

"seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by happygrowth - 19 Apr 2010 22:26

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i am a young youth counsellor and i am close to a lot of frum and secular teens.

i know some secular kids, that were becoming very passionate about yiddishkeit and had even started keeping shabbos.

however after they saw the film "the seal of truth" they told me that they don't want a relationship with a god that tortures people for masturbating and not keeping shabbos, even if they were born secular! "the guy in the film does not even mention being judged for the way he treated people yet he was publicly humiliated for masturbating!"

What worries me the most and what really compelled me to post this is that i have had 2 frum kids cry to me, with terrible guilt and fear in their eyes after watching that movie, they both told me they had not slept properly in weeks. the one kid sounded suicidal so i sent him for help as i am not qualified.

the thing is, before they watched the film they were doing well.

I am begging anyone who can stop this to do something, **must we wait for the first child to kill himself G-d forbid?** the movie clearly is not true if this even has to be debated it is tragic. one is judged on a personal level for what you were able to do. the film gives the christian impression that you will burn in hell even if you never hear of the torah.

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 23 Apr 2010 19:39

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I recall hearing, (No, I don't usually learn this type of stuff), an explanation about Gehinom/Gan Eden as follows. [I think it may be from the Rambam.]

Olam Habba is all about sitting and enjoying the pleasure of closeness to the Shechina. Tzadikim LOVE it. They will derive the ultimate pleasure from that. Ever been to a Godol Hador and felt the warmth of his attention on you? Imagine that he sits and learns b'chavrusa with you. Or he goes with you on a walk in a beautiful park with his arm tenderly around your shoulders, giving you his undivided attention.

Now imagine how you feel while on that walk if you know that you have betrayed that great

person. You know that a few minutes ago you gave the authorization to your employees to do great harm to him, along with public humiliation. How guilty would you feel? How ashamed would you feel? Would you feel less bad if you didn't know at the time that he is such a nice man? Wouldn't you want to bury yourself in the nearest hole out of sheer embarrassment? - But there is a big difference if the harm you caused was done intentionally or not!

Think of how Yosef Hatzadik's brothers must have felt when Yosef revealed himself to them. Did he rebuke them? Did he punish them? NO! He just showed them how devoted he was to them even though they weren't very nice to him.

Rav Acha bar Bardella says <sup>(Midrash)</sup> When Hakodosh Boruch Hu will hold each person accountable based on what he was capable of, how much greater will be his shame!!!!!!!!! The knowledge that we betrayed GOD will be so uncomfortable, so painful, that in itself is enough heavenly retribution.

[Just seeing all the souls created by our misdeeds come forward and identify themselves as our sons, our children, will cause us enormous shame! When someone gives birth to a child, it is his child, whether he wanted it or not. It does not matter whether his intent was to have a baby now or not. If someone did an aveira without knowing that it is not allowed, will the aveira become undone?]

When thinking with this perspective, is it a contradiction to our having a loving GOD? HE loves us no matter what we may have done against him. WE feel shame that has no limit, the pain that a Rasha feels in Gehinnom is what he is causing to himself! (In the World of Truth there is no such thing as giving excuses!)

**BUT**, we mustn't forget that Hashem, in his infinite mercy, did install a delete button! As long as we are still breathing we can still rectify EVERYTHING that we may have done wrong! The 'delete button' is otherwise known as Teshuva. True teshuvah is not very complicated. It has three steps. 1) Leaving the sins behind. stopping to do that. - The mere act of joining GYE puts

us into that category. 2) Undertaking that in the future we will not do the same again. - The mere act of joining GYE puts us into that category. 3) Confession, verbally confessing to Hashem that we sinned against him. - We all do that on Yom Kippor (at least!). WE ARE BAALEI TESHUVAH!!!! As long as we continue along the path that we are on, we have nothing to fear from Gehinom!

I am looking forward to meeting you all, face to face finally, in Gan eden; in the special section reserved for GUARD YOUR EYES members. We will all be sitting there behind our leader Rabeinu R' Guard Shlita himself!!!

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"  
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 23 Apr 2010 19:40

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[strugglingandstrivngBT wrote on 23 Apr 2010 14:11:](#)

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Yes, there is a systemic problem with society that the issue is not addressed, no sparking fear in young children will not help this issue. We need to teach people to love Hashem, then the sin will stop naturally.

This is an understatement!!!! :D

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"  
Posted by southafricanJEW - 24 Apr 2010 18:40

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All I can say is that over the years the amount of paralyzing guilt, pain and anguish that this issue has caused me is terrible.

