


WHEN DARKNESS FALLS



**Strengthening, Encouraging,
Cheering and Comforting,
All Who Suffer Crisis and Hardships,
Who Bear Bitter, Difficult Trials,
And Who Are Hounded by Problems
and Concerns, Binding Them to G-d
and Illumining Their Spirits, With the
Light of His Presence.**

.....

Written by the holy tzaddik
MOHORO"SH ZT"L

Based on the teachings of the holy tzaddik
REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLOV ZT"L

and of his prime disciple
REBBE NOSSON OF BRESLOV ZT"L



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WHEN DARKNESS FALLS

— 1 —

My dear fellow Jew, be sure to always strengthen yourself. To allow the untoward circumstances of your life to break and distress you is certainly no solution. Our Rabbis have said, “A person who turns toward suffering will find that suffering turns toward him.”¹ The more you focus solely on your problems, the more will your pains increase.

Why, then, concentrate on difficulties in your life? Practice forgetting — forget everything you have undergone.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov said that he regards forgetting as a great virtue. As soon as an incident

1. *Midrash Aggadah*.

in his life passes, he forgets it entirely so that not a trace of it remains in his mind.²

You, too, should follow this path. Always remove your experiences from your mind. Forget past events, as though nothing at all had occurred.

At every moment, make a new beginning. Draw yourself to G-d. This itself will fill you with hope and bring you closer to your true redemption.



In this world, the truth of things is concealed and swallowed up. A person doesn't really know what is a positive experience and what is a negative experience.

A person may amass a great fortune, yet ultimately it turns in his hands to dust and ashes, and it becomes a source of bitterness. So is it in this world, and how much more so, then, in the World-to-Come. Of this, King Solomon wrote, "Wealth which is stored for its owners for evil."³ Conversely, a person may experience poverty and pressures and yet they are to his good. Again, so is it in this world, and how much more so in the

2. *Wisdom of Rabbi Nachman* 26.

3. Ecclesiastes 5:12.

World-to-Come. As our Rabbis said, “Righteous people begin with sufferings, but they achieve tranquility.”⁴ Our Rabbis said as well, “When a person is beset by troubles, he must thank G-d. Why? Because sufferings draw a person close to His Creator.”⁵

A person doesn’t know what is good and what is harmful. That which he believes to be harmful for him may be the ultimate good; and that which he considers good may cause the greatest injury.

The real good experience is this world — and which is stored up for the future world — is that a person can every day find the goodness hidden in that day. That goodness is G-d Himself. As the verse says, “G-d is good to all, and His compassion embraces all of His creatures.”⁶ The ultimate true and eternal good is closeness to G-d.



Always draw yourself to G-d. The purpose of the troubles and sufferings that G-d sends you is to bring you close to Him — not, G-d forbid, to distance you from Him.

4. *Tana Devei Eliyahu* Ch. 11.

5. *Midrash Tanchuma*, Ki Teitzei.

6. Psalms. 145:9.

Our Rabbis have said, “All that G-d does is for a good purpose.”⁷ At this point, you may not see the good that is to emerge from your suffering. Nevertheless, believe that evil does not come forth from G-d. In even the most painful event in your life, goodness lies hidden and concealed.

Therefore, accustom yourself to always thank and praise G-d. Remind yourself of the great love G-d has shown you until now. Perhaps, due to your many problems, you have forgotten all the good that G-d has done for you, and you imagine that your life has been an unrelieved canvas of bleakness. Remind yourself of all the times that you were in dire straits, yet G-d had mercy on you and pulled you out.

Therefore, turn to Him with the hope that He will rescue you now as well. Do not despair, G-d forbid, no matter how difficult your situation.



My dear fellow-Jew, do not be so crushed by your experiences. Who knows what purpose G-d has in mind and how He intends that these experiences should help you progress in your spiritual life? Our Rabbis have said, “If a servant's

7. *Berachos* 60b.

eye or tooth is knocked out, the servant goes free. How much more can a person come close to true spiritual freedom if he undergoes sufferings, which affect his entire being.”⁸

Who knows how many terrible difficulties and sufferings you are saved from as a result of those problems you face today?

Therefore, accept your sufferings with silence, and do not think meanly of G-d. Our Rabbis said, “One should accept sufferings with love.”⁹

Furthermore, our Rabbis said, “Whoever rejoices in his sufferings brings redemption to the world.”¹⁰ If by remaining silent and rejoicing a person brings redemption to the world, how much more so does he bring redemption to himself.



