

yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 29 Jun 2009 19:47

(any questions , insights & suggestions about this thread,feel free to email me at taryaga@gmail.com)

There are many reasons we need to be where we are and who we are,most are unknown.Why do we even have to be in a situation or have in our soul so much darkness and a pull toward self-destructing negative behaviors?

I saw once an amazing thought in a sefer.Moshe Rabeinu came from a union that after the Torah was given would have deemed him a mamzer(parents being an aunt & nephew).He could not boast of his lineage.This is one reason that let him be the greatest Anov that ever lived.

We who have to deal with the stuff that's in us that we would rather not have in the first place-this pain and shame over the course of time -makes us realize that even when we b'ezras Hashem pull out of the addictions-we will never look at another Yid that is struggling with this in a negative way

We catch a Yid looking where he shouldn't be looking and our hearts are full of compassion.We will daven for him,treat him with respect,gently try to get him out of it.We would never disgrace him-not even in our hearts-because we were there.We know what it's like.In our eyes he is a potential tzaddik.

This is surely one reason Hashem gave us this urge towards baseness with all it's shades of ugliness.Yes you are special-like every Yid is-but never ever judge harshly My son or daughter that is struggling-because I love him or her - he or she is part of Klall Yisroel.Just as indispensable as you are.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 12 Jan 2020 00:30

From Torah.org-by R Raymond Beyda

Carrying is Caring

Parshas [Shemos](#)

“It happened in those days and Moshe grew up, and he went out to his brothers and he saw their sufferings.” [Shemot 2,11]

Although Moshe Rabenu grew up as a prince in the palace of the Pharaoh, he learned from his mother that he was not an Egyptian but instead, he was a Jew. **He felt a need to go out of his secure, comfortable surroundings in order to view the plight of his brethren.** The verse simply states that he saw their suffering but Rashi reveals the depth of his emotional attachment to the slaves that he saw struggling in the mud. “He put his eyes and his heart” into it. **Our sages teach this is a trait called “noseh b’ohl im habero” — “carrying the load along with your friend.”** It is in the merit of Moshe’s excellence in this trait that earned him the position as Savior of his people and gave us the leader who not only freed us from bondage but also brought us the Torah and led us to the boundaries of the Promised Land.

Rav Haim Friedlander zt’l says people are naturally “self” oriented. Even when people do acts of kindness they may be motivated by selfishness. **Someone who is uncomfortable seeing pain or suffering might help others thinking they are acting in a “giving” manner when they are actually sub- consciously removing from sight that which bothers them.** The act may benefit the one in need, but the motivation comes from the id — the “givers” selfish drives.

In 1895 there was a fire that destroyed many homes in the city of Brisk. The great leader of the Jewish community, Rav Haim Soloveitchik zt’l, tirelessly worked day and night to restore the dwellings of all those families who had lost their homes in the blaze. **He also refused to go home to bed, but rather slept on the floor of the synagogue until every family had a place to live.** He did not merely know about their plight and he did not merely help them out of their troubles — he FELT their pain and could not rest until their suffering was relieved. He felt that they were really part of him.

Another story is told about the Hafetz Haim zt’l who cried and prayed constantly during World War 1 because he knew how much his brethren were suffering all over Europe. Many were subjected to pogroms, others were drafted into battle for the countries in which they lived and others lost their homes in the changing boundaries of Europe’s map. One night his wife woke

up and found that he was not in his bed. She found him sleeping on a wooden bench with his head resting on his hands. “Yisrael Meir”, she said, “Why aren’t you sleeping in your bed? Where is your pillow?”

“How can I sleep in a bed,” he replied, “When so many of our people are suffering the ravages of war?”

He too did not hear about the troubles of another without FEELING as if the problem was his own.

Today, we are aware of a lot of Jewish suffering around the globe. We are all hungry for news from the battleground in Eretz Yisrael. But there are many Jews who are falling prey to assimilation even here in the United States. France has been showing an increase in Anti-Semitic crimes. There are still Jewish communities in Muslim countries and in the Former Soviet Union. Many of our people have financial problems, while others cannot find a mate. Some who are married have no children and others who have children fall ill to horrible diseases. **What does Hashem want? Perhaps He wants us to be noseh b’ohl im habero –to help in carrying the load — by praying, giving charity and assistance to those in need. But most importantly, to feel that another Jew’s problem is my own.** His or her problem hurts me like my difficulties. It was this attitude that made Moshe the leader of our salvation from Egypt and perhaps if we can truly evoke that unity in our people today, Hashem will bring the final redemption with the coming of Mashiah speedily and in our days. Amen.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 18 Jan 2020 23:28

Vaara

From Torah.org

PARSHAS VAERA- KINDLINESS IS G-DLINESS by Rabbi Ben Tzion Shafier

And Pharaoh sent for Moshe and Aharon and said to them, ‘I have sinned this time. HASHEM is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.’ — Shemos 9:27 After months and months of rebellion, Pharaoh finally admitted that he was wrong. The Dos Zakainim explains that the makkah of barad moved Pharaoh more than any other. And it was because of one factor:

Moshe had warned him that the hail would kill anything living. Again and again, Moshe cautioned Pharaoh to take his livestock and his slaves inside. **Because Pharaoh was repeatedly warned to save the living creatures, he was moved and recognized his error.** This Dos Zakainim is difficult to understand. **Why would this detail cause Pharaoh to admit that HASHEM was right?** He witnessed the greatest revelation of HASHEM's mastery of nature—and it didn't move him. He watched as Mitzrayim, the superpower of its time, was brought to its knees. That didn't move him. **Why should this single factor have such an effect?** This question is best answered with a moshol.

