

Sefirah of the Week: TIFERET – The Light of Truth and Peace

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Tiferet translates as beauty and represents the harmony and truth that can, and do, illuminate our lives. The Hebrew word tiPhERet shares the same root as the words Pe'ER (beauty) and PuRah (branches). In the array of the Sefirot we find Tiferet in the C column, branching out to the right and left sides, receiving from the upper Sefirot and transferring their bounty to the lower levels. This, in a sense, is the true beauty of Tiferet, which is able to unite and harmonize different energies and channel them in a manner that brings beneficence to all.

As a symbol of truth and unity, Tiferet also represents peace. We see this on a human scale when families or groups manage to live at peace with each other despite their differences. It is also evident on a Divine scale as God, Who is One, is at the same time the Ultimate Truth, the Ultimate Unity and the Ultimate Giver of Peace. Thus Tiferet manifests the peace that results from unity despite divergent approaches.* Tiferet also corresponds to Torah study. Like Tiferet, the Torah has many “branches.” Starting with a single verse or phrase from Scripture, the commentators cull references from other parts of Torah to develop and reveal different shades of meaning and even new ideas in the original verse. Those familiar with the study of Torah-both its Written and Oral components, including the Kabbalah-are aware of the Torah’s ability to guide a person from the first thought (i.e., teaching) towards a logical conclusion of the subject matter. What better way to learn how to grasp our own potential than by applying the analytical reasoning of God’s Law to practical use?

Naturally, everyone claims to have the truth and, interestingly enough, every person does, in one way or another. We all have our own individual element or perspective of what truth is. As for the real core of truth-well, that's a different story. Rebbe Nachman's teachings on the subjects of truth, harmony and peace are concrete pillars that will help us master these attributes.

Once Reb Noson's family put pressure on him to accept a job offer as a rabbi in a certain town. Reb Noson was reluctant to take the position because it might interfere with his learning sessions with Rebbe Nachman. When he discussed the pros and cons with the Rebbe, the latter asked him, "Who else should be the rabbi? One who doesn't know the answers?"

Reb Noson was taken aback. "Rebbe! Is that the truth? Should I take the job?"

Rebbe Nachman replied, "Yes. That's the truth?"

Hearing the inflection in the Rebbe's voice, Reb Noson persisted, "But Rebbe, is that the emeser emes (the real truth)?"

Rebbe Nachman then answered, "No! The real truth is for you not to accept that position." (In this case, it would have hindered Reb Noson's spiritual growth.)

May we perceive truth in different ways, with a truly wise judge to help us to recognize, accept and even bridge the vast differences between us so that we can live in harmony! This is the manifestation of Tiferet.

To be continued...

*Tiferet is sometimes called Rachamim (Mercy) and sometimes Mishpat (fair and proper Judgment). Tiferet is therefore Merciful Judgment-judgment tempered with mercy. The function of a judge in a dispute is to adjudicate between contending parties and help them arrive at a peaceful settlement.

Although we as individuals

Taken from Hidden Treasures, by Chaim Kramer
http://breslov.org//bookstore/explorations/the-exchanged-children-an-allegorical-reading/prod_61.html

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