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# Chambers of Light



Parshas
Pinchas
5784

## // Meeting the King in Pajamas

Once, they told Reb Nosson z"l that ehrliche Yidden say that during the 'Three Weeks' they experience spiritual decline - it's a time of atzvus and depression, making it difficult for avodas Hashem. Reb Nosson responded that the truth is exactly the opposite, these days are extremely opportune; it's very easy to become close to Hashem, even more so than any other time of the year. When the Shechinah is in galus with us, Hashem is very close to us, it's a special time for coming closer to Hashem through Torah and tefillah, making a residence for the Shechinah to dwell with us, thereby elevating us to reach great heights.

It is no coincidence that the yetzer hara incases these days with an illusion of atzvus and depression; such a great treasure will surely have many locks and seals, so that those unworthy won't benefit from it. But one who doesn't fool himself jumps and skips over all obstructions, increasing his tefillos and hisbodedus during these days to become truly close to Hashem and find him within all the concealment and coverings, such a person will surely find a wonderful otzar.

### // The King Arrives

Reb Nosson told a wonderful mashal: A regular healthy person who wants to meet the king needs to prepare extensively, he must thoroughly clean himself, and dress appropriately. After all the preparations he must knock on many doors, asking the king's acquaintances to intervene on his behalf for permission to enter. Even after all these efforts, he will only receive permission according to his personal status, one might only reach the outer courtyard, another with more connections might make his way to the entrance hall, and for a few minutes, receive a one-time opportunity to greet the king.

But if one of the king's men falls ill, and the king's mercy is aroused by his difficult situation, he will pay a visit to the man's house and enter his bedroom. We would find the king in all his glory sitting and spending time with a man who isn't even dressed properly to go out in the street, let alone as required for meeting the king himself.

### // Personal Geulah

When the Beis Hamikdash stood, we merited to ascend and fill our spiritual batteries, to charge our neshamos; today, the holy Shechinah comes to us. Hence with a strong ratzon, we can reach all the kedushah and closeness to Hashem that they would merit in the Beis Hamikdash. When a person does much hisbodedus during these days, asking Hashem to attain his personal geulah, to abandon all the taavos and rotton middos that overpower him, and to draw upon himself purity, through this he makes a home for the holy Shechinah, who is in galus, and merits special siyata dishmaya to be helped in all that he asks for.

Let's start anew in these special days, let's speak to Hashem in our mother tongue every day for a few minutes, according to our ability; with each word we will build a nest for the holy Shechinah and merit wonderful things.

### Gemstone

It is good for A yid to accustom himself to sighing over his not-good deeds, and amid his sighing, he should yearn and long to return to Hashem. Because through this sighing, He separates from being tied to a rope of impurity and becomes deeply attached to the rope of holiness and Kedushah.

(Likutei Moharan 1:109)

## Questions and Answers

# How Can One Recognize a True Tzaddik?

**Q**

Dear Rabbi Leser Shlita,

With gratitude to Hashem, I was fortunate to spend Shabbos Parshas Korach in Yavne'el, the Breslev City, and I enjoyed it immensely, especially what I was privileged to hear during Seuda Shlishis. Thank you for the encouragement and the light you give me and to all of Mohorosh's Talmidim.

I wanted to ask about the matter of Hisbatlus (self nullification) to tzaddikim. How is this supposed to be in practice? We see many people who followed one Rabbi or another and nullified themselves to him, and in the end, lost everything completely. I am essentially asking if it means that a person should not use their own reasoning, even if something seems illogical to them, and so forth. And whether a person who wants to receive from a tzaddik is allowed to say, in this matter, I think differently or like another Rabbi. Of course, I am referring to tzaddikim of our generation.

Thank you again for everything the Rabbi does for us.

**A**

B'ezras Hashem, Friday, Erev Shabbas Kodesh, Parshas Bolok, 13th of Tammuz, 5784.

I received your letter and was very happy to hear that you enjoyed the Shabbos you spent with us. May Hashem grant that you always draw holy vitality from the great light of our Rebbe z"l, and strengthen yourself in all matters of life.

Regarding your question about drawing close to tzaddikim and having faith in them—how this is practically done, and how a person can know if they are in a good and proper place and not being deceived, Heaven forbid.

This matter we have heard many times from Mohorosh z"l, and these are simple and clear things for anyone with common sense and a pure soul.

The main thing for a person is to look at "what you have in your hand." If you have merited to draw close to a certain tzaddik and have begun to learn Torah that you have never learned before, such as never having learned the entire Torah with the commentary of Rashi, never having completed ששה סדרי משנה, and let alone from studying Bavli, Yerushalmi, and Tosefta, and since you became close to this tzaddik you suddenly started learning shiurim in all parts of the Torah and slowly reached studies you never dreamed of in your life, this is a clear sign that you are in a good and proper place, and you should give your all to stay there and receive all the wonderful merchandise they offer.

On the other hand, if you have come to a place where they do not emphasize regular Torah study and even belittle it, this is a sign

that the whole place is a big illusion, and it is proper to distance yourself from there as far as possible.

And so it is regarding תפלה. If in the place you are, they emphasize the importance and necessity of praying all three prayers every day in Shul with a minyan, and also the concept of speaking every day to Hashem, in your native language, known to us as "Hisbodedus," know that this is a good and holy place. Stay there and you will constantly receive new inspiration and strength. But if such talks are not heard there, and they only sell all kinds of nonsense about this and that, it is worth running away from there because in the end, you will be greatly disappointed and realize after much time that "nothing remains in your hand," as our Rebbe Z"L said (Sichos Haran, 6) that the Yetzer Hora is like a person running around with a closed hand, and everyone thinks he has something good for them, and in the end, he opens his hand and has nothing in it.