The Nature of the Human Henry Ford, while a brilliant businessman, was not known for his kindness. In fact, he used to brag that he never did anything for anyone. The story is told that while he was going for a walk in the fields with a friend, they heard yelps coming from a nearby property. A dog had gotten caught in a barbed wire fence and couldn't get out. Ford walked over to the fence, gently pulled on the wire, and freed the dog. When he returned to the road, his friend said to him, "I thought you were the guy who never did anything for anyone." **Henry Ford responded, "That was for me. The dog's cries were hurting me."** This story is compelling because Ford didn't care about anyone but himself. He didn't choose to be kind. He didn't want to feel the pain of others. In fact, he tried his best to squelch this sensitivity. **But it was still there. He couldn't stop himself. He was pre-programmed to have mercy. In his inner makeup, there was that voice that said, "Henry, the poor animal is in pain. Go do something!"** Even though he prided himself on selfishness, he couldn't quell that voice inside. It bothered him to hear a creature in pain. When he heard those cries, they reached down to his inner core, to that part of the human that only wants to do good, proper and noble things. That part was touched. It saw an animal in pain and said, "Don't just stand there, Henry. Do something. That poor animal is suffering."

Let Us Make Man This is illustrative of the basic components of the human. When Hashem created man, He joined together two diverse elements to form his soul. These are his spiritual soul, what we call his nishamah, and his animal soul, which is comprised of all of the drives and inclinations needed to keep him alive. The conscious "I" that thinks and feels is made up of both parts. **The nishamah comes from under the throne of Hashem's glory.** It is pure and holy and only wishes for that which is good, proper and noble. Because it comes from the upper worlds, it derives no benefit from this world and can't relate to any of its pleasures. The other part of man's soul is very different. It is exactly like that of an animal, with all of the passions and desires necessary to drive man through his daily existence. **We humans are this contradictory combination. Within me is an animal soul made up of pure desires and appetites, and within me is a holy nishamah that only wishes to do that which is right and proper.** The animal soul only knows its needs and exists to fulfill them. The nishamah is magnanimous and only wishes to give. These two total opposites are forged together to create the whole we know as the human. Touching the Soul

This seems to be the answer to the Dos Zakainim. Pharaoh was a human being, **and as all humans, he had a sublime side to him.** He may have spent years ignoring and pushing it down, but it remained within him. What he experienced during the plague of hail was pure chessed. His enemy was concerned for his good. **There was nothing that HASHEM had to gain by protecting the cattle and the slaves of the Egyptians. The only motivation was generosity, goodness, and a pure concern for others. Seeing this warmed even the**

callous heart of Pharaoh. He recognized this wasn't driven by lowly motives. He understood that he was dealing with something outside of the realm of normal human interests. He saw HASHEM. Being like HASHEM This also helps us understand one of the great ironies of life. The selfish person is focused on his needs and his wants. The generous person is concerned about the welfare of others—even at the cost of his own needs. We would assume that the selfish person would happy. After all, he is singly focused on what's good for him. But the generous person has the good of others on his mind—surely he can't be as happy. He has to worry about the good of others. Yet, just the opposite is true. **The more a person is focused on others' needs, the happier he is. The more he focuses on his own needs and wants, the unhappier he will be.**

When man develops the trait of giving, he achieves inner peace, balance, and harmony. When he ignores it, he suffers. His sense of self becomes fragmented. One part of him is demanding, "What's in it for me?" and the other side is crying out, "What have I done for others?" The more a person develops the nature of giving, the more he becomes like HASHEM, and the holier he becomes. This why kindness is so basic to being a Torah observant Jew. If it could be, HASHEM is all-giving, kindness, and mercy. **Many mitzvahs train us in these traits because this is the greatest elevation of the human—to be as much like HASHEM as humanly possible.** While it takes focus and attention to bring out the higher part of our personality, it is ingrained in our soul and so it comes naturally to us.

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Re: yechida's reflections
Posted by yechidah - 19 Jan 2020 14:13

Jan 26

Please help me

Connect with

Abraham's Chesed

& Aharon's Peace

Jan 27

Joy of

United souls

As One

Jan 28

Apple seed

Dull color

Unattractive

Yet generations

Of trees & fruits

Within it!!

Jan 29

Study truth

In methodical order

Not meandering

Not hitting the on truth

Randomly

Jan 30

Gift of insight

Lightning flash

Seize that opportunity

Develop the illuminating concept

Before it conceals itself again

Build upon that light

A tangible lesson

Of true wisdom

Jan 31

Prayer

Bridging the gap

Between heart & mind

Both in unison

Connecting to the Divine

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 26 Jan 2020 01:18

Bo

The Painful Darkness of Light 1

Hashem said to Moshe: Stretch forth your hand over the Heavens, and there will be darkness upon the land of Egypt. 2

Nothing we know or can imagine approximates the darkness that overcame Egypt in the next to the last plague. It was miasmatic; there was substance and body to it, not merely the absence of light. So different in character was this darkness, that the *medrash*³ labors to understand its provenance. From where did such darkness come? The *medrash* offers a source: **the darkness came from on high, from the Heavens themselves.**

But what could this possibly mean? What darkness is there above, where there is only light?

