

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Thursday, April 10, 2014

Filling potholes - tips on switching back to proper use of ego to reveal Hashem's Glory

There is a pothole in our makeup through which our intellect falls into a pursuit of desires, jealousy or the pursuit of honor. The magnetism of this pothole is a divinely given gift that can become the means by which a beautiful equally heartfelt revelation of Hashem's Glory can beam into time and space. The key is to understand that the desires, jealousies and pursuits of honor, despite feeling like internal emotions, are external to our true identity, that of tzelem elokim.

Rabbi Itamar Schwartz in Da Es Atzmecha explains clearly that we are neshamas in a garment called a body and all the details of what that means. www.blivavi.net.

In one second, we get a thought that generates a self-referencing reaction and we immediately descend into an imagination that is very far away from the chochma of Torah or Hashem's will. Sensitivity for this switch out of the real reality into our subjective false reality is of paramount importance. It is not possible to begin to develop that sensitivity without a daily hisbodidus, a verbal introspection, a prayer exposing our subjective negative reactions that belong to externalities but appear internally real and powerful. These self-referencing ideas could be in the category of arrogance, galva, fear, anger, or anything where the subject of the matter is "I". Usually we are desiring to re-establish a sense of value that we believe has been challenged or lost. By definition, that cannot be true, but because of the way we are constructed, to fall into that pothole of thinking, we begin a journey into ego and ego solutions. Speaking out loud to Hashem is the remedy for that because it immediately limits the ego-mindedness gripping us to make room once again for the true reality, that all there is in the world is Hashem who creates the magnetic alternative to see if we will remember to ask Him to throw us a life-line through our prayers. Speaking out loud to Hashem daily builds the facility with which we are able to re-establish ourselves as neshamas in a garment called a body.

Or perhaps we have a desirous thought, for food, for money, for connection. Once again, these are attempts to validate something that we feel we "deserve." Torah permits us a great deal of pleasure. As long as it is within Torah constraints, then it is permitted to us. However, if we seek it with abandon or for its own sake, we have forgotten that its ultimate purpose is to give us pleasure while we are serving Hashem, who when we serve Him in truth is the giver of the ultimate pleasure - that of being the conduit of His Attributes into this world. Even when we want the pleasure of doing the right thing, that too is a corrupted motivation because it reflects that we are doing this for the "I", for strengthening the sense of the self in ego terms. Rather, it is imperative that we recognize that doing what is right in Hashem's eyes for Him is to give Him pleasure and reveal Him in this world because we desire that He be seen here. Much work needs to be done on ourselves to free us from the ego desire to be aligned with being good and right. The motivation for Him to be visible in this world is a greater pleasure that in a back door way gives the ego a way to be involved that does not cause us to say and do things that bring ourselves or others into stumbling into the pothole, that magnet desiring at all times to draw us into subjective reality - struggling to secure our dependency needs in a frame of mind of all is fair in love and war.

Chesed is an expression that counteracts the feelings of jealousy - when we realize that all good is sourced in Hashem who knows what we need and what is actually good for us, we have the emunah we need to pull ourselves out of being envious of others.

In all the world there is nothing but Hashem. Yes He diffuses His presence and creates beings with free will, but with faculty of mind, we can step into a world of service where we can avoid the potholes that draw us into external yet internally experienced falsehood.

And may we be zocheh to Moshlach just for the yearning to do this and may Hashem soon reveal His Glory in time and space for His Sake!