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# Don't Be Disappointed



Disappointments In Life Are  
Inevitable. As long As You  
Have Expectations In life, Then  
You Leave The Door Open For Getting  
Disappointed !

~ ~ ~

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~ ~ ~

*BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF  
**RABBI NACHMAN OF BRESLOV**  
AND OF HIS STUDENT  
**RABBI NOSSON OF BRESLOV***



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## ***Don't Be Disappointed***

**D**isappointments in life are inevitable. As long as you have expectations in life, then you leave the door open for getting disappointed. Sometimes the disappointment is mild; you only received an average grade, instead of an “A” on the test, the cake you worked on all day fell as you opened the oven door, he didn’t call you back after the date; or your travel plans were cancelled due to the snowstorm. On the other hand, the disappointment can sometimes run so deep that it becomes a state of mind; then every aspect of living seems to be so

overwhelmingly disappointing that, you no longer want to continue functioning. To prevent this kind of disillusionment, and not to suffer disappointment in general, you must come to terms with the fact that your expectations are unrealistic. Stop over-reaching in life, by learning to live with reality. Try to accept that where you are in life is where G-d wants you to be. Stop willing yourself to be someone different or somewhere else, by making it a rule that you only want what G-d wants for you, and then you will never be disappointed again.

## 2.

**R**eviewing the events of your life down to the last detail, will lead you to the unavoidable conclusion of how precarious it really is. At every step of the way the opportunity for disappointment always lurks, and if you're not careful it can pull you down until you lose total perspective.

To protect yourself from becoming crushed by disappointment you must accept G-d as the only reality in life. Interpreting every action and event that occurs as Divine Providence will immunize you against the risk of getting disappointed. If your fate lies exclusively in His hand, then how can anyone intimidate or discourage you? On the other hand, if you place your trust in other people, believing that they have the power to make you or break you, then you automatically, condemn yourself to a lifetime of disappointment. The path to happiness is then clear: give yourself over to G-d and you will never, ever be disappointed. And how does this translate into action? Simple, just make it a practice to speak to G-d regularly, as if you were speaking to a friend or like a child before his father. Something is bothering you; you're having a bad day; you're scared or just feeling plain old needy – tell it to G-d, and you won't ever be disappointed!

## 3.

**N**o man is an island! Because your day to day existence is spent involved with other people you develop certain expectations from them. And, as life so quickly teaches you, the more heavily you rely on others, the more you set yourself up for disappointment. So step back, and ask yourself: Why do I constantly compare myself to others? Do I really need their favors? Isn't it better for me to rely on G-d, than on a mere human being? Haven't I learned my lesson already that people are limited, and more often than not, won't come through for me? Why am I therefore, so concerned about what others think, and why must I worry about impressing them? Asking yourself these questions will help you emotionally detach from others in a healthy way, so that you don't suffer disappointment at the hands of others again. Relying on others, however, is like having an emotional ball-and-chain connection to them with which they use to

carry you down. Unfortunately, despite all their reassurance to the contrary, most people are out for themselves, and are not sincere in their desire to help you. Therefore, etch this phrase in your mind: "In G-d we trust", and you will never be disappointed.

## 4.

**T**he reason you interpret even the typical minor frustrations in life as disappointing, is because you are unsure of yourself. Having low-self esteem, you're always impressed by others and feel pressured to impress them. You're terrified of failure and the minute things go wrong, you become very self-conscious and deeply upset and disappointed. Free yourself from being controlled by the opinions of others, by realizing that no one has absolute control over your life except G-d. The reaction of others means nothing and no one has the power to make you or

break you, so laugh it off. Kick the bad habit of relying on others, and trust only in G-d. Life is too precarious and is filled with one punch after the other. Without absolute faith in G-d, how else can you possibly cope with all of life's disappointments?

