Chesed and Kabbalah

Chesed, the attribute that encompasses grace, benevolence and compassion, is one of the Ten Sefirot of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.  It is the first “emotive” Sefira and relates to those feelings we have when we give and share. When we reach out to help someone in need, we draw upon our “Chesed Flow” that is at the heart of humanity’s desire to make a meaningful contribution to the world. Even when we don’t realize it consciously, each of us is motivated to work toward the betterment of the world because underlying all spiritual happiness is the quality of service. Additionally, the Kabbalists believe that when we do a mitzvah, we seemingly play a part in completing the unfinished act of Creation, and when we facilitate “Chesed Flow” we align ourselves with the heart of the universe.

The Kabbalists also believe, though, that while practicing Chesed is a good thing, we need to balance a giving nature with wise self-restraint. This is the Sefira of Gevurah, with which Chesed is coupled in the “Tree of Life”.  This shows that any act of Chesed is strongly connected to the power of moral choice. Humans have been given the gift of consciousness and we have a duty to decide what best to do with it.

Sources: A Woman’s Kabbalah by Vivianne Crowley

                Practical Kabbalah by Rabbi Laibl Wolf.

Questions:

* What makes your life meaningful?
* In what ways do you work toward the betterment of the world?
* How do we make our Sisterhoods meaningful and relevant in today’s society?
* How might our Sisterhoods serve our communities to do mitzvot that make a difference?

Diana Sirkin

NxNW Region

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