

BILVAVI

**MY
HEART
ASKS**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

PARSHAS VAYEITZE 5782

ISSUE 215

DOES EVERYONE NEED TO LIVE IN ERETZ YISRAEL?	2
THE PROBLEMS OF OUR GENERATION 5781.....	2
SPIRITUAL PANDEMIC OF 5782	3
PATHS OF ROCHEL & LEAH.....	4
YITZCHOK DAVENING FOR RIVKAH	5
LEAH'S TEFILLOS	5
THE PNIMIYUS OF YOSEF & YEHUDAH	6
TZEDAKAH MIRACLES TODAY	7
SELF-CARE	8
THE ENERGY BODY	9
CHIP IMPLANTS & ROBOTS	9
I CAN'T BE MYSELF AROUND OTHERS	11
DIFFICULTY WITH AHAVAS YISRAEL	11
BRESLEV & BEYOND	12
UNDERSTANDING THE BRESLEV PATH.....	12
STILL SEARCHING FOR A REBBI	14
MENTALLY COMMUNICATING WITH A TZADDIK.....	14
WHAT KASHRUS DOES THE RAV USE?.....	15
ON AN AVREICH BECOMING A SHADCHAN	15
LOOK-ALIKES	16
SAVING UP MONEY VS. BITACHON	16
21 QUESTIONS ON AVODAS HASHEM	17
DAVENING BY GRAVES OF TZADDIKIM	22
SMILING VS. FLATTERY	25
LACK OF MOTIVATION & THE SOLUTION	26
CLARIFYING THE DHR HACHAIM'S VIEW ON BECHIRAH	27
TZADDIKIM WHO ARE ABOVE TIME & SPACE	28
TZADDIKIM WHO DAVEN LATE.....	29
QUESTIONS ON RAV MORGENSTERN'S APPROACH	30
MASHIACH BEN YOSEF & MASHIACH BEN DOVID	31
THE TEN MARTYRS	32
GUIDANCE FOR LEARNING KABALLAH	32
KABALLAH – KESER D'RADLA & MASHIACH'S PATH	34

DOES EVERYONE NEED TO LIVE IN ERETZ YISRAEL?

Since there are three groupings of soul roots, those rooted in *makom* (place), or in *zman* (time) or in *nefesh* (soul, inwardness), does *yishuv Eretz Yisrael* (living in Eretz Yisrael) apply only to those who have a soul root in “place” and therefore they need to serve Hashem in the main place in the world for serving Hashem (Eretz Yisrael), whereas those who have a soul root of *nefesh* (soul, inwardness) doesn’t need Eretz Yisrael that much, since they are meant to serve Hashem mainly on an inner level and they don’t need any outer factors such as a special place, in order for them to serve Hashem?

ANSWER

Eretz Yisrael is needed for everyone, but those who have a soul root in *makom* (place) need it even more.

THE PROBLEMS OF OUR GENERATION 5781

There is so much lack of clarity and difference of opinion about what we need to do in America (and the question probably also applies to Jews living in Eretz Yisrael), and according to what I understand from the words of the Rav, all of the issues today that we are facing are from the mixture of influences in our world [which are coming from the dominance of “Erev Rav”], which causes even Torah observant people to commit acts of *chilul Hashem*, inciting anti-semitism from the *goyim*, and thereby causing damage to their fellow Jewish brethren. What can we do about this? Do we need to fight this? Or should we just go inward into ourselves and not care at all about what’s going on around us, and we should just strengthen ourselves in Torah study and davening, and to focus more on personal growth and becoming closer to Hashem?

ANSWER

To our great pain, the generation today is full of a vast array of severe issues. The problems you are mentioning are just a few of them. But they are not even the main issue of today. And because we don’t have the capacity or energy to deal with every single issue taking place today in our generation, each person as an individual needs to focus on either fixing his worst personal weaknesses, or at least with the primary issue that we are facing collectively.

The primary issue which Jews are facing collectively in this generation is that we are too close to the non-Jewish lifestyle, and especially the media, which is the *Shaar HaNun d'tumah*, the worst level of impurity itself – and that includes everything else involved with media influence. The *tumah* of the media is exactly what blocks the light of Mashiach from being revealed upon the world, and it has already brought down tens of thousands of *neshamos* into the *tehom* (spiritual oblivion). It has had a devastating effect even on the most Torah observant people, on almost everyone without exception, causing everyone to take a downhill slide in their general level *ruchniyus* – for some the fall was less, and for some the fall was more.

