

❧ No basis for anxiety ❧

By the Grace of G-d
26th of Teves, 5725
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter with the enclosure, in which you write about your problem of acute anxiety, and ask my advice.

The best and most effective thing to do, in a situation such as yours, is to study thoroughly those sections and chapters in our sacred books where the matter of Divine Providence and Bitochon are discussed, such as Chovos Halvovos, Shaar Habitochon, and similar. It is well to keep in mind those chapters and verses in the Tehillim which speak of these subjects, as well as the Midrashim and interpretations of our Sages on them. These things should be studied with such depth that they should become a part of one's thinking. In this way there will be no room left for any kind of anxiety or worry, and as King David said in the Tehillim, "G-d is with me, I shall not fear. What can man do unto me!"

As you well know the matter of Hashgocho Protis is the basis of true monotheism, a concept which to us means not only that G-d is One, but that there is oneness in the whole of Nature. In other words the whole universe has one Supreme Being, Who not only is the Creator of everything, but also is the Master, continually supervising every detail of his handiwork. The corollary of this is that there cannot be a single point in the whole order of the world which is separated from the Supreme Being, or in any way not subject to His control. At the same time it is obvious that the Supreme Being is also the Essence of Perfection and Goodness. And although many things in the world seem imperfect, and require completion or perfection, there can be no doubt that there is a perfect order in the world, and even the lowest in the scale of Creation, namely the inanimate things, display wonderful perfection and symmetry, as can be seen from the atoms and molecules of inorganic matter. Hence, the conclusion must be that even those things which require completion, are also part of the perfect order, and necessary for the fulfillment of the good, as all this is explained at length in the teachings of Chassidus. It is explained there that in order for a man to attain perfection, it is necessary that he should also have the feeling that he is not only on the receiving end, but also a contributor, and

according to the expression of our Sages of blessed memory, "A partner in the Creation". This is why many things have been left in the world for him to improve and perfect.

I also want to make the further observation, and this is also essential, that there is really no basis for anxiety at any time, and as you yourself mentioned in your letter, that you find no reason for it. Even in such cases where you think you know the reason for your anxiety, the reason is undoubtedly imaginary, or at any rate, not the real cause. For the real cause is that one's daily life is not in complete harmony with the true essence of a Jew. In such a case it is impossible not to have an awkward feeling that things do not seem to fit somehow, and it is this disharmony which is at the bottom of the anxiety, and it is in proportion to the discrepancy between his way of life and his true natural self.

Everybody recognizes that anxiety has to do with the psyche. But in the case of a Jew, the so-called psyche is really the Neshama. Some Jews have a particularly sensitive soul, in which case the above mentioned disharmony would create a greater anxiety. In such a case even subtle and "minor" infractions of Didukei Mitzvoth would create anxiety. But even in the case of an ordinary soul of the average Jew, there must inevitably be created some anxiety if there is a failure to observe the fundamental Mitzvoth. It is very possible that the above may have a bearing on your situation. If this is so, then all that is necessary is to rectify matters, and bring the daily life and conduct into complete harmony with the essence of the soul, through strict adherence to the Torah and Mitzvoth. Then the symptoms will disappear of themselves.

It is necessary to mention also that in your case, where your position gives you a great deal of influence on your environment, your influence is an integral part of your harmonious life, and it is therefore essential that your influence, too, should be in harmony with the Torah and Mitzvoth in the fullest measure.

I suggest that you should also have the Mezuzoth of your home checked, as also your Tefillin, and before putting on your Tefillin every weekday morning, to put aside a small coin for Tzedoko.

Hoping to hear good news from you in regard to all the matters discussed above

With blessing

P.S. As for the question of seeing me personally in connection

Tuesday, 30th of Menachem Av, 5771

- 3 -

with this year's occurrence, the calendar of appointments is filled to capacity and for a long time in advance. But the important thing is that it is not at all necessary for you to take the trouble and time to see me personally, inasmuch as all I could tell you is what I wrote to you above.