



The Day after the
Coronavirus

How COVID-19 Is an Appeal for Global Awakening

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Introduction

As I looked upon the moving spectacle of Italians in lockdown singing together from the balconies of their homes, I knew that we were at the threshold of a new era that was going into the history books as a turning point in humanity's evolution.

The coronavirus quickly stormed into our lives. It caught us off guard, unprepared for the impending self-discovery and insights that it would provoke.

Panic and helplessness in the face of the virus' relentless spread initially marked the birth of the new world. No other phenomenon disrupted our lives in recent times as much as this virus. A minuscule and nearly-invisible particle put spokes in the wheel of our entire global socio-economic infrastructure, quarantining us into our respective homes with no near end in sight.

Where terrorist acts, world wars, and nuclear threats once frightened us, we now find ourselves bewildered, since the virus is closed off from any negotiations and agreements.

The global state of emergency we entered calls for deep introspection, not only at individual or state levels, but also across borders and cultures. Estimating the extent and impact of the virus-induced transformation is currently beyond us, but the dawn of a new age is indeed felt around the world.

The Day after the Coronavirus: How COVID-19 Is an Appeal for Global Awakening examines the new process that humanity has entered from the perspective of the wisdom of Kabbalah, which I have studied and taught for over forty years. In Kabbalah, I discovered the foundations to literally every challenge we face in life. I acquired this knowledge from my teacher, the Kabbalist Baruch Shalom HaLevi Ashlag (1907-1991), also known as "Rabash," the son and disciple of the 20th century's greatest Kabbalist, Yehuda Ashlag (1885-1954), who received the name "Baal HaSulam" (Hebrew for "Master of the Ladder") for his "*Sulam*" ("Ladder") commentary on *The Book of Zohar*.

"The negative forces that appear in current situations are the reasons for the progress of humanity. Through them it climbs up the rungs of the ladder. They are reliable in performing their duty, which is to bring humankind to the last, most desirable state of evolution, purified of any ignominy and blemish."

- Baal HaSulam, *The Nation*.



From Indifference to Panic

We first heard about the coronavirus in marginal news stories about a viral outbreak in a distant land—China. We had no idea that it would dramatically impact our lives, and so we moved on to other news items.

At first, travelers arriving from a few Asian countries were subject to self-quarantine. Later on, flights to the East and other parts of the world were canceled, and people returning from certain countries were obligated to enter a home quarantine period. However, even then we were still clueless as to what it meant for us and what was going to happen. We were mainly worried about the fate of the many products that we usually order from China.

Who would have thought that an epidemic in a remote Chinese province would soon become a global pandemic, knocking at our doors? Many of us have heard about the butterfly effect, where a small perturbation in one part of the world has consequences in other areas, but we related to that concept somewhat metaphorically and philosophically.

In the pandemic's first phase, when we were still unaware of the virus' globally expansive and catastrophic potential, some thought of the authoritative measures as excessive, since the coronavirus appeared to be no deadlier than the flu. Mortality rates seemed relatively low, and the coronavirus mainly harmed weaker segments of the population. It was thus unclear why the general population's freedom of movement should be restricted.

The next phase exhibited an acceleration of the pandemic's spread, with a sudden spike in the amount of infections and deaths. Fear, uncertainty, anxiety, and panic swept over societies. Many started feeling lost as the threat of lockdown became a

reality in more and more countries.

Naturally, our base survival instincts became triggered. We raided supermarkets, emptied their shelves, and stockpiled our storerooms. Toilet paper ran out. Eggs became a rare commodity. Meanwhile, social networks filled up with jokes shrouded in disguised anxiety.

Everyone suddenly became suspicious. Were they strictly observing the health department's guidelines or not? Where had they been? What did they come into contact with? Were they meticulous with their hygiene? Also, if someone was caught sneezing or coughing, they became a sanitary hazard, a risk to public well-being.

State leaders found themselves in frantic discussions day and night, focused on preventing the virus' spread without causing an economic collapse. Yesterday's controversies, social rifts, and even terrorist and nuclear threats had all dwindled in the face of a new global-scale problem.

If in the past we mulled over what new car we should buy, where we should travel for our next vacation, or what fashionable shoes we should add to our collection, then upon the global spread of the coronavirus, we became hastily introduced into a new reality, and faced serious questions about how to fulfill our basic needs.

