

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Spiritual root canal - understanding suffering and teshuva in an empowering way

Perhaps the most crucial sign of emunah is the clarity that we have in Hashem's constant Divine presence and oversight in the world.

Yet what we awaken with every day is clarity of how we are experiencing our body and ego realities, either pleasantly or not. In any given moment, we totally know if we feel good or not.

Imagine what incredible circuitry that requires for us – to have a nervous system directly channeling messages to our brain with built in response systems for self-preservation.

If someone tried to build a computer or a machine or a car that had an early detection sensor for how it is operating, as good as it might be, there would still be gaps, such as if the item were about to be dropped out of a window, hammered, or crashed. It would not be a perfect neuro-feedback system such as our mind – heart- body whereby we know how we are feeling throughout, right down to a small splinter.

Our intellect develops through our childhood, our education, our experiences, and our environment. We are very aware of self. Why, then, does Torah want us to shift from egocentrism to being Gd Centered?

Perhaps a better question would be to ask if Hashem wanted us to serve Him to be Gd Centered, why did He create us to have an intellect that grips us egocentrically so strongly?

Many would simply answer that this is the role of free will, to give us a real choice so that we can earn the pleasure of our choice to emulate Him, so that when we, after 120 years, are reunited from this distance the sense of pleasure will have been earned in having remembered Hashem. Great answer. A+

The process of taking the grip our body/ego has on the intellect and replacing that grip so instead the grip of our neshama connects with the intellect (so that the intellect shifts to serve the neshama in fulfilling Hashem's Will) brings an amazing glue from its formation - intellect out of natural development for self-preservation - and brings the strength of that Gdly built neurocircuitry into service for Hashem. When we see ourselves as rooted in shemayim by virtue of our neshama extending into this being, and we avail ourselves of all the beauty and strengths of the body/mind/heart connections for revealing Hashem's Glory, we come closer to Torah's vision of what Nishmas Am Yisrael is here to do.

We are here to provide a flow from Hashem through us utilizing every ounce of our strengths to serve Him – with all our hearts, with all our souls and with all our might. How could we ever understand those words if

we were not naturally built with neurocircuitry linking body and mind?

We are here to do spiritual root canal – to switch out the egocentrism a little at a time and replace it with emunah for Hashem's Will. Literally, we root out what blocks us, the "pulp" of egocentricity and self-preservation by realizing that all there is in the world is Hashem Who desires that with the life given to us, we glue ourselves to His Will, Torah, Mitzvahs and to rectifying our middos so that what flows through our blood and triggers our neuro-circuitry resembles Him more and more.

It is an infinite path, but understanding can help explain much. The suffering we experience is inevitably in the areas where we have self-referencing yet to submit to everything Hashem does is good. Tov. May we have compassion for the experiences of suffering we see and go through with this light at the end of the tunnel, that something about what we are experiencing is designed to help us to implant more deeply Hashem's Torah, mitzvahs, and middos within our natural reactions.

May we not have such suffering but if we do may we be comforted by knowing that somehow we are growing and grounding our neshamas more centrally in our being. And may THAT inspire us to a teshuva b'ahava that stirs the heavens to usher forth the redemption b'ahava.