I have wasted precious time worrying about these things, I have realized that it has prevented me from fulfilling so much of my potential with regard to everything else in life, I could have done so much more chesed, if I never spend sleepless nights lying in bed worrying about whether I was going to burn in hell.

as dov said

The guilt and the ga'avah that causes it are both so toxic that letting go of them is often the only way to succeed at actually stopping. And I do believe that Hashem wants me to be better - not smarter. I will always be a work in progress

I am sick and tired of morally condemning myself every time I masturbate.

I don't think Hashem wants me to look at my self as a child killer, even an "Ones child killer". This is a terrible poison that Thank G-d I realized would kill me at the end.

All I can do is try my best under the circumstances, (even if that means taking things slowly in steps)

I am not responsible for anything else and don't need to feel any sense of guilt or shame.

We were specifically given the Torah because we have earthly drives, I refuse to be ashamed of the fact that I am a human being with human urges,

Sexuality is positive, which was made for a loving intimate relationship with ones wife, I am not yet married and I know that Hashem understands my drives, and does not expect me to do more then I am able to, and when I find the right person to marry please G-d I will be as honest and open as I possibly can from the very beginning.

I don't think anyone has ever gained long term success from things like "the seal of truth"

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by Levi613 - 25 Apr 2010 02:06

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BS"D

To whomever it may concern,

I was shocked to read certain comments. How can you possibly take the teachings of Chazal lightly? If Chazal say that it is the worst aveiroh, then we should take their word for it!

Through excessive scaring another person is not right and shouldn't be done. But the Chait is very serious and not to be underestimated. Why do you think Gedolei Hador Shlitah are so busy to fight the internet?

To say that certain comments of Chazal are nonsense are mamesh akin to Apikorus. Please be careful.

Strange that an editor shouldn't step in here or at least take contact with people who write things like this and the like.

Cheerio

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"  
Posted by nederman - 25 Apr 2010 03:31

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[southafricanJEW wrote on 24 Apr 2010 18:40:](#)

I am sick and tired of morally condemning myself every time I masturbate.

You do not morally condemn yourself. The Torah condemns you.

The reason you are sick and tired is because you are convinced that asking a person not to sin

like that, especially in today's world, is just unreasonable. It's just impossible for you \_not\_ to sin from time to time. I think if this idea were true then you would be right. But fortunately for you it is not true.

But you are right in one thing. You do not have choice a once you are aroused. What about before you get aroused? At that time you do have a choice.

And rather than Hashem being unreasonable, it can be seen that He has already provided the way out: enter the nazir. The nazir is a drunkard. He makes a vow not to drink wine, as well as other fences that come with it, and some fences added by Chazal (not to walk into a vineyard.) The point of this is that since he is chaiav if he doesn't keep the neder, he also has divine help. Now, it's an interesting question why the nazir makes a neder for thirty days. The reason may be that while he has the neder, his desire for wine skyrockets. That's right: the neder increases his desire - he has a brand new yetzer ha-ra to violate the neder. However the neder also makes it possible for him to beat his yetzer ha-ra every time. The big impact of the nezirus on his future life is that while he is a nazir he actually does not drink wine, so he has a chance to shake the physical addiction. And a person can be a nazir several times in a row, or even a lifetime nazir. After the nezirus, he continues to keep away from wine, but a neder is no longer necessary.

Now, it can be seen that there is nothing about the mechanics of a nazir that won't work for other addictions. The key tool is the neder, which keeps one far from the addictive action, and gives the brain an opportunity to develop new behaviors. So this method can be applied to sex addiction. Arousal comes from looking, thinking, feeling etc. An averah leads to another averah. A small arousal weakens the resolve to resist the yetzer ha-ra, and the arousal increases more and more, until one no longer has bechirah. However teshuva for the initial thought stops the whole thing in its tracks, and a neder guarantees that the person will remember to do teshuva, and to do it asap. One says "I am sorry I took a second look at that woman."

So Hashem has a very accessible tool for anyone to shake addiction, once the person understands that it can work and he is convinced that his addiction is bad for him, which is true both in this life and in the next one. The gemara says that the portion of the nazir is right next to the portion of the sotah because "one who sees the sotah in her disgrace, let him deny himself wine." What is happening here? This person is a functioning alcoholic. He knows it's bad for him, and he has had some real problems from it so he is anxious about it, but he believes it's hopeless or he just lacks the resolve to make it his number one priority. When he sees the sotah destroyed because of adultery, which came from that social drinking, he makes a direct connection between the drinking and the evil that it ultimately causes. He makes a neder not to get close to wine, he strikes when the iron is hot.