Would we have something to eat next week, or would the shipments stop? If we were lucky enough to not be fired from our jobs, then how much longer would we have them? Also, what would happen if tomorrow we could no longer afford to pay for our groceries, our rent, our mortgage, or other loans and debts?





Interdependence

Looking at ourselves from aside, we can see how the coronavirus exposes our smallness and weakness in comparison to an overpowering and intimidating nature. It is as if nature, like a shark, opens its mouth wide, and we cower at the sight of its jaws.

In addition, the coronavirus reveals our tight interdependence, albeit negatively. That is, we can infect each other with the slightest contact, from a handshake to even just sharing the same space. All it takes is a moment of irresponsibility, whether innocently or by blatantly disregarding health department guidelines, for anyone to make others in their surroundings catch the disease.

In the 21st century, we became accustomed to communicating easily with people around the world, online shopping, frequent flights, as well as constant updates on what is happening literally everywhere. However, we failed to imagine the magnitude of such connectivity: ties woven between us that are impossible to unlace.

The coronavirus elucidated the fact that someone's problem in a faraway place could very soon also become our problem. In recent years, politicians, economists, and heads of state started talking about how we—humanity—are all in the same boat. Then, all of a sudden, with the pandemic's onrush, the concept of global interdependence became a tangible reality.

Indeed, the coronavirus highlights the network of mutual influence that lives and breathes between us. Such a network also existed before the virus appeared, but we were either unaware or unconcerned about it in our daily lives.

“Interdependence exposes everyone around the world in an unprecedented way,” wrote former NATO Secretary-General, Javier Solana, nearly a decade ago in his

article, "[The New Grammar of Power](#)," with Daniel Innerarity, Professor of Social and Political Philosophy at the University of the Basque Country. In the article, Solana and Innerarity further elaborate on the vast extent of our interdependence, and draw a key conclusion about a needed fundamental change in our attitudes to each other when acknowledging just how interdependent we are:

“Think of climate change; the risks of nuclear energy and proliferation; terrorist threats [...]; the collateral effects of political instability; the economic repercussions of financial crises; epidemics (whose risks increase with greater mobility and free trade); and sudden, media-fueled panics. [...] Nothing is completely isolated. [...] Other people’s problems are now our problems, and we can no longer look on them with indifference, or hope to reap some personal gain from them. [...] We must learn a new grammar of power in a world that is made up more of the common good – or the common bad – than of self-interest or national interest.”

The laws of the network that we live in have started closing in on us. Governmental health departments have become the supreme lawmakers, and new rules have been set. First, direct contact was prohibited. Afterward, there were orders to keep a minimal distance of two meters from each other, to use face masks and gloves, and to self-quarantine if we had been in close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case. And then the process of a gradual general lockdown followed.

As days went by and the number of hospitalized patients soared, concerns arose about a possible collapse of the healthcare system. We could not afford to even imagine such a situation. The circumstances led us to realize that only if we acted with personal and mutual responsibility could there be any chance of limiting the virus’ rapid spread.

In the pre-coronavirus world, mutual responsibility sounded like just another pleasant slogan, similar to “love your neighbor as yourself”—a nice-to-have value that no one was actually expected to implement. In combat units, fighters train to maintain

such a connection in order to survive, but outside the military framework, mutual responsibility is seen as an abstract ideal.

The coronavirus quickly clarified that “mutual responsibility” is much more than just a nice pair of words: We can all infect each other, and we are thus obligated to be mutually responsible for one another. Whether or not we like it or even understand it, anyone who behaves irresponsibly will bring down others, triggering endless chain reactions that endanger everyone.

In many countries, people diagnosed with COVID-19 became publicly exposed. Their itineraries became subject to epidemiologic investigation, and everybody was required to check if they had been in those places at the corresponding times. If they had been, then they had to self-quarantine and report their status to the authorities. As such, the coronavirus granted personal and mutual responsibility to entire populations. The way the virus spread taught us that the individual, no matter who it might be, holds tremendous influence in the global era.

The more time passed, the more the restrictions tightened. As the world stood still and streets became emptied, major questions started surfacing: What is going to happen next? When will this pandemic end? What caused this whole situation? And why do we deserve this?

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Why?

While confined to our homes, posts started circulating on social media with various theories about the cause of the virus: from humanity destroying nature to people sinning against God. People worldwide sought an explanation as to what caused this paralyzing phenomenon that caught us completely off guard.

