

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Friday, March 04, 2011

A Prayer for Success in Fearing Hashem

Dear Hashem

Each day you give to me is an opportunity for me to see that there is only You in the world. I struggle to see what my next step in avodas Hashem is, and into my mind flood distractions and even negative thoughts that I have to push away. Sometimes I succumb to these without even realizing I have, and then I stop and say that is not the concentration I am aspiring for! When I expend energy to re-connect and You grant me success, there is a tremendously pleasant quality to those moments that I recognize as true Emes. I am coming to see every moment as an opportunity of choice. Thank you for being so patient with me when I become distracted! Please know that the indulgences of my thoughts are more familiar but not more pleasant and that I beseech you to give me the strength to not only be able to see these thought patterns as habit and not as somewhere that I am stuck and can't get out of, but also as opportunities that I know how to get out of by choice that is under my complete control. That is, please help me to apply my awareness and Gdconsciousness towards choosing ratzon Hashem and may that become the primary set of thoughts and emotions in my day.

Dear Hashem, thank you for my eyes and ears, as well as all the working parts of my body and mind, for I see how temporary it is. From what You have shown me, I see that seeking solutions within the world of adversity – practical solutions to difficult problems – cannot be accomplished without Your help. Only ratzon Hashem happens in this world, whether it looks good to us or not and whether it was our success or failure. Understanding this has truly helped me to comprehend my role within this context. No matter if I choose well or poorly, my choices are ratzon Hashem! If this is so, then why do I need so much concentrated effort to try to do ratzon Hashem at every moment? How does that make sense?

The answer is Yiras Hashem. At every moment I must try to do ratzon Hashem with Yiras Hashem. This effort of fearing You is the difference between pleasure and ruin.

Dear Hashem please help me recognize that my inner rebellion to the constant mitzvah of Yiras Hashem fear You comes in when my yetzer hara is the strongest and most convincing – and also presents the greatest opportunity for me to become just like You by exhaling, smiling, and stepping over those lower, downward pulls that sound convincing in the world of practicality but that steal from me everything that I aspire towards – closeness to You, accomplishment of my purpose in becoming like You, and all the brachas that You bestow upon me! Please continue to tolerate my infractions and unintended insults to You when I do not apply effort or apply effort and do not succeed.

Please help me to continue to strive and reach and grant me success in becoming more like You, lovingkind, patient, bearing insult, tolerant, overlooking and more! (see Tomer Devorah)