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Office of the President

April 17, 2002

Dr. Maeir Becker
Rechov Tamar 1
P.O.B. 1348
Efrat, Israel

Dear Maeir לראו"ט:

During this past Pesach, Josh showed me your essay on R. Akiva and theodicy, and I found it most impressive.

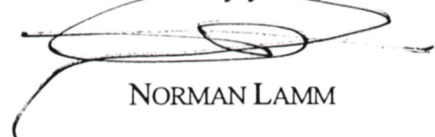
At first I thought that your eclectic use of sources constituted a weakness, but then I reconsidered and realized that this is the only way to find some rational and coherent explanation of R. Akiva's remarkable optimism--because I too would love to know the answer....

Offhand, I prefer to think that R. Akiva came out of the Pardes the same way he entered--no solutions, but with the satisfaction of knowing that there *is* a solution, but the Almighty has chosen not to reveal it to us, perhaps to leave place for freedom of the will. In that case, R. Akiva merely experienced anew the "solution" that the Almighty gave to Job. (Not every *kushia* has a *terutz*...)

Yeyashar kochakha, and keep it up—and do try to develop the idea further.

All the best to all the Becker generations,

Cordially yours,



NORMAN LAMM

(742)
cc: Josh Lamm