

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Blind spots need kind hearts not find and grind sharks

Just as a whole generation of philanthropy was stolen by one man, it seems possible now that the pathway to our internal connection with Hashem has been covered over with so much cultivated thought toward actualizing the physical, temporal side of ourselves that the generations from the Holocaust until now may have been secularly kidnapped.

As I recall, the values that seemed important when I was growing up were shaped toward academic and monetary success. Slowly the values of holiness, integrity and truth eroded by achievement orientation that became centered on physical pleasure and a machismo ego image. What surfaced became social groupings – gangs, cliques – where the ineffable senses get trampled and the urges to feel good and look good take over.

What has been lost, does anyone recognize it as lost?
What has been lost, does anyone miss it?
What has been lost, can it be recovered?

The only answer for the above three questions that I know with certainty is yes, it can be recovered. Why? Because the aspect of the Divine image within us is only covered over, never lost. But without people to show it to us, it is a treasure that will be forgotten. Perhaps that is the goal of what exterminating the Jews was (and chas v'chalila is) about. No one wants to be bothered doing what Hashem wants us to do. If we are gone, it (living with love, fear and desire to commune with Gd) will never again come to the mind of any person, for it cannot. It is something that can only be cultivated from the time a child is very young by people with emunah and bitachon and Torah wisdom.

And here we are, 60 years from the Holocaust, three generations. Two generations from the women's liberation movement where more and more children have been raised in mixture of home, school and child care. And now, a generation where a traditional family is no longer considered in the same way at all.

People are made in the Divine image. But who shows us where the aspect of the Divine within us is? We have to pierce through layers of coverings that we don't know are coverngs! Shall we go on glorifying how it is only human to be a certain way, or shall we acknowledge the struggle of being human to become holy, emulating the Divine?

Why does it matter?

The Yetzer Hara loves concealment. He hides in concealment, and there are plenty of dark places in our own minds alone, not even extending the combined places of darkness when there is a communication. There is so much room to go wrong. We are taught to grin and bear it, to give the benefit of the doubt. Yet the power hungry quickly learn to capitalize on the blind spots within people and communications and they take and take and take off the plates of those around them, even as they maintain what might appear to be proper social niceties and considerations!

What lurks in our hearts? Have we come to consider that the only way to succeed is to develop a map so that we too can take from others without their realizing it? Is human dignity based on being a better fox, meaning that you don't get caught? Are we willing to go far away from Hashem and tell our selves that it is permitted because as long as we are not found out and bring a confrontation or hurt human emotions, we don't have to take responsibility and own up to our scheming? And if so, and we are undetected, is that true happiness, taking off the plates of everyone and having the admiration of people only because we include them in our scheming like an exciting chapter story so that they fear that our secret ways might otherwise target their blind spots, and therefore others submit to the requests of those savvy with power and position, those who desire to use us and we participate in under-handed tactics out of fear that their hurtful secret ways will be used against us? Those who comprehend how people are constructed, what human nature is, how to control the physical aspects of a community to control people, how to control public opinion, if such leaders are self-serving, they influence and create the souls of a generation toward a goal that falls short of serving Hashem lishma, for if that were their goal, they would not need to deviate from Torah and lishma principles nor to control people and communities. Even though their apparent power and control is painful to individuals, in the end, it is empty and impotent and fails. Every ideology developed by mankind fails. Only Torah survives.

What is that mentality? And, if we are there, can we ever get out?

It is a psychological reality that when children see parents fighting and one parent is cruel and the other the victim, they learn how to be the cruel parent, because they see it is better to be cruel than to be victimized. Eat or be eaten. And if so, if

becoming the predator, the powerful one, is in response to the perceived fear of being taken advantage of, what could ever help a person re-discover another mentality, a mentality of conscience, of kindness, of emulating Hashem, of bringing out the aspect of the Divine image within us?

Everyone who drives knows that there is a blind spot on the right hand rear side of the car. Wisely, we purchase cars with good visibility and adjustable side view mirrors so as to be sure we are protected from the danger of a crash when changing lanes.

Homeland Security has been a stepped up attempt to try to open up blind spots within our society – areas where freedom leaves us vulnerable to those who have intent to harm. -We come to see that we are far more vulnerable with blind spots than can be managed – with all the safety precautions, what percentage of our vulnerability has really been removed?

And trying to protect ourselves has thrust us into a situation of fear and high alert. And the generations that have grown up not knowing a world without terrorism ARE those children who see that it is better to model their thinking aligned with the values of the ones taking power by taking advantage of the blind spots of others rather than to model their thinking aligned with the values of giving empathy and kindness which may cause a trusting person to be a scam victim. What is a person to do?

How can we be on the road of judgment and mercy at the same time?

We cannot. We have to pick the road. Which road we pick depends on if we comprehend there is a two world picture or if we choose to limit our choices to a one world picture.

We are imperfect creatures here to serve our Creator. When we give to each other, we emulate Him. The entire world and everything in it is a part of the Divine mind, set in motion for each of us to answer the question, do I know that all there is in this world and in all worlds is the Creator? If we answer yes, we never would consider to be the predator taking advantage of human frailties. Instead we would truly comprehend that we can enjoy a pleasure from another world by choosing to be like Hashem and be the benefactor, be the one who gives unconditional love, tremendous patience, strong resilience to insult or harm and constant love. Should we be pulled away by circumstances and experience the urge to respond otherwise, we need Divine assistance to give us the will power to immediately do teshuva and run back into the arms of our Father, for He is the Only Reality and we almost smashed our Olam Haba.

May we remove from our hearts the layers of concealment that cause us to view blind spots as opportunities to take, and may the aspect of the Divine image within us stir us instead to build support and safety for one another through kindness and understanding, and lastly, may those who like to find victims and grind them into the ground see the error of their ways, changing our society back to Klal Yisrael through Ahavas Yisrael and emulating Hashem's attributes.

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<http://www.becomingdivine.com/classes/7-Pirkei-Avos/Pirkei-Avos-1-3-6-The-Core-Fears-with-Living-and-Dying.mp3>