

## Powerful Words

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As I conclude my response, being that we are nearing the end of Shovavim, I feel it is appropriate to mention a thought which is in my heart. Our Rabbis teach us that everyone has some sort of suffering that he must go through in life, how fortunate is the one that takes his suffering through toiling in Torah!

These words are cryptic. What does one have to do with the other? How does toiling in Torah lessen the suffering that he had to go through? The answer is a lesson that I carry with myself at all times. It is the single most powerful tool I have to keep me afloat in the raging waves the Yetzer Hara constantly throws at me. An invaluable lesson to be shared with my brothers and friends. Get ready, here is the concept.

Every single person has a certain amount of happiness and suffering that is destined to fall upon him. There are many reasons for this, that only Hashem in his infinite wisdom can know. This is real, no less than the keypad I am typing on. One way or another it will come. It might take days, months or even years- but it will come. No one can disrupt this or interfere with it. When a person toils in Torah, there is no question, many times there is a tremendous strain. At times he is literally suffering. He much rather be out with friends or doing something to have a good time. There are times that he can not focus, even if his life depended on it! But he doesn't give up. He marches ahead. Maybe with aches, maybe in tears. He marches and does not stop. A person sees something inappropriate, instead of satiating his eyes, he immediately looks away. The image pops up in his mind during Amidah. He shakes his head, clenches his fists and MOVES ON. He can't yield, he won't yield, he doesn't yield. Hashem says, there was a certain amount of suffering that this individual was supposed to receive, he had to go through a devastating trauma, an illness, an accident, not finding a suitable life partner, marital discord, aggravation from his children or major setbacks in his career- but as of now I will deduct all this because he received it with the self affliction he lovingly accepted upon himself. He took his fair share and paid his dues. He did it for ME. The same holds true for any mitzvah that one does. The more difficult it is- the more he capitalizes on it. Not only does he receive reward for the Torah learned and for the mitzvot he has done, he actually removes the debt that he has with Hashem, and receives a complete atonement without going through grueling suffering, measure for measure, by going through suffering to uphold the Torah and Mitzvot.

Unfortunately, the same is true in the converse. A person is destined to receive a beautiful wonderful wife, a healthy family, a booming business and just about anything else we all dream of. He was supposed to receive these gifts, no questions asked. It was just a matter of time. However, he decided to receive his happiness and joy in the wrong ways, ways that Hashem dislikes. When he was tempted, he wanted that pleasure regardless of its nature, and he took the bait. What happens now? I get goose bumps every time I think about it. Hashem says, this guy was supposed to look in the eyes of the most stunning woman, stunning inside and out. He was supposed to raise a beautiful family with ease. He was supposed to be

wealthy. Happiness, joy and pleasure were his lot. But instead he had his happiness in the ways he took for himself. He can't cheat the system. He was destined only so much, and he got it. He can't just decide to take more pleasure than he rightfully deserves. Therefore, he can no longer receive the kosher pleasures (which were no less than the prohibited pleasures) that he was destined to have. Now if that is not heart wrenching enough, there is more. Not only does he lose the pleasures and joys he was supposed to receive in a permitted way, he also gets punishment for doing the actual sin. A double whammy! When we look back, we can all see with 20/20 vision that our pleasures that were against the Torah were accompanied with shame, guilt and at times depression. Our pleasures in serving Hashem was always with true inner joy, a feeling of genuine gratification and an extended ecstasy.

We need to realize that every pleasure that we receive, be it as small as a child's smile, to as big as a million dollar deal, was something that was destined for us to receive. Who knows how much more happiness we were destined to have, if not for the fact that we thought that we can cheat the system and use the back door to take what was not ours. Hashem wants to shower us with a tremendous amount of success and prosperity. Why ruin this? Why should we lose the grand feast for some meager crumbs the Satan offers us from under the table. I am not even talking about the world to come. I am speaking about our life HERE. Let us internalize this powerful reality our biggest enemy wants to hide from us (and for good reason). We are not going to get the shorter end of the deal anymore. If he gets us once, we get up and declare with an unabashed thunder "you got me this time, next time will be my victory. I will not stop until the bitter end. I am on Hashem's team. He is the one who really loves me and cares for all my needs. I will not betray him. Not out of fear, rather out of love. How can I possibly do anything which would undermine my intimate relationship with Hashem, my Father."

Let these words from my heart, enter your hearts. I say this with my deepest sincerest feelings. May Hashem open our eyes and guide us to the path that leads us to the most meaningful life possible. Life is short, but if utilized properly, is long enough. Let's do it.

(These are words I read from a rabbi on an app called InstaRabbi)

Baruch HaShem we will all be successful in this avoda and we will merit to see Moshiach NOW!!

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