

The RYS Daily 6/28/07 Musar Enthusiasm X

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 2, pages 39-40.

There is another side to the coin as well. The same reasons that impel one to contemplate the retribution for transgressing the will of G-d also impel one to contemplate the descriptions of the reward in store for those who obey the will of G-d — and thereby instill a love of mitzvot. Descriptions of this state, as contrasted with those of punishment, will infuse joy and gladness in the human heart in the expectation of the spiritual destiny and inestimable pleasures to be enjoyed. They will induce the hope for eternal life in the human heart, encourage and comfort man in all circumstances, and broaden the horizons of his life. This hope will counteract the anxiety, "and the measure of good far exceeds the measure of punishment.

The fear of punishment and the love of reward, however, belong to a lower level. The Rabbis of the Talmud have remarked: "The plagues of the Pharisees (Perushim — "those avoiding sin") bring destruction to the world. What are the plagues of the Pharisees? — Avoiding sin out of love (of reward — Rashi) and out of fear (of punishment — Rashi) ." These remarks, however, were applicable to earlier generations. In the degenerate state of our generation, however, we have no better means. Would that we were to attain the level of those who observe the Torah out of this love of reward and fear of punishment.

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