

Nourishment for the Neshama

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We can reveal a concealed world when we unify and sanctify Hashem's Name - here is a boost for the emunah needed to ward off the natural resistances - the yetzer hara and Amalekian doubts

When we see the crying of an infant when hungry or tired, we see that to the basic brain red alerts to our fundamental security produce strong reactions. Hashem programs into us basic natural reactions and then asks us to respond differently through use of the Intellect. Why?

Hashem made man on the sixth day of creation out of a little bit of everything else created. And He gives us free willed choice to take what is natural and through that choice and unify it back to true existence, which is that all there is in the world is Hashem.

A baby's personality is largely formed by the time they are two years old! In that time, what can be shared with such a young brain?

The building blocks are love, fulfillment of dependency needs, object constancy, physical exploration and safety. Yet when the baby screams, inevitably what happens is that the mother or father's basic brain reacts with its own self-preserving defensive mechanisms, trying to ward off insecurities and reactions that if imprinted on that baby's young mind could be formative to that baby's personality. What can a parent do?

It is natural when feeling distressed to scream out to the ones upon whom we are dependent. Those who are in charge can then lovingly tell us that yes, our natural reaction is normal and by design, but we also have an Intellect and if we look around, we see that there is intelligence running quickly to fill that need – to bring the diaper, to rock us to sleep, to give us our meal and when we lovingly soothe the baby with these words, even though they won't understand them until much older, we give the baby's personality an option when older to use its Intellect and not be a total victim to its red alert responses.

The categories of our red alert responses as we get older fall more and more into the categories of desire and ego. When we can catch ourselves from falling through these natural magnets into red alerts, we have the opening to instead reveal Hashem's attributes, especially when we see others who we love falling through these natural magnets into their red alerts and causing words or actions that issue forth triggering our red alerts.

We have real free will and the purpose of all of this is that Hashem desires a being who will remember at the time of red alerts that the purpose is solely to unify His Name and then to sanctify it so that He can be visible in time and space. This is His contract with Nishmas Am Yisrael for which He gives us eternity and great blessings in time and space as well.

If we looked at a molecule of fruit and a molecule of a rock under a microscope, we would then also discover that it is composed of atoms. Would we say, wow a fruit and a rock both are made of atoms? We understand this from science! We marvel at the world in this way, that its building blocks are atoms that fall into four basic categories, gas, liquid, solid and radioactive.

It is from here that we can begin to use our Intellect to understand our very soul as having acquired the characteristics of wind, water, earth and fire by virtue of contact with our bodies made from all of creation. And what is being asked of our soul? To bring the qualities of wind/gas to virtuous speech, liquid/water /desire – to constraints learned from and set by Torah, solid/ earth/ laziness to constancy and strong vessels to serve Hashem and radioactivity/fire that destroys to warmth and light and blessings – to bring the elements of the creation through our free willed choice and Intellect from the natural reactive side into service for revealing Hashem's mercy.

If we can understand this as we see our babies, and somehow give vocabulary into the young minds that will facilitate the Intellect to be able to calm our natural reactions and ultimately model Hashem's attributes, perhaps we would have a totally new world that WE influence through these choices.

In aquariums, we see life that we would never be able to see otherwise. Amazing creatures with instincts and camouflage and skills designed for its natural reactions to preserve itself. Without aquariums, when would we ever see an archer fish shoot a stream of water to knock a cricket off a branch into the water so the fish could eat it? When would we ever see a polka dotted fresh water sting ray that camouflages with the river floor? Just as an aquarium shows us the underwater life of a hidden world, the Bals Hamikdosh showed us the spiritual reality of this world, that there is a concealed world that we can affect through our sacrifices, including the mesiras nefesh of our natural self-preserving basic responses. This is the purpose of having Intellect, to actualize something beyond our basic self-preserving instincts, to elevate the natural and unify Hashem's Name so that we can then sanctify His Name by revealing His Glory in time and space.



May our desire alone be enough for Hashem to send us Moshlach to teach us how to do this. And may we be redeemed b'ahava.