

Rabbi Nachman's foremost disciple and scribe, Reb Noson, explains: "When the verse states 'ein ode milvado,' it means to say that nothing exists but God. Above and below, in heaven and on earth, everything is absolutely naught and without substance - although this is impossible to explain, but can only be grasped according to the intuition of each person" (Likkutei Halakhos, Matnas Sh'chiv me-Ra' 2:2).

Lord,  
It is difficult  
After all that's happened,  
to hold on  
To that experience of closeness to You  
I had in the ICU

Life becomes ordinary  
The grandfather clock keeps on chiming in my living room  
And the morning mist returns each day now that it's  
autumn round the corner  
And selichos weather is about to descend with its early  
chill as I leave the front door for shul.

But it cannot be the same  
I have seen the angel of death  
He looks like the front of a semi, in my car seat!  
And my cracked ribs and shortness of breath  
And persistent sleepless nights attest to his markâ€™!

I have also experienced Your grace  
And Your helping hand  
And the kindness of your creatures the compassion of  
your nurses and aides  
All those who helped me  
My children surrounding my bed  
My wife and all my friends and well wishers  
The prayers of the community and patients.

So how to live on after all this...  
The feeling of bliss inside the pain  
The knowledge of being alive in the haze of morphine  
The sense of Your presence and privilege of having  
survived  
This ordeal  
What now.

My Tikkun Chazot

My daveing

My immersion

The Tikkun Klali

The Hitbodedut

Uman

Those rituals that assisted me in purification

From a life steeped in the flesh

To loosen and jog and separate

Make a little space for another sensibility

Open the soul to the void and the silence

What becomes of them

Now that I have seen the 'other side'

And have come so close to death.

Where do I go now

That is my question