All I Know Is That I Know Nothing

THE GAME OF THE THREE LIVES

We live three times. This is life number “2”: life after birth and before death. This is a life with a body already formed, and a soul in a process of formation. Life number “1” is the one we live in our mother’s womb, with a body in a process of formation. Life number “3” is the one we will access after this life. Death is the end of life “2” and although it means the termination of your body, it does not mean that you totally disappear. Death is seen by our Tora as a transition between two lives, as a night between two days.

The transition and the differences between life 2 and life 3 is not easy to understand. Why? Because it is not a matter of “knowing more” but of understanding why “we know so little.” The best way to grasp this last idea, which may sound absurd, is to examine life before this life, life “1”, as seriously as possible.

DIE OR TO BE BORN: WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

Let’s try to imagine what happens to a baby in the mother’s womb.

Let’s first think in terms of the knowledge a baby has during life “1” about life “2”.

For example: When a baby is born, does he or she know that he is born, or does he think that he is dying? If we could somehow talk with a 9-month-old baby and explain to her that in a short time she will leave her placenta, the baby will think that if she disconnects from the umbilical cord, she will die. Why? Because everything that sustains his life: oxygen, food, etc. is there, in the womb! And comes to him

through the umbilical cord, without which life, as the baby knows it, can’t be possible.

THE LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE

The baby in the womb has no idea that there is a world outside the womb. The entire universe known to him consists of the placenta. In his prenatal world there is no light, no colors, no flavors, no aromas, no sun, no sky, no water, no mom, no dad, no faces, no other people, no thoughts articulated with words.

The baby does not even know what his own world is really like, because he has never seen himself as he really “is”. That is, as seen from our perspective, as we see him in an ultrasound, or in those photos of babies with their fingers in their mouths.

After this very brief introduction to embryology, let’s apply what we just learned to the question: what can we know about life after this life? The answer? Very little. Because just like the baby, we too are limited by the physical reality around us.

THE MATERNAL WOMB AND THE EARTH’S WOMB

We live, as my mother z”l once told me, “in a dimension that resembles an invisible terrenal placenta”. And if we compare ourselves with the baby in the womb, the reality that awaits us in the world to come (which following this comparison is infinitely larger, more sophisticated and more significant than our reality) cannot be known from this life. Imagine, for example, that in the life to come there is no time. We can’t think of something outside the framework of time! Or imagine a reality in which language is not used and thoughts are not articulated with words but are rather processed thru a metaphysical “capacity” infinitely superior to verbal intelligence. How could we conceived such “mental” (?) capacity. But while we cannot know anything about the life to

come, once we are born (1 to 2 or 2 to 3), we finally fully understand the life that has just ended.

One more thought: in the same way that the previous life is perceived by the baby in the womb as the only life that exists, in this life there is no physical evidence that something will eventually continue after we “die”. On the contrary, physiology seems to indicate that everything must end with the death of our body. We cannot cross that limit because the next life takes place in a dimension absolutely unknown to us, inaccessible from this dimension and also “unimaginable.”

This last point, “unimaginable”, will be examined in a future email.

To be continued