



PASSING OF A TZADDIK – TURNING DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

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*Free Translation**

This is difficult to understand: We are gathered to commemorate the anniversary of the Rebbe's passing.

A person's passing implies the absence of life. Certainly the absence of the fullness of life, with all the vitality and energy which is given to man.

A person's passing also causes the opposite of joy, which is why we observe many customs which express sadness – the opposite of happiness.

Yet, we gather on the anniversary of the Rebbe's passing, expecting that our gathering will bring increased energy, enthusiasm, and joy to completing our mission in life!

The answer to this was provided by the Rebbe himself, based on numerous statements in the Talmud and Midrash, as well as verses in the Written Torah:

On negative events in life, the Mishna states:

"All that God created in His world, He created to bring Him honor." The Talmud says, "This, too, is for the good." The verse says that a "greater light comes from darkness." Thus instructing us to take what seems to be darkness, and use it to create light. And not merely a return to light, "from the darkness" we get a "greater" light; a stronger light.

It is therefore understandable that considering that God directs every event in the world, a person's passing is certainly an act of God.

Yet, at the same time, God's directive that we "serve God with joy" is strong and operative at all times. Since serving God is a constant, because "I was *created* to serve my Master." And every moment that a person lives should be a reminder – and since he is intelligent, it does, in fact, remind him – that "I was created to serve my Master." And God declares in His Torah that our service to Him must be "Serve God with joy."

Hence, the darkness does not negate the joy and there is no contradiction. And after some thought we can also appreciate the reasoning: When a person dies the soul does not, Heaven forbid, lose its existence. A soul is eternal.

*) Taken from the Subtitles that appear on the screen



פרשת קרח

It follows logically that every soul's function is eternal —especially the soul of a Jewish leader— his soul's function as leader is also eternal, in that it continues to have that effect on the world. As the Talmud says:

“Just as Moses stood and served his people until now, so will he *continue* to stand and serve.”

A Jewish leader whose mission in this world was to lead, and complete and to help others complete their mission in the world; the mission to make the world fit to be a dwelling place, a “garden” for God.

When this soul ascends on high it does not cause him to depart and leave behind the physical world.

On the contrary: The Alter Rebbe, in his Iggeret HaKodesh, quotes the Zohar:

“a Tzaddik who passed away is present in all the worlds even more than during his lifetime.” When a Tzaddik, and especially a Rebbe, passes away, he remains present in that place where he functioned as Rebbe, more effectively than during his lifetime, while his soul was in a body.

For he is no longer limited by the restrictions of the body. For instance, previously he could not be in several places simultaneously. Now, after his passing — tonight, for example— when we gather in commemoration of his passing, the soul of the Rebbe is present at every gathering where people review some Torah that he taught, and most importantly, since “action is the main thing,” they derive instruction from his teaching on how to actualize, his directives to increase goodness, light, joy and holiness, throughout the entire world. Beginning, of course, with ourselves, and our immediate environment.

This explains how, although a soul's passing is the opposite of life, yet, upon contemplation of the fact, that the essence of a person is his soul, and the body is only secondary, thus, freed of restraints, the soul gains even greater powers “more than during his lifetime” —to fulfill its mission.

And we need only to remain in touch with him by following in his footsteps, and living our lives, day by day, as he instructed.

Then, despite the seeming contradiction, the anniversary of a passing is also a “celebration.” It can generate the kind of joy, that “comes from darkness,” an even greater joy than usual, and we will utilize this joy to “serve God with joy.”

