

גליון מס' 17

"משקל" מוקדש לרפואת האדמו"ר  
ר"ף רבי יאשיהו יוסף פינטו שליט"א.

דברים | ד' אב תש"פ | 25.7.20

# Mishcan

The Route To Emuna

Jewish psychology in creative writing

## Why is your faith so weak?

Did you ever hear that voice?  
"Your faith is weak!" The creator  
takes care of everything! There  
is Divine Providence! What kind  
of a Jew are you? Worrying?  
Resentful? Betraying your faith?

We all have that one time, or two  
or three... Or... I lost count...  
When we lost faith. A point where  
I was frustrated, I complained,  
felt deprived, betrayed and even  
distanced myself.  
From whom?

From the King of Kings!

It's frightening. It does not come  
from a place of ignorance. On  
the contrary, it comes from a  
place of deep knowledge, clear  
knowledge that the world has  
a creator, who watches us with  
Divine Providence. And I disagree  
with the way he is leading me.  
Not only do I disagree, I am  
resentful, not happy with my  
share, blaming the obstacles in  
my life, etc.

Then this voice wakes up. A voice  
inside of me - a part of myself  
maybe... This is my defender!  
My defense mechanism - the part  
inside of me that always knows  
what is right. Acknowledgement  
- This part of me begins...  
Begins criticizing me for my faith  
betraying ways: Criticizing my  
anger at what I don't have, the  
anger at what I do have, and the

disagreement with my life and  
especially the result! The result of  
my betrayal: Straying farther from  
The Lord!

Do you know that feeling when  
you just don't feel like it? Don't  
feel like praying, don't feel like  
asking, don't feel like turning  
to... HIM! A feeling of distance  
from our father.

A feeling that can spawn from a  
point of entitlement! I am your  
daughter!

Or from a point of feeling  
undeserving! We have sinned  
- because of my actions I don't  
deserve it, I don't deserve to ask,  
I don't deserve to really get close  
to him!

So this pendulum is created,  
between a spoiled daughter  
that turns to her father with  
a "justified" demand - it was  
you who brought me to this  
world! And I deserve the best!  
The best I can think of, from my  
point of view and thoughts...  
and between an undeserving  
one, because of my sins. I don't  
deserve to ask, so why should I  
even get close through prayers  
or requests. I am too afraid to  
even show my face at the King's  
castle. There is a fear to ask and  
get closer.

In both cases the result is the  
same - straying further away from

The Lord.

It's frightening to admit this  
aloud, but the result of betraying  
your faith is between you and the  
heavens.

When I turn to our father in  
heaven as a spoiled daughter  
who demands all the best  
from him: Everything in my  
time, everything the way I feel  
like, or when I turn to him as  
undeserving - "because we have  
sinned against you" (Selichot).

In both cases I might come  
"disguised" - disguised as a loyal  
servant of The Lord! Modesty,  
blessings, Amidah prayers, Shma  
Israel and even various acts of  
charity. But between us, that's  
just a disguise. Because serving  
the lord from such a place is fake.  
Turning to The Lord as a spoiled  
daughter is a disagreement with  
the way he has been leading my  
life, on the other hand turning  
to him with a supposed humility  
that stops me from getting closer  
- in that case I am moved by a  
negative dear that stops me from  
being and feeling truly close.

The problem is that when we are  
talking about the King of Kings,  
as opposed to a human boss - he  
is seeing through your heart, he  
knows!

You don't always know!

Many times, and in most cases, we don't really dive deep into the depths of our soul to understand why we're going through a hard period or lack of passion to serve The Lord - and in some cases we will be surprised to find out that as difficult as it is to speak it, the problem is beyond the personal level.

Especially with those who recognize and know The Lord, and even with those who refuse to know The Lord it is the same problem with a different reaction.

You can be resentful over many things, and walk through the world as an expert servant of The Lord, but in your subconscious, in the depths of your soul - you're not complete with the boss.

When you are not complete with your life in essence - with the timing of everything, including setbacks. With the people in your life - including the ones who cheated you, took from you, did something to you. With your husband, your children, or with no husband and children... Meaning that if you are not complete with your script, you will not be complete with whoever wrote it for you.