My dear fellow-Jew, at times a person's troubles will upset and disorient him. He will feel as though the entire world has caved in on him and that all the troubles in the world are crushing him without respite and without mercy, G-d forbid.

8. *Berachos* 5a.

9. *Berachos* 5b.

10. *Taanis* 8a.

Then his heart is twisted; he thinks G-d is treating him unfairly and as a result of his many trials, he becomes angry at G-d. He is resentful and bitter toward G-d, and begins to turn aside from Him, so that he can no longer pray and speak to Him.

If you are in such a situation, how can you free yourself? The answer is that you must separate your problems, so that they do not overlap. Sit down and review your situation calmly. Define and differentiate your problems. You have one problem, but it is unrelated to the second. The second problem has nothing to do with the third. The third problem also self-contained. And so on.

As you identify and categorize your problems, you will see that you still have a good deal of hope to free yourself from them.

When a person doesn't distinguish between his problems he feels that he is being sucked into a relentless quicksand of suffering. He then abandons himself to despair, which is the worst of all sufferings. The solution is to take the fabric of suffering and separate the strands.

This was the approach used by Jacob. In preparation for his confrontation with Esau, he commanded his servants, "Allow a space between

each flock.”¹¹ Homiletically understood, this verse hints to us that even in the bitterest of exiles, a person must make a space between his problems and not allow them to intermingle.

When you follow this advice, you will discover breadth and breathing space in the midst of even the most difficult sorrows. You will be able to free yourself of them completely and, with a calm spirit, have the presence of mind to turn to G-d and request of Him all that you lack.



It is precisely your difficult experiences that will help you return to G-d.

The purpose of all of a person's experiences, in fact, is that he will turn toward his Creator. Our Rabbis put it this way: “An olive gives forth its oil only after it is beaten. In the same way, Jews do not improve themselves unless they undergo difficult experiences.”¹²

Our Rabbis also said, “When G-d created the world, He called each day ‘good.’ But He called the totality and completion of creation ‘very good.’ ‘Very good’ implies the inclusion of suffering in

11. Genesis 32:17.

12. *Menachos* 53b.

the scheme of creation, because suffering brings a person to inherit the World-to-Come."¹³

When you experience hard times, troubles, and sorrows, know that there is no solution but to flee to G-d.

How do you do that? Speak to Him at length in your own words. Tell Him everything that lies on your heart. Recount with total simplicity and unaffectedness all that you are going through. Speak to G-d as you would to another person.

What more can be said? There is no other way to truly leave behind your problems.

At all times, guard yourself against the self-pitying belief that G-d is angry at you, that He doesn't need you, or that He no longer needs your cry. Such thoughts are illusions created by your wrongdoings. Really, the contrary is true — if you are suffering problems and frustration, it is because G-d wishes that through them you will return to Him.

Do not let your life slide past you irrevocably. Open your mouth and speak to G-d freely, in your own words. With the passage of time, you will be released from the grip of sorrows that had imprisoned you.

13. *Midrash Rabbah Bereishis*.

My dear fellow-Jew: our Rabbis declared, “If a person lives forty consecutive days without experiencing troubles, he has used up his entire reward of the World-to-Come.”¹⁴ If that is the case, then when you do experience sorrow, why should you be so broken? They are coming for your eternal good. They preempt greater sufferings you would otherwise have had to endure in the World-to-Come. So do not allow your bad experiences to so completely overwhelm you.

Our Rabbis said, “What is it that brings a person to the World-to-Come? The answer is suffering.”¹⁵ Furthermore, “Sufferings are dear to G-d, and He joins His Name to each individual who experiences them.”¹⁶ Again, “G-d joins His Name to a human being in the world only if that person has suffered.”¹⁷

When you see that troubles surround you, flee to G-d. Never indulge in despair. To the contrary, such a time is propitious to prepare yourself to be a fit vessel upon which G-d’s Presence can rest. This is because when you accept your sufferings

14. *Arachin* 16b.

15. *Midrash Shocher Tov*, Psalms 94.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Midrash Rabbah*, *Vayigash*.

with love, G-d will cause His very Presence to dwell with you.

