



Made In His Image: Tomer Devora-Unconditional Love #5

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Tzvi Feuer

The fourth divine attribute discussed in Tomer Devora is *shearit nachaloto*. There is a remnant of Hashem's portion within us and within every Jew. This means that we are all connected to our Creator and to each other. Every person has a part of every Jew within him. There's *arvut*-mutual responsibility which is expressed in both a positive and negative way. If a Jew sins, a part of every Jew sins with him. If he does good, he creates a positive energy that impacts others.

The first ten people that arrive in shul receive the merit of the next hundred that may come later because they have within them a part of every Jew. Conversely, if a Jew lets himself slide, he will cause others to fall too in their way, wherever they may be in the world. On Yom Kippur we say the confession, *Ashamnu* (we have sinned) in plural form. We repent for the parts of ourselves that sinned and the parts of other people that sinned because of us.

The Ramchal explains in Derech Hashem the great spiritual power of a *tzaddik*. A righteous Jew can elevate other Jews through his spiritual *avodah* (divine service). The afflictions he accepts upon himself with love can atone for his generation. Why does the *megilah* connect Mordechai's praying and

fasting with that of the Jewish people's? While Mordechai knew of the decree, it took months till the king's horsemen brought the decree to the far corners of the kingdom where the Jews were spread. The commentators explain that Mordechai lifted himself up to such a level that he faced the situation in a wholly spiritual way. His strengthening made it possible for the Jewish people many months later to climb to that level too.

With this we can also understand the concept of "*V'ahavta l'reicha komocha*," loving your neighbor as yourself. On a certain level you are your friend. You're really loving the part of him that's within you. The Talmud Yerushalmi explains, if you were cutting a piece of meat and your right hand cut your left hand, would your left hand then take a knife to cut the right hand? If every Jew is a part of you how can you take revenge or bear a grudge. *V'ahvta l'reicha* also means sharing in a friend's sorrow and in his joy. Pain triggers a human feeling of compassion. But rejoicing in a friend's *simcha* is a lot harder. If we bear in mind that we're all one entity it's possible.

The fifth divine attribute is, "*Lo hechzik l'ad apo*," Hashem doesn't hold onto his anger forever. While the sinner is still sinning, Hashem looks for possible ways to be kind to

him so as to give him the opportunity to repent. Even in a situation where the person deserves HaShem's anger, He will nullify it in the hope that the sinner will return.

Sometimes instead of spurring a person to repent through punishment, Hashem will use kindness. The Midrash in Malachi says that the Jewish people will not do *teshuvah* until Eliyahu hanavi comes. This means he will come before we are worthy. If Hashem sees that affliction is not helping us return, He will send Eliyahu hanavi to bring us back. The Michtav M'Eliyahu discusses this idea. The establishment of the state of Israel was an embodiment of the *middah* of *lo hechzek l'ad apo*. After the terrible suffering of the Holocaust, Hashem showed us incredible kindness in the hope that we would return. Perhaps we need to employ this *middah* in our *chinuch* too. If strictness doesn't work, a show of extreme love may help a child come back. The Gemara says about the *mitzvah* of helping to unload an enemy's donkey, "*Azov taazov*,"-Let go of your hatred. Draw your enemy close with love and perhaps in this way you will bring him to *teshuvah*.

Era of Mashiach and the Resurrection of the Dead #9

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

What will it be like to live in the times of *Mashiach*? In a world in which there's revelation, where will the challenges be? When *Mashiach* comes we'll continue to struggle but we'll be starting out on a much higher plane so that our ability to come closer to Hashem will be much greater. We won't stop being ourselves. We'll retain our individuality but it won't be hampered by outside factors.

We will become more perfected as a result of *Mashiach's* coming, but in order for him to be revealed the generation has to be willing. There must be a degree of profound inner readiness, a willingness to listen, a point where we'll stop trusting external factors and search for true meaning. The other possibility is that we will be so far from anything true that seeing truth will be like seeing lightning against

a black sky. We'll know what is true because we'll already have experienced what is not. This is what is meant when the sages said *Mashiach* will come in a generation that's either worthy or unworthy.

The era before the redemption is compared to the process of childbirth. Just before the moment of birth, the mother reaches a point where she cannot bear it anymore. So too for us to come to the point of listening, we will have to endure great suffering. Alternatively, we can get to the same place from within ourselves. There's a mixture of both of these paradigms in the exile of Egypt. The Jew's capacity to be redeemed came from within but the cause came from without. When Pharaoh died and a new king came in his place, the Jews cried out to Hashem. They saw that it wasn't a political problem. Similarly we will

come to a point of a combined inside and outside cause that will make us finally able to hear Hashem's words.