Moshe was told to stretch his hand over, above the Heavens. We would have expected him to

be instructed to lift his hand towards Heaven. Moshe, however, was not meant to point with his hand in the direction of a higher place. He was told to reach above the Heavens, take hold of some lofty and elevated spiritual level, and bring it down to Egypt. There, explains the *Toldos Yaakov Yosef*, **this wonderful light would turn to painful darkness for the Egyptians.**

Consider a thoroughly evil fellow, somehow finding himself in Gan Eden, moving about among the righteous, who all sit there resplendent in their crowns of glory, basking in the radiance of the *Shechinah*. *Tzadikim* there experience this as indescribable pleasure; he suffers immeasurably. **Completely unaccustomed to spirituality, he experiences this Gan Eden as unbearable discomfort.**

This, then, is the essence of the plague of darkness. Moshe took some of the light from above. It plunged Egypt into a darkness like no other.

After crossing the Sea, the Jews went for three days “and could not find water.”⁴ What they really were missing was the sweet water of Torah.⁵ Consequently, when they traveled a bit further, “they could not drink the waters...because they were bitter.” Having gone a significant time without learning, says the *Toldos*, when they returned to it, they found it bitter rather than a source of joy and pleasure. Unaccustomed to Torah for only a short while, they found it unattractive and foreign when they returned to it. **All the more so a person who never experienced the sweetness of Torah, who spent a lifetime distant from all Torah and mitzvos! He gags on them; he finds them devoid of meaning and uncomfortable. There is no greater darkness than this!** (Rambam⁶ mentions the same phenomenon. In sickness, a patient will sometimes report that bitter foods taste sweet, and sweet foods taste bitter. Spiritual ailments cause something similar. Spiritually diseased people relish traits that are evil, and spurn good and proper ones.)

The Jews experienced the very opposite. Unlike the Egyptians, they were not overcome by palpable darkness. On the contrary, the illumination that Moshe brought down from on high bathed them in light. “For all the Bnei Yisrael there was light in their dwellings.”⁷ Those who dwelled often in light, who sought it, cherished, looked for it – who made a home for themselves in it – they found novelty and excitement in this light brought by Moshe.

We have not yet done justice to this darkness from above. We speak of Hashem as “*yotzer/* fashioning light and *boreil/* creating darkness”⁸ “Creation,” we are told is on a higher plane than “fashioning.” Why, then, is darkness linked to *beriah*?

The *sefarim ha-kedoshim* explain that the “darkness” linked to *beriah* in this verse is actually light – light that is even brighter than what is connected with *yetzirah*. Some light is so powerful, that staring at it leaves one blinded, incapable of seeing anything else. People who stare at the sun for even a brief moment are temporarily left unable to focus properly. One who is not equipped to handle the light loses his vision because of it. **Chazal⁹ tell us that in the future,**

Hashem will take the sun out of its sheath. It will then inflict punishment upon the evil, while simultaneously curing the righteous. The righteous, accustomed to spiritual illumination, will make good use of it. They will find it curative and redemptive. The evil, unaccustomed to such illumination in their lives, will be overwhelmed and pained by it.

So it was to the Egyptians. Moshe did not bring darkness from above, but light. Unable to bear what their souls were unaccustomed to processing, the Egyptians were paralyzed by the overdose of light, and they were unable to see each other or rise up from their places for three days. The dwellings of Bnei Yisrael, however, were suffused with light.

Chazal tell us that a common thread ties together all the plagues: each acted in two opposing fashions. Each struck at the Egyptians, but brought relief to the Jews. We should not think that two different natures were unleashed in tandem by Hashem in each plague. Rather, we should understand this as above. **Each *makah* had but a single quality. It was experienced differently by Bnei Yisrael and by the Egyptians, proving useful and positive to the Jews and devastating to the Egyptians.**

Rav Moshe Midner adds a grace note to our discussion. “To all Bnei Yisrael there was light in their dwellings.” Sometimes, the light is too much for any individual to bear. **When Jews dwell together, when they band together as a group to bring down Hashem’s light, they are able to jointly receive it.** This is why Jews gather and sit with each other in large groups on Shabbos.

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Re: yechida's reflections
Posted by yechidah - 01 Feb 2020 23:51

From Torah.org

beschalach

Everyone Needs Attention

The pasuk [verse] at the beginning of the parsha says, “Vayehi b’Shalach Pharaoh es ha’am” – “and it was when Pharaoh sent out the nation”. The Medrash Rabbah comments on the word “Vayehi” – “and it was”. The Medrash says that the expression “vayehi” is related to the word

“vai” (as in ‘oy vai’), which means to cry out. The Medrash asks, “Who cried out?” The Medrash answers that Pharoah screamed in anguish when he had to send the Jewish people out.