At face value, asking about why the coronavirus came about might sound like a childish question—or it could easily be dismissed as philosophical, mystical, or religious—since pandemics are nothing new. For instance, the Spanish flu of 1918 and many other pandemics throughout history obliterated entire populations. However, when looking at the situation with an understanding of the laws of nature, as described by the wisdom of Kabbalah, then we can shed light and a new way of thinking on what is really unfolding in our lives.

According to Kabbalah, which explores the creation and evolution of individuals, societies, humanity, and nature as a whole, **the system of human interdependence is the deciding factor behind every problem, whether health related, emotional, social, economic, or ecological.**

While we might be able to pinpoint biological causes behind the coronavirus' outbreak by studying it on a biological level, what we would fail to see in such an investigation is that any biological cause is still merely a consequence of a much deeper cause.

The coronavirus is like a puzzle. Solving this puzzle means nothing less than revealing an invitation to the next level of human evolution.

Evolution Bolsters Connection

Our understanding of the world stems from the fact that the more humanity progresses, the more laws of nature we discover. In the ancient world, we worked out how to process certain stones into iron, copper, and various metals, and how to turn raw materials into foods and beverages, such as bread and wine.

Later, scientists aimed to describe fundamental elements of nature in the various sciences, such as physics, chemistry, and biology, and formulated various laws and theories, such as the law of gravity, laws of energy, the effects of energy on various materials, and so on. Our discovery of newer laws and theories often challenged the ones we knew, such as Einstein's theory of relativity in relation to classical physics, which was widely accepted until his time.

Everything that happens to us, and our entire development, unfolds within the laws of nature. The more we understand how and why nature operates the way it does, the more we can understand the many phenomena taking place in our lives, including the coronavirus pandemic.

The wisdom of Kabbalah emphasizes the connections between nature's various levels. It is as Baal HaSulam explains in his article, "[The Freedom](#)":

“There is a general connection among all the elements of reality before us [...] meaning that each and every creature in the world from the four types—still, vegetative, animate, and speaking—abides by the law of causality by way of cause and effect. [...] This is apparent to all who examine the ways of nature from a pure scientific point of view and without a shred of bias.”

All parts of reality are interrelated. Every action has a systemic impact. Furthermore, over the course of evolution, the connections between the parts of reality become increasingly sophisticated. Evolution describes the developmental processes of living beings from discrete elements into complex life forms based on collaborations. Thus,

from the connection between compounds, living cell evolved. The basic units of life later formed more connections in order to develop multicellular life forms at the vegetative and animal levels.

Humanity also evolved following this trend of increasing connectivity. Until about 100 years ago, we were primarily connected to the physical environment in which we grew up, while today we are connected to a far wider environment. The desire to develop and progress led us to create means for enabling connections between people, countries, and nations. The train, the telegraph, the radio, and the telephone connected remote people, and the Internet made everyone readily available. This tendency to connect has made the world smaller and more accessible.

Evolution biologist and futurist Dr. Elisabet Sahtouris [describes](#) how evolution pushes nature into diversity and individualization, leading each time to conflict, which is then solved by collaboration and the establishment of connection on a more advanced level. Accordingly, the process by which the world has become a small global village is no accident: it is a natural stage in the evolution of civilization toward a greater form of connection.

Kabbalists describe this developmental process to increasing connection as a **law of nature, a general force that operates in the system of nature, making it more interconnected through the creation of more advanced links and webs.**

In the special language of *The Zohar*, in the portion [Toldot \(Generations\)](#), this process is expressed as follows:

“As man’s body divides into organs and they all stand degree over degree, established one atop the other and are all one body, similarly, the world, meaning all creations in the world are many organs standing one atop the other, and they are all one body. And when they are all corrected they will actually be one body.”

More and more scientists today are talking about the world as a kind of “super-

organism,” regarding it as a single connected entity. The mutual responsibility illuminated by the coronavirus makes this super-organism’s existence evident. Nature’s parts, including human beings, are interconnected through countless relationships.

The world has changed. From an individualistic world where each acts in isolation from others, we have transitioned into a **global and integral world**, where we are all interconnected health-wise, ecologically, economically, politically, and socially.

Global means one—whole.

Integral means interconnected, where all parts are interdependent without exception.

While we have yet to digest our global and integral state, it makes no change to the fact that it is the system in which we exist.

