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When Rav Shlomo Wolbe zt”l asked Rav Chatzkel (Rav Yechezkel Levenstein) zt”l what important information he should tell the students in his yeshiva, Rav Chatzkel said, “Tell them there is a Master of the World!”

Much later, Rav Wolbe understood the significance of this comment.

Rav Chatzkel lived with a tremendous feeling of closeness to Hashem at all times, and insisted that all who learn Torah strive to attain the same feeling. It is possible for one to learn Torah, and yet, fulfill the pasuk (Yirmeyahu 12:2), “You (Hashem) are close to their mouths but far from their interior” and (ibid. 2:8), “Those who have grasped the Torah do not know me.” This can happen if one learns Torah and feels that although the Torah is here, Hashem is far away somewhere.

The reason we are informed that Hashem’s presence is here is that we are supposed to intend to connect to Him when learning Torah. As the Chazon Ish wrote, “The main thing is to remember before Whom you toil in Torah.” If one approaches learning with no thought, there is a halachic problem: Torah-ordained mitzvos require prior intent.

Before learning, one must spend a minute thinking about why he is learning. If one does this, he will become much closer to Hashem through his learning. This is the reason we must learn Torah every free moment — through it, one can cleave to Hashem at all times.

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