What did Pharoah cry about? The Medrash relates a parable. A King had a son who travelled away from home. The prince spent some time at the house of a wealthy person. When the King heard where the prince was staying, he corresponded with this person and asked him to send the prince home. The wealthy person ignored the letter. The King sent more letters, all of which were ignored. Finally the King went to the house of this person to take his son home himself.

When the King finally took his son home, the wealthy person started to cry out. The neighbors asked him, “Why are you crying?” He responded, “I had a great honor in hosting the prince in my home. The King corresponded with me and took an intense interest in what was happening in my home. Now, I no longer have the prince in my home, so the King will have no interest in me whatsoever. That is why I cry out.”

That is how Pharoah felt. As long as the Jews were in Egypt, G-d kept sending him messages. Now that the Jews left, Pharoah would no longer have a ‘correspondence’ with the Mastter of the World. “Woe to me” (vay), says Pharoah, “that I sent the Jews out and lost my dialog with G-d”. That is why the pasuk begins “VAY-ehi b’Shalach...”

What conclusion must we arrive at from this Medrash? Was Pharoah a masochist? Did he miss the ‘correspondence’ that G-d was sending to him: Blood, Frogs, Lice, etc., etc. Did he love getting beaten up. Why did he cry out when he was no longer ‘hearing’ from G-d in this fashion?

Pharoah may have had deep psychological problems, but masochism was not one of them. Pharoah was a very real human being. Human beings need to feel wanted. They need to feel “I am somebody. Somebody notices me.” When a person is no longer noticed, he feels like less of a person.

Rav Shlomo Wolbe (one of the premier personalities in the mussar movement today, residing in Jerusalem) mentions in one of his books that a certain young man once stopped coming to prayer services at a Yeshiva. A friend asked him, “What happened? Don’t you daven anymore?” The young man responded, “Heaven forbid, I daven at another minyan now. There is no shortage of minyanim in Jerusalem.” His friend asked him, “Why don’t you daven in the Yeshiva anymore?” The young man responded, **“This way maybe the mashgiach [spiritual mentor of the students] will notice me.”**

This is an example of the fact that negative notice is better than no notice. “I want somebody to know that I exist.” **Apathy is worse than punishment.**

Small children sometimes 'act out'. (Sometimes they don't have to be so small.) We may ask, "Why are they acting out? Why can't they behave? Why can't they just sit quietly at the Shabbos table? Why do they act out, only to be sent away to their rooms in the middle of the meal?"

The answer is that they, in fact, want to be sent away because that way they are at least noticed. We all have a choice. We can either give our children or our spouses positive attention or we might have to give them negative attention. But we will need to give them attention, one way or another.

This is the lesson of the Medrash. Pharoah would rather be beaten over the head and worse, than not be noticed by G-d at all. The worst thing for Pharoah was the realization that after sending out the nation, G-d would become oblivious to him. **Everyone needs attention.**

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 01 Feb 2020 23:59

regarding loving yourself, marriage & healthy eating

Feb 1

Life

A school

A testing ground

In having faith

In God

Feb 2

Divine Providence

In every particular in life

All for ultimate good

To bring us close to Him

Feb 3

Faith of God

Brings

Peace of Mind

Feb 4

Loving our people

Mitigates judgements

Even pre-repentance

Feb 5

Don't think that

Because you don't love yourself

God doesn't love you either

This is a false assumption

For He loves us

Intrinsically

Feb 6

Desire for women

(other than one's wife & soulmate)

Conceals & stagnates

Our love for God

From coming forth

Desire for one's wife & soulmate

Coming from not just body but also soul

Bring forth & accentuates

Our love for God

Feb 7

Deep desire in a woman is

To love her husband

When she doesn't sense that love

Her heart & mind in in turmoil

So loving your wife truly

Is not just a nice thing

Its instilling life in her

Feb 8

True love

Deeper than

Hugging & kissing

Deeper than

The physical act of sex

But all this

Is still needed

To express that love

Feb 9

Looking at women

Blocks a husband's heart

From fully loving

His wife

Feb 10

Its not just our soul

That is uniquely high

Our bodies too

Have great spiritual potential

Elevating the mundane

Feb 11

The primary gift

A husband

Can give his wife

Is a true & empathetic

Listening ear

Feb 12

A husband's wisdom (Chochmah)

Is sorely lacking

Unless he

Incorporates into himself

Accepting the discernment (Binah0

From his wife

Feb 13

If a husband's desire

For his wife

Is only physical/sexual

It will ultimately

Create distance

Not closeness or unity

She will feel degraded

Internally-

As a result

It's Ok

Even admirable

For a husband

To be sexually & physically attuned

Attracted to his wife

As long as

The soul-friendship bond

Is primary

Feb 14

Generally speaking,

Man is attuned to intellect

Women to emotion

Though occasionally

It's the reverse

But deep intuition

Is primarily

A woman's gift

Feb 15

Please Hashem

Grant me the strength

To overcome

My mouth's basic desires

Of evil speech & overeating

Instead

Help me speak

Only goodness & wisdom

And to eat healthy

With the right mindset

Feb 16

Let me eat

To live

Not to live

To eat!!

