

THERE MUST BE AN ANOCHI IN HERE SOMEWHERE!

by Rabbi Label Lam

See I place before you today blessing and curse. The blessing that you listen to the commandments of HASHEM your G-d that I command you today, and the curse if you do not listen to the commandments of HASHEM your G-d and you turn away from the path that I command you today to go after other gods that you did not know. (Devarim 11:26-2)

Here are the keys to the game of life in these first few words! "See!" We are told to see! Ok! See what? See that "I"- Anochi/HASHEM is placing before you a world of choices/challenges. HASHEM is placing in the present tense. It's not a "still life" picture but an active river of real life and specially designed tests flowing your way! If we can see the Anochi-HASHEM behind and within every scene then we can begin to see what can be seen.

Here's a scenario I heard about from a very clever individual: Imagine that you are sitting in a reception area in a fancy office on the 77th floor of the Empire State Building. Suddenly the elevator opens and a gentleman with a disheveled appearance walks over to the window which he throws wide open. He backs up like he's readying himself to take a running leap and before he does so you are able to halt him temporarily.

You ask him, "Why are you about to do such a crazy and foolish thing?" He shows you a piece of paper with a list of 49 items that he begins to recite aloud; 1) Lost my job 2) Wife left me 3) Broke 4) Hungry 5) Dog died 6) Chronic incurable diseases 7) Homeless etc. That's just the beginning of the list and any single item would be enough to drive the average man over the top. He's got the worst situation you ever heard of or imagined. You're ready to agree with his morbid conclusion. What can you say to him?

Of course, you acknowledge his pain but you might challenge him with the following question: What if on top of all the 49 things there was also a 50th and that is that you were also completely blind? Today you tapped your way over, pressed the 77th floor button, before tapping your way to the window and as you are about to leap, lo and behold the lights go on and you are granted vision. You can see! Would you choose to jump at that moment?

For sure the fellow will say, "NO!" "Why not!?", You would have to challenge him. He would probably answer, "I'd go around and check it all out!" So then you tell him, "You aren't blind! You can see! Use those eyes to find goodness!"

A family had twin boys whose only resemblance to each other was their looks. They were opposite in every other way. One was an eternal optimist, and the other boy was a gloom pessimist. Just to see what would happen, on the boys' birthday their father packed the pessimist's room with lots of games and gadgets. The optimist's room he loaded with horse dung.

That night the father passed by the pessimist's room and found him sitting amid his new gifts with a sorrow face. "Why are you sad?" the father asked. "Because my friends will be jealous and I'll have to read all these instructions before I can do anything with this stuff. I'll constantly need batteries, and my toys will eventually get broken." answered the pessimist.

Passing the optimist twin's room, the father found him dancing for joy in the heaps of manure. "What are you so happy about?" he asked. To which his optimist replied, "There must to be a pony in here somewhere! Thanks for the gift Father!"

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