The sex addict can also make that connection. Sex addiction has many negative consequences, but to me the most frightful one is that the sex addict cannot avoid but view women as "sex people." Women, on the other hand, view themselves as people who carry around an attractive appearance. This is almost certain to cause divorce, which really messes up somebody's life. So a person doesn't even have to have yiras Shamaym to convince himself to turn off this addiction.

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by southafricanJEW - 25 Apr 2010 05:39

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Dear 30years,

let me explain myself at the risk of being removed,

A rapist or child molester can be morally condemned; some one that masturbates has not done anything to deserve moral condemnation.(this is so if one is not married or if one is honest with ones wife)

Addictive masturbation is a psychological and spiritual problem.

Natural masturbation is a spiritual problem.

When some one has a problem like masturbation, I believe Hashem does not morally condemn I believe Hashem has mercy and understanding.

When some one G-d forbid molests a child, I believe that while Hashem has mercy the person must be morally condemned, and that Hashem's primary concern is the safety of children.

The reason why I make this obvious observation is because I think that for a long time I, in a certain respect regarded myself as a murderer because I took chazal's statements regarding masturbation literally. This brings me to my next point:

[Levi613 wrote on 25 Apr 2010 02:06:](#)

BS"D

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Strange that an editor shouldn't step in here or at least take contact with people who write things like this and the like.

Cheerio

I think your main concern is with regards to "rage atm's" explanation that masturbation, may not actually be on the same level as murdering a little child.

I also feel it is inappropriate to say that his statements are akin to apikorus, my yetzer horah used to (and sometime still does) tell me that I am nothing more that an apikoras, do you know how many painful nights I have had crying to Hashem worried that I may be an apikoras? I don't think that's very healthy.

And I think the problem lies somewhere in the fact that we have a messed up image of Hashem. Hashem is our loving father Not "Godzilla" and while we have to try our best to strive to eventually overcome masturbation in the long term, I don't believe Hashem "morally condemns us" (maybe I am understanding the term moral condemnation differently to you?)

I hope I expressed what I meant clearly and that people on this forum don't regard me as a perverted apikoras. :'(

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by silentbattle - 25 Apr 2010 07:29

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First of all, relax - one thing's for certain, and that is that we're all perverts here, trying to get better, so no one's judging you for that!

Second of all, let's taking the "murdering babies" out of the equation, please. It makes things far more emotional. The question is whether it's something that's damaging to the fabric of reality (something I would say we all agree is bad, but is a little more intangible, so less emotional). I think that Levi613's issue is not with the specifics, but rather with the fact that chazal (in more than just one or two places) make it very clear that this sin is above and beyond a normal aveirah. And again, it's something which is carried into halacha, making it clear that on a practical level, we agree with and hold like those sources in our everyday lives.

When you use the term "moral condemnation," I'm not sure what you mean. Perhaps you can elaborate? Do you mean that this is a person who no one should talk to? I think we all agree that's not the case here. Do you mean that this person isn't causing damage to the fabric of reality by his actions (whether or not he's in complete control of them)? Or that we shouldn't blame him even though he is, because he has no choice whatsoever in the matter? Or something else entirely? Thank you for any clarification you can offer.

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by Levi613 - 25 Apr 2010 08:50

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BS"D

Dear friends,

I like to react to this that you wrote:

"do you know how many painful nights I have had crying to Hashem worried that I may be an apikoras?"

Rachmana litzlan. I never meant it that way. I just had the feeling that respect for chazal was overly ignored. For their words are the words of the Living G-d.

Coming to speak about people who are indeed addicted to P\*\*n and masturbation like me, myself (I am fighting it very hard, but not yet there and it will probably take a while before I can

get out of the mud). That what you mentioned about crying and being afraid to be an apikorus, I know that feeling very well.

I spoke with quite a lot of people. (besides I don't advocate to lay out all your cards to everybody) From Hadracha teachers to one particular Godol B'Yisroel ZT"L who spoke English. I explained him my background (being a Ger Tzedek and raised in a most permissive society) he said to me that for sure there is a Geder of Oines.

He asked me how many times was I oiver the fist year I had become a Yid, and the second and the third and so on. He said there was a decline in the amount of times I was oiver and he said that was a very good sign.

My dear friend, for sure you are battling or at least feel very bad about your problem. But if you can't help yourself to get out of it so quickly, that doesn't make you into an apikorus R"L. For sure Hashem appreciates every little bit of battling you did!

