

Nourishment for the Neshama

<http://lvracha.com>

Sunday, October 30, 2011

Yearning for the bombs and all suffering to stop - what can we do?

Missiles are landing in Southern Israel. Early snow storm knocks out power in New York area. Social Security is in the red. Emotionally portrayed grievances prevail in political negotiations, pressuring people to abandon what is true for relief from the oppressive dark experiences created by emotional bullying, obscuring the quiet enjoyment of life. PRESSURE. How much do we attach ourselves to what is good and right in Hashem's eyes? How well do we cling to Divine truth?

The neshama does not take any pleasure at all from the physical realities of this world, not bodily pleasure, not egotistical pleasure, nor the pleasure of responding naturally to our emotional reactions. Not only that, unless the neshama is able to utilize these experiences to serve Gd, it (the neshama) experiences pain.

When the neshama experiences pain, what do we experience? Conflicting feelings? Inner turmoil? Darkness? YES. And Heaven forbid should we no longer experience these, but rather succumb to the oppressive outside forces and heaven forbid we develop ways of responding to minimize our natural discomfort in body, ego and emotional reaction, it is a sign that our neshamas have been covered over so fully that we may never hear their screams again. Our natural human nature has absolutely no way of discerning the pain in our neshamas. Societies can be built and babies come into the world into a situation where their neshamas have no chance of ever being heard although their natural urges will be. For what reason, then, did Hashem give an exalted neshama to a human being? So that we can torture it?

Hardly. We are in a world where our emotions become attached to pleasures that cannot provide anything but emptiness while appearing to be desirous. We all want to live in our emotions, to feel happy, to feel emotionally well and loving as well as the feeling of being loved.

The Ramchal in Mesillas Yesharim explains that the soul derives pleasure by knowing it is using its time here to emulate Hashem and to do His Will, for the soul's desire is connection. The greatest emotional pleasure is the joy of being centered upon loving and fearing Hashem, to deepen within our hearts emotion to love and dread Hashem and nothing else. Dreading Hashem is the greatest pleasure? Is that what is written here? YES!!

The Ramchal explains that dread of the majesty of Hashem is awareness of the tremendous energy that He is and the essential temporal smallness of what we are. This is a constant. If Hashem is everything and is all there is to dread, then a bomb, an abusive person, a terrible financial threat, and even a fatal diagnosis become mere sticks in His Omnipotent hand. Where will we attach our emotions? Yes, the pain is real. But the pain is coming from our emotional attachment to the message and we can alter our experience to one of peaceful acceptance and service by using our free will to attach our emotions to ahavas and yiras Hashem, love and fear of Hashem. Whatever the challenge, it becomes the stage for our behira, for our free willed choosing. Do we comprehend that the greatest pleasure – connection to Hashem and a sense of serving Him and being unified with Him – is available for the totally zero dollar choice of freely and willingly re-routing what might be overwhelming compelling negative reaction from the event to love and fear of Hashem?

That may not sound very practical but if a person comprehends the nature of the human experience and mental design and also comprehends that Hashem is 100% in control 100% of the time, and is outside of time and can do anything in an infinite number of ways, hisbodidus and yearning to attach our emotions to ahavas and yiras Hashem is THE prescription. When we see that all there is in the world is Hashem, and that our emotions are gateways to connection, we have wisdom and can properly use our free will to, by yearning, attach our emotions to ahavas and yiras Hashem instead of to the natural emotional reactions, no matter how societally sophisticated.

The Mesillas Yesharim is a crucial guidebook in comprehending how to live life. We are not here forever. Pain is purposeful so that we learn to stop torturing our souls and instead bring ourselves great pleasure here and for eternity. Hashem gives us the free will to do it. We are capable of comprehending that our bodies are not ourselves but vessels to be used to accomplish and become who Hashem wants us to be. The key to comprehending is that human nature cannot discern these matters. We need Torah learning to elucidate this matter for us.

Whether we learn or not is up to us. Our souls are elevated and cleansed by the suffering. Hashem will bring the geulah whether or not we reach up to Him. But if we reach up to Him, we will enjoy peace and well-being here and joy for all eternity, and hopefully hasten the coming of the Moshiach Tzidkeinu. For if each person reaches up, we hopefully will tip the scales and Hashem will have no need for bombs, illness, financial strife, oppression and more.

May we be zocheh to pursue a path of straightening out our emotional attachments so that we are drawn to Hashem like iron to a magnet, deepening love and fear of Hashem in our hearts so much that it is a constant yearning and protection.

ADDENDUM

We cling with our emotions to the erroneous belief that doing so will be effective in eliminating the suffering. Letting go of the sense that we can accomplish beyond what Hashem's will allows is the first step. Attaching our emotions to love and fear of Hashem and comprehending the privilege given to our souls to be here and suffer the kapara/tikun whilst earning eternal reward by emulating and relating to Hashem is the task