Solving a conflict with a person is hard, but possible. I went through business mediation several times in my life. Although it was grueling, exhausting, and demanded wisdom and the ability to compromise, it eventually happened... Maybe you will not be very satisfied with the result because compromise is hard! But the conflict is over. And when I met that person again on the street at another time, I could greet him with peace.

And yes, solving a marital conflict is hard, but possible. Every day in a relationship, sometimes you are from the House of Shammai and your husband is from the House of Hillel. And no matter how much grace and justice learn to live in harmony, there are issues they will never agree upon. But just like the Houses of Hillel and Shammai, we know that with all of their disagreements, they would marry each other. The same is true for married life: Agree, disagree, even if we agree to disagree, still... We marry each other again and again every day.

But a conflict with the heavens?! That's scary! It is scary to even name it.

In Jewish psychology there is a dimension called the beyond human dimension. It was named that because these days even in the non-Jewish world it is understood that you can't successfully walk the path without acknowledging a higher power. Evidence for that we can see in one of the most popular treatments in the world - addiction treatment. The method is called the 12 steps programme, and when a participant arrives at the treatment space, the first step they must take is acknowledgment of the basics of the programme. The treatment begins with a verbal statement. Saying aloud and meaning it that the participant has lost his way and he looks to the heavens for help. Meaning the beyond human dimension is talked about all around the world throughout different cultures and religions.

As Jews, the beyond human dimension takes up a large

space in our lives, maybe the biggest one! With belief in Divine Providence and perfect execution of everything in our lives, every little detail. That is where an opening for "conflict" emerges! When I understand that everything in your life happens thanks to the King of Kings, and I don't hold the sticks that were sent to hurt, damage, hinder or challenge my life then - is The Lord guilty!

And when other symptoms appear, like anxiety and depression, many times it is because of these two reasons: Terrible desperation because nobody understands me, and even The Lord forgot me - or a terrible fear that The Lord did not forgive me. There is no redemption for the things I've done.

These discussions usually happen beyond our consciousness. Humans are composed, in simple terms, from a conscious - what I know exists in me, floats in me - the edge of consciousness - I know of it, but don't really live it. Between the conscious and the subconscious - and the subconscious - deep inside my treasure chest. Judaism adds another dimension, and it is the beyond human dimension - a secret, mystical and spiritual origin, which I cannot reach but has the biggest influence over my life.

The parts of me are all the parts my personality is comprised of. Two main parts are always engaging in non stop discussions: the soul - soul of a beast, many psychologies will call it - the little child - a narrow

view that focuses on me. Just like a child! This part manages our subconsciousness. We are not aware of it throughout the day, because we are busy shutting it down. This is the part that wakes up and bothers us when it doesn't like something.

And the "cop" part - sitting within our consciousness, and includes the adult me, who knows everything that is important, values, what is right for us within our environment, mindfulness not from focus on my and my ego, but a part that can look outside and include itself within creation.

We are made of many self parts. Some are more deserted, residing in the footnotes, and sometimes they need to be focused on in order to solve an internal conflict.

If I ask you - Why is your faith so weak? And remind you all the good things The Lord did to you, and remind you of your belief in your religious obligations, you will surely reconsider and say "You are right! How could I forget?!", but it doesn't mean that you will waver in your faith again.

We all know the basics of the Jewish faith: Whatever the Lord does, he does for good.

And also "You must be blameless before your Lord" (Book of Deuteronomy 18) - release your mind! Completeness is the way.

Let me ask you: Does that always work?

I can't always see the good in delaying childbirth, or waiting for a match, or surviving the day or struggling to raise children, or wanting a big house, or waiting to

heal, or any other thing.

And thus sometimes the required completeness is a serious battle! What is good about waiting, being sick, avoiding phone calls from the bank or crying a lot?

With help from above we will try to answer that with the famous story from the Zohar and the Babylonian Talmud. The story is similar in both places, but not identical.

Four people entered a garden:

Ben Azzai, Ben Zuma, Rabbi Akiva and Aher. Before they entered, Rabbi Akiva warned them: "When you arrive at the stones of pure marble, say not water, water!" (Chagigah 14b)

Know, my friends, that some things are not as they seem!