On the other hand we can't brush aside statements of Chazal. If they say those awful things about this chait, then for sure it is true. But you have to take those things in a healthy perspective.

If we look at "Seal of truth" (which I belief to be emes) we knock against the problem that most people deem him (Nir Abujam zol sein gesund und shtark) a tinoik sheNishbah. I myself belief that that is true to a certain extent. Though I want to draw your attention to the fact that there are several understandings what it means to be a tinoik shenioshbah. Rav Avigdor Miller ZT"L seems to be have been very machmir to apply that title. He used to say to say that you can't apply it to most American Jews, because almost everybody knows what orthodox Jews are and have taken some of their morals (or at least heard about them). I agree that (and I am not at freedom to argue with anybody especially people who knew shas forward and backwards) maybe this is a little too black and white. But, according to him Reb Abujam who was born and breath in Tel Aviv in a Sefardi family would probably not amount to his picture of the Tinoik Shenishbah.

It is true besides that, that some are choilek on Rabbi Miller (they believe that TSH"N is a much more broader concept). far it fro me to be Machriah.

When I was a little kid (5 or 6 years old) starting masturbating, I felt naturally that it was wrong. That is just a sense Hashem had put in to me (if not in all people). Ah, you are going to tell me that at that age you can't make a good bechirah yet, but I belief though that if we know it is wrong at least at an older age I should have battled it. I obviously didn't and it only grew on me. The fantasies and the amounts of times became only more elaborate and more often.

This sense that it is wrong (even though you are coming from an environment where you were maybe encouraged to masturbate, as was by me the case) this you might have to answer for after 120.

I know a little bit the world from inside the catholic notzrim-world. I want to tell you that there is a shtark difference between them and us. When a person is a so-called sinner. A person will be condemned and shamed publicly for it by the kallachim (clergy). Now coming to Yiddishkeit I seen such a contrast. True the chait is very serious. But here a Rabbi will (instead of condemning the person) put an arm around your shoulder and say: "My dear friend, everybody has a Yetser Horah and we will go and fight it together."

It is such a difference.

For sure the person in "Seal of truth" is also shamed in public. But I think that everybody's Din in Shomayim is tailor made for that person. Don't be too sure that you will come out guilty, and being condemned to slight in the Boir R"L never to emerge. Hashem is one and all mercy and you will get the chance to do Teshuvah.

The amount you are Oines, well, that is only something you can ask to Gedoilim and think about your own past.

But Hashem Yisborach for sure appreciates you fight and loves you more then you can love the biggest Tzaddik, because you are a Yid.

Look at the seforim which will tell you about the kedusha of a Yid. True, there are some major problems. You are in this world to work on them. Not necessarily succeed always, but nevertheless fight!

Keep up the good work dear brother, and I ask sincere Mechilah if everything I wrote (also in this reply) hurts you. Please email me in such a case and we will talk about it. (write I mean) Note that English is not my first language so sometimes I might be saying things that look strange, I apologize

Be well

Levi613

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by southafricanJEW - 25 Apr 2010 13:39

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30years, I forgive you, and thanks for your kind words.

Silentbattle, and everyone,

Firstly one can't simply keep "murdering babies" out of the equation, because this is the very reason why there is so much terrible guilt surrounding this issue, as this is what it is compared to.

Secondly, what I mean by this "moral condemnation" is this:

(For the sake of simplicity I am referring to a not yet married person)

Masturbation is definitely not "bein adom lechavairo" (no matter what this "damaging to the fabric of reality" is)

It is either "bein adam lemukom" or "bein adum leatzmo"

If masturbation is really something that terribly effects other people somehow, then even if one's hormone's were raging, or one was an addict, one would still be hold accountable for masturbating, because one would be required to either keep his hand tied up, or chop his hand off, just like some one who knows he may rape someone G-d forbid, would have an obligation to hand him self over, for the safety of the world.

However if masturbation is "bein adam leazmo" then your only concern would be yourself and Hashem. In other words, your long term success for the rest of your life. This would mean that you are not obligated to chop off your hand, and you can stop slowly over time, if need be.

I believe as long as one is **honestly trying to do ones best under the circumstances** one does not need to worry about "damage to the fabric of reality" that is the razton of Hashem and there is absolutely nothing that I can do about it in the short term.

