

Nourishment for the Neshama

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From the sin of the spies to the sin of the Golden Calf - how do we strengthen our emunah to heal?

Rabbi Moshe Weinberger in teaching Rav Schwartz's life with emunah section of Bilvavi brings out the way a Jew lives and davens, saying:

Hashem, I want to believe in You, You see how I slip from this. I forget so many times. I am not giving up hope of believing in You. Any time that I forget You, blee neder I will immediately try to mechazek myself to try again and remember my belief in You and I beg of You from the bottom of my heart have mercy on me that I should not forget You, that I should not forget my emunah in You and if I forgot please may it be only a short time that I forgot. Please help me awaken the emunah within me and remind me of You.

Rav Moshe Weinberger speaks about the 17th of Tammuz, the day that we were to receive the luchos, a day which had it gone through would have been a day that Torah was etched into our hearts and the 21 days to Tisha B'Av would have been a joyous time leading up to the coming of Moshiah and redemption. Instead, Rabbi Weinberger explains that what happened on the 17th of Tammuz happens to us every time our experience of reality as it is conflicts with the emunah in Hashem that everything is according to His decree and is true and good. How can we create an opening in our hearts for emunah to reign when our physical senses and apparent reality conflict with the message of emunah, that Torah is true, that Hashem is real and all is good? It can be a constant contrast.

Rav Schwartz suggests we say the above in our own words, from our heart. Here is what my words (so far) are, with the goal of essence being able to flow through emunah to the heart as natural:

Hashem, I want to believe in You, You see how I slip from this. *The experience of reality that I am having is sending messages throughout me of fear, anger, pain, disappointment, etc. and I am identifying with these, which cause me to devise ideas based on self-referencing that may cause damage. My heart is stone to emunah right now! I forget so many times that my esteem is based on revealing tzelem elokim, which holiness seems so distant right now, for how will my overlooking faults or bearing the discomfort of the confusion involved solve this matter in time and space? And doesn't Torah have remedies to help me reach self-referencing goals? My emunah is very far from my mind, only in my mind and heart are self-referencing goals. Right now emunah feels like total sacrifice of self! HELP!!*

I am not giving up hope of believing in You. *Open my heart to being flesh so that emunah flows through my neurocircuitry instead of self-referencing. For I know that if I beg You to redirect the light that is drawing my attention and intellect to self referencing instead to declare Your truth, that all there is in the world is You Who creates all circumstances, then I am choosing hishtadlus that emulates Your compassion by unifying Your Name as the primary goal of free willed choice.*

With appreciation and awareness that Hashem has subjected Himself through giving me life to suffer in this confusion, and with compassion upon the Shechina trapped in the suffering and in this moment, I desire to unify the Shechina trapped in my confusion from the natural reaction and beg that Hashem redirect the light so that I may turn my heart from stone to flesh and merit to become a vessel through which Your midda of bearing the discomfort of confusion may be seen in the world. You do all of this just to give me life and the opportunity to choose to do this avodas Hashem so You can give me benefit and I can delight in relating with You here in time and space!

You Hashem are behind all circumstances and with emunah I know that when I serve Hashem He answers only with good, no matter what, and that this teshuva, this tefilla, are the best hishtadlus I can do because it is a plea to open my heart to revealing Hashem's Glory, and that is the service that Hashem Echad desires from free willed choice and the investment of tzelem elokim in me.

Any time that I forget You, blee neder I will immediately try to mechazek myself to try again and remember my belief in You and I beg of You from the bottom of my heart have mercy on me that I should not forget You, that I should not forget my emunah in You and mechazek myself to arouse love in my heart for the Shechina in galus with my confusion just to give me life and opportunity to declare Your Truth and Oneness. Please help me emulate Your bearing the burden of my confusion by extending Your Mercy through me to others and in so doing may I become connected to Your Mercy, receive clarity, and fold it into consciousness and actions that reveal Your mercy. And if I forget, it should only be a short time that I forget. Please help me awaken the emunah within me and remind me of You.

What if on the day Moshe was to bring down the luchos we had used the garment of emunah to flow through our hearts so that our essence of tzelem elokim prevailed over our fears that the program had been dashed, fears generated by real-time mis-understandings of time and space?

The time zone of 17 of Tammuz is approaching in 34 days. Perhaps if we in our quiet private moments attempt to strengthen within us emunah we may have a positive effect.

In all the world there is only One yet it feels like two. Please help me unify with You.