I ask you: Aren't your sorrows and troubles worth having G-d subsequently cause His Presence to rest upon you so that your soul will be illumined by His light?

Our Rabbis have said, "We begin the *Amidah* prayer by referring to G-d as 'G-d of Abraham, G-d of Issac, and G-d of Jacob.' Had Job not hurled his challenge at G-d — as a result of his many sufferings — we would have also said 'G-d of Job.' But, unable to withstand the test, Job confronted G-d."¹⁸ Thus Job lost both this world and the World-to-Come.



Our forefathers, Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, were so imbued with the spirit of G-d's Presence resting on them that they are called a "supernal chariot" which is driven by G-d Himself.¹⁹

My dear fellow-Jew, do not delude yourself that they achieved such a level without trials, without toil, and without troubles.

18. *Yalkut Iyov* 908.

19. *Midrash Rabbah, Lech Lecha*.

Our Rabbis have said, “He who at first undergoes difficulties will ultimately enjoy tranquility.”²⁰ Who suffered more in their young years than Abraham, Issac, and Jacob? Read their stories in Genesis and you will see clearly all the troubles they underwent, and all the bitterness that they tasted. Yet they never threw a challenge at G-d. As a result, their egos were nullified before the Infinite One to such a point that they achieved the title of “supernal chariot.”

Therefore, my dear fellow-Jew, though you may suffer, though you may feel pain and hurt, though troubles may crowd you from all quarters — transform everything to goodness by turning to G-d. Do not approach G-d with accusations and resentments. Go to Him with quiet prayer and pleading. Nullify yourself completely before Him.

Then, my dear fellow-Jew, you will become a vessel on which G-d’s Presence will rest. G-d’s Name will be joined to yours, and you yourself will be formed into a “chariot” through which G-d will make His Presence known in the world.



My dear fellow-Jew, always be aware of G-d.

20. *Midrash Tanchumah, Eikev.*

Fill your consciousness with the truth of His existence. Never forget G-d for even an instant. Then you will always be close to Him.

Furthermore, always return to G-d from wherever you may be. Whenever you do something wrong, confess everything to Him. Speak to Him in your own words, as you would speak to your best friend. Then, you will be exonerated of all wrongdoing. You will as a result keep clear of the many problems and troubles that otherwise would have confronted you.

But what if a person doesn't turn to G-d and doesn't think of G-d? What if person doesn't speak to G-d, nor judge himself before G-d? Then G-d distances Himself from that person, so to speak, and that person's troubles and sorrows are doubled. As our Rabbis said, "If a person undergoes suffering and returns to G-d, then G-d saves him. But if he doesn't, G-d sends him a subsequent distress."²¹

My dear fellow-Jew, always return to G-d. Always be aware of the truth of His existence; think of Him alone; envision before your eyes His infinite light. In all that you do, examine yourself and judge yourself honestly before G-d. You will

21. *Midrash Tanchumah, Behar.*

sweeten your entire life, and G-d's light will shine on you wondrously always.



My dear fellow-Jew, at times a person may be so overcome by pain and confusion that it is difficult for him to bear his trial. How can he then accept everything with love, and maintain an awareness that everything that he is undergoing is for his eternal good?

To strengthen himself, a person has to bring himself close to the true *tzaddik* (spiritual master) and to his teachings.

The true *tzaddik* has indeed attained a wondrous plane of accomplishment. He has climbed high the ladder to G-d and brought down with him such teachings that with their help everyone can come close to G-d.

The true *tzaddik*, who is on such an extraordinarily high level, strove all the days of his life to totally nullify himself before G-d. Once he achieved this goal to the ultimate degree of perfection attainable, he could bring a gift of awesome and wondrous Torah insights to his students, who are also true *tzaddikim*.

These students take the insights they have

received, and rework and rework them until finally everyone — even a person on the lowest, most corporeal and besmirched level — can draw down to himself the pleasant sweetness of the light of G-d's holy Presence.

When you are bowed under by burdens and do not know if you can bear them, go to the true *tzaddikim*, who are the students of that great, awesome *tzaddik*. Your life will become altogether sweeter than the honeycomb.

❧ 11 ❧

My dear fellow-Jew, be strong. Do not let every problem snap you in two. There is no denying that your problems are real. Nevertheless, accustom yourself to search out the good from the midst of your troubles. Ultimately, this will enable you to do away with your sorrows entirely.