## 5.

**T**he sun rises, the sun sets. Fall turns into winter, and then spring arrives to usher in the summer. As the cycle repeats itself uninterruptedly, again and again, we routinely go about our daily lives, oblivious to the drama that continuously unfolds before us and unmindful to the message it seeks to impart. How long will you allow your soul to continue to slumber? Arise! Wake up, and shake-off the raiment's of complacency by getting excited about G-d and the marvels of His creation. Unmask the mystery of His hidden presence garbed behind all the



natural wonders, whether it's matter, vegetation, animal life, or man. Don't stop there. Explore further, by penetrating deeper and deeper behind the layers of earthly veneer, uncovering one wonder after another to continuously arrive at a greater manifestation of G-d's existence. The Righteous Ones – *Tzaddikim* – who have successfully penetrated the mystery of G-d and live with Him as the only reality that exists, have developed such a sensitive awareness that they see what others don't see, hear what others don't hear, and feel what others can't feel. Functioning on a higher plane of awareness – where the Truth about G-d is apparent and obvious – they can detect the hidden meaning in the mundane and formulate teachings out of ordinary events, and even reveal the future. Having become so closely identified with G-d – so that their every action is only a reflection of His will – the concept of disappointment as commonly understood is irrelevant to

them – because if everything is ordained by G-d, of what consequence is the action's of others? You too can achieve this remarkable level of insight. In fact, the *Tzaddikim* devote their lives to sharing this knowledge with others and mentoring their students on how to reach the heights they have.

6.

**H**ow many times have you promised yourself, “this is the last time, I’m going to do favors for people!” Strange as it may seem, we often get stabbed in the back from the very people for whom we do favors. And almost as if a rule, the more good we do, the more bad do we receive in return. Face it, people will disappoint us, but G-d doesn’t. Therefore, don’t stop being a good person. Let the actions of G-d serve as your role model, and not the behaviors of others. To be sure, you feel hurt and betrayed, and naturally you feel

yourself growing increasingly hard and callous towards others. Nonetheless, don't surrender your humanity by giving-up on mankind. Take your cues from G-d; just as He continuously bestows kindness on others, so should you. Remember, the reward for all your kindness comes from G-d and not from others, as it says, (*Avos, Chap. 5*) "According to your pain, so is your reward". Moreover, G-d will more than double your returns, for all the suffering you've received at the hands of others. So for goodness sake, ignore all the insults, ingratitude and abuse, from others and just continue being a good person. Indeed, **don't be disappointed** by people's lack of consideration – when taken together, all your pain means so much to G-d. Your efforts may not seem to be appreciated by others, but to G-d they mean the world.

## 7.

**E**veryone has their pet peeves. Not a morning goes by, where we all wake-up only to stare disappointment in the face once again. We expect so much from ourselves, others and from life itself. Losing sight of the higher purpose of our existence, we get easily frustrated and broken by all the imagined needs and desires along the way that don't get satisfied. Get back on track, and stop nursing disappointment, by recalling that from the moment you entered this world to the moment you leave, you have one sole purpose: To know G-d (*see Zohar Bo, 42a*). Practically speaking, you must perform His commandments and follow His will, bringing the reality of His presence into the here-and-now. Then G-d will no longer be a stranger in your midst – relegated to the realm of the abstract; on the contrary, His presence will occupy a very relevant place in your life (*see Midrash Tanchuma B'Chukosai, Chap. 3*). Imagine that! – we

stem from such crude origins; a mere putrid drop and a physical form derived from the lowly earth yet, we are charged with the exalted task of bringing the reality of G-d into the world! Saddled by our physical urges, and hassled by life's petty problems, minor frustrations and needs constantly pulling us downward, we are nonetheless, bidden to elevate ourselves by attaching ourselves to G-d. This is true meaning of self-actualization; to discover and bring forth the actual G-dliness that exists within ourselves, while yet in our lowly state on this earth. But for our life mission to be complete, we must take it even further, by inspiring others to experience the relevance of G-d within their lives – so that they too can feel a connection to Him. When the reality of G-d's existence gains wide acceptance so that His control over every outcome is obvious to all, then the concept of disappointment automatically becomes irrelevant. Who can possibly disappoint

you? Isn't it clear in your mind already that G-d created and fashioned all of creation and that everything rests in His hands; He elevates this one, lowers that one: this one He enriches, that one He impoverishes; so why be jealous or disappointed by someone else's G-d-appointed success? So tomorrow, wake-up a new person free of disappointment, content that everything is just the way G-d meant it to be.