Feb 17

Please help me handle

By inner emotional pain

Properly

Not allowing it to trigger

Unhealthy releases

Such as overeating

Or misdirected sexual channeling

Feb 18

To facilitate healthy eating

Eat-slowly & deliberately

Concentrate-when making blessings

Before & after eating

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 07 Feb 2020 14:29

Feb 19

You can't believe in God fully

Until you believe in yourself

That God values you

& cherishes you

Feb 20

Live with Truth

God's spark within us

Knowing everything in us

Is God's kindness

Feb 21

Living

Recognizing the truth

Of our faults & errors

To talk to God about them

Asking His assistance

To help us

Correct ourselves

Feb 22

The more we express

Our gratitude to God

The closer we get

To the Truth

Feb 23

Be happy with our lot

Includes

Being happy for people

Who have more than us

Feb 24

Thank you for the gift

Of clean cloths

Physical & spiritual

Reflecting

The Divine spark

Within us

Feb 25

What a waste of time

Excess efforts

On outer appearances!!

Feb 26

Wisdom conceals itself

Man-endowed with inner wisdom

Hides this Wisdom

Through garments

Feb 27

God helps

Those who help themselves

By also asking

For His help!!

Feb 28

God

In His Infinite Kindness

Sustains us

Even when we are unworthy

Feb 29

God desires Kindness

Within us

In the World

We, in turn-

Emulate this

By being kind

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 09 Feb 2020 00:44

Yisro

torah.org

“Even though I’ve told you ten times I don’t want to sell that watch, you are such a nudge, I’ll sell it to you.”

When you want someone’s object so badly that you force them to give it to you, and according to most commentaries even if you pay for it, you have violated “Thou shall not covet” (Shemos 20:13-14) of the Ten Commandments!!

Understanding what really belongs to us and what really belongs to others is quite critical to our success in Judaism. It also prevents the inevitable blurring that results from coveting that which is not one's own.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 16 Feb 2020 00:34

Mishpatim

From Torah.org by Rabbi Wein

Don't Cross the Line

It is difficult, in the extreme, to understand the concluding part of this week's Torah reading. It is recorded that the noble people of Israel somehow gazed and saw the likeness of heaven and they were not immediately punished nor struck down for having done so. **The Torah has made it abundantly clear in many places that no human being while alive can see, so to speak, a corporeal vision of the Lord.**

If this be the case, then what is this verse and the Torah telling us? What does it mean that these noble people were able to gaze upon the Divine presence? As is the case in almost all the narratives that appear in the Torah, there are various interpretations of this issue that have been advanced over the ages. Most of these opinions reflect the idea that these great and noble people gazing upon the Divine presence is to be understood in a metaphorical sense and not literally.

After having experienced the revelation at Sinai and the granting of the Torah to the Jewish people, this cadre of special people now attempted to understand the methodology by which God runs the world. They thought that they had achieved such a level of spirituality that they were able to do so. They somehow combine the idea of physical reality in their understanding of God and for this they would later suffer negative consequences. Their ambition, even for spirituality, was a reach too far.

In the Torah reading that we will hear in a few weeks, we will see that our great teacher Moshe also attempted this leap of understanding the Divine completely. **God will tell Moshe of the**

impossibility of his request. Being human, no matter how great one is, automatically limits one's understanding and true appreciation of the Creator. It is a line that no human being can cross and retain life, as we understand it to exist.

The Midrash seems to indicate that Moshe did have such an opportunity at the beginning of his mission, at his encounter with God at the burning bush. Moshe was not willing to avail himself of that opportunity then and the Lord informs him now that it is far too late for that opportunity to be revised. Nevertheless, Moshe has the strongest relationship with Heaven that any human being ever experienced or could experience. But even that relationship – the face-to-face conversations, so to speak, with God – is to be viewed as not achieving a complete understanding of the Divine and of the methodology employed by Heaven to guide the world and human events.

Perhaps that is what the rabbis of the Talmud meant when they said, “simply let them ignore and disassociate themselves from Me and just observe the Torah that I have granted them.” Much of the world at various times confuse human beings with God or as being God. Judaism comes to tell us that there is an indelible line between the two that can and never will be crossed.

(this is a very important lesson to know & integrate when seeking deeper meaning & spiritual heights. We need to know that our physicality creates intrinsic limitations & we need to honor that. So while its not healthy to indulge the body, it is healthy to keep the body as healthy as possible & live a Torah life in all aspects including all physical activities & limitations)

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Re: yechida's reflections
Posted by yechidah - 23 Feb 2020 01:48

Terumah

From Torah.org by R Raymond Bayda

Try Try Again

“And you shall make candelabra of pure gold; from a solid piece of gold it shall be

made..." Shemot 25:31

In this week's Torah portion Hashem instructs Moshe to construct a beautiful edifice as the Tabernacle to house the holy vessels that represented his connection to the people of Israel. Amongst the holy utensils was seven-stemmed candelabra called the Menorah. Moshe was instructed to take a solid piece of pure gold and to form the candelabra which contained stems, cups, flowers and ornaments. The commentators, however, see a grammatical problem with this particular command. The verse begins and "you" shall make. The verse continues, and "it shall be made". Why, they ask, change from the active tense to the passive?