Everything in nature is interlinked. This connection’s depth will unravel more and more as we continue our research of the complete system of nature through the wisdom of Kabbalah. Sustainable living in a system of this kind, in which the network of connection increasingly tightens, necessitates a change in our thinking and behavior.

Incompatibility With the Connected World

The coronavirus, a biological particle, caught us in the midst of life’s rat race and at the peak of our advanced connectivity. We live in multicultural societies. We developed a global economy. We move freely around the planet, and this connectivity became the fuel that transformed a tiny virus that surfaced in China into a global pandemic.

Unlike the evolutionary trend that develops nature’s parts toward integration, complementarity, and more elaborate connections, the human being has an inherent mechanism that operates under an opposite set of laws. This mechanism favors separation and disallows our perceiving ourselves as parts of a system, where our personal well-being derives from the well-being of the whole.

This mechanism is defined in Kabbalah as “egoism” and it consists of many layers.

Egoism's most basic layer makes us constantly compare our possessions and achievements with those of others. We compare our homes, vehicles, careers, children, incomes, economic and social status, as well as many other variables, and our persistent ambition is to feel better off than others.

As a result, we cannot simply settle for having what our bodies require to live balanced lives. Instead, in addition to our bodily needs, we feel an increasing tendency to exploit others for personal benefit. Therefore, unlike any other creature, we humans use our resources and our environment in an imbalanced way.

“It is the nature of egoism that the manner of using it makes it very narrow, since it is more or less compelled to acquire a nature of hatred and exploitation of others in order to make one’s own existence easier. Also, it is not abstract hatred, but one that appears in acts of abusing one’s friend for one’s own benefit, growing murkier according to its degrees, such as deceiving, stealing, robbing, and murdering. This is called ‘narrow egoism.’” – Baal HaSulam, *The Nation*.

This mechanism also manifests at the international level. The desire to control and exploit territories, resources, and people, has been behind history's greatest wars, and it has formed and destroyed entire empires.

The more we evolved, the more we felt the tug-of-war-like pressure of opposition between the force of nature—urging for more qualitative connection—and our inner egoistic mechanism—insisting on the benefit of an individual, a group, a nation, or an empire at others' expense.

Our present era's uniqueness is in the colossal tension between the power of interdependence, which pushes to connect us more and more, and the power of narrow egoism, which pulls in the opposite direction.

Before the coronavirus struck, we were on the edge of an abyss: charged international relations, vicious trade wars, heightened nuclear war anxiety, and almost-routine terrorist attacks regularly killing and injuring innocent people around the world. These

phenomena alone should have sounded a red alert on how **our selfish way of life is no longer appropriate for life in an interdependent system**, and if there will be no transformation, the system will collapse.

The Ecological Environment

Our self-serving attitude to everything around us has also brought about much ecological damage. With each of us trying to keep up with the Joneses, our desires to become wealthier, and to gain more social status, power and control over other human beings, has led us to a cutthroat competition in which we have exploited natural resources ad nauseam.

Today, unequivocal proof of our destructive influence over the ecology from various ecological reports has made us far more aware of this fact. However, it is not the heart of the problem.

Why? It is because our exploitative attitude toward nature is merely the outcome of our egoistic relationships, the desire of each one to be above the others. The ego causes us to see everything around us as a means to achieve our goal, narrowing and distorting our perspective of the still, vegetative, animate, and human parts of nature.

However, **nature is an integral system that links all of its parts together, within which no individual part can take control.** When humanity fails to adhere to the system's rules, which require systemic and reciprocal complementarity, the contrasts in the system can manifest in all kinds of forms and levels, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, locust plagues, or COVID-19.

It is thus a mistake to think that our troubles will be over when we find the vaccine or the cure for the coronavirus. If we fail to see the bigger picture and continue our exploitative behavior that has characterized us to date, then even if a solution is found for the current virus, it will likely be followed by a stronger virus or another blow from nature.

We thus need to redefine the nature of human connections, since we are nature's most developed beings. Upgrading our connections will affect our attitude to everything around us, and will benefit us in all walks of life.

High Connectivity in Nature

“The magnitude of the value of man’s power of will, and how crucial is his degree in reality, is yet to be revealed in the world through the secrets of the Torah (Kabbalah). And this revelation will be the crown of the whole of science.” – Rav Abraham Isaac Kook, *Orot HaKodesh (Lights of Sanctity)*.