## 8.

**D**o you feel chronically unhappy in life? Are you dissatisfied with the direction your life has taken? Does your family find you mostly moody, irritable and whiny? Do you find yourself constantly reciting a litany of "if only..." to alleviate your restlessness and disappointment with your unbearable circumstance? Break the vicious cycle of expectation and the inevitable disappointment that follows, by

recognizing once and for all, that no one holds the key to your happiness in their hand! If you continue to spend your life in foolish anticipation, waiting for others to fill up your shopping cart you will only be left with an empty carriage. People will always be too busy, too tired, too lazy, too preoccupied with themselves or somebody else. They're either on the phone or out to lunch, and really couldn't care less – or even if they do – they can't help themselves so how can they help you. The only effective cure for the disappointment “blues” is to swallow your pride and admit the truth that only G-d has the absolute power to make or break you, and not others. You see, most of the disappointment you're experiencing does not necessarily reflect reality, but rather how you look at it; it's a matter of perception. Once you fully accept G-d's authority over all creation, and every circumstance and event that occurs – including your life – then you can make

peace with your situation and others. With G-d having the whole world in His hand, no one can touch you, so life is a breeze.

## 9.

**H**aving a hard time getting along with yourself and others? Did you know that underlying most of our conflicts is a profound sense of disappointment with ourselves and with others? For example, you may be a middle-aged person stuck in a going nowhere job. The prospect of switching careers so late in the game terrifies you, yet you feel so unfulfilled, unaccomplished, and burnt-out. You wistfully wonder what happened to all the dreams and plans you had for life. Books still sit on your shelf unread, gathering dust. The shiny guitar that held the promise for a great musical career has been silent for so long. Personal items are still strewn around the house awaiting attention from your organizing hand, while



general house repairs are left undone. Slowly you lose interest in life as basic daily functioning becomes a hardship. Similarly, beneath all the petty squabbles of the combative couple, lies a reservoir of built-up resentment and mutual dissatisfaction over unmet needs. He complains that, after a long hard day at work, the least he can expect is to be lovingly met by a doting wife who has a full-course supper waiting, while the house is in picture perfect shape and the homework with the kids done – not to mention the piles of laundry as well. She expects that in return for all her domestic services, she should at least be showered with love and affection that translates into gifts of expensive jewelry and dinner out at popular restaurants. Soon enough, the couple learns that trivial expectations can easily sour into major and bitter disappointment. She always dreamt that marriage would be one way; he insists that marriage should be another, and they

both point the finger of blame at each other, until after enough nasty fights and heated arguments, the relationship collapses. Likewise, with children, the danger of being disappointed exists when parents place unrealistic expectations on them. Who said that your son has to be a doctor or lawyer? How many children's self-esteems have been damaged by domineering parents who insist that their child be an A student when they're not? Today the houses of Israel are war zones, because parents are at odds with their children who have chosen to walk paths different than their own. And even with good friends and neighbors the potential for conflict arises when you expect them to march to the beat of your own drum and they don't. So, stop fighting so many battles on different fronts. You can't wage a war against the whole world – because you feel so hurt and disappointed – and expect to win. Expecting too much from yourself and others is the sure road to

disappointment that only leads to bitterness, isolation and despair. Why not climb down from the control tower and give-up charting for others their destination in life, by recognizing that there is only one true pilot in command. The course, altitude, direction and speed that our destinies assume are solely determined by G-d. Whether your life takes-off and you're going places, or even if you're stuck and stay grounded is decided by G-d, and not by any other agency or human device so, why be disappointed? Remember, naked you arrived in the world and naked you will leave, so why have any expectations? Be resigned to your fate, and accept happily whatever happens to you and you will never be disappointed. By accepting G-d's authority over your life, your whole attitude will change from one of selfishness to selflessness. Recognizing that the sacred task of marriage is to have children so that the legacy of faith is