Each one of the holy vessels in the tabernacle represented a distinct aspect of Jewish life. The altar, for example represented prayer or service to God. The table, represented sustenance. **The candelabra represented knowledge and Torah study.** Many people acknowledge that their earnings are determined by Hashem in Heaven. Others feel, and rightly so, that Hashem expects them to be the ones to initiate prayer. All agree that one who does not study will not be able to acquire Torah knowledge. By the same token, they feel that if they do put in effort they will become wise. This, however, may not be totally true.

Rabbi Noah Weinberg was visiting the United States of America. He spent one Shabbat in a small New Jersey community. The people were friendly, and because of the small size of the congregation for Rabbi mingled freely with all the congregants. On Shabbat afternoon, when they sat to eat Seudah Shelisheet, the third Shabbat meal, a young man who was sitting next to the Rabbi began a conversation, which expressed his frustration with his ability to learn Torah. The young man described the many hours in the many techniques he had tried in order to grasp the difficult concepts of the Talmud study.

"How come I just can't get it?" he asked. "No matter what I do, it seems my conclusions are wrong when I get a chance to review with my Rabbi. I am about to give up," he said he reported.

"That is the worst solution, you could choose" the rabbi responded. "A person has to understand that the learning of Torah is not something that a human being can do without the help of Hashem. Hashem expects you to put in all the effort you can, and then he will produce the results."

The young man listened and was encouraged. **The respect he had for the sage gave him the strength to continue with his suggestion off try try again. Not long after he made a breakthrough.** He reached a level where he was able to prepare a portion of the Talmud on his own. Today that young man is a practicing Rabbi in his community teaching others how to learn and how to be patient, if at first they do not succeed.

Our sages teach that creating the candelabra of one piece of gold was something that Moshe

found very difficult and almost impossible to comprehend. Hashem's response to his puzzlement was to tell him **"You do yours and I will do the rest"**.

When one sits to learn the concepts and ideas that are contained in the Torah, **Hashem expects a person to put in its maximum effort. The concepts themselves, however, are impossible for the human being to understand on his own.** Just as construction of the candelabra, which represented Torah study, was impossible for Moshe to comprehend yet Hashem said to him putting your efforts and I will complete it- so too is the learning of Torah. The verse cited above goes from active tense to passive tense to show that all you do, you must do to the fullest extent but don't expect to complete the job on your own. Holy work gets done only through the help of Heaven. May it be the will of Hashem that we all have the strength to put in all of our efforts to grow in spirituality and in Torah knowledge and may He bless us with successful achievement of those goals – Amen.

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Re: yechida's reflections
Posted by yechidah - 01 Mar 2020 12:03

March 1

Provide kindness

In quiet & subtle ways

So as not to embarrass

The recipient

March 2

Pray diligently

To acquire

The sweetness of Torah

Which sustains souls

& gives us joyous life

March 3

Strive to reach

The high level

Of never hurting

Another human being

March 4

Please allow me

To be a vessel

A channel

To help others

To shower blessings

Upon others

Never to cause pain

Only encouragement & joy

March 5

Weeping of Tisha Baav

Not for the past

But for present correction

Of the brightest future

March 6

A wise person

Learns wisdom

Even from stone

Plants & animals

March 7

Depression/sadness

Greatest enemies

Of repentance

March 8

Arrogance blinds the vision

Of a person

From seeing

The intrinsic good in others

March 9

Nothing more hurtful

To a wife

Than an arrogant husband

March 10

An arrogant person

Is incapable

Of loving & honoring

His wife

March 11

Gratitude brings redemption

The expression of it

Ultimately reaching

The depths of the heart

March 12

Peace amongst ourselves

Brings us to be grateful

To our brothers & sisters

Brings redemptive healing

March 13

Charity in abundance

Corrects theft

That took place

Even in prior reincarnations

March 14

Peace at home

Grants

The Garden of Eden

To your children

To experience that joy

In their home & heart

March 15

Everything is contingent

On the 4th blessing

Of the Amidah

Requesting "Daas"

