

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Bereshis - bring to it the devekus of hoshana rabba and see how to do battle with the serpent!

"The serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die, for Gd knows that on the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like Gd, knowing good and bad." Rashi explains For Gd knows as every craftsman hates others of his craft, that Gd ate from the tree and created the world, and that if she ate she would be like Gd, a fashioner of worlds."

Adom was totally connected to Hashem. There was no part of the universe that was withheld from Adom. Thus, being a fashioner of worlds should not have been able to stir any pleasure in Adom's heart. Hashem, Torah and the soul of the Jewish people are one. We with our human hearts after Adom's sin can understand the honor that Eve imagined possible, to be on a level that could create a world as Gd did! And Adom, who only wanted to bring light into a dark world, thought he could do something better than what Hashem designed and he ate, hoping to show his love for Hashem by bringing light into the darkness.

We, the descendants of Avraham, are here to rectify Adom's sin, to see where the opening for the mistake occurred and to fix it in our hearts. That place of fixing is in understanding that the place of the world is Hashem and that He alone knows what is good and not good for us. At every moment, we can answer the hungerings for apparent pleasures with Torah answers and middos harachamim. With love in our hearts, knowing the place of the world is Hashem and that we continue to be His Bride in creating influence, what greater pleasure could come to us than remaining attached to His Attributes at every moment? That is the pleasure of living with malchus shemayim. We can bring out the malchus in us. There is a real choice to how we define ME, based on a spiritual membrane that is a muscle we build when we consistently choose Hashem over the natural me. That membrane, without the second M for malchus, traps us in ME-brane. With the m for malchus, 'me' stands for malchus emergence, and we have majestic enjoyment for touching Hashem's attributes.

We must learn from Adom and remember. There is no greater pleasure at any time for anyone other than the pleasure of devekus, which Adom experienced. Every contradictory pleasure is a counterfeit. Without exception. Adom could not understand what darkness really is! Many of the perceived pleasures we desire stem from jealousy, lust or desire for honor, which take us out of the world of pleasure of devekus with seemingly compelling human rationalizations, and we make the trip to ME-brane being seduced by the lures of the yetzer hara. Just as Bereshis shows us how the snake was able to create the downfall of the very first human, so must we show ourselves our deceptive inner rationalizations that try to sell us pleasures that make no sense whatsoever to those who strive for total emunah.

May we build internal strength to turn away from the luring deceptions of what is good and turn toward the constant good that is truth, increasingly experiencing the warmth of Hashem's love, the pleasure of devekus in emulating Hashem's attributes and keeping Torah and mitzvahs in this world, with love in our heart, as yiras shemayim, and may we be zocheh to redemption soon!