Let's look at an allegory of four friends who get on a bus, and each one of them gets off at the station most related to his soul.

Aher - Elisha Ben Aboya - he got off at the fire element station. It is known that Aher's father, Elisha Ben Aboya, watched the students of great scholars study Torah and the Torah's fire was around them. And when he saw the power of the Torah, he wanted his son to be a student of a scholar. Meaning, not for the Lord, but for the great power of those who study the Torah. Aher denied the essence, meaning he believed the mistake that there are two authorities, that there is an absolute good and an absolute evil. What his eyes saw, he saw with his mind.

Ben Azzai - he got off at the earth element station - he looked and died. Earth: "For dust you are and to dust you will return" (Genesis

3). It is known in stories that Ben Azzai never had a woman - meaning it could be said that he was not ready to connect. Of Ben Azzai's death it was said: "Precious in the sight of The Lord is the death of his faithful servants." (Pslams 116) - his death was service. It couldn't be avoided by changing course. It was a one way road. That is why his death was his saving, to stop him from heresy.

Ben Zuma - Took a look and died. Lost his mind. He got off at the wind element station. We know the story when his Rabbi sees him and calls his name twice and Ben Zuma answers that he cannot tell the difference between the water below and the water above - meaning he was hit by a bad wind. Could not connect between heaven and earth.

Rabbi Akiva the only one who got on safely and got off safely - Rabbi Akiva came from the water element, but he is the only one who took actual action to not get off at the station that fits his soul, because he knew that there are things that look one way, but are a deception - it was said: "No one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence."

Rabbi Akiva teaches us the element of faith! True faith! A deep treatment of faith!

There is a palace (Hekhal) called Palace of Love - when you love someone or something, you are ready to give your life for him. A person who loves money gives away his days and nights to chasing money and whatever he wants to achieve. A person who loves respect chases diplomas and certifications, years on end, in order to achieve what he wants. A

person who loves the land, works with his hands for hours to grow, seed, plant and harvest. A person who loves the Torah spends days and nights studying the holy Torah and so on. In all these loves, and in the meaning of love itself, the giving is unlimited by the time needed to be invested without seeing results. A farmer works and works, maybe he will succeed, maybe he will not. A doctor studies a lot, and maybe he will become a good and useful doctor, maybe not. Yeshiva student spends his time on Torah, maybe the heavens will open for him and maybe not. A business owner works and invests and maybe he will get rich, but maybe not.

How many stories have you heard where someone just gets a gift from the heavens without any effort? Very rarely. For example, a man who has healing powers without learning, someone who got rich from winning the lottery, a man who got the entire Torah in his head overnight. Maybe these exist, but they are rare. And even those who did get a gift, probably could not hold on to it.

This means that in life we are expecting to receive this Palace of Love from above upon us: Lord give me, take care of me, prove your love for me!

But Rabbi Akiva realized that love is grown from the ground up!

That is an amazing insight!

Every time you see hardship, hindrance, deficiency, pain, sadness, Rabbi Akiva tells you:

When you arrive at the stones of pure marble, say not water, water!

It is not as it seems! There is deception - love. To enter the Palace of Love you need to give from below and upwards. Understand that every time I tell you no, when The Lord tells you no, he is actually saying - give me your love. Weave another thread to connect us - connect the water above with the water below - connect between the mistake of two authorities and one authority!

You only have my, my daughter, I am the first and the last and I want you to enter the Palace of Love - and to do that you need to weave threads of giving, from the bottom up.

As we know, every person is a small world. Even in your internal world the rejection comes from parts of the beastly soul - the small child - the part that concentrates on "me". From down there, channel it upwards - to your consciousness, to your mind, let it take control and steer this battle by channeling this battle to your consciousness - to your knowing part, and you will succeed at giving love from below without the feeling of loss, because you teach that part of you, which is the darkest and has the least light of God in it, the lowest part, the physical part of your soul - that giving is completely beneficial. It is not a compromise, it is not a loss - it is weaving connecting threads between you and The Lord, building a Palace of Love and there will definitely come a time when you get love back from above, and your deepest wishes

will come true and be good and blessed.

