



Dvar Torah for Parshat Bereshis Based on Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom #119

Kayin and Hevel (aka Cain and Abel) each brought an offering to God. Kayin, a farmer, brought some linen seeds. Then Hevel, a shepherd, brought some fat sheep. "God turned to Hevel and his offering, but He did not turn to Kayin or his offering. Kayin became furious and upset. Kayin argued with Hevel [seeking a pretext to kill him—Rashi]. When they were in the field Kayin rose and killed Hevel his brother."
(Genesis 4:4–6,8).

You try to be a good Jew. You're human, you haven't arrived—yet—at any pinnacle of Divine service. You try to give to God what you can, even though you're still taking plenty for yourself. So it's hard when you finally give something, feel like you've made a real sacrifice, and see that somebody else is giving more, doing a better job. Not only that, but the other guy is being openly rewarded (because it's obvious that he is better off than you). You can't stand it. It's infuriating.
You hate that guy.

Admit it: you're jealous.

But that's the wrong way to go. Even if you're far from meeting your Jewish potential, be glad that another Jew is. At least someone is doing the job right! Rebbe Nachman said, "If, God forbid, I am unworthy to serve God, at least some other Jew should serve Him! This is a very great thing to hold on to."

Reb Noson writes:

When a person maintains this desire that his friend should be a kosher Jew, a tzaddik, even if, God forbid, he himself is not this is a very great achievement.

To me this is obvious. I certainly have a great interest and desire that every Jew should be a genuine tzaddik. Even if I won't be, at least my friends—all Jews—should be extraordinary tzaddikim. This is the true love and compassion that we have to have for one another....

But I know that there are people who fail in their devotions, God forbid, or worse, actually get tripped up by desire or sin, and as a result hate those who serve Hashem. They pick fights with them, discourage them and disgrace them in any number of ways. Some even tell others that they as well will amount to nothing....

This is a result of jealousy. Because they fell, they want others to fall. In fact their feeling should be just the opposite....

So don't "kill" the potential of any of your brothers or sisters. Instead, remember what God told Kayin when he failed, "If you improve, you'll succeed...You'll have challenges, but if you want to, you can overcome them" (Genesis 4:7; see Rashi).