When a person experiences troubles, sorrows, problems, and hardships, he is being tested. What will his reaction be, and where will he turn for help? When a person's reaction is patience, equanimity, and forbearance, and he turns for help only to G-d, then his problems dissolve. Having passed the test, he will see his troubles transformed into illuminations.

Our Sages have said, "When a person calls out

to G-d in his trouble, his ability to earn a living is improved twofold.”²² A person must in the midst of his trials be aware of the truth of G-d’s existence and know that everything comes from G-d alone. He will then draw down to himself a spiritual light of such power that even his physical sustenance will be increased, not to mention that of the spirit. He will apprehend spiritual lights that are beyond the grasp of anyone who has not reached a level of self- nullification before the Infinite One.

Our Rabbis stated, “When the Jews meet with trouble and seek Me out, declaring that they are with Me, then I am with them and I answer them.”²³

Therefore, always turn to G-d. Bear with profound equanimity all which you undergo. Draw down to yourself G-d’s very Life-force, and then you will attain a great deal in both the spiritual and physical realms.

❧ 12 ❧

My dear fellow-Jew, do not be broken under the blows of the hammer of hard experiences.

22. *Berachos* 63a.

23. *Midrash Shocher Tov*, Psalms 20.

Accustom yourself, rather, to speak to G-d. He will certainly heed your call.

Investigate the workings of the world. Understand and see that everything is in its essence complete Divinity, and that every atom and atomic particle is overseen by an infinite Providence.

Your best choice, then, is to bring your packet of troubles to G-d, Who understands you as no human being ever could.

Run to G-d now. Tell him everything within your heart. Describe to Him all that you are undergoing. Speak of these matters to no one but to G-d.

Our Rabbis have said, “If a person is beset by trouble, let him not cry out to the angel Michael, nor to the angel Gabriel, let him call only to G-d — and he will certainly be answered.”²⁴

Do not, therefore, allow the hammer blows of difficult experiences shatter you.

Only run to G-d at all times. He will answer you with love and compassion. It may indeed be that you will have to wait. But the more you wait with patience, consistently and constantly pouring

24. Jerusalem Talmud, *Bereishis* Chapter 9, Law 5.

out your heart to G-d in prayer, the greater will your redemption finally be.

— 13 —

My dear fellow-Jew, if you are experiencing troubles and sorrows, it is due to your lack of knowledge. You have become so disoriented and confused that you have forgotten about G-d — and only an awareness of G-d is truly called knowledge. As the verse says, “You have been taught to know that G-d is the L-rd, and that there is none else but He.”²⁵

As a result of this lack of knowledge, you feel pain and suffering.

When a person lacks knowledge, he thinks that the universe operates merely under the control of scientific principles and mathematical formulas. Then, subject to this point of view, which is the essence of uncleanness, he suffers his aches and pains.

Instead, perfect your knowledge. Become aware that there is no existence save that of G-d, and that everything is in its essence complete Divinity, which has constricted and clothed itself in a physical garb. Know that the Master of the

25. Deuteronomy 4:35.

universe is present in every movement in the world. Then you will turn everything to good, and you will experience only redemption and compassion.

❧ 14 ❧

My dear fellow-Jew, if you suffer, G-d forbid, or if you witness the suffering of others, it is so that you will return to G-d.

However, since a person has free will in this world, he may to the contrary be overcome by bitterness and depression, and in fact be distanced from G-d, as a result of such experiences.

Therefore, always strengthen yourself. Whenever you experience the fear that accompanies one's own sufferings or seeing that of others, turn this fear and awe to the good. Feel the awe of G-d, and return to Him.

At times, when you experience troubles or see them in others, you will experience fears, anxieties, apprehensions, and worries. At such a moment, strengthen yourself, using the techniques and advice given us by the true *tzaddikim* across the generations. Then you will turn this fear to good, and be in fear and awe of no one but G-d Himself. As a result, you will be able to return to G-d completely, and you will reap a harvest of joy.

Every day, G-d sends a person new avenues upon which he may travel and leave behind his various troubles

Therefore, do not let the problems of yesterday sully you today. Today G-d may send you a great redemption — so why worry so much? It is true that perhaps yesterday you suffered many problems and much bitterness. Still, you do not know what wonderful help G-d may send you today if you but turn to Him and forget the past.