SPIRITUAL PANDEMIC OF 5782

During corona the Rav guided us through that period. I wanted to know, will the Rav be giving a derasha soon on the topic again, in light of the current situation, and are any other additional insights that the Rav has regarding the current situation?

ANSWER

In the last year, the situation has changed. At first it was unthinkable for people to own *treif* internet devices. Then it became permitted for work purposes. Then it became accepted for everyone else [even not for work purposes] to use internet-devices. Then it came to the point where even a “normal” “*avreich*” “is allowed” to own such devices and that it’s all “normal.” And now it has gotten to the point where, if a person isn’t willing to own such a device in his possession, he is considered a “*machmir*” (very strictly observant) and “extreme”. This can be compared to a dead person, who is at first warm and then cold. This spiritual coldness [indifference] was all a result of what corona brought about, because “corona” is from the word *kor*, “cold”.

That is the situation now, *Rachmana Litzlan*, the level of the situation of the generation today. And because of this, there is no “ark of Noach” to take shelter in amidst the Flood we are in. In the Ark of Noach there was a closed window, but today the window is open to everything, ‘the size of an entranceway’ and even bigger than that. And therefore the yeshivos, which used to be called the Ark of Noach of today, can no longer be called an Ark of Noach. Because the

‘opening’ is much bigger than the enclosure [like we find in the laws of succah]. It is upon each person to work with himself, towards his Creator.

PATHS OF ROCHEL & LEAH

When I learn Torah I enjoy very much to start the *sugya* with *chiddushim*, and when I daven I want to feel more and more “light”, to daven with greater feeling. [Based on what I understand about the two different paths of “Rochel” and “Leah” in avodas Hashem which are the roots of a person’s *shoresh neshamah*], I think that my shoresh neshamah is rooted in “Rochel”. Yet I also feel very drawn to the Rav’s path, specifically because the Rav explains the inner workings of the soul and gives a clear path in avodas Hashem. It seems to me that the Rav’s shoresh neshamah is in “Leah”. My question is: Is the Rav a Leah-type neshamah? Also, if I am right that I’m a Rochel-type neshamah then why do I feel so connected to the Rav’s path in avodas Hashem which seems to be a path of “Leah”?

ANSWER

From your wording, it is very recognizable that you learned the sefer *B’Yam Darkecha*, which explains the different types of neshamos that are rooted in “Rochel” and “Leah”. You think that your neshamah is rooted in “Rochel” and still you feel connected to the path of the other types of neshamos, which are “Leah.”

The root of this entire matter (the different paths of Rochel and Leah) is in the Arizal’s *Eitz Chaim* (38:3), as follows: “*Now it will be explained the connection between Leah and Rochel....Rochel begins her Keser (crown, highest point) from the chazeh (chest) and below, until where the feet (endpoint) of Zeir Anpin ends, so that at the ikvei Leah (“heels” or endpoint of the area called Leah), that is where the Keser of Rochel begins, descending below the heels of Leah....Rochel is vision and Leah is humility....The feet of Leah are clothed in the Keser (head or highest point) of Rochel.*” [translation here has been abbreviated and condensed].

That is the ‘meeting, connecting point’ between the neshamos rooted in Rochel with the neshamos rooted in Leah.

Understand that Rochel was first rooted in *Chazeh* (chest, middle) of *Zeir Anpin*, and that is the place of the heart, the place of emotion, and that is why the neshamos rooted in Rochel

lean towards emotion. But Leah's main place is in the head of *Zeir Anpin*, and that is why the neshamos rooted in Leah are more inclined towards intellect. However, the "heels" of Leah are found at the place of emotion, where the heart is. By the neshamos rooted in that place, the heels are not heels that don't feel, but heels that can feel, and they can feel precisely in their heel. In the side of ruination, the *ikvesa d'meshicha* (heels before Mashiach), from Rochel's perspective the heel is found below where it is touching the place of evil, but from Leah's perspective, the heel is by the heart. Understand this very, very well.

The clarity of the Leah-neshamos shines through their "heel", a clarity of intellect that extends to the clarity of emotion, for this is the heel that is found at the heart, and it shines for the Rochel-neshamos who are thirsty for the emotions of the heart, because that is where their root is, in the *chazeh* (chest) of *Zeir Anpin*, the place of the heart.

