



24th December Reflection No. 251

In many respects Jesus' conception was definitely unique. For us, being born is ultimately being placed in existence without being consulted – how could we have been consulted, when we did not even exist? Also, for us being conceived and born is a necessary step to fuller human life. But God did not need to be conceived and born in order to exist, let alone in order to be happy. Actually, it is precisely by being born as a human child that God became vulnerable, capable of suffering... and of dying. Being human and, indeed, being humanly limited is not a bad condition and God's example is a challenge for us to accept our humanness and our being limited.

God became human, so identified with our human nature, that God would seem to hide. This is what Elie Wiesel expressed by sharing with us an old Hassidic tale that I want to reproduce here.

Rebbe Barukh's grandson, Yehiel, came running into his studio in tears.

- *Yehiel, Yehiel, why are you crying?*
- *My friend cheats! It's unfair. He left me all by myself, that's why I am crying!*
- *Would you like to tell me about it?*
- *Certainly, grandfather. We played hide-and-seek and it was my turn to hide and his turn to look for me. So, he gave up. He stopped looking. And that's unfair.*

Rebbe Barukh began to caress Yehiels's face and tears welled up on his eyes. *God too, Yehiel, he whispered softly, God too is unhappy. God is hiding and we are not looking for God. Do you understand, Yehiel? God is hiding and we are not even searching for God.*

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