Therefore, my dear fellow-Jew, do not weaken. Renew your spirit and run to G-d. Draw to yourself the sweet pleasantness of the light of His mighty Presence. Then you will delight in His peace from now and evermore.



THE ORPHAN

ADAPTED FROM SICHOT MOHOROSH

How difficult is the life of an orphan. Alone and without support, he must confront struggles and tensions entirely by himself.

Such was the experience of Joseph. Although not actually orphaned, he was for all practical

purposes cut off from his family completely. He stood alone in Egypt without a father or mother, without brothers or sisters — and yet, no matter how terrible his situation became, from the depths of his loneliness he always strengthened himself.

This young Joseph, only seventeen years old, had gone to seek his brothers on an errand for his father. Suddenly and unexpectedly, they turned against him, set dogs on him,²⁶ and wished to kill him for no reason whatsoever. At the last moment, Joseph was saved from a violent death by his oldest brother, Reuben, who threw him into a deep pit infested with snakes and scorpions. Then he was lifted out of the pit only to be sold to Arab and Midianite slave-dealers, degraded people who beat and humiliated him, and who traded him from one caravan to the next until he came down to Egypt. There he was placed on the selling block with other slaves, men and women who had descended to the depths of debasement.

There, among the corrupted slaves and cruel traders, stood this innocent and sheltered Jew with curling sidelocks whose entire life had been spent in his father's tent learning Torah. Now he stood alone among debased slaves who had given themselves over to licentiousness and immorality.

26. See *Midrash Rabbah Bereishis* 84:14.

One spit at him and another pulled his sidelocks; one woman kicked him and another mocked him. Thus he stood all by himself, a young Jew in total exile, completely divorced from his people and family.

What would you do in such a situation? After such bitterness and troubles, after such mortal danger, humiliations, and anguish, you would now be standing completely alone. There would be absolutely nobody to help you out of your overwhelming problems. You could simply go mad from grief and despondency!

Who would not be completely shattered by such an experience? But, testifies the Torah, “Joseph was well-formed and good-featured”²⁷ — that is, not merely in a physical but also in a spiritual sense. In Hebrew the first letters of the words “well-formed and good-featured” (*Yefei Toar Vefei Mareh*) spell out the word “orphan” (*YaTOM* — “v” interchanges with “o”). Even though Joseph was abandoned, orphaned, and prey to cruel abuse, he still remained spiritually “well-formed and good-featured.” Joseph didn’t despair, but clung to a simple faith in G-d. He didn’t slip in his adherence to Judaism and didn’t compromise in his service of G-d the slightest bit.

27. Genesis 39:6.

Instead, he remained “well-formed and good-featured.”

Afterward, Joseph was accused of adultery. His name was smeared and vilified across all of Egypt and he was thrown into prison.²⁸ Still he didn’t lose himself. To the contrary, he clung to G-d with even greater fervor.

It is precisely the orphan who, having no one, can rise to the highest levels. Generally, a person considers that he has someone in this world on whom to rely: his parents, brothers and sisters, or whomever. An orphan however, has no one to turn to in this world. Therefore, he must become aware that he has only G-d.

Thus, wherever he goes he should talk with G-d just as he would speak with a friend, telling G-d in his own words all the details of his experiences. Similarly, whenever he needs something, he should request it of G-d. He should know that all he has is G-d. This was the way that Joseph himself conducted himself. The Torah says of him that “G-d was with him,”²⁹ and Rashi explains that “G-d’s Name was always on his lips.” He always spoke only of G-d, and only to G-d, for he was aware that he had no one else.

28. See *Midrash Rabbah Bereishis* 88:1; *Rashi Bereishis* 40:1.

29. Genesis 39:3.

One of the greatest Jews to have ever lived was the founder of Chasidism, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov.

How did he reach his high level?

His father, Reb Eliezer, was 100 years old when his child was born to him; and his mother, Sarah, died at his birth. When young Israel was five years old, his father lay on his sickbed. One day he called his son to his side and told him the following words: "Israel, I must now die, as all men must, and you will be left all alone. But know that you aren't really alone, because G-d is everywhere, and everything is His. Whatever you need, ask it of G-d, and He will help you."

With these words Reb Eliezer returned his soul to his Maker.

Young Israel didn't know what had happened to his father. He called the neighbors and they came and buried the old man.

