

## Nourishment for the Neshama

<http://lvracha.com>

**Tuesday, June 10, 2014**

### Reflections on what sparks us

When we realize how powerful a thought is we must ask, where is its power coming from? After all, the thought is not plugged into a wall yet a thought can cause us so much anguish, cause us to take an action that has eternal consequences, create strain that raises blood pressure and much more.

When we understand that there is a Creator, when we accept that there is nothing that is not in His complete control, then it follows that the thought itself is generated through a system that is rooted back to the Creator. And that every step and level that brought that thought into our mind, whether through memory, through senses, through imagination, through learning, is part of a system that brought that thought to mind as part of Hashem's plan.

That said, every physical reaction, every struggle we have emotionally is all designed for us to remember to refer to Hashem for a solution, for all Glory is His. He shares an image of His glory with us in the form of light, our tzelem elokim, that gives us life and health and faculties galore.

Yet what do we identify with? tzelem elokim or something more tangible? Obviously we experience our lives and our identities based on our uniqueness, which means that we are identifying with garments covering our tzelem elokim. In order to understand what our essence is, and that our esteem is based on our effort to reveal tzelem elokim because that is where glory is since all the glory in the world is Hashem's glory alone, we need to understand how to stop identifying with the more local messages that come from our imagination about who we are. However much we identify with our garments for esteem opens us to the experience of pain and suffering when our garments are damaged. This is very real in terms of time and space, involving our health, our money, our food, our survival and more. When we identify esteem based on revealing Hashem's glory, there lurks from our natural awareness the nagging question, even to here – the question that Rabbi Akiva's students addressed to him as he was being raked with hot irons and remaining in a meditative state of attachment to Hashem.

No one wants such a test. Yet each of us must understand that we have an area within us that fundamentally needs to have its identity challenged – who is going to control our heart, which inclination, esteem based on garments or esteem based on Hashem's glory.

In truth, it is not an equal fight. For one is true and the other is a false basis for esteem although feeling true. It must be that way in order for our choice to have meaning. When we declare the truth that we desire our identity to be based on revealing Hashem's glory from our tzelem elokim, it is with tremendous mesiras nefesh.

A spark of fire brings us from esteem based on tzelem elokim to esteem based on something from the garments, and the element of wind brings an inspiration from that spark and whirls it into a storm of desire, with waters flowing that generate a thought, that generates an emotion, that generates our

action. Thus it is crucial to comprehend how the sparks can ignite us into a downward pull away from remembering that esteem is based on revealing Hashem's Glory, tzelem elokim.

May the more committed we are to esteem based on tzelem elokim help us recognize the sparks of nature designed to attract our life force to imagination based on self-referencing, and may our love and awe of Hashem and His World help us use our Torah learning, water, to immediately douse the spark and instead declare His Truth, that all glory is His, and to please help us to reveal the same mercy He is showing by agreeing to bvear the burden of our confusion of mind, giving us the strength and power to give the benefit of the doubt and remain in Menuchas hanefesh no matter what.

And may our attempts to understand this be enough for us to be redeemed bahava.