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## Tefillah - 028 Real Life

### **Hashem - Our "Helper"**

מלך עוזר ומושיע ומגן - Hashem is our עוזר, our ultimate Helper.

Hashem is our true Helper. When a person helps another, the one receiving the help is considered the main person. But when Hashem helps us, we realize that Hashem is the main one, and we are just secondary. As it is written, *"My help comes from Hashem."* (Tehillim 121:2).

Chazal say that our evil inclination gets stronger every day, and if not for Hashem, we cannot overcome it<sup>[1]</sup>. On a deeper note though, our every action that we do really needs Hashem's help.

### **How Hashem Helps Us**

How, indeed, does Hashem help us?

Whenever we do an action, it is considered alive only if we put Hashem into the equation. Although we use our power of *bechirah* to do good actions, our actions can only be considered 'alive' when we realize how we need Hashem to help us, and this gives life to the actions we do. A person might do many good deeds, but inwardly, he can be dead, because there is no life-source to his actions; Hashem is missing from the equation. Once we put Hashem into what we do, Hashem is providing life to our actions, and then the actions we do are alive.

### **Life Vs. Imagination**

A person needs to live an inner kind of life, in which all that he does is inwardly connected to Hashem.

We must know what it means to really live **life**, and what it means to merely **imagine** what a good life is - to see the differentiation between these two.

To illustrate, a child plays a game and is having a good time; he thinks that this is his life. As he begins to get older, he realizes that all his fun was the world of imagination, and that this is not life.

The life which we see in front of us, on this world, is all a world of imagination! In order to really know what our life is, we have to merit from Hashem that He open our hearts to understand what it really is. If our heart hasn't been opened a little, we do not understand what "life" is at all. We might know what death is, but we won't know what "life" is.

Our existence is that we are a soul clothed by a body. Therefore, we initially perceive life from the perspective of our body, even if we learn Torah and mitzvos; from the perspective of the body, we have an erroneous perception of what life is about.

We have to daven to Hashem that He should open our heart (as we daven in the end of Shemoneh Esrei, “*Open my heart to Your Torah*”) in order to understand what life really is.

We should look back at our past and see that whatever we thought until now as “life” is not really life, just imagination. Most people are not experiencing the true meaning of life, even if they live for 70 or 80 years. People often do not even experience one moment of true life on this world!

### **Real Life**

Our *neshamah* deep down in us knows what real life is. But when we ask Hashem for life, we do not always know what it is. The meaning of life is really a secret; only our *neshamah* knows what it is.

Sometimes we receive sparks of understanding of what the meaning of life is. But in order to actually arrive at a total recognition of what life is, we need to have our hearts opened.

During Elul, what are people asking Hashem for? People have all kinds of things they want and ask Hashem for a whole list of things. The more a person asks for various things, the more it shows that he doesn't understand what life is.

We are all asking Hashem for a real **life!** In the *Shemoneh Esrei* of Rosh HaShanah, we daven, *Zochreinu L'Chaim, Melech Chofetz B'Chaim, Kosveinu B'Sefer HaChaim...* we keep asking for life, because that is really our central request in Elul. As for our personal requests that we ask of Hashem, most of these requests are not for life itself, but rather about various details that branch out from our life, such as *parnassah*, etc. The main request which we ask for in Shemoneh Esrei is that we should have a real, genuine kind of **life!**

Since we are young, we think that we know we are alive. But the truth is that most people don't even realize what it means to really be alive. People ask Hashem that they be granted life only because they don't want to die. But as for **life** itself, to know what it means to be alive – people often do not know what it is.

We don't want Hashem to take away our life, as we daven in the prayer of *Shema Koleinu*. But what *is* our life to begin with? What is the life that we are asking for more of? Do we realize the true meaning of what it means to be alive...?

### **To See Real Life, We Must Open Our Heart**

If our hearts begin to become a little opened, we can realize that the kind of life we think we have been living until now is really the world of imagination, which is the way a child views life.

It is hard to verbally express this concept in words. The point is that your heart needs to become opened, and then you will know what is being discussed here.

### **Living Through The Prism of Imagination Vs. Living Through The Essence**

In Elul, we ask for *chaim*, life. We must realize that this world we see in front of us is not a real life – it is entirely a world of fantasy.

Ever since Adam ate from the *Eitz HaDaas*, this world became like one big imaginary kind of

existence. This is the depth behind the curse of “death” that came to the world – it was a “death” to the ideal state of mankind.

So when we ask for life in Elul, the depth of our request is that we are asking Hashem that we be granted the power to leave our imagination, and instead taste of the true life – the *Eitz HaChaim*, the source of true life.

It is not only a person who is immersed in physical interests who is living in imagination. Even a person learning Torah and doing mitzvos, who is not entrenched in physical pursuit, can also be living in imagination. We see from this from the fact that we can have all kinds of dreams at night.

When we reveal the **inner essence of our heart**<sup>[2]</sup>, we will then understand what the true meaning of life is, and then we will be able to truly have *d'veykus* with the Creator.

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[1] Sukkah 52a

[2] As is well-known from the Rav's teachings, the “inner sense of the heart” is the ability of the soul to live with a palpable sense of Hashem in our life, as a simple feeling.