But his father's words stayed with Israel. From then on and for the rest of his life, he never ceased speaking to G-d. Whenever he needed anything, he would turn to G-d. For many years his was a bitter and difficult life. Orphaned, homeless and penniless, he was always on the move, wandering from village to village and town to town. Yet he always held fast to his

father's last words, until he eventually reached the highest levels.

When he was a young boy, Rabbi Nachman of Breslov heard this story about his great-grandfather, and it impressed him deeply. Eventually, he himself acted in this manner until he reached great heights. So much did Rabbi Nachman value the importance of speaking to G-d that he said, "If, when I was younger, I had truly known how much a person can attain through prayer and speaking to G-d, that which had taken me a year to accomplish I could have achieved in a single day."

Therefore, see how much a person can attain when he is aware that he has no one in this world to help him — not his father, not his mother, not brothers or sisters — but only G-d Himself.

This was the understanding reached by King David, as well. King David cried out, "My father and mother have abandoned me! G-d, bring me close to You."³⁰ While still a young man, David had been abandoned by his parents, and his brothers suspected him of wrongdoing. How did he respond? He always wandered among the hills and fields, speaking only with G-d. As a result, he merited his subsequent attainments.

30. Psalms 27:10.

It is thus important that everyone – especially he who is abandoned and alone – accustom himself to speak to G-d wherever he is and wherever he goes.

Our Rabbis stated, “Why does G-d love orphans? Because their eyes are turned solely to Him, since He is the ‘Father of orphans.’³¹ Therefore, whoever robs them robs G-d Himself, so to speak, since He is their Father in heaven.”³²

Indeed, everyone can reach the level of being an “orphan” — that is, that he relies on no person in this world, but knows that he has only G-d Himself.



A PRAYER

FROM LIKUTEI TEFILLOT

BY RABBI NOSSON OF BRESLOV

G-d, Master of the universe, full of compassion and doing good to everyone, help me accept everything with love.

31. Psalms 68:6.

32. *Midrash Rabbah Mishpatim* 30:8.

Even if sometimes You send me suffering which appears unjust, help me accept it with a truly great love.

Open my heart and fill it with holiness, so that I will realize that as I am, after all the wrong I have done, You treat me with infinite love and compassion.

How much goodness have You given me; how many favors have You done for me, do You do for me right now, and will You continue to do for me in the future.

What can I say? What words do I have? What can I give back to You, G-d, in return for Your gifts? But my sins have blocked my heart, and my mind begins to think badly of Your uprightness.

Therefore, I beg of You, G-d, treat me with kindness. Guard me and save me from a twisted, ungrateful heart. Strengthen me with faith so that I will be aware that You are righteous and that Your judgment is fair.

I have acted badly, and the love You have given me in return shows Your infinite compassion and kindness.

In Your great compassion, have pity on me; guard me from evil, from trouble and suffering.

O G-d, You are merciful and eager to forgive.

My sins are so many. All the pains in the world couldn't correct the slightest of them, G-d forbid. But You can forgive me; You can cleanse me with no suffering at all. Our prophets told us: You are forgiving; You are loving; and You will save Israel from all of its sins.

Master of compassion, I spread my hands out to You: have compassion on me; guard me; save me from evil, from sorrow, and from suffering.

Do not act toward me according to my sins. Do not pay me back according to my wrongdoing.

As for those pains that You in Your love have decreed I must receive, give me the strength to accept them with total love and no resentment whatsoever.

Then I will confess my wrongdoing freely, and admit before You, "I have sinned." Then I will no longer act badly.

For Your sake, O G-d, have compassion on me.

Help me not to resent my sufferings. Help me accept with love Your reproofs, for You are a Father reproving His child.

In Your kindness, G-d, ease my suffering. I am weak and I don't have understanding. I lack the strength and wisdom to accept suffering.

Forgive me, G-d. In Your great compassion,

wipe out my sins. In Your love, give me life. Then I will keep Your Torah.

G-d, in Your anger do not rebuke me; do not chastise me in Your wrath.

Compassionate G-d, do my will as if it were Yours, so I may nullify my will before You completely. Then my only wish will be that everything be the way You desire it. So may it be, now and forever — Amen.



