

## Nourishment for the Neshama

<http://lvracha.com>

**Sunday, February 23, 2014**

### **Choosing to reveal Hashem's Characteristics over the natural emotions - Nishmas Am Yisrael wants to come in first place!!**

The Olympics will close tonight. People practicing for their entire lives to compete in order to come in first second or third in an event is very exciting to watch, thrilling when they win, heartbreaking when they fall.

Every day each one of us is involved in an endeavor to bring ourselves forward in refining ourselves. Refining ourselves ultimately means, utilizing the gifts that Hashem has given to us to bring into voice and expression the part of us that is made in His Image. Hashem breathed into us a part of Himself, called a tzelem elokim, that embodies the ability to reveal His Lovingkindness as we exert in proper manner kindness, strength, balance, endurance, humility, bonding and ultimately kingship, meaning revealing His Kingship, reflecting the crown of Hashem's Malchus through our actions in time and space. The battle that we endure in every moment to do so is a war, nuclear war, because it requires us to re-configure the atomic understanding of who we are and for what reason we are given life and power to be in time and space. We have our entire lives to review our patterns and try to see what it is that we are here to correct.

Hashem is very patient with us. He gives us many opportunities to see the futility of our natural reactions. Yet how many of us really get to the point where we see that our natural reactions, despite how good and right we feel about asserting our view, are simply destructive. What boundary do we all need in order to know when we are attempting to assert a view that we feel is good and right but are really causing damage? Perhaps this is the purpose of the system of courts to determine. Yet within our inner lives, we often are called upon to make choices in the moment that are subject only to our free choice because they are not legalistic. Part of taking responsibility for our lives is seeing something through to its completion, to make sure that we fulfill what it is that we can do in hishtadlus when we seek a goal that requires help from above. How do we know when it is Hashem's will that we put in more effort, and how do we know when it is Hashem's will that we step back and trust in Hashem?

May no one ever have such an occurrence but what if someone knows that a hit man has been hired to kill him and he knows who hired him. He hires someone back with instruction that if he is killed the person he has paid should now go and kill the person who hired the hit man to kill him. One day, the man sees the hired killer coming to take his life. He knows he will not survive. After he dies, will he be glad or regret that his order to kill the person who had him killed is carried out? On the one hand, while he is alive, he experiences a sense of being right and not wronged even in death. On the other hand, he is deemed a murderer in shemayim and has to deal with the eternal consequences of being responsible for that other person's death. Who are we if we hire to kill back? Who are we if we do not? Which demonstrates awareness of our true identity, to reveal Hashem in this world? I can imagine there are tremendous arguments on both sides. The point of raising such a question is this. What appeals to the lower part of us and makes sense in terms of time and space may not ultimately be what Hashem requires of us. Hashem may, instead, require of us that we draw into our mind His Character and return it to our heart and bring it into our actions. The point is to show how our emotions and perspectives can cause us tremendous charge and sense of righteousness without clarity regarding what is good and right in Hashem's eyes, that which will make a kiddush Hashem.

That which we do to makes His Name beloved in the world becomes who we are for all eternity. There is

nothing in the world but Hashem. When what we are about to do clashes with making His Name beloved in the world, it is time for us to stop, to realize that we are utilizing the strength He gives us in a manner that is creating destruction, albeit we have very good logical human oriented justifiable rationalizations that everyone would understand and agree with.

Making Hashem's Name known and beloved in this world requires us to recognize our limitations and turn to Hashem for solutions when the only solutions we can logic and rationalize cause us to come face to face with something that is abhorrent to Hashem or that makes His Name covered over. Every person, despite the strength of our reactions when we recognize evil and poor choices in others, must also comprehend the futility of acting upon something we think is good and right that really will cause destruction and harm. We must be honest with ourselves that what we are doing is causing pain, even if we rationalize that it is good and necessary, as if we are like a doctor who does surgery on a patient.

We are a very diverse people. Our differences appear to be bringing us farther away from each other. Nevertheless, we are but one soul, Nishmas Am Yisrael. It is necessary for this reason for each part of Nishmas Am Yisrael to comprehend that even if I don't understand how something that another person believes could be true, I believe that there is Hashem and He knows if it is true or not and I do not have to "correct" or "fix" it if doing so inflicts damage or causes me to violate something that Hashem has commanded.

All of this to say that despite all the difficulties facing our people, Torah tells us the laws of ahavas yisrael, that we are all connected and responsible for one another, that we are to respect your fellow Jew and speak well of him and look out for his needs and provide for him. Whatever we are asserting, if our conviction is bringing us to take an action that violates these laws, we are responsible for our choice and for the destruction we cause. Our soul could, instead, have added love and awe of Hashem to the strength of our conviction and returned to our heart a bridge that would have brought into the matter Hashem's glory. We want in final analysis to have provided the means by which Hashem can be once again seen in this world of time and space. That is our primary role as Nishmas Am Yisrael, as the bride of Hashem, who said we will do and then understand. May we all consider deeply our feelings and pass them through our mind, add love and awe to them and return them to our hearts with uplifted devotion to serve Hashem and may we soon see the redemption.