



# BUILDING A SANCTUARY IN THE HEART

## INNER GROWTH

In *Parshas Vayigash*, Yosef reveals to his brothers: “I am Yosef, is my father still alive?” The brothers were deeply ashamed. The words of Chazal about this verse are well-known: “Woe to us from the Day of Judgment, woe to us from the Day of Rebuke. If Yosef was only the youngest of the brothers yet they could not face him, surely this will be in the Day of Judgment, where man will have to give an accounting before Hashem.”

The brothers realized that the reality wasn't how it had seemed to them. It quickly dawned on them that their opinion of Yosef had been incorrect. It was now apparent to them that the reality was not how it seemed on the surface.

There are deeper and deeper layers to life which we can see, for Hashem has created the world with great depth. Even when people gain a more mature perspective towards life, they don't always see the truth in front of them. Even if a person merited to grow up in a Torah home, and he knows that the purpose of life is to do Hashem's will, learn Torah with exertion, and do the *mitzvos*, he doesn't always see the truth of what is in front of him.

Chazal say, “Woe to the creations who are seeing, but they don't even know what they are seeing.” It seems to a person that he is

seeing the world, when he views it with his physical eyes. But he does not realize that he may not even be seeing the reality in front of him.

The true way to live is that as one increases his Torah learning and dedication to *mitzvos*, his being slowly becomes purified with this, and his perspective towards life begins to change. This change will cause him to improve both externally and internally. He will want to keep improving his Torah learning and *mitzvos*, which is his external layer, and as he becomes more and more purified from that, one can uncover his internal layer, which can see newer perspectives towards life.

This is the meaning of true spiritual growth: When the changes that one experiences in life are mainly internal, not just external and outward changes. It is when one's perception matures, so he sees a more inner perspective towards things, seeing and comprehending things much differently than how he did a few years ago.

When one has this kind of true spiritual growth, his inner perspective will see a world in which nothing matters except for the will of Hashem. ■ excerpt from the sefer *Bilvavi on the Parshah*

**QUESTION** What is the way to reach *bitachon*? What does a person need in order to keep having *bitachon*? What prevents a person from having *bitachon* and how can a person overcome those obstacles?

**ANSWER** Externally, it is by being stubborn, and internally, it is to have pure, trusting, unquestioning *emunah* in Hashem. Lack of inner resilience and lack of *emunah* prevents a person from holding strong with his *bitachon* (and “go and learn the rest”).

**QUESTION** The Rav said that if a person doesn’t disconnect emotionally from Internet and media connection by the moment before the *Geulah* arrives, even if it’s just filtered Internet, the person will not get into *Olam HaBa*. It seems then that most of *Klal Yisrael* won’t get into *Olam HaBa* (*chas v’shalom*)! How could the Rav say something so harsh like this?

**ANSWER** When a person remains connected to Internet and media devices, he contradicts [and blocks] Mashiach’s light. If a person has any *zechus* (merit) of his own, or if he has the *zechus* of a *tzaddik* to help him, he will merit to disconnect from his emotional connection to the Internet before Mashiach comes. But when a person remains with his connection to Internet and he doesn’t want to part from it, he cannot receive the light of Mashiach, because the *tumah* of the Internet cannot go together with Mashiach’s light, for they are in contradiction with each other [the greatest *tumah* versus the greatest *kedushah*].

**QUESTION** Why is the Rav saying that our main *avodah* now is to separate from the Internet and connection to media? Why isn’t our

main *avodah* instead to *daven* that all of *Klal Yisrael* should be *zocheh* to the *Geulah*?

**ANSWER** There is what we need to do, and there is also what to daven for. At first we need to do our responsibility to Hashem, and only after that can we *daven*. Otherwise, we are like a person immersing in a mikveh while holding a *sheretz* (remaining impure). After a person cuts off all of his connection to anything to do with Internet, he may *daven* for the rest of *Klal Yisrael*. But a person cannot remain connected to the *tumah* of the Internet and at the same time *daven*.

3) The Rav mentioned the words of *sefer Chessed L’Avraham* that if the *Geulah* happens through *middas hadin*, there will only be 7000 Jews who will be alive to see the *Geulah*. So how can we not be afraid of the *Geulah* and have *bitachon* in Hashem, if most of *Klal Yisrael* might not live to see the *Geulah chas v’shalom*?

**ANSWER** One has to do whatever he can, and at the same time, have *bitachon* in Hashem.

**QUESTION** Even if a Jew doesn’t merit *Olam HaBa*, what does that mean? Isn’t there a deep part of the soul (called the *Yechidah*) which lives forever and it can never be destroyed (because it is intrinsically connected with Hashem)? Is it only the outer layers of our soul which don’t make it to *Olam HaBa* when we don’t purify those layers of our being, but the *Yechidah* part of us will never go lost? And, accordingly, all of the *avodah* and *teshuvah* and fixing that we need to do is only on the outer layers of our soul (which are able to become destroyed if we don’t purify them), but the inner essence of each of our souls (our *Yechidah*) always makes it to *Olam HaBa*?

