

(1) SECOND CHANCES?

This week's Sedra speaks about the first Erev Pesach in the desert, exactly a year after Yetzias Mitzrayim. Whilst most of Klal Yisroel were busy with the Korbon Pesach, there were some who could not join. Two weeks earlier, on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, Hashem had commanded, and Moshe had taught them, the laws of purity. A group of Yidden now approached Moshe, begging, "We are impure! Having been involved with a corpse. Oy! We cannot bring the Korbon Pesach!

But Why? Why should we be excluded from offering the Korbon of Hashem ...?"

(2) WHY IS PESACH DIFFERENT?

This complaint of theirs is difficult to understand. Many Mitzvos are not relevant to every person, or in every situation, why did they think that here there would be a solution? It is particularly surprising that Hashem actually validated their complaint and gave us the Mitzvoh of Pesach Sheini.

(3) PESACH – PEH-SOCH IS OUR "STARTER".

Pesach was the "commencement" of our becoming Hashem's nation. The Initiation of our relationship with Him. The message of Pesach – "**Peh - Soch** - A **mouth** that **communicates**", is also the tool that is always available to every one of us. With this, we can always refresh our personal relationship with Hashem.



(4) DETAILED CONVERSATIONS WITH HASHEM!

The Rebbe was once sitting with Reb Nosson outside the Shul and revealing to him his own ideas about prayer. This was at the initial stages of Reb Nosson's connection to the Rebbe. The Rebbe then put his holy arm around Reb Nosson's shoulders and said his famous statement:

"...and furthermore, it is good to converse and speak out one's heart to Hashem just as one would with a close friend..."

(5) THE MASTER KEY

Reb Nosson writes that he then immediately realized that having this type of capability in prayer was such an all-encompassing key that he now would be able to deal with literally any situation that would be thrown at him.

(6) ANNUAL SPEECH THERAPY. AND A DAILY BOOST.

Indeed, the Yom-Tov of Pesach gives an annual boost to Tefilla i.e. our ability to perceive and relate Hashem in this personal way. Armed with this awareness, we have the tools to deal with any situation.

And of course, we need a daily Yetzias Mitzrayim. A daily Peh – Soch to release us from our personal Mitzrayim – Tzoros.

(7) DAILY LOSSES! SO WHAT'S STOPPING US?

Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to cultivate such a type of

intimate communication with Hashem?

We are just like those who, due to their impurity, could not bring a Korbon Pesach.

Sometimes our minds are so clouded with impurities and confusion, we feel the same unbridgeable gap between ourselves and the concept of Peh-Soch. Of being on face to face terms with Hashem.

So, we lose out. We constantly miss out on this treasure of Hashem's closeness.

(8) TRUTHFULLY A SIMPLE SOLUTION

But there is a simple solution. In one word. Truth. Say something truthful. To Hashem. No matter how lowly those words might be. But if they are truthful words, that is all Hashem is waiting for. That is all He is yearning for. If you feel impure and miles away from having a conversation with Hashem – then – tell – Him – exactly – that!

"Hashem! I feel so impure! My heart feels dead! I am like a corpse! Davening? Forget it! Conversing with You Hashem like with a friend? This "Peh-Soch" concept? You know, Hashem, how far I am. The writer of this pamphlet thinks that everyone can pray like my Rebbe, Rosh yeshiva or Mekubal - Who does he think I am? A Tzaddik full of prayer? Honestly, Hashem, not for me"

Recognize these words? Don't these mirror the truthful words of those Yidden who spoke to Moshe? *"We are impure! We have been involved with a corpse. Oy! We cannot bring the Korbon PeSoch!"*

(9) JUST BE REAL

Don't you realize? Those words you said are **your** truth! By truthfully saying to Hashem, *"I don't want to pray",* you were (paradoxically) actually practicing the ultimate form of prayer; truthful prayer! So, this is the real Tefilloh! The reality of prayer! And indeed, any higher level or "holier" prayers wouldn't be **your** truth. And, as such, wouldn't be a true prayer!