Therefore, always check carefully what you have received from the tzaddik you want to draw close to. If you have received good and important things, strive to stay there and acquire for yourself everything you can, fulfilling "Here I will sit, for I desired it," and then your way will be right and you will succeed in all matters of life.

If a person still doesn't know how to measure their Torah and Tefillah, they should measure their Shalom Bayis (Marital peace). What does he receive from this tzaddik regarding Shalom Bayis? If the Tzaddik emphasizes Shalom bayis and teaches how to give one's all so that the home is a place of joy, calmness, and faith in Hashem and his Tzaddikim, this is also a clear sign that it is a holy and pure place, and one should do everything to connect there with all one's soul. But if these matters are belittled and one is taught crooked teachings that Shalom Bayis is an obstacle to serving Hashem, it is a place of the סטרא אחרא, and it is proper to flee from there as from fire.

Therefore, according to these simple and clear instructions, a person can easily discern if they are in a proper and holy place or not, and nothing in the world will be able to confuse them and disconnect them from their source of life.

May Hashem help us to always be close to tzaddikim and to always enjoy their great light.

Wishing you blessing and success in all your endeavors and have a שבת שלום ומבורך!

## Sparks

# Where Are You Running?

Reb Nosson zt"l had a childhood friend who wanted to run away, etc., because he was stuck in debt and couldn't find any other solution except to flee. Before running away, he decided to visit his dear friend Reb Nosson with whom he had learned in his youth, to say goodbye and pour his heart out. Reb Nosson told him: "let me advise you - if you must run, run only to Hashem Yisborach, 'Antloifen iz nor tzim Eibershten' (Running away is only to Hashem)." He listened, and in the end, he had a tremendous yeshuah.

Therefore, I say to you as well: You have found yourself in a serious difficulty, everyone is against you and wants to entrap you, etc. On the contrary, now is the best time to escape only to Hashem Yisborach. There's no more appropriate time than now, since you see that everyone is up against you, etc., and everyone has abandoned you. Now when you come to Hashem Yisborach, you will come with a lev emes, a genuine heart, and every word you speak with him will be with sincerity.

The Rebbe says (Likutei Moharan 1:112): When a person speaks words of truth, then the light of the Hashem shines for him, guiding him how to exit the darkness he is trapped in. Therefore, do not fall into despair, you are not alone; Hashem is with you, so very close to you. Completely subdue yourself to Hashem Yisborach, and then you will see open miracles that Hashem will do for you, truly defying the laws of nature.

(Asher BaNachal Letter 8780)

# Is He Jewish?!

The ship sailing long weeks between the port of Odessa and Turkey was privileged to host many talmidei chachamim, led by the Brisker Rav zt"l.

As befitting for Yirei Hashem, the Jewish passengers arranged in advance and discussed with the ship's leaders very clearly that the food being served during the long journey will be 100% kosher, as appropriate for Bnei Torah. And indeed the sailors kept their word. But the only one who refused to taste anything was the Brisker Rav zt"l. He instructed his family members and even the young children who were with him, not to eat the food coming from the ship's kitchen.

The captain noticed this and approached the Rav with an interpreter who could understand the Rav's language and translate it into Russian.

"May I ask the esteemed Rabbi why he refrains from eating our food?" The interpreter then conveyed the Rav's answer to the captain, "He's concerned about the kashrus of the food."

"Is that the issue?" the captain was surprised, "I have a solution!"

"Let the Rav send a trusted Talmid to the kitchen, who will take out a live fish from the pool of fish, and check its kashrus himself. Then in the corner of the kitchen, we have new dishes and pots that have never been used before. The Rav's Talmid can then peel potatoes and other vegetables and cook them himself in those new pots."

"This way, the Rav can be sure that the food is 100% kosher!" the captain concluded his offer to the Rav.

The Rav thought briefly about the proposal and replied: "Nu, it should be for the children..."

Before sending his talmid to carry out the mission, he warned him: "Make sure to light the gas yourself, so we don't stumble upon bishul akum- food cooked by a non jew. If you see that the non jew has already lit the stove, turn it off and light it again yourself."

The talmid quickly went down to the ship's kitchen to fulfill the tzaddik's will. Seeing the stove already burning, he remembered the Rav's warning. He turned off the gas and lit it again.

The captain, who was in the kitchen, asked: "Why are you turning off the gas and lighting it again?" Before the talmid had a chance to find the right words to explain, the captain continued: "Are you concerned about bishul akum-food cooked by a non jew?! I'm Jewish!"...

When the talmid returned to the Rav with the kosher delicacies, he told the Brisker Rav what the captain just told him.

"Vos? Er iz a Yid?!- What? He's Jewish?!"... the Brisker Rav reacted with great excitement.

"I was very troubled," the Brisker Rav revealed, "As soon as he arrived and was so concerned about my children, I wasn't at ease. Why was this non jew so worried about the children? What were his intentions behind his concern?

Now that I've heard he's Jewish, I'm at ease."

This is the way a Jew acts, he opens his heart and shows concern for another Jew. He tries to find a way to help him fill his spiritual and physical needs. Even a jew who is far-removed from yiddishkeit cannot extinguish the flame burning in his Jewish heart.

(Asher BaNachal Letter 26046)