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Adass Aish Kodesh



SNOWFLAKES THAT WON'T MELT

Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita

'Snowflake Generation' is a derogatory slang term that implies an inflated sense of uniqueness, an unwarranted sense of entitlement, or a sense of being overly-emotional, easily offended, and unable to deal with opposing opinions. This term is often used to express a feeling that our present generation is one that can't take adversity, nor is able to withstand pressure. How often do we step back and wonder how our young will ever perceive in overcoming the huge weight of today's challenges and remain steadfast in their

Yiddishkiet? The truth is we really are living thru unparalleled times that present us with difficulties never before experienced. It would not be absurd if we thought that under so much pressure we would start to melt.

However, it is specifically in these demanding days, that every small advance is of inestimable value. Even the smallest step towards holiness covers a great distance, and the humblest of mitzvos brings great light into the world.

The Tzaddikim of previous generations knew that our generation was coming, and they feared for it. The Baal Shem Hakodesh explained the double wording of the verse, "I shall surely hide My countenance on that day," (Devarim 31:18) to mean that even the fact that Hashem is hidden, will be hidden from us. The Baal Shem would say that he did not fear the concealment of Hashem's Presence as long as he still knew that Hashem was there. However, he sorely feared the times that would come, when even this knowledge would be lost.

In our times, vulgar pleasures and warped ideologies are hawked on every street corner, clouding our thoughts and numbing our hearts to the feelings of holiness that were once the heritage of every Jew. We now face the greatest challenge of all time, which even the Baal Shem Tov feared.

The Gemora states, "If the previous generations were like men, then we are like donkeys in comparison." (Shabbos 112b)

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The Biala Rebbe Shlita in his Sefer Mevaser Tov quotes the Sefer Bris Menucha in explaining that this referred to the times of the Gemora, in which each generation was progressively weaker of spirit than the generation that preceded it. However, these final generations, are greater than those of our predecessors, since we must overcome difficulties the likes of which the world has not known since the Great Flood and the Tower of Bavel.

Modern culture has been overrun with perverse attractions that distort the outlook of mankind, blinding us to Hashem's Presence.

As it was when the world was created, darkness must always precede light. The yetzer hara plays its final hand before the coming of the great light that will eradicate all evil from the world. Says the Biala Rebbe, 'The souls sent to battle against the strongest temptations the world has ever known, are surely the mightiest of spirit. We are not measured by our achievements in the service of Hashem, but by the difficulties we must endure to attain them. Although the spiritual accomplishments of our generation might seem paltry compared to those of our forefathers, we have much to be proud of since we serve Hashem despite the darkness that surrounds us. In this way we bring great comfort and consolation to the Shechinah.'

Parshas Matos begins with: "Moshe spoke to the tribal heads of Bnei Yisroel, telling them that this is the word that Hashem has commanded."

The Tiferes Shmuel of Alexander Zt"l explains this passage as meaning that Moshe Rabbenu taught the leaders of Klall Yisroel that they should teach the people that in whatever circumstance one finds themselves in they should stop and ask themselves, "is this the word that Hashem has commanded!"

Every step of the way is given us only because Hashem has deemed it worthy. In the mire that we find ourselves in, we often slip up because we lose sight of our constant connection to the Eibishter. We fall into a sort of auto pilot mode where we do things and thoughtlessly don't take notice of what the Will of Hashem is. The Rebbe is telling us that at every juncture in life one must ask, 'is this the Rotzon of Kaveyuchle the Eibishter?'

Yes, we live in dark times. We are exposed to the whiles of a yetzer horah determined to wreak havoc, in his last desperate attempt to bring us down. Hashem knows where we are, and sits with us in the golus awaiting the end of our pain.

Despite these difficult times, where the world is sliding into moral collapse, we try to hold on, asking ourselves what it is Hashem wants from us. Sure, we are all broken, and perhaps 'snowflake' is too little of a depiction. But we are Yidden, and we do still ask what it is Hashem Wills for us, and in this we take comfort and ready ourselves for our salvation. Call us Snowflakes, we are proud to undertake the challenges, we will never melt nor ever give in.

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