(10) WITH TRUTHFUL WORDS, THE DOORS ARE ALWAYS OPEN

Those Yidden of the Door De'ah (Generation of Awareness) were aware of the power of "truthful words". They knew that just by being Real and open with Hashem: "We are impure..." this would shine a light on their solution. Other Mitzvos, (as mentioned,) might be limited. But they knew that "Korbon Peh-Soch" – which symbolizes An Offering of a personal prayer to Hashem - instills this capability within us and makes it everlastingly accessible.

(11) THE TORCHLIGHT OF TRUTH SHINES ON THE EXIT SIGN.

The Rebbe promises: Words of truth are a Light. A Light which will illuminate your situation to clearly see the way out of any difficult situation whatsoever. Just like the ones who were impure. Their words of truth: "We are impure..." lit up the solution to their predicament, when Hashem revealed to them the Mitzvoh of Pesach Sheini.

(12) PERSONALIZED LIGHTING SYSTEMS.

So too, let it be with us. Let us utilize the power of "words of truth". Then Hashem will reveal to us our own personal Peh-Soch Sheini. He will reveal to us the Light of true prayer, customized for us, to lead us out of our own personal, daily "Mitzrayims."

(13) MATZOH WITHIN THE CHOMETZ?

This is the difference of Pesach and Pesach Sheini. On Pesach, no Chometz is allowed. But on Pesach Sheini, although there is a Mitzvoh to eat Matzoh, nevertheless, Chometz is not forbidden. This symbolizes that through this concept of Pesach Sheini the purity of the Matzoh can be found even within the "impurity" of Chometz. By being Real and truthful with Hashem about your own **Chometz** and **impurities,** you are connecting to your own **Matzoh,** which is your **Purity** of truth.

(14) THE TRUTH OF ALL TRUTHS

Let us all strive to draw ourselves towards our **truth,** until all our truthful prayers will be combined together to reveal the Emes Le'amitoi – The Truth of all Truths – Hashem Elokim Emes – at the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu Bimheiroh Beyomeinu Omein!

(Adapted from Likutei Mohoran #112 with Toch Hanachal Beha'aloscho 5772)



DO THE CHAREIDIM COMMEMORATE THE SOLDIERS WHO WERE KILLED AL KIDDUSH HASHEM?

QUESTION

Dear Rabbi Lesser,

B"H, I am a Baal Teshuvah already many years, and have been blessed, beyond all my expectations, to marry and set up a Chareidi family, true to Hashem and His Torah.

There is one question that bothers me every now and then - particularly during this time of the year. I would really appreciate it if the Rav could set me straight on this…

As is well known, here, in Eretz Yisroel, we have a Memorial Day for all the soldiers who were killed or injured during the various wars waged here. I understand all too well just what this stands for…… I was also a Golani soldier. I also fought on the battlefield. I saw Death before my eyes. I lived through and saw my squad mates – my *friends* - being killed, or reported missing, G-d save us! So this subject strikes a very sensitive chord within me.

The thing that bothers me is that I never see any recognition of this amongst the Chareidim, Chassidim and choshuve Yidden. They don't take much notice of it at all. Do they *really* not feel pain at the thought of all those Neshomos who have fallen and are lost to us? Even if their observance of Torah and mitzvos was not all it should be, they were still our brothers – acheinu b'nei Yisroel. "kol Yisroel areivim zeh lozeh" – We Yidden are all responsible for each other. Should we not share in their pain? Shouldn't we be doing something to honour their memory?!

Please forgive the tone of this question. I do not mean it in an accusatory way, ch"v. I just need an answer for my own peace of mind….

ANSWER

Dear….

Your question is an extremely delicate and sensitive one. I will try to answer you with the reflections it has triggered in my heart. May Hashem help me to assuage your pain and to clarify this matter for you.

