

Rather, it first dresses itself up in *mitzvot*, etc. [in order to fool the person]. By engaging in Torah study, a person merits true understanding and to be saved from all this.

6. The primary reason why prayers are not accepted is that the person's words lack grace. Therefore, every person must make an effort for his words to have true grace. A person merits this by engaging in Torah study, and then his prayers will be accepted.

2 TISHREY

7. A Jew should always look to the intellect in every thing, and connect himself to the wisdom and the intellect that are found in every thing, so that the intellect in every thing will shine its light for him and he may draw close to God through that very thing. For the essential vitality in every thing is nothing other than the intellect and wisdom it contains, as it is written, "Wisdom gives life to its possessors" (Ecclesiastes 7:12). The intellect is a great light and, like the sun, shines to a person in all his activities. Even when a person sometimes comes to a place of obscurity and darkness, God forbid, nevertheless, when he merits to see the intellect and vitality in every thing, the intellect then shines its light for him and draws him close to God. This is how Joseph merited to withstand his test – he looked for the intellect in every thing.

8. It is impossible to attain the light of this intellect except through Malkhut (Kingship). In other words, one must accept upon himself the Kingdom of Heaven in truth and in perfect faith, and rein in his mind and dismiss his own wisdom completely, as if he has no intellect of his own whatsoever. He must abhor all secular wisdom and thinking, and wait, long and yearn only to receive light and vitality from the true intellect and wisdom – namely, the supernal holy intellect which is the essence of the holy vitality that exists in every thing.

9. The essence of the battle between the good inclination and the evil inclination lies in this area alone. For the good inclination incites a person to abhor all secular wisdom and thinking, as well as all the physical desires that are pure folly and genuine foolishness; and it impels him to connect himself only to the light of the holy intellect. But the evil inclination incites a person to the opposite, as in, “A fool does not desire understanding” (Proverbs 18:2). This latter case was personified in Esau who scorned his birthright, which is the concept of holy wisdom and intellect. Each person must empower the good inclination to prevail over the evil inclination, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “A person must always incite the good inclination against the evil inclination” (*Berakhot* 5a). A person merits to do this by engaging in Torah study with energy and enthusiasm.

3 TISHREY

10. When a person merits to attain all of the above, a great spiritual unification is thereby achieved in all the worlds; the “light of the moon becomes like the light of the sun” (Isaiah 30:26); and he attains grace. Then all his prayers and requests are accepted.

11. The evil inclination wants to make a person literally insane, God forbid. For one who sins is insane, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “A person does not commit a transgression unless he is possessed by a spirit of foolishness” (*Sotah* 3a). But how can the evil inclination possibly come to a person and suddenly make him crazy, God forbid? The way of the evil inclination is to first dress itself up in *mitzvot* and to mislead the person, as if it is inciting him to do a mitzvah. Afterward, it misleads him and incites him even more until the person comes to commit actual transgressions willfully, God forbid.

This is precisely what happens with the insanity of a madman. [Little by little,] his mind becomes confused and deranged until

he finally calls bad, “good” [and good, “bad”]. Nevertheless, he still retains some traces of intellect and sanity, for even in his craziness and senselessness, he, too, understands and knows that a person ought not to do such crazy things. Even so, he does them anyway. Because of this, two methods are required to cure the insane. First, it may be necessary to strike them in order to subdue their willful evil – so that at least it will not be pleasant for them to engage in their crazy behavior, and at least they will not do things that they themselves know to be madness and foolishness. Furthermore, it may also be necessary to place upon them [mystical, holy] names and amulets in order to banish from them the evil spirit which is confusing and deranging their minds, God forbid, to the point that they distort what is correct and call bad, “good” [and good, “bad”].

Similarly, when it comes to curing a person from the insanity of the evil inclination, one must also employ these same two methods. First, it is necessary to subdue the sinner’s tendency for willful evil, so that at least he will not do what he himself understands and knows to be evil and sinful, God forbid. Furthermore, it is necessary to banish from him the evil spirit, the spirit of foolishness, that dresses itself up in *mitzvot* and misleads him, as if it is inciting him to do a *mitzvah*. All this can be attained in its entirety only by engaging in Torah study, which includes both these methods.

12. The main way to connect oneself with the holy intellect is through straightforwardness and simplicity, as in, “Jacob was a simple man” (Genesis 25:27) – for Jacob merited to attain the light of the intellect to perfection.