Clarity of Mind

Real Truth

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 08 Mar 2020 11:01

March 16

Every person

Can find his or her

True path to God

Their unique song

Their specific & special mission

March 17

Though it's not easy

But exceedingly crucial

& rewarding

To forgo momentary pleasures

For the sake of Truth

March 18

Discern God's lesson

To you

In every circumstance

& event

March 19

Gratitude

Foundation of all good character traits

Foundation of all life

March 20

Gratitude

Softens

The crushing blows

Of self-blame

March 21

Gratitude

Mitigates

Harsh judgements

March 22

Gratitude

Heals arrogance

Occupying the mind & heart

In thanking God

Leaving little room

For grandiose self -absorption

March 23

Appreciate

Even inanimate objects

That God places for you

For your benefit

March 24

Never turn your back

On the people

Who have helped you

At the very least

Pray to God

For their well being

March 25

Know your true level

Don't under value

Or over value

Your gifts

Appreciate them

As they are

& use them wisely

March 26

You can pray to God

To make your situation better

But at the same time

Believe that in the present & past

God placed you exactly

Where you need to be

March 27

Being happy with what you have

Is a great blessing

In & of itself

Generating both joy

& peace of mind

March 28

Greatest concealment

If the belief

That God doesn't love you

March 29

Don't be afraid

Of success

Or feel guilty

For having so much blessing

But don't become arrogant either

March 30

A woman can be very successful

In many areas in life

& it's to be valued

As long as she is fully aware

Of the great privilege

Of being a wife & mother

To the best of her ability

March 31

It's a sign of great respect

When interacting with the opposite gender

To be aware of the inherent sexuality

That exists between the 2 genders

& yet to not pay attention for focus to that aspect

instead to treat her/him with respect & dignity

as a total person

made in the Image of God

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 09 Mar 2020 01:11

Purim

many of us will be with family & friends-many of us will be alone

either way-we are all both alone & not alone

we are alone with the unique precious soul given to us

at the same time-deep in our soul-we are connecting with Everyone- All our brothers & sisters of Am Yisroel!!

& so-if you are surrounded by friends & family-be kind to them , to the poor , to every one you meet this special day-& also be kind to yourself & see to it that you connect to your Creator this day by praying to Him & by doing all the mitzvos of the day with devotion & love

& if you are alone-or feel a deep painful loneliness even in a crowd of people-you can overcome that inner pain this day because you are not alone-at any time-but on purim you can sense it & build on it-you matter-your soul sings-it feels the eternity of our people & how you are bound to everyone of our brothers & sisters as they are bound to you

you too-even alone or lonely-can find a shul to hear the megillah, can pray on this very special day, to find a person to give shelach manus to , to give the required charity to the poor & to have a purim meal with some meat & wine. even alone or lonely- this day can be a great source of healing to you.

this day-even as you see many families around you rejoicing & by you its quiet or lonely or not ideal-it truly makes no difference-because God is with you just as He is with them, God rejoices with you just as with them, God loves you atleast as much as He loves them & He wants to be invited into your heart on this very special day

& when you invite Him in, the pain of loneiness will subside, & you will be at peace & ultimately even experience a certain serene joy...

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 17 Mar 2020 22:37

it's a difficult time for all of us-for our nation & for the world at large.

it's not our way to fall into despair or panic or depression.

it's a time for each one of us to keep & safeguard the special mitzvah of watching our health-to follow the guidelines of medical professionals & responsible torah authorities-& after that is done -to trust Hashem, to keep positive & to do as many mitzvos as we can.

as strange as it sounds-while this virus outbreak is clearly a global crisis-a crisis of a massive "tzibbur"-jewish & non-jewish -the truth is that both the physical & spiritual remedy for this extremely serious situation is not from correcting a "tzibbur" problem.

the truth is that it's a "yachid" -individual crisis-its the call for each & every individual to do his or her private introspection in thought , speech & action

its a call to reevaluate our lives-to recalibrate-to reorganize the structure of our hearts & minds to do in this world what are souls are meant to do

we have no prophets. we have gedolim that can shed some light but for the most part we are in the dark. no one-absolutely no one-can pinpoint exactly why this is taking place-its most likely that there are hundreds of reasons & each individual needs to hear the true calling of their soul to determine the truth that pertains to them.

of course the "rounding up the usual suspects" (as R YY Jacobson once put it) will of course take place- as described below:

some will blast the internet, some will proclaim its the talking in shul, for others it must be lack of tznius, or porn or loshon horah or being a Zionist or treating zionists and the non religious like garbage, or it must be bitul torah, or sinas chinum, or going overboard with lavish weddings, or traveling too much when you should be with your family, or overspending on lavish vacations or

going to disneyland, or for not giving \$\$ to kupas haiir, for going to uman for rosh hashana, for not going to uman for rosh hashana, for wearing long wigs,or wigs at all , or not being double covered, for short skirts , for long skirts, for davening mincha after shkia,for not saying tikkun chatzos or for not drinking hot tea motzoi shabbos, for eating OU . for not eating OU, for your shver not supporting you for 100 years, for going to work , for wasting time in kollel, for using birth control, for not using birth control, for having sex only once a week with your wife, for having sex seven times a week with your wife , for not sending your daughter to the top seminary in erez yisroel,for sending your daughter to the top seminary in erez Yisroel & to let it get to her head, for going to tish when you should be learning, for learning when you should be going to tish, for staying in the city in the summer with all the pritzus, for going up to the bungalow where also more dangerous pritzus can take place, for saying Kiddush levanah before 7 days, for going to dirshu siyum hashas , for not going to dirshu's siyim hashas, for non filtered water, or for not trusting rabannim who hold that filtered water is ok, or learning rambam , for not learning rambam, its all the men's fault, its all the women's fault, it's this group group, its that group, its the "samach mem", its from learning nittul night, its from not learning nittul night, its from sefardim eating rice on pesach, its from askenazim that don't stay up all night the seventh day of pesach, for eating fish on pesach, for not giving your new son in law a brand new megillah for purim., for naming your daughter after this grandmother instead of the other grandmother, & on & On & On

The above is a very long winded & complicated mess of things that don't even touch the tip of the iceberg of all the elaborate science fiction that ive heard in my lifetime from many chusheva places & from the "wisest" of our people as to why things happen to people

These ridiculous nonsense is what has to stop!!!