Therefore one can not be "morally condemned" because this means that you could and should have prevented the damage. But as is says in the "guardyoureyes attitude handbook" (6. It's not your fault)

"Everyone has dirty laundry. We don't have to be ashamed of our laundry unless we let it pile up and never clean it."

"The Steipler too, in regards to a specific behavior that someone had difficulty controlling,

writes: "He is not a Ba'al Bechira now in this area, and the only thing he can (and should) do, are Tikkunim that will help him over time.'"

I need to break free from the terrible prison of guilt and shame, and return to Hashem and I find in order to do that I need to view it as a problem rather than a sin. To me sin and "moral condemnation" translates into being my fault, along with all the terrible feelings of guilt. Please tell me if this somehow makes me an upikoris, for some strange reason I can't let go unless people on this forum tell me I can, not sure exactly why.

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by aryeh tahor - 25 Apr 2010 20:15

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I bear some responsibility for this thread since I was the one to bring up Seal of Truth in a thread I started which seems to have spawned this one.

For what it's worth, my reaction to the film was generally positive. It instilled fear and dread and the consciousness that what we do here has major consequences and we should be careful. It made the notion of Olam HaBa more real to me, and got me thinking about the fact that what we see here in this world is a very small piece of reality.

Some measure of fear is a crucial ingredient in the cessation of a behavior. The film is not helpful to everyone at every stage of addiction, but no strategy is. It IS helpful to a lot of people who want and need a wakeup call about the consequences of actions that seem to be harmless but, as our sages indisputably tell us, is a serious aveira.

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"

Posted by southafricanJEW - 25 Apr 2010 22:17

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Today a was really freaking out about all the guilt darkness and confusion that surrounds me, I

could not actually stand it, so I closed my eyes and begged Hashem to give me, some sign by the end of the day that would at least begin to help me through this maze.

Every Sunday night I go to a certain small yeshiva and learn gemorah with a friend, tonight I went there as usual, but when I arrived he said that his father (who is a doctor) was coming and wanted him to help him look up something on the "refuaynu" part of the "shmonah esray" My friend asked if I would mind doing this instead of our usual gemorah, I agreed.

It turned out that the doctor was mistaken and the source he wanted to look at (mostly from Rav Shimon Schwab) was not at all useful for his topic, but we decided to learn it anyway, my friend was the only one with a copy so I am not sure if this is what Rav Schwab was actually saying or if it was my friend's interpretation.

But briefly, Rav Schwab was interpreting refuaynu from the time Jeremiah used it, he explains that Jeremiah, had a nuvoah or something about people having the problem of thinking they are right when they are wrong, and thinking they don't have a problem when they do.

He said that some one can be a very good honest person and still have this problem because of "illness of one's heart", in other words pain, guilt etc. this is what Jeremiah was concerned about, **even for himself** and therefore he asked "refuany Hashem" for his heart.

Now I don't think Jeremiah was worried about being an apikoras, he was worried about simply being led astray by his heart. I believe Hashem is telling me that sometimes pain and guilt may interfere with my thinking but **this does not make me an apikoras**, I must simply daven to Hashem to heal my heart. Dov was right when he told me that thinking too much about things will be harmful, I tend to be overly analytical about things, but stopping this is proving to be difficult. So I daven "refuany"

Then my friend started talking about "hoyshtayni Hashem" I know this sounds weird but when my friend spoke it felt like Hashem was talking directly to me, he said that sometimes we can be surrounded by darkness and confusion and have so much struggles and pain that we wonder where is Hashem? We must Daven "hoshiany Hashem" may Hashem save us from this loneliness. My friend explained Hashem puts me through this darkness and confusion precisely **because he loves me infinitely and wants me to grow and be refined and become the person I have the potential to be, if Hashem never loved me he would not bother with all this (I had to hold back the tears as my friend spoke.**

Basically I must do what I must do and daven to Hashem "Refuaino"

(this may sound similar to the 12 steps, but it actually is not, I find that the 12 steps just does not work for me)

Just thought I should post this, I am still surrounded by darkness but at least now I have a much greater understanding that Hashem is with me all the way.

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"  
Posted by baalteshuva - 25 Apr 2010 23:12

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wow

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"  
Posted by silentbattle - 26 Apr 2010 01:09

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Everything in this world happens for a reason - so without a doubt, there is a reason you learned this piece right now!

Hashem certainly does love you more than any of us can imagine. Enjoy growing into the person you want to become!

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Re: "seal of truth"="seal of suicide"  
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 26 Apr 2010 15:31

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[southafricanJEW wrote on 25 Apr 2010 22:17:](#)

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