The connections between nature's different levels are far beyond those that we perceive. Nature is a general force field within which all particular constituents and modes of their interactions exist. Various forces operate in the system, from physical, chemical, and biological ones to those of thoughts and desires. The more qualitative the force in the system, the more hidden, subtle, and influential it is.

Attitudes, thoughts, and desires provoke a reaction in the system according to their congruence or incongruence with the force of nature that pushes for complementarity among its parts. Therefore, our thoughts, our attitudes toward others, our separation or connection, all influence the natural system. Their affect goes beyond our social relations, rippling throughout all levels of nature. Why? It is because the system is integral, interconnected, interdependent—one.

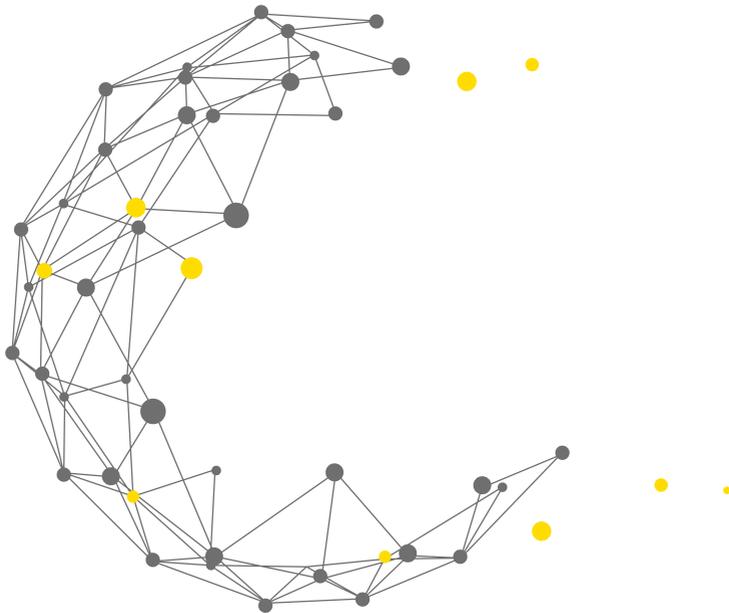
The wisdom of Kabbalah has long revealed that **when humans strive to harm one another, their negative relationships affect the entire system of nature.** That is, even without taking any harmful action, the very thought and desire to harm others already ruptures the mutual complementarity among the system's parts. It might be tough to grasp, but our desires and thoughts hold immense influence in nature.

However, the wheels of evolution roll on, regardless of our readiness to keep up. They

operate systemically, and as such, break apart our former connections, forcing us to create new, integral, and more advanced ones that will be compatible with the global world of the 21st century.

The appearance of the coronavirus further clarified our interdependence and mutual responsibility. It showed us how easily it passes from one person to another, from one country to another, disregarding our borders, distances, economic status, and any other distinctions we place between us.

Also, if we thought that we could manipulate nature's laws to our advantage, it is now clear that we would be wrong. Nature is much more powerful than us, and it has strict rules. When we understand them and act accordingly, we will be able to exit our home confinement, and enter into a new reality.





The Ultimate Vaccine

“That each and every individual will understand that his own benefit and the benefit of the collective are one and same thing. In that, the world will come to its full correction.” - Baal HaSulam, [“Peace in the World.”](#)

On one hand, our egoistic relations harm the entire natural system, but on the other hand, knowing this point identifies exactly what needs to be fixed in order to bring about the ultimate cure for all of the world's ills. The most significant force in nature is human connection. If we learn how to build positive relationships, we will impact the system with mutual complementarity on all of its levels.

What is the essence of the change that human thinking needs to undergo? It is that we need to adopt a new way of thinking outside the egoistic box, one that follows the integral lines of nature's thought. It is a transition from a way of thinking that perceives the individual as separate and independent, to one that perceives individuals as interconnected parts of a holistic web.

The way we think in terms of caring only about ourselves has become outdated in our era. That is, it is unaligned with the interdependent world. We cannot guarantee our well-being and optimal conduct in the world if we view it through a narrow self-centered perspective.

In an interdependent system, everyone affects and depends on everyone. Therefore, self-concern needs to be replaced with concern for the common good in order to assure everyone's well-being. Even as far back as the 1940s, Baal HaSulam clarified this point in his article, [“Peace in the World”](#):

“In our generation, when each person is aided for his happiness by all the countries in the world, it is necessary that to that extent, the individual becomes enslaved to the whole world, like a wheel in a machine. Therefore, the possibility of making good, happy, and peaceful conducts in one state is inconceivable when it is not so in all the countries in the world, and vice versa.”

