



Breslov Research Institute



Dvar Torah for Parshat Ekev Based on Likutey Moharan II, Lesson #48

"Maybe you'll think to yourself, 'There are so many non-Jews. There's no way I can drive them out.' Don't be afraid of them. Remember well what God did to Pharaoh and all the Egyptians; the miracles and the wonders that you witnessed...God will do the same to all the nations you fear...Don't let them break you; God is with you... (Deuteronomy 7:17-21).

"And know: a person must cross a very, very narrow bridge. The rule, the most important thing is: Don't give way to fear." – Rebbe Nachman

You pray, you attend classes, you give charity. You make sure to eat only kosher food, gave up your old circle of friends to spend time with more religious people and the end result is: you couldn't feel less Jewish than if you were the pope.

You do your honest-to-goodness best to perform every religious practice and good deed—not just on the outside, but on the inside!—and it amounts to a total feeling of alienation from God. Not just a little alienation; total distance. You feel He treats you like you're not there.

Relax. All the tzaddikim have been there and done that. But they wouldn't have become tzaddikim if they wouldn't have held their ground. What you have to do, says Rebbe Nachman, is to ignore the feeling. Dig in with all your might and don't give up an inch of progress that you've made.

Your assessment of your (lack of) progress in Judaism may be correct. You may be extremely distant from God. You may actually be making things worse at every moment because you're such a poor example of a Jew. If that's so, says Rebbe Nachman, then even the slightest hairsbreadth of progress that you do make (one less slice of ham, one less fib told) is extremely precious to God. As often as necessary, use that hairsbreadth of progress for a pick-me-up of happiness.

Don't backtrack. It's impossible to be holy without first passing through the swamps and hurricanes of confusion and backsliding. That's just the way it is. Even if your opponents keep tossing you out of the ring, crawl and try to get back in.

Rebbe Nachman warns us that the biggest, most trying tests of our desire for Judaism are just as we reach the threshold of holiness. Rebbe Nachman told of a tzaddik who said, "If someone, anyone at all, would have told me at the beginning of my efforts to serve God, 'Be strong and hang in there, brother,' I would have tried that much harder."

So, do what you can. Remember that you're in it for the long haul. Remember that every move and effort you give to improve your connection with God will come back to help you in your time of need.

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