YITZCHOK DAVENING FOR RIVKAH

Why didn't Yitzchok daven for Rivkah until he saw that she was barren? He had many years to daven for her even before reaching the conclusion that she was barren (which was 10 years of waiting). Can we learn from this that a person can assume that Hashem lets nature run its course and there is no need to daven unless a person is in need of a miracle?

ANSWER

Certainly a person needs to daven at the beginning of every situation. Yitzchok also did so. But later he increased his tefillos even more, because he saw that a greater level was needed in order for them to bear children. As Rashi says, "Vayeetar" means that he greatly increased his tefillos. (See Beraishis Rabah 53:5 and Gur Aryeh ibid.)

LEAH'S TEFILLOS

Why did Leah allow herself to go along with Lavan's plan to trick Yaakov into marrying her? Why was she allowed to cause pain to Yaakov Avinu?

ANSWER

See *Daas Zekainim* (Beraishis 29:25) that Leah said to Yaakov the next morning, "I learned from you how to resort to trickery, since you tricked your father Yitzchok to get the

blessings.” Especially because she knew through *ruach hakodesh* that she would marry him in the future, and therefore she permitted herself to do this. Even more so, it was because Yehudah, the root of Mashiach, would come from her, and Mashiach’s ancestry always comes about in a roundabout way into the world.

QUESTION

2) Why was Leah originally supposed to marry Esav? Was this a punishment on her? Perhaps from a previous lifetime? Or was she supposed to give a *tikkun* to Esav?

ANSWER

Esav represents the “kings of Edom who died”, the fallen “*Binah*”, and Leah is called *Binah* [thus she was supposed to repair Esav].

QUESTION

3) When Leah davened that she shouldn’t marry Esav, was this because she knew that it was the ratzon Hashem from her to daven to break the decree on her and she had bitachon that Hashem would answer her tefillos? Or did she daven to Hashem to break the decree in spite of the fact that the ratzon Hashem was that she should marry Esav?

ANSWER

[She davened not to marry Esav because she knew] it was the ratzon Hashem from her.

THE PNIMIYUS OF YOSEF & YEHUDAH

The *Sfas Emes* says that the argument between Yosef and Yehudah during their confrontation in Egypt was concerning the paths of Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Dovid, and when Yehudah came forwards towards Yosef, it symbolized the unity between the two Mashiachs in the future. The *Sfas Emes* says that Yosef’s path represents Torah, the mind, while Yehudah represents Tefillah, the heart. Where do we see that Yehudah emphasized the heart, Tefillah? We find that Yehudah established a yeshivah in Goshen, which is Torah, but we do not find how Yehudah emphasized Tefillah. Also, where do we find that Yosef emphasized the mind/Torah more than the heart/Tefillah? If anything, it seems that Yosef was more connected with the heart, because he remained connected to his father’s image while he

was in Egypt, and this is a matter of the heart. So how does Yehudah represent the heart (Tefillah) and how does Yosef represent the mind (Torah)?

ANSWER

Yosef is called the trait of *Yesod*. The Torah says “*These are the offspring of Yaakov, Yosef*”, because Yaakov gave over to Yosef everything that he had received in Torah. Of Yosef it was said that he was the wisest ruler – he had great understanding in Torah that surpassed anyone else. Yosef is called the “crown” of his brothers, he is the “head” – a symbol of the mind, Torah. That is what made him worthy also of receiving the firstborn status. Yehudah though is from the word *hodaah*, which is Tefillah. The last three blessings of Shemoneh Esrei are called *hodaah* and they are the root of the Shemoneh Esrei. [In Kaballah], Yehudah represents *Malchus* or *Nukva*, which is *Tefillah*. He established a “*Bais Talmud*”, which actually means Tefillah, because one needs to daven in the place where he learns, Tefillah and Torah together in one place, as the Gemara says that in the place where there is *rinah* (Tefillah) there should be Torah.

TZEDAKAH MIRACLES TODAY

Today there is a phenomenon in which people are seeing *yeshuos* (salvations) just from giving *tzedakah* (charity). On one hand, we can see from this how *tzedakah* saves from death, and this is like seeing the *he'aras panim* of Hashem, but on the other hand it is *hester panim*, because it gives the impression that people don't need to do *teshuvah* or improve their ways, and that they can just ‘get away with it’ by giving *tzedakah*. What is the right attitude about this?