**ANSWER** Correct.

**QUESTION** Concerning the Rav's words that people who don't give up their Internet connection before Mashiach comes won't get into *Olam HaBa* - aren't there *tzaddikim* in every generation who do *hamtakas dinim*, who sweeten all of the judgments on people and who atone for the sins of the generation?

**ANSWER** *Hamtakas dinim* (sweetened judgment) gives a person the *zechus* to disconnect from the internet. But if a person doesn't disconnect from the Internet, he isn't able to receive a *hamtakas dinim*.

**QUESTION** Why can't we enable the entire generation (even those who remain connected to Internet by the time Mashiach comes) to be worthy of the *Geulah* by davening to Hashem that every single Jew has a *nekuda tova* (good point in him) as Rebbi Nachman taught, which changes around all judgments on the person because Hashem sees the person as an entirely different person when we remind Hashem of someone else's *nekudah tovah*?

**ANSWER** Reminding Hashem of another person's *nekudah tovah* is in the category of a "spark" of holiness that can help another person, but the *Geulah* is not a "spark" of holiness, it is a complete spiritual light. Although a small spark of holiness is very powerful and it can burn up evil, the *Geulah* is a complete "light" of holiness and not a mere spark of holiness (which is only a partial level of spiritual light). And therefore in order to be *zocheh* to the *Geulah*, a person needs to be worthy of its light [by disconnecting himself from all media use] - merely having a "spark" of holiness going

for him won't be enough for a person to make it to the *Geulah*.

**QUESTION** Is the Rav's approach is only for those who have very strong character or for people who are at least very spiritually inclined?

**ANSWER** Those who are mainly living their lives *shelo lishmah* (not for the sake of Heaven) are more interested in pleasure, and they will not connect that much to the [Bilvavi] approach.

**QUESTION** I have a general question about the entire deep, inner and truthful approach of the Rav, and I hear this question from other people as well, who sometimes struggle with the Rav says and they have a hard time accepting what the Rav is saying. Could it be that the Rav's approach only works for people in *Eretz Yisrael*, and not for Americans? Because after all, the Rav did grow up in *Eretz Yisrael*, so perhaps we can assume that the Israeli audience can more easily handle the truthful approach of the Rav, whereas Americans have a harder time with the truthful approach of the Rav. Also, the Rav often demands a lot of intense deep spiritual growth from people. Maybe Americans just can't handle this? Because we in America grow up surrounded with *tumah* and mixed with the *goyim*, and we're much more affected by secular culture than our Israeli counterparts. And in America, the more popular approach that works for people here is to focus on the positive, to feel good about ourselves, to constantly get *chizuk*. Though many people feel that the Rav is speaking the truth, a lot of people in America find the Rav to be too much for them, and they have a hard time accepting what the Rav says.

So, basically my question is: When the Rav speaks, is the Rav mainly addressing an Israeli audience, who can better handle what the Rav is saying, as opposed to Americans, who can't really handle as much what the Rav says? And in particular, is the Rav's approach mainly for those who are *bnei aliyah*, who are far and few between? Of course, any person on any level can gain from the Rav's psychological insights about the human soul, but I'm asking about the very truthful and inner approach of *avodas Hashem* which the Rav talks about. Can this approach also apply for those in America...? *Yasher Koach* to the Rav for all of the holiness and purity which the Rav bestows us with.

**ANSWER** Even in *Eretz Yisrael*, most people are not searching for this [truthful] approach. There is never any one way of *avodas Hashem* that works for everyone, and this way [the "Bilvavi" *derashos* and *sefarim*] is only one of the ways of *avodas Hashem*. Each person needs to find the way that is suitable for him. Often, those living in *chutz l'aretz* are not looking for a "way" of *avodas Hashem*, and they are instead looking for a 'compromise' – they are looking for a way to have the best of both This World and the Next World at once. But there is no such way.

The way of *avodas Hashem* which is emphasized [in the "Bilvavi" approach] is not in order to "demand more growth" from people. It is just to clarify and become precise about what we face, and that, in and of itself, can demand something from us.... ■ from the archive of Q & A

Parents who learn to view their children as being *neshamos*, G-dly souls, will have a totally different behavior towards them, on all levels. When a parent is about to raise his hand to hit the child when the child has done something wrong, he will think twice before hitting him, remembering that the child is a *neshamah*, a piece from Above.

(This does not contradict the necessity to sometimes hit the child, when the child has done something that requires this punishment. But we must remember that even when the child should get hit, he should only be hit when it is necessary, and never when it isn't).

There are people who work with fashioning earth, others work with copper, others with silver, and some individuals get to fashion gold. But when we raise our children, we must be aware of their priceless value. We must know that it is not enough to love them naturally with a parent's love - although that, too, is important and necessary. Rather, there is something deeper here, which is priceless: Every child contains a *neshamah*, which has a connection to the Creator of the world. Therefore, as parents, we need to honor them just for that very reason.

In that way, our entire approach towards educating our children will be with a totally different attitude, for we will be trying to add the *neshamah* dimension into all that we do.

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