

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Tuesday, January 15, 2013

Shame, Destruction, Mesiras Nefesh and Redemption

We learn from the Ramchal that Hashem's purpose in creating this world and the Jewish people is to enable us to receive great pleasure for all eternity, a pleasure that can be experienced in its fullest only if earned. To receive such a pleasure as a gift would engender within us the bread of shame. We would feel undeserving and what was intended as a pleasure would be the opposite. The greatest pleasure is touching the perfection of Hashem. How can anything with intelligence that is not perfect stand in front of truth and be told it deserves the pleasure of perfection?

Surely we are not able to attain perfection in the condition of being human in this world. But Torah teaches us how to touch perfection by emulating Hashem. And in those moments, we can experience a pleasure. A real pleasure. An eternal pleasure. A pleasure for which we were created.

In order to experience this pleasure, we are to follow Torah, mitzvahs and Hashem's thirteen attributes of mercy, lest these middot be extinguished from the world, chas v'shalom.

Thus shame exists as a way to bring us with good conscience back to doing what Torah tells us, for if we arrive after 120 years in Shemayim and have not fulfilled our mission or followed Torah, we will feel terrible shame, for all eternity. Just think of the feeling of shame we get when someone corrects or chastises us harshly, especially when we have done something WE believe deserves thanks and praise! How ungrateful is so and so!!

It is the strongest negative experience, it has great power, and it affects us so much it sticks to our souls and covers over our ability to connect lovingly to Hashem. Instead we become occupied with thoughts of defending ourselves that proceed to produce destructive beings into the spiritual realms. And we think we are more than justified, that we are, in fact RIGHT, and no one who tries to tell us that we have taken a wrong turn will be considered on our side! These are the branches into the world of sheker that without Torah we falsely mistake for just and goodly.

Shame is a very negative reaction. It hurts. Unless we have a way to comprehend how humiliation and shame are actually good, we mistakenly think our ego has been offended and proceed to take steps to reinstate what we feel has been unjustly taken from us, our self-esteem.

Let's take a step back.

We live in a world that is called the world of sheker, of falsehood. We daven in the Shema every day declaring that we understand that Hashem is One, that all there is in the world is Hashem. But if that is so, who am I? I am not Hashem, therefore, it seems like there IS something besides Hashem – ME! How can I comprehend my existence which has a complete sense of independence to it, in what seems to be an independent world where there is mostly evil, as being all Hashem Who is all good?

Who I am, this body, this personality, is nothing more than territory designed by Hashem for my neshama to conquer and bring under Hashem echad. That is, at all times, my neshama knows that I am connected spiritually in every limb and organ to Hashem through my soul. What is eternal within me, what will continue after 120 years, is the merits that my relationship to this being that I call me acquires, based on having that relationship with a love of Hashem. When I understand that I am here to love Hashem and to bring that love of Hashem as a thought substitution to every negative thought that comes to my mind, I begin to comprehend this world in a far different way. It is no longer a sheker world. It becomes a world where I can redeem vivifying force from a thought and with clarity of thought and love of Hashem add that vivifying force to ahavas Hashem and create light in the spiritual realms. Often this requires doing the exact opposite of what makes "sense" in time and space. And that is the point of it all. That doing the opposite out of love for Hashem is the "bull offering" that our loving relationship with Hashem can bring us to, just as

Avraham did at the akeidas Yitzchak. We may not have Avraham's mission, nor Moshe nor Aron's mission, but we have our unique mission and it is imperative that we see that we can be thought "surgeons" in the same way, redeeming vivifying force from our negativity out of love for Hashem and drawing it from the world of tuma to the world of kedusha with our free willed choice to love Hashem and not cause any damage.

And the shame that we experience here from others? It is a negative experience that cleans our soul of the previous destructive actions we may have inadvertently fallen into out of pain or insult or injury. The shame negates our own sins, atoning for them. But if we never recognize our actions that are destructive, if we think what we are doing is good when in fact it is the opposite, we continue to experience, and even cause Hashem to intensify, the circumstances that we find so perplexing in the first place.

Are you trapped? Is there an area in your life that just gets worse and not better?

Try telling Hashem "I love You Hashem." Generate a sincere emotion of love for Hashem with full confidence that the matter at hand is solely presented to you so that you can tell Hashem that you know it is He and that you love Him and that you kindly ask that your love for Him evoke His healing and mercy because under NO circumstances do you wish to create any destructive beings. Instead, yearn to be like Hashem, casting sins in the sea, forgiving, loving, overlooking, relating to another with awareness of how difficult this struggle really is. There is no guarantee what the other person will or won't do, but with the proper understanding that this is what WE are here to do, then whatever the outcome, it is all good. This is how we can utilize our lives the best, understanding that we stand with a bull offering of our natural negativity at every moment, capable of bringing to Hashem what is so sweet to Him and creating spiritual light that will, please soon, bring the final redemption. Hashem wishes for us to be partners with Him. What better thing can we do to tell Hashem that we truly believe He is here with us in this golus, watching our every move, waiting patiently for us to tire of our human game of conquering that can at best bring only a faint glimmer of counterfeit pleasure compared to the pleasure He designed for us? And who stands at the gate keeping us from seeking the real pleasure? It is the lowest part of our natural selves, the lowest part of the yetzer hara, the part of us that doubts, that then brought the attack of Amalek. It is the part that says "get real, this is too far out" or "come on! You mean you are going to be a shmata?"

Hashem is real. Hashem is here. Hashem is awaiting us to activate the love buried in our hearts for Him, a love He is ready to return to us with healing and redemption. But it is up to us. Are we willing to bring Him the sweetest bull offering, the offering of our negativity, the last drop of doubt and cynicism that we can find, to really cleanse ourselves of our connection to idolatry and to the El Zar and open the channels to the wells of benefit and abundance that He is constantly sending to us?

We live in a sheker world that brings us to counterfeit pleasures in time and space. But we have the Torah. We have the wisdom from Hashem the Creator Who is telling us how to become thought surgeons, through the six constant mitzvahs and in particular through ahavas Hashem.

Just love Hashem every moment. Emotionally. With intention to NOT be destructive. With intention to redeem the vivifying force from the side of tuma within us to the side of kedusha, for the unification and sanctification of His Name.

And may we soon see a new light, a light WE are empowered to bring through this mesiras nefesh, a light of redemption, that Hashem can then use to actually redeem us, may it be very soon!!!