ANSWER

There is a principle taught by the sefer *Toldos Yaakov Yosef* (a student of the Baal Shem Tov) that everything is in the secret of the *parah adumah*: It contaminates the pure, and purifies the impure. It is the same with this. For those on a higher level of *emunah*, seeing *yeshuos* from giving *tzedakah* is actually *hester panim* for them, but for those who are on a lower level of *emunah*, seeing miracles and salvations from giving *tzedakah* is a form of *he'aras panim* for them. Chazal said that “The Jewish people will not be redeemed except in the merit of charity.”

SELF-CARE

When a person is in middle of learning, davening, or hisbodedus and he feels a sudden physical need for comfort, eating, coffee, relaxing, going outside, or chatting, or simply just wanting to do nothing, is this always bittul Torah or is it a sign that the person really needs to unwind? Is the body rebelling against *ruchniyus* in these scenarios? Many people can't sit and learn an entire *seder* without interruptions and they feel a need to "schmooze" in middle – perhaps these are their basic emotional needs and therefore there's nothing wrong with how they are acting and it's not *bittul Torah* for them. Is that true?

ANSWER

If a person will lose his yishuv hadaas (basic level of calmness) at a noticeable level if he doesn't do any of these things (chatting, relaxing, eating, coffee, etc.) then he is acting above his level. Usually this will also cause an imbalance between the abilities in his soul. Also, there are some who need to chat a lot, much more than the average need, and there are also those who can't sit and learn uninterrupted for long and they need to take breaks. Every person has to act according to the level he is on right now.

QUESTION

2) Why does growth depend on inner work and doing what our souls need? Shouldn't it all depend on much sleep and nutrition and exercise we are getting? If a person would sleep enough, eat right and exercise properly, he will have the physical and emotional well-being to learn and do mitzvos properly. Why does he need to do more than this?

ANSWER

The body needs to eat and sleep and be taken care of [in order to be healthy and so that we can serve Hashem], but our soul's health depends on balancing our four elements.

QUESTION

3) Does physical exercise like running or walking quickly or brisk walks during the day the best antidote to remove sadness? And what about going to the gym? Is this all needed in order to serve Hashem properly, or is it the way of the goyim because it focuses exclusively on the body and on the needs of the lower soul (nefesh behaimis)?

ANSWER

This is a way that works “from below to above”, it is to affect our soul by taking care of the body. It needs to be thought about carefully and how to be done within the boundaries of *kedushah*. In contrast, working with our four elements works directly with the soul.

THE ENERGY BODY

Does the body have a “soul” of its own, besides for the *nefesh habehaimis* (animal soul)? Are we able to “listen to the messages of the body” and work with it? There are Eastern methods of healing in which a person can “speak” to the body, where the body’s “energy” can give “permission” for the person to ask it questions and get answers. And there are also methods where the practitioner can say certain words and the body makes a subtle movement in reaction to certain words. Is this a separate area from the soul or is it part of understanding the body?

ANSWER

Everything contains a “soul” in it which revitalizes it. A still, inanimate creation has in it the soul of a *nefesh domemes* (a soul that keeps the inanimate creation in existence), a plant is revitalized by *nefesh hatzomachas* (a soul that gives life to the plant enabling it to grow), an animal is kept alive by *nefesh chiyuni* (a life-force that sustains it), and a person is kept alive by *nefesh maskeles* (intelligence). The body contains the first three mentioned [but it does not contain its own intelligence, which is unique only to the soul itself]. Eastern medicine is mainly involved with *nefesh hatzomachas*, the same life-force that enables nurturing and growth [which is contained even in plants].

CHIP IMPLANTS & ROBOTS

Technology is accelerating at a dizzying pace and soon there will be developments unlike anything we have ever seen. There is a technology being developed to surgically implant a computer chip in people which would enable us to learn and educate ourselves through the information on the chip (for example, a person would be able to know all of Shas just with just one click). The chip can also learn about the reproductive process and it can transfer this

information to robots (at this point, this particular capability is still at a primitive stage) and it can thereby make other robotic people using this information.

What should be our perspective towards this?

ANSWER

Concerning the future, it says, *“And the earth will be filled with knowledge of Hashem as water fills the sea...”* This means that the spiritual illumination of the highest point, *Keser*, which is called the “crown of the King”, will be revealed, and this will cause advanced wisdom to spread all over the world. Not only will advanced wisdom spread to people, but it will also spread to animals, plants and inanimate objects.

