

The Mystical Key to Relationships – Tomer Devora

Introduction

It is proper for man to emulate his Creator, for then he will attain the secret of the Supernal Form in both image (tzelem) and likeness (demut). For if a person's physical form reflects the Supernal Form, yet his actions do not, he falsifies his stature. People will say of him, "A handsome form whose deeds are ugly." For the essential aspect of the Supernal 'Form' and 'Likeness' is that they are the deeds of the Holy One, Blessed Be He. Therefore, what good is it for a person to reflect the Supernal Form in physical form only if his deeds do not imitate those of his Creator? Thus, it is proper that man's actions imitate the Thirteen Supernal Attributes of Mercy - the functions of the sefirah of keter - hinted at in these verses:

Who is G-d like You, who pardons iniquity and forgives the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not maintain His anger forever, for He delights in kindness. He will again show us compassion, He will vanquish our iniquities, and You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Show faithfulness to Yaakov, kindness to Avraham, which You have sworn to our fathers from days of old.
(Michah 7-18-20)

Consequently, it is proper that these Thirteen Attributes, which we will now explain, should also be found in man.

Chapter 1 - Who Is God Like You?

This attribute refers to the Holy One, Blessed Be He, as a tolerant King Who bears insult in a manner beyond human understanding. Without doubt, nothing is hidden from His view. In addition, there is not a moment that man is not nourished and sustained by virtue of the Divine power bestowed upon him.

Thus, no man ever sins against G-d without G-d, at that very moment, bestowing abundant vitality upon him, giving him the power to move his limbs. Yet even though a person uses this very vitality to transgress, G-d does not withhold it from him. Rather, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, suffers this insult and continues to enable his limbs to move. Even at the very moment that a person uses that power for transgression, sin, and infuriating deeds, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, bears them patiently.

One cannot say, G-d forbid, that G-d cannot withhold His benevolence from a person, for it is within His power to shrivel up a person's arms or legs instantly, just as He did with Yaravam. Yet even though it is within G-d's power to withdraw vitality, and He could argue, "Since you sin against Me, sin with that which belongs to you, not with that which belongs to Me," He does not withhold His goodness from man. He bears the insult and continues to bestow His power and benevolence on man. Such an insult and the forbearance thereof defy description.

For this reason, the ministering angels refer to the Holy One, Blessed Be He, as the long-suffering King. This is the meaning of "Who is G-d like You"- "You, G-d, are kind and benevolent, possessing the power to exact revenge and claim what is rightfully Yours, and yet You are patient and tolerant until man repents."

This, then, is a virtue man should emulate namely, tolerance. Even when he is insulted

to the degree mentioned above he should not withdraw his benevolence from those upon whom he bestows it.