Truth is that we know nothing. but at the same time , we have a Torah, we have Hashem, we have the tools within us to learn what **each one of us individually needs to work on in our lives WITHOUT pointing accusatory fingers at anyone else.& even with ourselves-not to bash ourselves for our past screwups but to be compassionate with ourselves knowing that as we fix our own internal flaws Hashem will help us succeed.** yes, we can influence, we can educate, & we must care of all our brothers & sisters for their physical & spiritual well being & try to help when someone is going on a wrong road-but all this to be done with compassion & love & with first taking a hard long look at our own personal behavior & thoughts-& do everything we can to guide our own souls to where they are meant to be.

we dont know exactly why this is taking place & we may never know until Moshiach comes & tells us why. (together with why the holocaust, the world wars, the crusades ,& everything else both positive & painful)

But what is clear -**as everything is shutting down around us-it is clear as day to every person that Hashem is telling us to turn inward** -for each individual -each single person is a Whole World-& each one of us is tasked to build our own unique individual whole world by become a true son & daughter of Hashem

turning inward does not mean to not care for others or to be self absorbed in a selfish way-the opposite is true!! by turning inwards with wisdom , we learn to deeply connect to all of our brothers & sisters in a real way, bring out the best in ourselves & in all of our nation & even the best for the whole world

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 22 Mar 2020 00:40

personal message from r simon Jacobson to each one of us

www.meaningfullife.com

Dear (Yechida)

First and foremost, it is my sincerest hope and prayer that you are all feeling well both physically and emotionally.

Though you are always in my heart, at a time like this, when all otherwise-reliable security blankets and comfort zones have been stripped away and we're being tested in ways we could never have previously imagined, **it is more important than ever to know how deeply connected we really are.**

In “normal” times we often make do by relying on our conventional routines and habits, convinced that our material comforts provide us with ultimate security. **But when those have all virtually been upended and we're suddenly faced with deep unknowns, we realize that all we have left is our one and only true and ultimate security – the one that comes from our soul's connection to G-d and to each other.**

Although no one wanted or expected this upheaval, it has been thrust upon us and presents us with two choices: 1) To cower in fear and retreat into the clouds of uncertainty. 2) To rise to the occasion and let our souls shine forth in the best and most beautiful way they can.

I am confident that both you and I have chosen correctly.

Obviously, we need to be prudent, responsible and listen to the health authorities to do whatever it takes to protect ourselves, our families and all those around us. **But at the same time we must reach deeper into our inner resources and remain calm and confident as we face these challenges. We must use this time to build up our inner and intimate lives – our love and connection with our families and loved ones, our inner fortitude and values system, and to remind each other what it is we stand for and are ready to fight for.** Despite the darkness around us, now more than ever, we embrace being agents of light, particularly when the light is so drastically needed.

While we have no control over the virus and the events going on outside of ourselves, **we do have full control over what is going on inside ourselves: what our attitudes are, which message we will give our children, families and friends, how nobly and in how dignified a manner we behave during this unprecedented time; which new skills and strengths – perhaps lying dormant within us until now – will emerge.**

So while we may need to be socially distant for the time being, we must become soulfully closer than ever.

In the spirit of brotherhood I share with you that we are here for you and with you. We will neither slow down nor curtail any of our activities. **On the contrary, we have chosen to accelerate them – by focusing all our resources toward providing everyone with empowering, life-affirming messages and life skills to ease the strain felt by all of us.** Just as the body needs nourishment to be healthy, so too does the soul. In many ways,

demoralization and fear can be even more debilitating than the virus itself. We are committed to doing everything in our power to boost the emotional and psychological immunities of our brethren.

In the coming weeks, we will be rolling out special online programs and classes which will address many different segments of society, including online interactive sessions with students across the country and the world which will respond to their questions and concerns, short daily spiritual messages (Soulful Antidotes), and much more. Please see the [special coronavirus section](#) we created on our site, which is being updated daily with new materials.

I invite you to join me in this effort. Firstly, by personally partaking in these programs, and of course, by extending the invitation to all others who may benefit as well. Secondly, by sharing your suggestions about programs and ideas you feel would be of service to you and others you know. I would love to hear your thoughts.

And above all, do your part! Express your unique voice and illuminate everyone you can reach!

We may be quarantined within our homes, but we are certainly not quarantined in our souls – we have enormous ability to reach deeper into the hearts and souls of our loved ones, our friends and strangers too. Indeed, these crazy times have opened up new unprecedented opportunities – and a great need – for just such soulful connections.

Let us use this opportunity to transform what may appear as a “distancing” and “isolating” experience, into a connecting and unifying experience -- a global unity revolution -- uniting and bringing us closer together than ever before, until we merit to see the personal and global redemption of the entire world.

I believe this may be the defining event of our lives: how we respond today will be etched into the annals of history for eternity.

We will not be known for having been silent in the face of such upheaval. When this story will be told by our children and grandchildren, we will be remembered as having done everything humanly possible to mitigate the crisis, emerging a much stronger people in the process.

We shall see the sun rise and our planet restored to excellent health.

With blessings and prayers for complete, perfect health and many long years, physically and spiritually.

With love and warmth,

Simon Jacobson

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