That is what Rabbi Akiva managed to do. When Rabbi Akiva stepped out of the garden, he was not the same soul. He visited the Palace of Love. He knew that the hardships, the disadvantages, the challenges, "say not water, water" - he knew that he would not let the element in his soul lead him. He took control by understanding his mind, and did not follow his soul, but told his soul "say not water, water". He gave love from below upwards - loved serving The Lord - his soul came out as "one". Love equals thirteen. And love from below upwards equals thirteen. Together it could reach The One - twenty-six (the value of The Lord's name in Gematria). He managed to connect, rather than separate.

That is what The Lord wants from you. Connect and be connected. Connect between me and you, says The Lord, with threads of love, threads of giving. Understand that there are no two authorities, it's all one. Both the good, and that which feels not so good, it is all one!

That is what Chazal teach us - to call things different names:

"Said Rabbi Elazar, said Rabbi Chanina: Students of the wise spread peace through the world, as it was said: All your children will be taught by the Lord, and great will be their peace. Don't call them your children, but your builders." (Brachos 64)

Turn your point of view and

your understanding of the hardships, the disadvantages, the deficiencies around, and you will understand the level of Rabbi Akiva. After he visited the Palace of Love above, his life turned into a waiting room to realize this love, and that explains when they combed his flesh with iron combs, his students asked him - our Rabbi, is that enough? and he said: "All my life I have been sorry for the verse "with all your soul", when will my time come to fulfill it... An echo appeared and told him bless you, Rabbi Akiva, as you are welcome to the Olam Haba." (Brachos 61).

"Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away." (Song of Songs)

A known story:

Once upon a time, many years ago, all human emotions and feelings met on the face of the earth. When boredom once again yawned, madness suggested: "let's play hide and seek". Doubt raised its eyebrow, while curiosity could not hold back and asked: "Hide and seek? How do you play this game?". "It's a game", explained madness, "where I cover my face and count from one to a million, while all of you hide. When I finish counting, I go looking for you in your hiding spots." Enthusiasm danced with oforia, happiness jumped up and down so much that it totally convinced doubt and indifference, who was never interested in anything. But not

everyone wanted to take part. Truth preferred not to hide. For what? It is always found eventually anyway. Pride said the game was silly, but what really bothered it was that it wasn't her idea. Fear decided not to take any risks. "One, two, three..." madness started counting.

First to hide was laziness, under the first rock she saw. Faith raised to the heavens and jealousy hid in the shadow of success, who found a spot on top of the highest tree, through great effort. Generosity almost could not hide, since every place it found was great for one of her friends. A clear lake? Ideal for beauty. A hole in a tree trunk? Perfect from modesty. Behind the wings of a butterfly? Best for sensuality. What about a gust of wind? Great for freedom. And generosity found a modest place on a small ray of sunshine. On the other hand, ego found a great place to begin with. Big, airy, comfortable, but only for himself. Lie hid deep beneath the sea (but the truth is that it hid behind the rainbow). Passion and desire found their place in the mouth of a volcano, and forgetfulness forgot where it hid.

"A million!" madness declared and started looking.

The first one to be found was laziness. Three paces away under a rock. Then madness heard faith talking to one of the angels in heaven and found her quickly. It heard passion and desire rattling

a volcano.

When it saw how successful madness was at this game, jealousy appeared, and that is how success was found too. There was no need to look for selfishness, since it came out on its own from its hiding spot in a beehive.

Madness got thirsty from looking, and walked over to the lake to drink and found beauty. Doubt was easy to find. It was sitting on a fence unable to decide where to hide. Madness found everyone one by one. Talent between growing flowers, anxiety in a dark cave, lie behind the rainbow, and even forgetfulness who forgot it was playing hide and seek.

Only love could not be found anywhere. Madness looked behind every tree, under every rock and on top of mountains. When he was just about to give up, he noticed a bush of roses and started moving the branches. Suddenly he heard a terrifying scream. The thorns on the roses injured love's eyes. Madness didn't know what to say to apologize. It cried, begged, asked for forgiveness, and even promised to be love's close companion.

And thus since that day of playing hide and seek, love is blind and madness accompanies it wherever it goes.

Yours, Hannah.



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