

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Rav Ovadia Yosef loved and cared about every Jew. So can we

Rabbi Cable In Nefesh HaChaim spoke about the greatness of Rav Ovadia Yosef, obm.

"He cared for others and for the Jewish people and sacrifice, put on the yoke of torah and bear it and see it as a pleasure. The pleasantness of his voice and the joy, a happy glad man most of the time. Torah is sameach. When he would give shiur the joy and gladness of Torah was palatable. The pleasantness of the words of torah were felt when he would speak. That is an additional quality that he had. A man who could laugh and make other people laugh, a man of that caliber and seriousness. Hashem created a human being the potential of whom can be normal and balanced and great like an angel at the same time. HKB should have mercy on us and continue to provide us with leaders and guides and shepherds. HKB looked at the beginning of time and saw all the tzaddikim and placed them throughout the generations so that the Jewish people would never be without chochomim. We pray to HKB that those who Hashem has already put in the world should emerge and find their place and the Jewish people should find guidance from them."

With that in mind, let's consider again 5774 years after Adam's sin,. What has happened?

"I know something you don't." (please molchel me for causing you to react to that but it is only to make a point, not that I really thing I do.) How many of us hate that! I would say 100% guaranteed to trigger defensive remarks and gestures and challenge backs. It certainly does not cause us to love one another.

That is what the snake threw toward Chava. He told her Hashem ate from the tree and then He made the worlds and He knows more than you and wants to keep it that way so He told you not to eat from the tree. Similar reaction. Jealousy.

Even with free will, if we don't have self-awareness, there are many things above our free will. Or buried in our subconscious. Hashem gave them free will but Adam and Chava had not been alive long enough to comprehend this aspect of human nature, an aspect that the snake was a master at.

And Hashem knew that even with free will and even wanting to do Hashem's will that they would eat and become abandoned (thrown out of Gan Eden) and annihilated (made mortal,) Hashem wants a place to dwell in this world. He is in the highest or should I say deepest inward world of penimilus. In order for Hashem to "live" in this world, it is our free willed choices to bring Him into our hearts that makes that happen.

In order to bring Hashem into this world, we have to love Hashem enough to remember to do Hashem's will in the moment. In order to do Hashem's will in the moment, we have to set aside to the point of feeling like it is death or a terrible ego blow, the means that we feel a sense of ourselves, the me, the ego. In order to set aside the ego, the me, we have to remember that choosing to do so is the reason Hashem went to the trouble to make a world in the first place and understand more about human nature and the subconscious mind. He wants a room in the walls of our hearts through which to be in this world. Let us realize the privilege and pleasure for doing so, the honor and the opportunity at hand.

Rav Usher Freund said that if we understood how good humiliation is for the soul, we would run into the street to seek it. Why? Because feeling humiliated does not in any way prevent us from serving Hashem! We have all our faculties, we can learn, we can exist. But if we set our sense of self on our ego, then humiliation, which is the pshat understanding of the cruel words and deeds social groupings often inflict in order to bolster their societies, life is not only unpleasant but it can be unbearable and even result in permanent mental damage or death. Especially if these humiliating ego trials happen to children who are forming their self images. But in the mystery level of understanding, the humiliation can be seen merely as oil for the wick of bringing Hashem's light to the world. With sod understanding, a person can convert the worst pshat level ego destructive shunning and cruelty, all in the name of communicating a society's standards, to bring bracha upon the community that is struggling with bearing the burden of Adam's sin, not yet having ingested what is necessary to find the purpose for which Hashem creates us, to give us the ultimate pleasure and redemption.

We all have egos and experience pain at the hands of each other. Good and bad remain subjective due to the continued dominance of the yetzer hara over human nature. Yet we can take steps toward something that is more pleasant, and that is the understanding that our survival, our pleasure and our lives depend on Hashem alone and that He alone is the One we wish to host in our hearts and whose love we want to share abundantly. For in all the world there is NOTHING but Hashem, Who knows what is in the heart of every human because He designs us and every thought has an angel dispatched from Hashem or from His external penimius in order to see if we, the Jewish people, love Hashem enough to set aside our egos and rectify the Shechina with His Name and avail ourselves of our free willed choice to then replace the empty vacuum left in the kelpas by our freeing the Shechina with something from His Inner Penimius. We do that by emulating His attributes of tolerating insult, overlooking faults, bearing the burden of Adam's sin and casting sins into the sea.

Torah teaches all of this to us. We all were taught this in utero. But I forgot it. And I made a lot of mistakes. Real mistakes. Baruch Hashem learning Torah has reminded me. And Hashem made teshuva. And He gives us the power to convert our averas to brachas. He gives us partnership – like matching funds, He matches together what we free with where we direct the bracha. And He gives us the free willed choice to bring abundance to the world.

May we be inspired to fulfill His design by setting aside our egos and truly care about each other with ahavas chinam, as He loves us. And may we bring a new light to the world.