The coronavirus pandemic teaches us a very important lesson in our network of connection and how it pushes us to live in a more balanced way as parts of this connected system we all share. It shows us the impossibility of continuing to live the way we had been. Our behaviors and attitudes are in need of a major shift—to accept humanity and nature as a single integral system, within which we are all different cells and organs. Simply put, we are all interconnected and interdependent, and unless we take care of literally everyone, we cannot survive.

The sooner we understand nature’s evolutionary course and adapt our relationships accordingly, the more we will be able to avoid future potential suffering. Moreover, subsequent blows would be expected to hit harder than the coronavirus if we fail to learn our lesson this time around.

“It would be better for us to take the law of development under our own hands and government, for then we will rid ourselves of any torment that the developmental history has in store for us henceforth.” – Baal HaSulam, [“Peace in the World.”](#)

Integral Mind and Emotion

In order to understand what it means to function optimally in an integral system, let us look at the human body. Imagine that suddenly every organ decided to do whatever it wanted, regardless of its necessary function to maintain the body’s health and well-being. In such a situation, the body cannot exist. It would quickly deteriorate and

perish. Optimal systemic functioning requires the acquisition of a new integral mind and emotion.

Therefore, the ultimate vaccine for phenomena like the global pandemic involves adapting our relationships to the laws of nature. We would thus be wise to set personal and mutual responsibility—which the coronavirus era demands of us—as the law of connection in our daily lives.

Understanding how to weave healthy connections between different and even contradictory individuals is the next level of human evolution. Creating relations suited to the laws of nature requires each individual cultivating a deep connection with others. We need to develop sensitivity to detecting each other's needs, so that we understand what we can do to help and complement one another. It is quite a complicated task, but anyone who succeeds in doing so will feel that even personal gain today lies precisely in this transition to a new perception.

Our development in feeling others will let us perceive others' well-being in addition to our own personal well-being. Our vision will thus expand and take into account the common interest of benefiting ourselves and others as a single whole. As a result, our perception of reality will change. A whole world of possibilities will open up to us that were earlier outside our perceptual reach.

In such an advanced state, we will relate to the world with the intention of contributing our unique addition. We will each calculate and use our individuality and uniqueness for the well-being of the collective, instead of for personal gain, detached from others. We will then also start absorbing much broader impressions from our surroundings. We will be able to connect with each other, sensing what we all feel and think, expanding our perceptions and sensations to become more advanced social beings. The more we will influence others with inspiration, encouragement, and support to become more positively connected to each other, the more we will grow and develop into upgraded human beings, and the more our value in society will rise.

The awareness of our interdependence and interconnectedness will let each of us understand and feel how the network affects us, how we influence the system, and how we gain by thinking about the well-being of the whole. We will become more aware of our inescapable interdependence, and we will understand how it manifests in health, social, economic, and political arenas. We will also be able to accurately define what harms or benefits the system. Every definition of success that we have in life will change from one extreme to the other.

Accordingly, it is expected that **future developments in becoming mutually considerate and responsible beings will see us creating new tools that will serve the transition from individual to collective consciousness.** Such tools will help us practice our new attitude and qualify us to increasingly understand and feel the desires and thoughts of others.

When the quality of our relationships will be so high, every person will gain a whole new sense of security, confidence, happiness, and vitality. The feeling that people around us seek to benefit us, help us, encourage us, inspire us, and raise our spirits, will gradually release us from the incessant concern for our own needs—from the anxiety about our personal condition and our future. When our hearts and minds will be freed from personal concerns, we will be able to realize more extensive aspects of our potential.

Does this perfect picture of reality sound utopian or naïve? It might indeed. But think about how delusional it would have sounded before the coronavirus to say that very soon, nearly all flights will stop, the global economy will reach a near standstill, and people around the world will be confined to their homes.

5

A New World

“Our planet is rich enough to provide for all of us, so why should we fight this tragic war to the death, which has been dimming our lives for generations?” Baal HaSulam, *The Nation*.

The coronavirus isolated us in our homes and made us see how different the world can appear. We were obviously unprepared for the pandemic. It shocked us, but over time, many of us found a certain charm in returning to the bosom of our families again.