Each yiddishe soul is supported by all the others, collectively forming a single large structure. Each one is an important branch of the same huge tree. They are closely interconnected and interdependent; what affects one, affects them all. There is no doubt whatsoever that it is incumbent on every member of klal Yisroel to share in his friend's pain. He must empathise with his feelings of bereavement, participate in his mourning and endeavour to comfort him in any and every way possible.

The question is, how do we go about it? What practical course of action constitutes "participating in a friend's mourning"? In what way can we most effectively keep ourselves attuned to his pain and honour the memory of the deceased? Does a Minute of Silence really cut it? At an arranged time, a siren is sounded and, in cities across the land, everything comes to a halt. People get out of their cars; everyone stops what they are doing and stands in silence for one minute…… and then what? Does this adequately fulfil the obligation of Remembrance?

What was going on a few moments before The Minute? And what is meant to happen after it?!

As responsible brothers, is it not our duty to ensure that our fellow Jews avail themselves of their heritage, enjoying the life of eternal Torah goodness that is their due? What are we doing to fulfil that duty? Does it bother us enough that millions of Acheinu B'nei Yisroel are drifting around the world like sheep without a shepherd, knowing absolutely nothing about Yiddishkeit? And no-one even cares?

How unfortunate pitiable are those poor souls, killed at such a young age without having accumulated a respectable amount of Torah and Mitzvos during their lifetime. Taken prematurely from This World, they have nothing to bring along with them to the World to Come. True, when one is killed simply because he is a Yid, he is considered to have died al Kiddush Hashem – an extremely high madreigoh. However, these neshomos still require their individual tikkun, to make up what they are lacking in Torah and mitzvos.

Therefore, we have an ***ongoing*** obligation to remember these Nishmos Yisroel. We must ***continually*** remember how they suffered – and how they are still suffering. We must do whatever we can to help them, both materially and spiritually.

Designating one particular day in the year as "Yom Hazikoron" - where the entire country observes a Minute of Silence and imagines that they have thus discharged their duty of commemoration – is similar to the misguided attitude of the Goyim in various other lands, who invented the concept of "Father's Day" and "Mother's Day". They set aside one day a year to remember and honour Mom or Dad, while we Yidden have an obligation al pi Torah to remember and honour our parents constantly, each and every day – both during their lifetimes and after their passing on to the Next World.

The same is true with regard to commemorating those of our nation who fell in battle against our enemies, or who were injured in acts of terrorism. It is our duty to remember them constantly, to seek heavenly mercy for them and to perform acts l'ilui nishmosom. How wonderful would it be, if we could establish a new practice; if, on hearing the traditional siren, everyone was to take out a pocket Tehillim or Mishnayos and recite a kapitel or a perek for the neshomos of those killed or missing. Now, ***that*** would be a true memorial!

You should know, my dear friend, that this is the function and work of the Tzaddikim of every generation; they strive, at great cost to themselves to achieve a tikkun for the people of their generation, both for the souls of the living and the souls of the dead. They try, in all sorts of ways, to help them attain the merit of Torah and mitzvos, to bring them to Emunoh and Yiras Shomayim and to draw them under the canopy of the Wings of the Shechinoh. As the Rebbe explains (Likutei Moharan 1:65): The Tzaddik is the gardener and the master of the field, who cares for all the Jewish souls that are growing in the garden. He toils and labours continually, that they may bloom in the fullness of good health and merit to achieve their eternal tikkun. Fortunate is he who is privileged to have a close relationship with the true Tzaddikim, for through them, he will merit to attain his true tikkun, both in This World and in the Eternal World to Come.

Therefore, do not imagine for one minute that Chassidim and true Men of Consequence do not do anything to commemorate the Fallen Ones of our nation, or that they don't care about what happened– or about what is still happening - to them. Quite the opposite; they are extremely involved in this, doing whatever they can to help them, in ruchniyus and gashmiyus. Let us daven hard to Hashem Yisborach that there be complete achdus between all the souls of k'lal Yisroel, wherever they are – and that they all respect one another.

And then we will be able to prepare ourselves to usher in the Geuloh, and to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu – may it be soon!

Rabbi Yitzchok Lesser

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