

Cruelty, is it a Reality or a Perception

By Ariel Bar Tzadok

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“Hokhma and Binah permeate the entire world. Within each thing one can understand the mysteries of wisdom. Even every herb of the field reveals mysteries and secrets of the Torah... Once [I heard] a concealed matter in the sound of a horse's trot... All the works of this world are unifications, intimacies and the beautifications of the Divine Presence (Shekhina).” (Mekor Mayim Hayim, Toldot A)

There is a singularity underlying all of creation. I do not care what you call it. It is there whether or not one calls it anything, calls it God, or calls it nothing. The singularity guides all that is. It guides all that is, from what it was, to what it is, and from what it is, into what it will be.

We are all part of this great singularity, and whether we like it or not, or believe it or not, we too are all guided by a (metaphorical) higher hand.

While so many people believe in God, so many also embrace many misconceptions about what they believe to be true about God. Ask yourselves this. Is God kind or is God cruel? And before you answer this question, first ask this second question. Is nature, God's creation, kind or cruel? If you have any connection to reality, I am sure that you will find yourself agreeing that nature is indeed cruel, very cruel, in fact!

Nature, God's creation, is indeed very cruel. The cruelty within nature is obviously a part of its nature. God is the singularity that brought nature into being, thus God is the One who created nature's cruelty and put it into place. God is thus responsible for all the cruelty that we find in the natural world. This is not an image of God that those who proclaim faith in “Him” want to see, or acknowledge. But how can one deny the most basic and obvious of truths?

Let me be blunt. Life is cruel, nature is cruel, creation is cruel, and therefore, we must conclude that for some reason, maybe unknown to us, the Singularity that we call the Creator allows this cruelty. Although this is true, I do not know if we can conclude that the Singularity, the Creator itself (“Him”self) is cruel.

I believe that the concept of cruelty is a subjective one, and is actually only a perception that we ourselves perceive and interpret.

Essentially, I do not believe that God is cruel, but we can perceive “Him” to be. I do not believe that life is cruel, or that nature is cruel or that creation is cruel, but we can indeed perceive them to be. I do, however, believe that we mortal humans are so disconnected from the natural way in which the universe operates that we have skewered our views and have totally misunderstood, life, nature, creation and the Creator.

I also believe that unless we readjust our lives, our minds and our ways to that which is normal and natural, we will forever be in conflict with the greater universe. Unless we readjust then the greater universe, following natural law, will simply deal with wayward humanity as any organism deals with an infectious body.

The universe is permeated with the Presence, Way and Will of the Singularity, which we call God. When we simply pay attention to life, nature and the natural way, we can learn all that we need to know about God and the Way of Heaven. But instead of paying attention to what is real, we chose instead to pay attention to what we humans ourselves create, what we ourselves want to believe and what we ourselves want to do.

God created the Torah, we humans created religion. God created the universe, our planet, and the life hereon. Still, we humans decide that we know better. We revel in our denial of both creation and Creator. We pervert the natural way, all the while calling our perversions, progress. We give our ideas fancy names, most ending with an “ism” of some sort. And we remain totally blind to how we are all living inside the fantasies of our minds, instead of within the realities of the world around us.

We are totally oblivious to the pain and harm we cause our mother Earth. We also deny Heaven as being real, and defy the higher hand to act in any way to impose itself against us. And thus, when life becomes cruel and nature acts as nature does, what do we do and what do we say? Animals act like animals and humans act like humans.

We will continue to perceive life as being cruel, as nature being cruel, and even seeing God as being cruel, for as long we continue to not see the world as it truly is. And we will not ever see the world as it really is for as long as we continue to gaze out upon the world through our individual “isms” that keep us isolated in our minds, and thus separated from each other, and separated from the natural, real world around us.

God's wisdom is in everything, even in the pattern of a horse's trot. Yet, only those with ears to hear will understand this. Those who can hear nature's call understand exactly what it is that I am saying. Yet, they do not need my words to tell them this. Those with ears to hear have heard these things directly from nature itself for as long as they have been listening.

If you want to face the future with fear and apprehension, then this is a personal choice. The blind will not see, and the deaf will not hear. Now hear this!! The blind will not learn to see by reading from a book. The deaf will not learn to hear by listening to a lecture or a lecturer. It is time to close the book and leave the classroom. It is time to return to nature, and to listen carefully to the horse's trot, the voice of the wind blowing through the trees, and to learn to see the way and movement of the natural world.

Living in the artificial world will keep one handicapped. Living in the artificial world will leave one unprepared to face nature and life as they pass from one phase to another. Those who remain rigid and firm will eventually topple and fall as do mighty trees before the even mightier winds of hurricane force. This is the way of things. Life requires movement, nature demands change. Those who do not move and do not change will soon run out of life as nature leaves them behind.

Life is indeed cruel to those who do not know how to face it. Nature is cruel to all who would defy it or deny it. God can be cruel to those who seek to violate the Natural Way (Torah) that "He" has made. Cruelty does exist. It is the byproduct of an unnatural life. Wisdom dissolves cruelty. Wisdom enlightens the eyes and understanding gives ear to hear. The Ways of Heaven are often mysterious. To many they may indeed seem cruel, but to the wise, there is wisdom everywhere, even in that which appears to be cruel.

This is how I know that God is not cruel. I hear and see the ebb and flow of Torah in nature. Can you say the same?