

Five Hundred To One! You Can't Beat That!

*Have you ever considered how much G-d loves you?
I mean like how much G-d really loves you?!!*

This afternoon while I was benching, I realized that I had become distracted by something lying on the table, and my concentration had wandered off. I felt disappointed with myself, "I really should be concentrating better," I thought.

Then I realized just how hard I am on myself when it comes to keeping mitzvos.

"I wonder if G-d is actually as strict about these things as I am?," I considered for a moment. Is my strictness on myself coming from a place of really knowing that G-d is so strict, or am I just taking another opportunity to project an already critical attitude of myself onto yet another target?

Here comes what I think for a lot of us will be a very pleasant surprise.

Have you ever noticed how many times you are critical of yourself (or others) compared to how many times you have kind, encouraging or supportive words to say?

I remember reading a statistic quoted by Miriam Adahan, that parents tend to criticize their children 24 times for every time they give praise! How remarkable!

I guess it would sound something like- "don't touch, don't eat, don't look, don't breath, stop, go, close, open,....., yes, you can have another cookie,.....no, no, don't, you can't,..... (and so on)"

Wouldn't it be valuable if we could have some kind of understanding of just how strict Hashem really is with us compared to how kind, forgiving and loving He is?

The good news is that we read the answer to this question just last week in none other than the 10 Commandments! There G-d says "Who pays for sins till the third and fourth generation... Who acts with kindness for thousands of generations..."

Our commentaries make a very simple calculation. The minimum number for "thousands" (in the plural) is two thousand. If G-d's punishment ends after four generations but His love extends for two thousand generations- that means His attribute of love is five hundred times greater than His attribute of strictness! That is very good news!!

Try complimenting your spouse, kids (or especially yourself) 500 times for every word of criticism you give! (I know that's a very tall order!)

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Let's go back to my benching this afternoon. Chances are, even while my mind was wondering, G-d was still "thinking" 500 good thoughts about me; "well done for benching, I love hearing your voice, you are so precious to Me, well done for trying, I know you can do it, I'm always here for you", praise, joy, nachas, pleasure, pride, "happiness", satisfaction, hope, believing in me, and so on, as opposed to the one thought of "you should be concentrating better, bad, bad, bad!"

Wouldn't it make such a difference in our lives if our minds could be filled with all these positive thoughts rather than negative ones that are taking up all the space!

Five hundred to one could take us our entire lifetime (and still more) to achieve. Let's hope we can at least try to be realistic and shoot for 5 words of love and praise for every one of criticism.

I believe our lives would be unbelievably enriched as a result, don't you?

Positiviews

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