This particular concept comes from a revelation of spiritual light that will be in the future, and it is already starting to materialize even now, in the era of the end of days. In the last few decades, computers were able to fasten the pace of all work by using information that was entered and stored in the computer. Nowadays, computer capabilities advanced to be able to have “computer intelligence”. At first, this intelligence becomes available to humans, and later it is able to spread even to animals (i.e. the rooster, which is given *binah*, understanding, to differentiate between night and day). And now this intelligence has spread to even the stillest forms of creation [i.e. the body].

This is really because the spiritual light of the future, which will cause advanced intelligence to spread throughout the world, has come down closer to our material world, and now it is reaching even the lowest level creations (inanimate objects). The greater the burst of intelligence from above, the further down it will reach, until it reaches even the lowest level creations: the stillest creations. Part of this unfolding process of advanced intelligence is the technology of this computer chip that is being developed for all kinds of many uses. When the spiritual light behind all of this advanced intelligence will radiate completely, the light of Mashiach will be revealed. It is already starting to shine partially, and it is gradually increasing.

I CAN'T BE MYSELF AROUND OTHERS

For a long time now I feel like being in yeshiva “stifles” me and places me into a profound exile, in which I can’t be who I truly am. When I daven in yeshiva I feel like I can’t daven with all my heart and that I can’t shuckle as I would like to. I am always busy thinking “What do others think about me?” I don’t know what I should do – does Hashem want me to just be a normal person and be like everyone else in the “chevra” who aren’t into deep thought like I am and who aren’t into pnimiyus, who are just learning 3 regular normal sedarim a day and they feel fine as long as they keep to all the sedarim knowing that they’re doing what’s expected of them and that’s it? Do I need to be that way also...? Understandably every person has to become a yachid but that would mean that a person needs to separate from the chevra, especially if he’s beginning to become more independent and original in his ruchniyus as he would like to, but then he’s deemed strange and weird in the eyes of others and he’s not doing what’s socially acceptable. So what should a person do when he’s a more internal kind of person and he wants to be more himself but it’s not socially acceptable amongst his friends to be himself and he would just be weird in their eyes if he starts being more himself?

ANSWER

It is forbidden for one to hold himself back from his personal share on this world. But a person needs to hide himself a bit from others as much as possible. Every so often he should daven somewhere else [where he can be more ‘himself’ when he davens]. He can also consider other kinds of change, as long as those changes don’t cause him to lose his balance with his family, and as long as he considers all the details and doesn’t make drastic changes that will throw him off balance (because sometimes, changes can be more damaging to the person than any gains that he will have from them).

DIFFICULTY WITH AHAVAS YISRAEL

It is difficult for me to love another person who has different mentalities (*de’os*) and views (*hashkafos*) than mine. What is the solution to this?

ANSWER

You need to understand that there are other truthful viewpoints which are no less valid than yours. Your mentalities and viewpoints are understandable according to your particular *seichel* (intellect) which Hashem has given you, and had Hashem given you a different kind of *seichel*, you would think in line with that other *seichel*. That is why you need to gain different ways of thinking that are each truthful.

BRESLEV & BEYOND

On one hand I get a lot of chizuk from learning the sefarim of Reb Nosson of Breslov, but on the other hand it's hard for me to digest the whole "tzaddik" concept, which is such a fundamental concept in his teachings. He says that if someone isn't close to a tzaddik, his emunah is damaged. What I don't understand is that many tzaddikim were not close to the types of tzaddikim whom Reb Nosson is describing, so how are we to understand this? Is it all an exaggeration chas v'shalom? Anyone who tastes his sefarim gets revitalized and he sees the truth in it and how futile this world is, and it's hard to imagine that R' Nosson was mistaken. On the other hand, it's hard for my heart to digest the concepts taught in his sefarim.

ANSWER

According to Breslev, this is the only way to serve Hashem [by being connected to a tzaddik]. But many of our Gedolim held that this was only one of the ways, and that it was not the only way. If we want to understand this more deeply, the path of Breslev is rooted in *Chochmah d'Radl"a*, which is when the *Shaar HaNun d'Kedushah* (50th gate of holiness) nurses from the *Chochmah d'Radl"a*. That is the "secret of opposites", which is the very concept of the *Radl"a*, where opposites become integrated together. That is why there are many teachings of Reb Nosson that show "opposite logic." Above this level is the light of the *Keser d'Radl"a*, which is above the light of the *tzaddik*. Understand this.