Many have experienced a revived family experience that was lost in our consumeristic culture: more moments of laughter together, leisurely passing time with the family and listening to what our loved ones have to say, connecting with their worries, hopes, and pains.

The pre-coronavirus world, however, seems to wink slyly at us from a distance, threatening to return with full force. At this juncture, we are given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a special kind of introspection. We can now scrutinize whether we really want to return to that life that we left.

The pre-coronavirus world was built not according to our needs, nor the needs of our children, but according to the rules of the economic system shaped by human egoism. The norm became working from morning till night, meeting our children and spouses when we were impatient at the end of our exhausting days, otherwise we would fail to make ends meet for all the expenses that weighed down on us.

Today's economy is based on consumerism: the aggressive production, marketing, and ultimately, consuming, with the aim of increasing profits, expanding markets, and milking additional consumers with greater sophistication.

Consumerism made us buy new cars, renovate our kitchens and apartments, buy more shirts, jackets, dresses, and shoes than the ones we had. It made us increasingly fly out to other countries and go out to more and more restaurants. Since we were accustomed to these activities being the pleasures of life, they made us feel good, and the more we could fill our lives with them, the more we could consider ourselves successful.

In the name of achieving a respectable materialistic status according to the consumerist system we enslaved ourselves to, we would dedicate ourselves to working hard, making a lot of money, and then having fun. We would vacation in the world's most beautiful places, but always return to the rat race.

Then it all froze.

Like a strict mother wanting to teach her children a lesson so that they grow up wiser, nature raised its firm hand with the coronavirus, telling us: "Stop everything you're doing! Go to your rooms. Sit down. Think about what you're doing. Don't you see all the harm you're causing yourselves? Don't you see that if you keep doing what you're doing, you're going to end up miserable and facing much greater hardships later in life? I want you now to seriously think about what you really need, and what you don't, and I hope that you'll get rid of everything you don't need. I also hope that when I let you out of your rooms, you'll relate a lot better to yourselves and to the world you're in."

This virus is changing us. It hit us like a tsunami, and it has washed away a lot of the dirt that was accumulating in our lives. More and more people have started seriously considering what is truly important in life, the kind of world we really want to live in, the shortcomings of chasing after bigger and bigger profit margins, and how human

society and the economy should be setup in order to genuinely satisfy us and make us happy.

The “sacred” value of our old paradigm was to produce, consume, and then throw away as much as possible in order to keep the machine’s wheels moving. Now that we have been forced to take a breather from all the hustle and bustle, room for more meaningful engagements has opened up.

We have been given time and space to connect more qualitatively, with more warmth and love.

We can connect more deeply with our families. Also, we can pay more attention to our neighbors and friends, asking about what is happening in their lives and listening to their answers.

We now need to think: How do we build a world that is good to live in, a world of positive relationships, where its systems will support the achievement of shared happiness? Imagine for a moment how the media and politics would appear when we remove destructive competition and private interests.

This is not wishful thinking. Rather, it is a no-choice situation.

Upgrading the quality of our connections is a requirement that nature has set for us in its developmental process, and we will have to match it one way or another. If we fail to understand nature’s laws and continue acting contrary to them, we will receive such backlashes that will force us to adapt ourselves to its integrality, similarly to how events played out with the coronavirus.

A fundamentally new world is one where people will learn to relate to each other as to themselves.

Understandably, such relations are beyond our very nature, and it is for that very reason that the wisdom of Kabbalah—the method of connection—was revealed in our generation.

When a genuine connection becomes the supreme value we aspire for, then as we learn to cultivate mutually considerate, responsible, supporting, and loving relationships, we will feel that there is a force in nature operating reality in the same way. We have been looking for it our entire life, all throughout history. People have called it “God,” “the universe,” “nature,” and many other names, and had no idea about what or where it actually was.

Now we can discover that this is a **force of connection and love, the source of life**. This force is neither in the heavens, nor is it in our imagination. Instead, it flows in the depths of the new positive relationships that we will build, in our enhanced attitudes to one another.

We can take such a step forward together, only together, all of us as one. We should avoid looking back, and never revive the old world that pits us up against each other.

If we succeed in helping each other move forward toward more and more positive connection—and I hope we will—then we will even be grateful for the coronavirus, as we will see that it came to push us into a much better world.

I wish us all the strength and courage to make this fateful shift to a positively-connected humanity a reality.



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**“Everything
stands on love”**

The Zohar, portion [VaEtchanan \(I Plead\)](#)