

When we fully accept things as they are, we automatically move out of the ego and come to experience the freedom of awareness first hand. In that freedom, we also become unified within ourselves; our awareness accepts everything within our field of experience. When we totally accept the resistance within ourselves, it eventually melts away. This is how the paradox works: resisting the resistance of ego just perpetuates the resistance, and creates more ego. Total acceptance of your resistance, however, ultimately dissolves resistance and ego disappears.

There is a traditional prayer formula that is said before performing many different prayers and ritual acts. In English, it means: “For the sake of the unification between the Holy Blessed One and the Presence, to unify the Name *Yod Hay* with *Vav Hay* in perfect unity...” In Kabbalah, the two halves of the Name are pictured as the “feminine” and “masculine” aspects of God. So the “unification of the Name” is an image of two partners coming back into right relationship, of being *separate* in order to *become one*. In other words, it is an image of waking up. We can now see why the first of the Ten Commandments says that “God” brought us out of Egypt: The Name of God is a map of consciousness, pointing the way toward *freedom* of awareness, on one hand, and the *unity* of all levels of your being, on the other. This also sheds light on a traditional notion that this first commandment is the command to believe in God. When we understand that “God” means the possibility of liberation, then “belief in God” really means being open to this possibility. It means acknowledging that freedom and unity are possible, in this moment.

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Let’s look again at the *midot*- the spiritual qualities- of the baby in the road example. There, we found the qualities of immediacy, unity between oneself and reality, selfless service, presence and gratitude. In fact, all of these are potentially present within the initial intention to wake up: first, there is immediacy- waking up does not take any time; it is something you do now. The intention and the doing are not separate. Second, it creates inner unity. When the egoic energies are dominant, there is inner conflict. Your image of the way things *are* and your opinion of how they *should be* are in conflict, and your awareness is trapped in that conflict. When you wake up, you simply accept everything that is happening within yourself, without judgment. With practice, this open acceptance dissolves all inner conflict, and you can act with clarity. Third, waking up is not only good for you; it is always good for everyone else, because it means you are no longer speaking and acting from unconscious egoic energies; you are not acting from craving or arrogance and so on. Rather, you are free to be your best self- to be of service in each situation as it is. Fourth, you are “present”- which means that you are not carried away by your mind into distracting thoughts. You can fully engage with whatever is going on. Lastly, there is a natural sense of gratitude. When you experience for yourself

the profound relief of being free, rather than be burdened with the ego energies of the “four elements”, there can be a deep sense of gratitude that arises naturally within the heart.

We can now begin to understand Antiginous’ statement- “Don’t be like the servant who serves the master to receive a reward”. When we become conscious, we are not only serving ourselves. In fact, we are serving much more than those around us as well. *We are actually participating in making the universe itself more conscious.* Think about it- *you* are one of the ways that the universe can become conscious. When we free ourselves from ego and act with awareness, we actually participate in the evolution of consciousness on this planet. This is why the metaphor of “unifying the Name” is used; becoming conscious is actually a service to Being Itself; it is a service of God. The “master” in the above quote, of course, is God- that is, the basis of all being. This service must be done for it’s own sake, and not to receive some future reward, because it *is* its own reward. As long as the mind is fixated on some future reward, you cannot truly wake up; you are still caught in the web of the mind and heart that are looking toward the future for some fulfillment. Like Yitzhak in the parable, you are looking everywhere except the only place you can find it- under your own “stove”- beneath your own thoughts and feelings, within the silent field of awareness. It is here, in this place, in this moment, that the ultimate is found.

Questions

1. How does Kabbalah view the two halves of the Divine Name?
2. According to this text, what does “belief in God” mean?
3. Who is the master that Antiginous is talking about?