Amalekians and remove their power. We need to do teshuva on the part of us that we stumble over and our choice to fall into the reality of unreality. On Rosh Hashana, we crowned Hashem King. On Yom HaKippurim, we received spiritual rejuvenation. Between now and Purim, let us all work on putting into our hearts the trust we need to know that the place of the world is Hashem's mind, that this is a world of thought in which we have an influence, and that our inner bina must cling to doing only that which is precious in His eyes without a blink of doubt or an ounce of rationalization as if we stand in a world of vitality and transcendence, a world above thought, where we can see His throne of glory directly in front of us, knowing that we constantly are receiving His light and bringing it into this lowest of worlds..

May Hashem help embed into our hearts the emunah we hold near to us and may the certainty of what is real be a quick antidote to the part of us that might be energizing Amalekian influence in the world.