

The RYS Daily 6/24/07 Musar Enthusiasm VI

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 2, pages 35 -36.

In a special letter addressed to the people at large, R. Israel formulated his program in forceful and incisive language:

"in his imagination, man is free,' but fettered in his intellect. His imagination leads him astray along the path of his heart's desires, without him becoming at all fearful of the inevitable consequence (lit. "future") — the time when G-d will call him to account for all his deeds, when he will be severely chastised, without anyone else being held responsible for him. He alone will have to suffer the consequences of his sins. The person committing the transgression and receiving the punishment are one and the same. It is bad (lit. "bitter") — Let no one say: It is a sickness, and I must endure it.

"The sufferings of this world are quite insignificant as compared with the retribution for sins. The soul will abhor it; a day will seem a year. Woe to the imagination, that wicked enemy! It is in our hands, we have it in our power to rid ourselves of it, if we would bend a listening ear to the intellect, to apprehend the world of truth, to weigh the gain of a sin against the loss. Yet what shall we do? The imagination is [like] a stream in flood drowning the mind — unless we place it aboard ship, which is the excitement of the soul and the stormy arousal of the spirit."

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