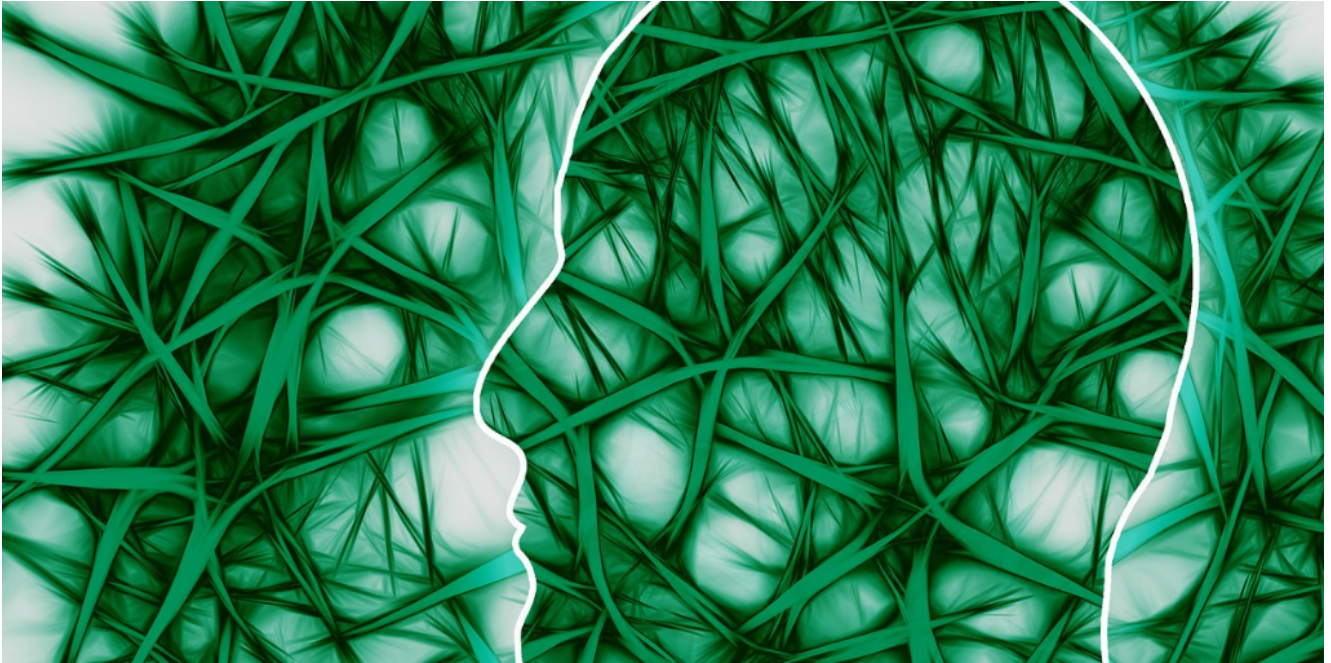


The Missing Link

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“In the place where returnees to Judaism stand, even completely righteous Tzaddikim cannot stand” (Berakhot 34b).

Wow! Our Rabbis are implying that the returnee is greater than the saint. But shouldn't one who has spent his entire life in the service of God, and never really faltered, be considered supreme in every aspect? How could there be a “place” reserved for one who has erred?

This question is as old as the universe. You see, once there was only Oneness: only God existed. But God wanted to create a world where others would know Him and develop the deepest kinship with Him. Because He wanted us to appreciate and experience His ultimate kindness and greatness, He created our universe. But there was a problem. If we were to immediately recognize everything created as an obvious manifestation of Godliness, the world would automatically revert to its original state – we would be nullified in God's awesomeness. Therefore God created freedom of choice and its many forms of multiplicity. By being able to experience the opposites of

pure holiness, including our doubts and lusts, we have the space to develop our own identities while at the same time uplift and connect our every experience with God's absolute unity.

This is life. God created an incomplete world, but He gave us the power to complete His creation. When we see through the "thick of things" and have emunah (faith) that everything comes from Him, we are able to reunite creation with its Source. Whenever we study Torah, pray or do a mitzvah, we express our emunah in the unity of creation, and reconnect ourselves in the highest way.

For someone who has lived a completely righteous life, there isn't that great a distinction between God's Oneness and creation. Such a person has more or less lived his life always connected to God, and is therefore, in a sense, living in the original, nullified state that God was not content with. On the other hand, the one who has fallen, the person who has done wrong and forgotten about God, best expresses the purpose of Creation. When that person returns, he exemplifies God's purpose: to create a distinct being who achieves complete connection and unity with his Creator. The further removed we are from God, the greater is our capacity to experience and reflect the awesome Oneness of God. By being strong and having emunah in God when He feels distant, we are fulfilling the purpose of Creation to the ultimate degree – we are completing God's creation!

The Jewish people lived a miraculous lifestyle in the desert for 40 years. The people who were living with such an obvious level of direct manifestation of Godliness were expected to enter the Holy Land, the land of Divine Providence, with emunah alone. The same God who fathered them at Sinai would also father them in the Land of Israel. Any challenge they encountered would ultimately serve to bring about God's will. But instead, they resorted to the logical plan of sending spies to "check out" the Land – they made their own

“creation.” Their newly-created burden and challenge of finding God in the multiplicity of things was now entrusted with the spies – and unfortunately, the spies did not live up to this challenge.

Each of us is an agent of God Himself. We have been entrusted with life and have been asked to carry out God’s will by connecting to Him in every situation. True, it would have been easier had we always made the right choices and lived on the level of the Jews in the desert. But even if we have erred, with our emunah, we have the awesome power to complete God’s creation!

Based on Likutey Halakhot, Shluchin 3
A Gutn Shabbos! Shabbat Shalom!