UNDERSTANDING THE BRESLEV PATH

In a recent response [16121 – "Understanding The Breslev Path"] the Rav explained that the differing views between Rebbi Nachman and his student (Reb Nosson) and other Gedolim were all "their words and their words are the words of the living G-d". So the question is:

Should a person be busy trying to make the tzaddik known to the world, or should he be busy with his own person avodah? How can a person integrate the path of Breslev with all other ways of serving Hashem? Can a person ignore certain statements in the Bresslever sefarim and just learn the divrei Torah? That doesn't seem to be possible. Here are some examples. Rebbi Nosson says that there is a war of Amalek in every generation, and that Amalek tries to distance the tzaddikim from everyone and therefore the main avodah of a Jew is to come close to the tzaddik. When you look at other paths in avodas Hashem you can see that they focus on different things and it seems that they did not agree at all with Rebbi Nosson that drawing close to the tzaddik is so important. Would a Bresslever chassid be allowed, or perhaps he is even obligated, to believe that the path of Breslev is the only way to serve Hashem? Or would he, too, have to believe that there are other ways too of serving Hashem, even though the Bresslever sefarim of Rebbi Nachman and Rebbi Nosson are saying that their path was the only path of serving Hashem?

ANSWER

Every person has to choose for himself a *rebbe* and then act accordingly. In every argument between our Gedolim, it is always “their words and their words are the words are the living G-d.” At the root, it is all *emes* (truth). It is just that in the world of action that we live in, each person needs to choose which path is most appropriate for him (that is, if he is *zocheh* to reach his own personal *cheilek*/share). A person is not able to choose to do all of the paths of *avodas Hashem*, because that is not possible. Rather, a person must believe that all of these ways are truthful, and practically speaking, he should connect to the way that's most suitable to his own soul. One has to believe that all the words of our Sages and tzaddikim are all true. Part of what they said is understandable, and part of what they said is not understandable to us. We do not have to understand everything they said, and certainly we cannot understand how all the approaches can be reconciled together. This is because it seems to us that each path contradicts the other. But we must believe that all of these paths, together, are all true. Practically speaking when it comes to how a person must act, he should ask his *rebbe* and follow the ruling of his *rebbe*.

STILL SEARCHING FOR A REBBI

How do I blindly follow what my Rebbi tells me? How can I find a Rebbi who is closer to the *emes* - how can I trust my own perception of what *emes* is? What if my Rebbi tells me that I am allowed to have an Internet job?

ANSWER

The fact that you are so bothered by this and searching for a Rebbi in order to listen to what he tells you, is the proper way to go in. As long as you feel that you are not finding the Rav or Rebbi that you are searching for, you should continue your search and continue davening for this, until you find someone whom you recognize as closest to the *emes*. From your questions on this topic, it seems you haven't yet found the Rebbi you are searching for. If you search for him with all your heart and with a desire for the pure truth, Hashem will accommodate your wishes.

MENTALLY COMMUNICATING WITH A TZADDIK

Is it permitted to “mentally” speak to a tzaddik I knew who was niftar already? I imagine him in my mind dressed in white and how he's shining in a holy light, and I ask him questions and he answers me. I know it's not the tzaddik answering me and that it's my own mind answering my questions. But I feel that the answers that come back are truthful.

QUESTION

ANSWER

(a) Yes [it's permitted].

QUESTION

(b) If yes, it is something worthwhile to do?

ANSWER

Don't do it, though, because it can lead to delusions.

QUESTION

(c) Also, does it bother the tzaddik that I'm using my mind to remember him in such a way?

ANSWER

(c) It does not bother him.

WHAT KASHRUS DOES THE RAV USE?

Since there's so much confusion about *Kashrus*, I would like to know *maaseh Rav*, how the Rav conducts himself, regarding which *Kashrus* the Rav eats.

ANSWER

First of all, I am not on the level of *maaseh Rav* for people to learn from me how to conduct themselves. Secondly, this topic is complicated not only because of *halachah*, but also because of many other factors, such as politics, control, prestige, money, etc. Since in all my years I am very careful to keep away from these matters, it is not possible for me to answer these types of questions.