transmitted to future generations, emboldens the couple to strive harder for marital harmony. Seized by a sense of Divine imperative, marriage is no longer perceived as a means to exploit the other partner, but rather as the most ideal way to honor G-d, by loving and cherishing the most precious gift that He gave each of you, which is each other. Chase away the somber clouds of disappointment that threaten to darken your marital horizon by remembering this principle: In marriage, it's by giving that you get all that you hoped for and more! Likewise, children are a gift that should never be taken for granted. Reflect on how lucky you are to have children, when there are so many cases of childless couples who are desperately struggling to conceive. So why be disappointed? So you wanted to have a more studious child; or you wish your son was more sociable and was not so shy; and how dare he drop-out of professional school to become a mechanic. We all wish

the best for our children, but ask yourself how realistic is it to force your child to do what's good in your eyes, but not his? You are only courting disappointment and disaster. Our duty as parents is to let go of what we can't change – which is their own unique personalities and style of thinking – and to offer them a way to change for the better – which is by instilling in them faith in G-d. To empower your child does not mean providing him with an elite education so he can gain admission to an Ivy League school. Teach him the basic principles of having a simple faith in G-d. Underscore for him the main objective of life which is to know G-d by devoting your life to serving Him and fulfilling His commandments. Do this and consider your job as a parent done; everything else will fall into place. Don't impose your will on the child when it comes to practical matters, such as career choice. Let him go with the faith you taught him and find his own path with the unique personality and

talents that G-d gave him. You won't be sorry or disappointed; on the contrary, you will only be proud. Apply this same approach in relating to your friends and neighbors, and you will avoid the disappointment that can lead to conflicts and feuds. Work on acceptance of the circumstances and conditions that G-d presents you in life, by promoting greater awareness of Him to yourself and others. Opt out of the competition between friends and neighbors, which put you under constant pressure to impress them or to impose your will on them, by convincing yourself and them that it's G-d's opinion that ultimately counts, not theirs. The power struggle will end the moment you give up the desire to dominate the people around you. Then you are free to live in peace and harmony with them, because you no longer feel threatened by their power to disappoint you. In fact, you will sail through life with complete serenity, satisfied with doing your own thing and

letting others do theirs, because ultimately it's G-d's will that will be done.

10.

**R**ecall that expression, “out of sight, out of mind”? Bitterly disappointed people who are angry at the world have too much time on their hand. They sit idly on the park bench gossiping about others or spend too much time alone casting their critical gaze on themselves, their wives, family and friends, filling their mind with invented hurts and imagined disappointments. The best advice for these people is: keep busy and stop thinking so much about yourself and others. Find a trade, vocation or hobby to keep your mind occupied so that you don't even have a spare moment to ruminate about your hurts and disappointments. Better still, is to fill the hours of your day with Torah learning and formal prayer, which is far more meaningful than mindless thoughts about

others. Too much unstructured leisure time makes people nervous and insecure about themselves and life. Frustrated that things in life didn't go their way, they look to blame others for their disappointments, and in the process they alienate those around them. So, stop looking at others, and keep disappointing thoughts about them out of your mind, by getting a life and keeping busy!

## 11.

**D**espite the arrogant attitude of our affluent society that “things are coming to us”, no one owes you anything in this world, and likewise, you don't owe them a thing. This is the secret to true contentment in life, free of disappointments; if I have no expectations from anyone, how can they possibly disappoint me? On the other hand, those that are still seeking love from rejecting parents; or parents who are vainly



struggling to impart good values to recalcitrant children; or the wife seeking attention from a callous husband; or the poor who chase after the meager handouts of the rich; and just about anybody who embarks on the losing proposition of trying to get something out of somebody or vice versa, is bound to end up feeling disappointed with themselves or with others. Remember, don't expect anything from others, and they have no right to expect anything from you. Train yourself to direct your expectations to G-d, since He runs the world and holds your fate in His hand. When you're feeling bad or sad and need a boost, don't automatically lift the receiver and call your therapist or friend. He will charge, and your friend may be too busy or not care enough. Why be disappointed? Go straight to the Boss and tell Him what you need. Not only does He really care, He expects you to come!

