

An Important Mystical Message To My Readers

by Ariel Bar Tzadok

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From time to time, I receive e-mails requesting of me to address mystical topics and to speak from the classical mystical texts of Jewish literature. Sometimes, I email back and ask, why these topics in particular are of interest to the reader. The answers I receive in return are usually all of a kind and never cease to amaze me. I am told that the mystical literature is the only true source of knowledge, that they alone reveal secrets and the future and that they contain, what I call, the “wow” factor.

Readers really think that classical mystical literature is awesome and inspiring. OK, I get it, readers like to be “inspired.” Yet, just what does such “inspiration” lead to? Does it lead to one rising up and becoming a better human being? Does it inspire one to develop one's character and to lead a more honest and moral life? Or, on the other hand, is one's definition of betterment limited to one becoming more ethnic, elitist and separatist? If this later is the case, then I guess the message of mystical literature has become completely lost!

It is one thing to read the classical mystical literature, it is quite another to understand it and implement its message properly. I find that many readers enjoy, and even crave the literature's awesome form and mystical style, but very few are willing to extract from its metaphor and imagery the underlying message that permeates it all. In other words, people are “buying the book, because they like the cover, but are rarely opening the book to read it.” They like a pretty book on their shelves. It makes them look good. But they rarely open the book and actually learn its contents, and thereby transforming themselves. No, I found the vast majority are into the “show” and not the “content.” They want to look pretty, not be pretty.

I have been aware of this sorry state of affairs for quite some time. I have often spoken to condemn what I call “entertainment religion.” I do not believe that religious or mystical teachings are meant to entertain, I believe that they are meant to transform. Sometimes, transformational literature can be entertaining, but most times, it is not. Transformational literature is meant to be challenging. It is meant to be confrontational. Transformational literature is designed to confront you where you are at and challenge you why you are there and not somewhere better!

Alas, this is where the problem lies. Most people today are lazy and compliant. No one really wants to think independently anymore. It's usually too much work. And why bother to work, if and when one does not have to? So, if classical mystical literature does not

challenge one to “move one's butt,” but instead entertains and inspires one to dream about mystery and the mystical, then, in the eyes of the majority, that is all good, because that is what they want. They want to be entertained in their laziness. The majority does not want to move, does not want to be told to move, and simply does not want to have to think more than is minimally necessary.

Well, I have found a successful way to address this lethargy and laziness. I turn to all the classical, mystical literature and I extract from it its vital essence, and its true message, and I place it in essays, lectures and classes, in more simplistic and even poetic forms. In others words, I take the “meat and potatoes” and “mash them down” so that the lazy and the spiritually sick can “suck them in through a straw.” In this way, the people get their nutrition, all the while that they are either too lazy or too weak to “feed themselves” properly.

Everything that I write is based upon classical mystical sources. Everything I write is focused on teaching holiness and righteousness and to get my readers back in touch with God, personally and directly. I have no time or room for nonsense. I am not interested in distracting my readers with mystical mumbo-jumbo, make-believe stories about Rabbis and other unrealistic, misguiding lessons.

Life is not about being fake. Life is not about fantasy. Life is not about make-believe. Life is about being real. Life is about harsh realities. Life is about hard work and strenuous effort. This, more than anything else, sums up the the message of the entire genre of classical mystical literature. Although such works are couched in metaphor and imagery, it is this message that is the moral of all these stories and lessons combined.

The more mystically-minded one becomes the more dangerously removed one becomes from reality. Mysticism enables one to create and dream about a fantasy world. This by itself is not that bad. But, what happens is that the mystically-minded often feel motivated to become politically active, either in movements or as individuals. Often, these mystically-minded individuals are so enraptured in their fantasies, and so far removed from actual reality, that they will move forward with activities that can significantly destabilize the real world and create havoc, destruction and death. The mystically-minded know this and consider this destruction necessary because it is part of the apocalypse. They firmly believe that they can light the fire and that mystically and miraculously God will intervene and put out the fires that these deluded individuals have started.

This is a present danger. Certain religious groups around the world are doing this right now. They want to attack the West and are certain that the fire they start will be put out by the god of their religion. There are similar type groups elsewhere in the West who want to create religious wars in Israel and even in the United States. Everyone is acting for God, yet no one seems to be asking God what He wants, rather they are telling God what He needs.

Mysticism creates these types of illusions of grandeur. In the past, such a group of mystically-minded zealots provoked a war between Rome and Judea. They were certain God was on their side and that He would intervene to destroy the hated enemy. They thought that they had all the scriptures on their side to prove themselves right. Yet, as

history has clearly shown, these zealots were wrong, dead wrong. Their fantasy illusions provoked and created a holocaust. Over a million died because of their misguided mysticism.

As it was then, so does this exist again today. This is why mysticism misunderstood is a dangerous thing. This is why I believe it is so vital to assure that classical mystical literature be understood properly and correctly, without the fanaticism and zealotry. Zealotry is supposed to be focused on internal self-transformation, not violent social upheaval. Mysticism is about withdrawing from the world, not engaging it head-on.

So, for those of you who want to learn mysticism, my message to you is to get real! There is nothing mystical about mysticism. If you want to really learn, understand and apply mysticism properly and correctly, then keep reading KosherTorah.com. I will make sure that what I write, and you read, will be the best of classical mystical literature made simple and clear.

My job is to make the Biblical, prophetic path to God as accessible as possible to as many who wish to walk it right and proper, even as it was in Biblical days. I will do my best never to let you down.