ON AN AVREICH BECOMING A SHADCHAN

There are so many older girls from good families who are sitting at home awaiting their *bashert*. The pain that their families have over them is so great. It is heartbreaking to me. Maybe it's time for us *Kolel avreichim* to learn the art of being a *shadchan* (matchmaker), so that they can do active *chessed* with the families who are trying to marry their girls off? And they would be doing Torah and *chessed* at the same time. As difficult as it may be to learn the skills, perhaps it's a mitzvah that has to be tended to because there's not enough people doing it. Maybe every *avreich* should have a notebook and write down any names in it that he hears about? Or will it lead to *bittul Torah* and take him away from learning? Plus it also entails talking a lot to women. Perhaps it's a great aspiration to have but there's no mitzvah to be involved with this, because of these issues mentioned, and we can let Hashem do as He sees fit. What should be done about this?

ANSWER

When you try to approach any subject, first take apart all the factors that it involves. Let us think a little about what it means to be a *shadchan*. (1) If you will become a shadchan, you will be hearing information all day about people, both boys and girls. You won't only be hearing their names, you will be hearing everything they do, their personalities, etc. (2) As a shadchan, you will need to convince both sides that the boy and girl are compatible with each other. But many times, when the details are given over, they are not accurate. Sometimes certain information isn't conveyed, and sometimes the information is changed a bit or more than a bit, leading to misinformation that is being given over to any of the sides. (3) An *avreich* becoming a shadchan will mean that he will need to be having long, extended conversations with all kinds of men and women, and sometimes these are not just conversations but they lead to emotional connections that are formed. (4) You need to be prepared at any given moment of the day to give of your time and be available to both sides before a date and afterwards, to discuss it with both sides. (5) There are many other factors as well to consider, which are subtle.

An *avreich*, and any *ben aliyah* who is immersed in his learning, is really far away from doing the work of a *shadchan*. It is better that women should be involved with active *shadchanus*, and the woman's husband can help her a bit by giving her ideas, but not more than that.

LOOK-ALIKES

If two people look very similar to each other and they have similar body language and their personalities are also similar, to the point that people often confuse these two people with each other (and in fact, the father of one of them saw the other coming towards him and thought it was his own son, and even the wife of one of them thought that it was her husband coming towards her when really it was the other one), does this mean that these two people have the same *shoresh neshamah* (soul root) or that they are two halves of one *neshamah*?

ANSWER

Yes.

SAVING UP MONEY VS. BITACHON

Is it okay to save up money or is this a lack of bitachon (trusting Hashem)?

ANSWER

Every person has to know what level of bitachon he is on, and then he should act accordingly. A person has to examine himself personally in this area, so there is no one answer to this question.

21 QUESTIONS ON AVODAS HASHEM

1) *Is it good [for a high-school age bochur] to learn sefer Yesod V'Shoresh H'Avodah?*

ANSWER

It would be worthwhile to learn it once a week, like on Shabbos Kodesh.

QUESTION

3) *I usually feel negative emotions, and barely any positive emotions. And even when I feel positive emotions, they don't feel intense, unlike my negative emotions which feel much more intense and which I can easily identify what negative emotions it is. When I experience a negative emotion, it lingers on with me all the time and I keep getting bothered from it. How can I let my positive emotions become just as powerful as my negative emotions?*

ANSWER

It would be worth it to jot down on a piece of paper a bit of all of the different kinds of positive emotions that you have experienced and which you recognize, and every so often, read it and connect yourself a bit to the positive emotions you are reading about.

QUESTION

4) *What should a person think about when preparing for (a) davening (b) learning?*

ANSWER

(a) Preparing For Davening: Quiet everything down. Recognize whom you are about to talk to, and what the purpose of davening is [to form a relationship with Hashem]. (b) Preparing For Learning: Try to forget about everything on your mind – as if there is no world. Attach yourself to learning Torah with pleasantness and serenity, coupled with exertion in your learning.

QUESTION

5) *How much time should be spent on preparing for davening and for learning?*

ANSWER

A few minutes.

QUESTION

6) *What is it better to do, to prepare for davening or to say Korbonos?*

ANSWER

For now, suffice with just preparing a few minutes before davening.

QUESTION

7) *How do I clarify what my shoshon neshamah and main avodah in life is? I think that my main avodah in life is to give a nachas ruach to Hashem, but maybe there's more to my avodah that I'm not aware of.*

ANSWER

It is a long process of self-awareness. For now, don't do more than this clarification. You're going in the right direction.

