

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Ahavas Yisrael and Ahavas Hashem - the antidote to sinas chinum

As we grow in Ahavas Hashem, in love for Hashem, we develop the recognition that all there is in the world are the creations of Hashem. Ein Od Milvado.

Consider this – that everything on earth and beyond is fulfilling the will of Hashem. The only creature that can choose to fulfill Hashem's will or not is a human being. With the power and the desire that Hashem creates us with, He gives us choice in this regard.

Chazon Ish's teaches us that there are only two middos – the natural free flowing tendencies without boundaries and the ethical choices we make to bring our choices within ahavas Hashem and yiras Hashem (awe of Hashem). As parents we want to bring our children who are born natural into serving Hashem with love. Understanding that children are formed by the time they are 2.5 to 5 years old, it makes sense to bring some building blocks regarding ahavas Hashem into the picture early.

As adults, perhaps we are unfamiliar with the mitzvahs of Ahavas Hashem and Ahavas Yisrael. We know that this golus began because of sinas chinam, baseless hatred. Loving your fellow Jew is the repair. We learn that in any generation, if the Temple has not yet been re-built, it means that we have not yet learned to love each other.

No matter what our age category, we live in a world where we are engaged on a daily basis with challenges and adversities. A basic comprehension of ahavas Hashem and ahavas Yisrael gives us the ability to choose to bring these mitzvahs into our daily lives.

We deal often with our children who also either present to us challenges or who are faced with challenges. How do we empathize, empower them and help them grow from natural tendencies to ethical choices that serve Hashem?

Below are four points that might be of some help.

1. I understand how upsetting this is! Sometimes our upset feelings become even stronger because our feeling hugged by Hashem gets covered over. Hashem loves us and gives us hands, and legs, and eyes and mouths to speak with, food, parents, nice homes – He gives us so very much to be grateful for. Isn't it amazing how our upset feelings can be like a huge cloud covering that over?
2. Hashem gives us so much power and desire - and most of all, He gives us a choice to be like a lion or to be a Prince or Princess of Hashem! Good mommies and daddies want to raise children to be a Prince or Princess of Hashem because we want the very best happy life for our children.
3. Each one of you is beloved to Hashem! Do you understand that Hashem loves each of you so very much? Each of you has tremendous value because you have within you the power to choose to be as loving as Hashem is to us, only with each other WOW! You have that power!!
4. When we choose to love each other, we send a loud strong message to Hashem that we love Him and all that He does for us, even when our natural feelings sometimes try to cover that over. When we know that we have tremendous value because we can choose to be as loving as Hashem, even if we make mistakes or bad choices, we begin to understand how to treat each other. Everyone has this tremendous value! And no one is perfect!

Perhaps after considering these, we may be able to think of a way to work out our challenges in a manner that is pleasing to Hashem. May Hashem find our efforts towards this end pleasing and may we

tip the scales and create achdus and unity to repair the cause of the destruction of the Second Temple and end this long golus.

We have the power and free will that Hashem gives us every day to choose to see that Hashem loves every Jew and every Jew has intrinsic value deserving of our respect and love, may Hashem grant us success in our efforts to communicate and show love toward one another..