Mashiach can come at any time if we're ready and Hashem views it as time. The process will involve the Jews repenting which in turn will affect profound change in the world. The nations will return to Hashem. This will lead to the Jews coming back to Israel, which will lead to the rebuilding of the temple, which in turn will unite us. At that point Eliyahu hanavi who would've proclaimed *Mashiach* will tell every person which tribe they're from, meaning what direction to look to be themselves. There will be continued and deep awareness, where Hashem and the world will be seen as one. We will live with the consciousness that everything in the world is an expression of His will.

Continued on Page 2



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Continued from Page 1

Upon hearing news of a death we say, "*Baruch dayan hamet.*" (Blessed is Hashem the true judge.) We don't see the whole picture. We're limited. When Mashiach comes there will only be one *bracha*, "*Hatov v'hameitiv*," not because it will all be perfect but because we'll see everything as coming from one source. There will be no oppositional forces. All the puzzle pieces will fall into place. In exile, we are subservient to the nations. They've taken us over so fully that we no longer have a sense of who we are. In the Messianic era we will discover ourselves. The world will be one in which people won't have to be challenged to discover their goodness.

They'll find it within themselves as they fulfill their role.

Even in a world where Hashem's unity is a defining factor, our lives are limited by the mortality of the body and the fact that it conceals our true selves. At one point in the Messianic era we will enter the era of the revival of the dead. First everyone will die. Then the great day of judgment will take place. Everyone's story will be told and people will see the real effect their life had on others. Justice will be meted out to those who deserve it. Then our bodies will change. They will express who we truly are so that a kind person

will look kind and visa versa. We'll see each other with far greater clarity than we do now. *Techiat hameisim* is the final act when the body and soul will be wedded together once more to allow us eternal individuality. We'll have bodies that don't challenge us or destroy us but work with us and define us and are good servants to our souls. In the time of *Mashiach*, we will not cease to be ourselves nor will we stop growing. Rather we will move closer to Hashem and in turn attain our truest highest possible selves.

Builder of Her Home A Woman's Expectation of Her Husband Class #13

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

Chazal tell us about the prophetess Devora whose husband was an ignoramus. She said to him, "I'll make wicks for the *menorah*. Bring them to the *mishkan* in Shilo and set your portion among those who serve Hashem. Through that you'll earn your share in the future life." She didn't say, "Do it so that I'll be the wife of an accomplished man;" or "Do it because I can't stand being married to an ignoramus, what will the neighbors say?" In *Shemonei Esrei* we implore Hashem, "For the sake of the *tzaddikim* and the pious ones and the converts, pour down your mercy and give good reward to all of those who trust in your name. And make our portion like theirs." How can we ask for their portion if we are not them? When the Gemara discusses a Jew's fate in *olam habah*, it refers to those who will be turned into the dust beneath the feet of the *tzaddikim*. If you're touched by righteous people, in a certain sense you become them. You can gain something of them because one who is created to influence others needs someone to give to, as much as someone who is created to receive needs someone to give to them. Devora sent her husband to Shilo so he could get his portion in *olam habah* by associating with *tzaddikim*. About her it is written, "*Chochmat nashim banta beita*"-The wisdom of a woman builds her home. Devora shared with her husband what

she yearned for most. She sent him to be a part of something bigger. The Yalkut says that her effect upon her husband made her deserving of prophecy. This fundamental idea that everything comes from the woman depends on her expectations and her ability to receive. Nothing spurs a man forward on his way towards greatness than a woman telling him how much she needs what he can potentially give forth.

If there's no wheat in the house she cries out. He knows that there's someone waiting for him to receive and to derive joy in the fruit of his success. Every husband's secret dream is a happy wife and he'll go very far for that. The more she shows him she has expectations of him, the more courage he'll have to face life. But if she emasculates him and says, "I'll do what needs to be done, your nothing," she's setting her home up for failure. The Midrash Shmuel says a woman isn't ashamed to demand from her husband. She doesn't feel like a beggar because she knows her husband is waiting for her to demonstrate her faith in him. That expectation and the trust she shows in him is what will give him the ability to bring home both material and spiritual sustenance. Nagging or criticism won't do it.

When a woman asks her husband for help, the

negative message may be, "What you do is unimportant, what I do is vital. And therefore you have to help me." A more positive message would be, "As much as I realize the enormous importance of your job, I can't manage. Can you help me?" In this way the husband feels that not only is he *mashpiah* (giving forth) Torah and *parnassah*, he's also being *mashpia chesed*. Instead of letting bitterness overtake her for marrying a husband who is not a full time learner, a wife can think, this is what Hashem meant him to do. He wanted him to be *mashpia* in other ways. He gives charity and he learns when he can. In his own unique way, he's an *adam shalem* (perfected person). There are women who have working husbands who are not enormously successful. Instead of being unhappy, if the wife would encourage her husband by looking cheerful when he leaves in the morning and then asking about his day and expressing gratitude, they would both feel a whole lot different.

The root of the greatness of a Jewish woman is to build a world of expectations for her husband where he'll see more in himself through her eyes than he would've seen through his own eyes. When she accepts what is *shalem* (complete) within him and builds with it, they will both find joy and inner peace.