



illness, or whose children have died, the way Iyov's friends spoke to him: "Surely your fear was your foolishness, your hope and the sincerity of your ways" (Iyov 4:6). And we can add that the Rishonim on this Gemara write that the problem is not only causing distress to another person but also arrogance in thinking that we can know the ways of Hashem.

It is correct that we must repent over any distress which befalls us, as the Rambam writes at the beginning of Hilchot Ta'anit. But what does this mean? That each person should be awakened to repent for his sins, and each community should be awakened to repent for its sins - not that one person should search for the transgressions of another and blame him. As is known, the wording of the Vidui is: We have sinned, we have betrayed, we have stolen, and not: you have sinned, you have betrayed, you have stolen or: he has sinned, he has betrayed, he has stolen.

When we are in distress, Hashem is speaking to us, but in order to understand what He is saying we need prophecy or, at the very least, Ruach Ha-Kodesh (as in the case of the Arizal).

This reminds me of the reciprocal blame that occurred following the horrors of the Holocaust: Some said it happened on account of Zionism, others said it was because there was not Zionism. And still others blamed it on the Enlightenment. Each group's explanation came from its own biased outlook, with no regard for the idea: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts and My ways are not your ways" (Yeshayahu 55:8).

At the same time, we must not be naïve and think that the Arabs have reached the level of being filled with the knowledge of Hashem. Among them are many murderers, dregs of humanity. We must not forget that there are 350 million Arab enemies surrounding us, who are supported by a billion Muslims, another billion Christians, and another a few million Arabs in our Land. In such a situation, it is impossible - to our great distress - to be 100% protected. But we must remember that according to a report of the WHO, World Health Organization, 8 out of 100,000 Israeli citizens are murdered each year. That's

compared with 15 out of 100,000 citizens of France, and 25 out of 100,000 Americans. We must thank Hashem, and his loyal agents - Tzahal, the police, the Mossad, the Shabak and the rest of the security establishment - day and night for the peace and quiet we merit in our Land. Kol Ha-Kavod to Tzahal!

And from here to another spiritual question: Can individuals with Ruach Ha-Kodesh reveal where the kidnapped teens are being held? If so, they have not revealed it to us thus far. Although one Rabbi used the "Goral Ha-Gra" (the "lottery of the Vilna Gaon", which involves using a particular format of the Chumash and flipping the pages back and forth until eventually a particular verse is chosen, which provides answers to questions), it is known that the Goral Ha-Gra is not magic. The book "Ha-Gaon Ha-Chasid Mi-Vilna" of Rav Bezalel Landua and also "Ha-Gaon" Rav Dov Eliach stated that not every Rabbi can receive an answer by using the Goral Ha-Gra. Also in our time, when a Jew approached Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski and suggested that he use the Goral Ha-Gra, Ha-Rav Kanievski said: In order to do so one needs Ruach Ha-Kodesh, go the Rosh Yeshiva". And when he turned to Ha-Rav Aharon Yehudah Leib Steinman, he responded: Do I possess Ruach Ha-Kodesh?! And he added: "And if so why are there Agunot? We could use the Goral Ha-Gra to find the missing husbands...".

In sum: We need to increase prayer, we need to increase repentance i.e. each for his own transgressions and not attacking others, we need to increase Tzedakah and chesed, and we need to increase strength and courage, especially in Tzahal and the police, as Hashem said three times to Yehoshua Bin Nun: Be strong and courageous, be strong and courageous, be strong and courageous (Yeshoshua, Chapter 1).

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