

GOOD DAYS AND BAD DAYS

<p>The very knowledge of the fact that it is natural to have good days and bad days has the power to assuage a lot of despair and sadness</p>	<p>עצם הידיעה על העובדה כי זה טבעי יש ימים טובים וימים רעים יש את הכוח לשפץ הרבה ייאוש ועצב</p>
<p><i>Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe Alei Shur, Vol. I pg. 35</i></p>	

How can knowing that it is "natural to have good days and bad days" have the "the power to assuage a lot of despair and sadness?"

The Exodus from Egypt occurs in every human being, in every era, in every year, and in every day.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

1. How can the enslavement and exodus from Egypt be seen as a metaphor for each of us?
2. 2. Have they been times when you felt as if you were enslaved or entrapped in your own Egypt? What did you do to advance your "exodus" from this situation?
3. 3. Have there been times when you have observed a friend, colleague or family members in their own "Egypt"? Were you able to play a role in their exodus from this situation?
4. 4. The root "Mitzraim", Egypt in Hebrew is "tzar", meaning "narrow". How does viewing "Egypt" as that "narrow place" impact your thinking about Egypt as a personal place emotional or psychological place for each of us?

The whole world is a very narrow bridge; the important thing is not to be afraid.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav*

1. What do you feel the term "a narrow bridge" refers to?
2. Why can a person's life seem to be a "narrow bridge"?
3. Have there been times in your life or in the lives of those you know when it seemed that you or they were traversing a "narrow bridge"?
4. Other than "not being afraid, what are some courses of action you can take when traversing a narrow bridge in your life?

(2) I the LORD am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage:	אֲנִכִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבְּיַת עֲבָדַיִם:
Exodus 20:2	

How can a belief in and spirituality help us leave places of emotional bondage or the enslavement of substance abuse?

(3) You shall have no other gods besides Me.	לֹא יִהְיֶה-לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עִלַּיִנִּי:
Exodus 20:3	

In our society and in our times, what other "gods" might entice each of us?

All new beginnings require that you unlock a new door.

- Rabbi Nachman of Breslov

1. What is nature of the door or doors that stand between you and a new beginning for you?
2. What will it take to unlock it? What can you do to open it?
3. What do you believe is on the other side?

Pirkei Avot Ch 1:6

Make for yourself a Rav (a teacher); acquire for yourself a friend, and judge every person favorably.

1. Look at each of the three parts of this saying and think about how it can be of value when we are facing difficult times.
2. Who are the teachers and friends you can reach out to when you are facing difficult times?
3. How can each part of this saying relate to the times when we are in a position to support friends or family members who are facing difficult times?(Keep in mind that, in Hebrew, the term "Rav" can mean a teacher but it also refers to a rabbi and a spiritual advisor- someone you turn to for advice and guidance.)
4. Especially in the context of emotional and substance abuse challenges, why is it sometimes so difficult but also so important that we "judge every person favorably?"

It is written: "God is my refuge and my strength, a very present help in time of trouble" (Psalm 46:1). Help us to feel that help. Let Your presence be a light within to dispel the darkness. Let Your nearness, Your silent speech within the heart, be a comfort to us.

We pray for the courage to carry on in the face of disappointment, for the wisdom to learn from adversity, for the strength to build a new and better life. Your spirit can transform affliction into

salvation; enlighten us, therefore, that we may look to the dawn of a new day with confidence and trust. May hope abide beyond the moment's loss. For You, O God of hope, are our sustaining power, even when we have fallen. Keep us from self-recrimination. Give us peace of mind and contentment of spirit. Amen.

We come to you, O God, for Your gracious help. You dwell within our hearts, You feel our distress, You know our pain and how burdened we are. Give us strength to bear our burdens with courage, wisdom, and grace. Help us to be true to our better selves, to discern our real work in life, and to do it with all our might. When we struggle within our own hearts, stay by our side. Then we shall be able to say with Your prophet (Isaiah 40:31): But those who hold fast to the Eternal shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

May our work, and the ties that bind us to family and friends, make life rich in meaning for us, so that each day we live may be yet another step leading us nearer to You. Amen. *(Adapted from On the Doorposts of Your House, CCAR)*

Source: Blue Dove Foundation Mental Health Toolkit Prototype.