

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Erev Rosh Chodesh Nisan, Let's Unite through our efforts to Reveal His Glory for His Sake

As I search and search for Chometz, outside and in, the question of whether I would have been one of those who left Mitzrayim comes to mind. Only 20 percent of the Jews actually left, despite all the miracles. Why? It must have been that physical constraints, including comfort zones and possibly doubts and unrefined characteristics that seemed more pleasurable than serving Hashem kept them there.

Daily I work so hard to clean off the ra from the yetzer hara and self-referencing pops its head back in consistently. At any moment, which way will I go? What can I do to assure that in every moment my eyes look upward to Hashem and to emulating Him as the greatest pleasure over the constant, natural pulls of our lives?

We are all made in Hashem's Image and we cannot ever be diminished. Being made b'tzelem elokim is the basis for having esteem and for respecting others. Yet we do not earn eternity simply for being made in Hashem's Image!

Forty years ago and today, the very same tzelem elokim gives me life. The difference between then and now is that I have more mitzvahs and more ability to reveal tzelem elokim because I have worked on my characteristics.

The basis for eternity is the effort I make to connect to Hashem and do His Will, in mitzvahs and in emulating Him. Any refinements that I make in my nature that actually change the ways I conduct myself reveal His Glory. And ultimately THIS is the purpose for which He Creates us, so that He can be in this world by having us choose to reveal His Glory, reveal the tzelem elokim over the natural reactions of daily life.

It is a pleasure to do so. Having consciousness of that pleasure means that we draw closer to understanding that all there is in the world is Hashem. That means, we accept upon ourselves the role that He sets for us as the pleasurable route, that being transparent to reveal His Glory is also pleasurable for our natural selves.

It seems with all the difficulties facing our people, the discussions, the differences in values, that we are at a stalemate. In order for one group to assert over another, it would require a violation of a Torah principle, to not hate each other, to not take revenge or bear a grudge, to love each other as ourselves. **Just as optically vision enters the eye and the brain flips the image, so too can our brain flip our pre-disposition to pursue our agendas into a united effort to reveal Hashem's Glory.**

When we truly understand that Hashem is in complete control of every thought that is entering the mind of every person and of every minute detail that we each experience, we relate to Hashem in a far different manner. All Power is His. All Glory is His. If something is coming into my mind and heart, it is incumbent upon me to reflect and realize my role – to bring that power, if it is in a dark place, into service of Hashem. How? Baruch sheim kavod malchuso leolam voed, I know Hashem that this power is from You and wish to use it for good only, so please let me borer away the circumstances and choose to emulate You and filter this thought through the vessel of mind that You bestow upon me and return it to my heart with forgiveness, love, and a desire to provide warmth, light and protection for klal yisrael.

Sometimes we slip. Sometimes we see that everyone seems to be not working so hard. Sometimes we wish that life were just easier all around, and that the natural way of looking at the world and responding in a goodly way at face value would be enough. But if that is so, would I have left mitzrayim to go into the desert and cross the Red Sea and travel to Har Sinai?

I don't know about then, but I surely wish to be on board for contributing whatever effort I can to reveal tzelem elokim over my natural responses. It is a great yearning to see Hashem's Glory fill the world. It is not the easy path to do so, but it is the most pleasurable experience when we do.

It is experiential understanding of that pleasure that changes the choice we have for our identity – we have the free willed choice to reveal tzelem elokim thereby unifying and sanctifying Hashem's Name and revealing His Glory. We are His Nation. Let us be unto Hashem the Nation He Desires so that His Glory can be revealed in time and space for His Sake. Ein Od Milvado.