FROM THE HOLY AND AWESOME BOOK *LIKUTEI MOHARAN*

1. There are places that are so low that they seem totally divorced from G-d. Yet it is precisely there that the most exalted life force is concealed: There are the “secrets of Torah.” A person who has fallen far must know that in the very place where he finds himself, he can achieve unique closeness to G-d because of the exalted life force that is concealed in that very place. When such a person returns to G-d, a

very high revelation of Torah comes about: the “Secrets of Torah.”³³

2. There are times when a person feels the stirring to return to G-d. He wants to begin to serve G-d and to make the journey to the *Tzaddik* who can guide him. At such a moment he must face the full force of the evil inclination. It takes great strength and persistence to withstand this new evil inclination, which seems to be born afresh at every turn. It can happen that someone has a great urge to make the journey to men of truth. He sets out with tremendous yearning. But as soon as he is on the way, his desire dampens. And at times, when he finally arrives and comes to the *Tzaddik* himself, he seems to lose his desire altogether. All this comes about because as soon as he made up his mind to make the journey to the *Tzaddik*, he slaughtered the evil inclination he had had before. Now there is a new and far stronger evil inclination that is born afresh in him at every moment, “for the greater the man, the greater his evil inclination.” It is a great thing to seek to draw closer to G-d. That is why it takes renewed efforts at every moment to fight this new evil inclination that keeps being born afresh with every passing moment.³⁴

33. *Likutei Moharan* I:56.

34. *Ibid.* 72.

3. There are many different kinds of evil inclination. The common run of people have a very low sort of evil inclination. Their desires are grossly materialistic. In fact, they are quite nonsensical. Anyone who has a clear head and can begin to form some slight conception of the true greatness of the Creator can see that such desires are mere foolishness and idiocy. For him even the trial of sexual lust is a kind of nonsense that takes very little strength to withstand. His own evil inclination is on a far higher plane because his own level is higher. He has begun to acquire an understanding of truth.³⁵

4. Higher still is the level of those whose evil inclination is a “fine husk.” Such an evil inclination is sent only to a truly worthy man. But this is still not the level of the evil inclination of the true *Tzaddikim*. Theirs is really a holy angel.

5. The very strength of desire that a person experiences to draw closer to G-d can in fact be a danger thrown up by the evil inclination. At times his “passion” burns far more fiercely than it should. This is the meaning of the warning that G-d gave to Moses before the Law was given. “But let not the priests and the people break through up unto the L-rd, lest He should break forth upon

35. Ibid.

them.”³⁶ You must pray that G-d’s loving-kindness will protect you from this.³⁷

6. There are times when we experience G-d’s strict justice. For example, when we have some serious problem or grave misfortune, G-d forbid. Then is the time to be more steadfast than ever in escaping the snares of the evil inclination. For then it comes against us with full force. This is because the principal root of the evil inclination is in the Divine aspect of justice.³⁸

7. Depression is a terrible scourge. It feeds the evil inclination. You should always take care to work on yourself to bring joy into your soul. There are many good ways of doing this, as will be explained later. Joy is the foundation of spiritual strength. As we find written “For delight in G-d, that is your strength.”^{39 40}

8. The approach to G-d starts with rejection. When a man wants to draw closer to G-d, he usually experiences all manner of hardships, harsh experiences, and fierce obstacles. He starts believing that he has been rejected. But, in fact everything is for his own good. The purpose is

36. Exodus 19:24.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Nehemiah 8:10.

40. Ibid.

actually to bring him closer to G-d. It takes great strength and determination to stand up to this trial and not to let yourself get pushed away by the hardships and obstacles and the sense of rejection. You should not make the mistake of thinking that everything is out to thwart you. You should realize that everything that comes upon you is only for your good. It is to encourage you to draw upon all the resources of strength that are within you, so that you will be able to come ever closer to G-d. The entire purpose of this rejection is only to draw you closer.⁴¹



41. Ibid.

הספר הקדוש הזה

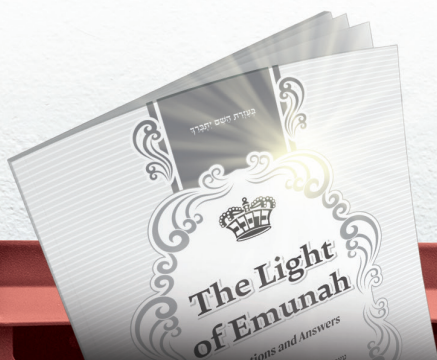
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