

Tefillah Tips

Let's Talk About Us

After a couple goes out for a reasonable amount of time; it is common for one of the two to say to the other, "Let's talk about us". The purpose of this discussion is to assess the relationship, both its strengths and challenges; as well as deciding *where do we take it from here?*

The holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkoth and Shmini Atzeret provide a Jew with enough synagogue contemplation-time to engage in this vital evaluation of his/her relationship with G-d, and have a *Let's talk about us* moment.

All year long we are running and planning, meeting and doing; and we may not consider our personal relationship with G-d. Even during the holidays we are meeting and greeting, hosting and visiting, and perhaps praying now and then, but we may not do the necessary soul searching that the holidays prescribe.

So how is your relationship with G-d? How well do you know Him? How well do you think He knows you? Do you know all of His names? Do you feel close to Him or distant? Is your relationship with him better now than it was last year or not? Why? Are you fulfilling your part of the relationship? Do you feel G-d is fulfilling His? And finally – what can and will you do this year to improve and fortify your relationship and enable it to grow?

You may be thinking – *but rabbi, how can I possibly get to know G-d better; he is invisible, omniscient and no matter how much I talk to Him, does not talk back!*

The answer is that we can get to know G-d better from His handiwork i.e. the Torah and the world. He has created for us. The last Mishnah in Tractate Makkot states, " G-d wanted to benefit and purify the Jewish people; He therefore provided them with a Torah and Mitzvoth..." We live in an age that Torah is more accessible and user friendly then it has ever been before. You can study in Hebrew, English, French or Russian.... You can get the Bible, Prophets, Mishnah, Talmud, Ethics, Rituals, Philosophy.....in the language of your choice in print, by phone, on the web, audio and visual recordings and on I Phone 24/6 - except for Shabbat. If we want to get to know G-d better, let's learn what He's all about through His teachings-The Torah.

Additionally, one can learn a lot about a builder by his buildings, an inventor by his inventions and a poet by his poetry. We can learn about G-d, our Creator, by studying the world He has created. G-d did not need to create the world in color. G-d did not have to create so many species of vegetation, animal life and fruit. The world is a veritable paradise of delight that

offers a myriad of visual, sensual and intellectual pleasures for us to pursue and enjoy. The more we recognize G-d's handiwork, the more we can understand Him and appreciate Him.

In my opinion, this is what Rosh Hashanah and the holidays are all about. The goal is to *Think About Us*, each one of us and our relationship with Hashem. We can contemplate and consider our relationship throughout the holidays during our silent meditations, our lively discussions at holiday meals and when the Shofar blast penetrates our hearts and inspires us towards improvement. Let's face it, we have all been going out with G-d for a long time. I think it's certainly time for all of us to look up to the heavens and say Let's Talk About Us.

Please accept our warmest wishes for a Good and sweet year filled with happiness, health and fulfillment.

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