## 12.

**D**isappointment can lead to serious mental illness and depression. What initially begins as a minor frustration or adversity can snowball into a profound sense of disappointment with all of life. Fed-up and disgusted with just about everything and everyone, you crawl back into bed and pull the cover over your head in despair. Left unchecked, you gradually cease to function and slip into a crippling, inescapable depression. Many of the common neuroses and psychoses are triggered by disappointment over unsatisfied desires that are still repressed. Let's face it, we all encounter disappointment in life, and as we grow older, it only deepens. Some of us however, expected so much more out of life and feel cheated because we received less. Marriage disappointed us, friends rejected us, family didn't come through for us, and children didn't live up to our

expectations, so you fall into depression and almost lose your mind. Stop allowing disappointment to insinuate itself in your thoughts and convince you that your whole life went wrong, and it's all over. Get control over your emotions and life, by surrendering control to G-d. Comfort yourself with the soothing knowledge that it was G-d who was directing the events of your life all along, and not others. The debilitating effects of disappointment will heal once you understand that it was wrong of you to expect so much out of yourself and others, and that contrary to what you think, your life didn't go wrong, it went right – just the way G-d wanted it to go. With this outlook on life there is no room for disappointment. For instance, if a potentially great marriage prospect doesn't work-out, instead of getting crushed and disappointed, you will easily dismiss it as the will of G-d saying, "If it's meant for me I'll get it, if not, not". So, put your feet back on the ground and get

realistic about life by letting Heaven have more say in your life, than the opinions of others. By wanting what G-d wants, you'll get what you want – and more. You will never know disappointment and heartache anymore.



**Words of Inspiration**

(Translated from ***Imrei Mohorosh***)

A person must not be psychologically reliant on anyone. His only desire should be to cling to G-d and not to need anyone else.

Nevertheless, Rabbi Nachman said that a person should be part of a community of people serving G-d.

But there is no contradiction. When it comes to the affairs of this world, a person should turn his face to the wall and immerse himself in Torah study and prayer. He doesn't need to spend his hours chatting away. But when it comes to serving G-d, then it is important to have friends and even to spend hours with them in mutual support.

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A person has to purify his eyes so as not to look at immodest sights. He has to work at this even in his own home; for instance, he shouldn't gaze idly out the window. And of course, when he goes in the street, he has to work especially hard to avoid looking at immodest places .

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Before going out to the street, a person should fortify himself with faith, and prepare himself to see only the G-dliness that resides within everything.

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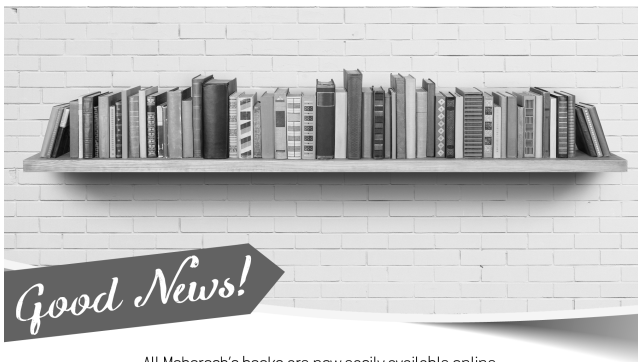
One can learn how to serve G-d from everyday events. For instance, there once was a peddler who was selling sunglasses on a street in Tel Aviv, and was crying out, "Buy sunglasses! It's a pity to ruin your eyes!" A *tzaddik* that was passing by

remarked, "Listen well to the words of the peddler, for he is reminding a person not to ruin his eyes by gazing at immodest sights. "

Another example: The government maintains firefighters, and when they go to put out a fire, they blare sirens and horns. This can remind a person that he should always be prepared to fight the fires of his passions with crying out to G-d in prayer .

Happy is the person who can learn how to serve G-d from everything that happens around him!

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