

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Soul-mates and Free Will

Imagine the love between two soul-mates. We hear of people who find their soul-mate and marry them. I have the privilege of knowing at least one couple like that. They are blissfully happy people, and they have a sense of completion that fortifies them in all they do and in all that happens to them. It is unimaginable that either of them would not take the other into consideration because that would hurt them more than if they themselves got hurt.

Now imagine that one of them did something wrong—really wrong. As a couple they had agreed on how to spend some funds, and then one had an impulse of some kind and purchased something else. Broken is the trust, but with apologies, it will heal. Now imagine that one of them did something much worse – you fill in the blank – something that threatened the relationship such as losing their temper with a child in an unforgivable way. Now there is a breach that apologies don't assuage, because how does the other person really know that the first has control over it? The one lacking in control is now terrified of losing everything, and the other is grieving over the loss of an ideal partner.

If we recognize it, Hashem and we are this couple, soul-mates, passionately in love. Hashem gives us the Torah and we agree to live by this marriage contract. We can have that intense, binding, inseparable sense of oneness and joy.

When we do something contrary to the Torah, either by mistake, omission, or commission, do we feel terrified of losing the most important relationship in our lives? Why do we not realize this?

Hashem has given us free will. He has given us an insulation in not realizing what we are jeopardizing so that we actually have a choice. When we choose to uphold the Torah, it is because we realize that we are soul-mates with Hashem and that without Him, we have absolutely nothing. Do we cry when we commit an averah? If so, when we cry over our averahs and sins, and we beg forgiveness, let it be with the same desire as if we were appealing to a soul-mate who we know we could not live without, the absence of whose love would destroy the fabric of our lives.

In His Omniscience, He created the world in such a way that Baruch Hashem He will never abandon us, although He may conceal Himself in the darkness. Nevertheless, let us find ways of bringing ourselves to such a passion for Hashem and for mitzvahs and self-improvement. And in that merit, may He come out of concealment.