QUESTION

8) *How can a person "always be naturally connected to his emotions" as the Rav has spoken about in one of the sefarim? And how can a person do this within the peer pressure while being in yeshiva?*

ANSWER

Find a good point in yourself and connect to it. Even more important is to become connected to your strongest point. Whenever you find a good point in yourself, it is like a "spark", in comparison to your strongest point, which is the "light" (a greater level than just a spark). There's a big difference.

QUESTION

9) *What does it mean to "relate to our feelings as a reality" as the Rav explains? If I'm sad and I know that I have to be happy, like on Shabbos and Yom Tov, and other areas of avodas Hashem which requires me to be happy – how can I be happy if I'm supposed to be aware of my feeling of*

sadness and consider it to be a reality and not just a feeling? Also, how can a person be truly happy when he's so connected to his emotions and he is acutely aware of his negative feelings, considering also that life is full of difficulties and challenges and things that bother us?

ANSWER

Refer to the previous answer. The main thing is to become connected to your strongest point, and to also be immersed in the depth of learning Torah and palpable closeness to Hashem, according to your current level.

QUESTION

10) When a person is bothered about something, should he throw himself into learning Torah because "If not for Your Torah which is my delight?" Isn't that just escaping reality?

ANSWER

It is certainly an escape, but part of the process of growing and reaching self-completion on this world is to know where to escape to when we feel trouble. We need to run away to our root. This is not like escaping to some far-off place that isn't befitting for us. It's an escape of running back to where our true share is, to our root. Sometimes a person even needs to escape to something external that will calm him a bit. Every case will be different. Not always can a person deal with the issue he's facing, and sometimes he needs to simply escape from where he is. Moshe Rabbeinu first escaped to Midian and then he was able to go back to Egypt to "deal" with Pharaoh.

QUESTION

11) What should I do if talking privately to Hashem in middle of Shemoneh Esrei (by Shomeia Tefillah and by Elokai Nitzor) causes me to lose hearing Kedushah and Chazaras HaShatz?

ANSWER

Continue as you are doing.

QUESTION

12) I usually get up early before davening and I have enough to organize myself before davening, but I feel pressured. But when I get up a bit later and it's almost time for davening Shacharis, I get read quickly and I don't feel as pressured. Which option is better?

ANSWER

Try to get up at an ‘in-between’ time [where you’re not too early but not too close to davening, so you have enough time to prepare and you’re not pressured].

QUESTION

13) What is the way to make the most of my time?

ANSWER

Utilize every moment properly but without thinking too much if you are using all of your time correctly or not.

QUESTION

14) The Rav has said that a person should fill his empty void all the time with avodas Hashem. How can a person do this properly without becoming stressed?

ANSWER

See previous answer.

QUESTION

15) Whenever I do a good thing, like when I answer Amen loudly with all my concentration, immediately my yetzer hora tells me, “Look what a tzaddik you are!” How do I counter this yetzer hora of becoming so full of myself? Is it not feasible to work on not being a baal gaavah at such a young age?

ANSWER

It would be good to be act a bit more discreet (*tzanua*).

QUESTION

16) When I do something good or I succeed at something, and I feel good about it, am I allowed to take in the pleasure of this good feeling about myself?

ANSWER

It is good to feel satisfied when you are successful. Otherwise, you will encounter the difficulty you mentioned in question 3.

QUESTION

17) Is it ever constructive to be nervous? What is good nervousness and bad nervousness? And how do I deal with bad nervousness?

ANSWER

When you sense that you can be in control of your nervousness, then your nervousness is constructive. When you sense that your nervousness is controlling you, that is how you know it's not constructive.

QUESTION

18) What should I do when I see or hear bochurim around me who are behaving or talking in a way that's not proper for a yeshiva bochur? How should I react to it and should I say something to them? And if I do not need to say something to others, what is the way to do it?

ANSWER

Immerse yourself in your internal world [*olam pnimi*] and ignore what goes on around you.

QUESTION

19) In yeshiva I feel like I don't have that much chiyus. In my house I can learn alone and I get a lot of chiyus from this. I feel like I'm serving Hashem there and I feel very connected to myself when I'm alone in my house. I can also daven at a minyan nearby my house that I love to daven in. At home I can learn what I love to learn. I don't encounter loud emotions such as immense enjoyment or getting insulted from others, when I'm alone at home. I can feel a lot closer to Hashem when I'm at home with myself. I also have more time to talk to Hashem. In yeshivah, I can barely do any of the above. I also feel that my entire day in yeshivah is one long conundrum for 2 weeks straight until I go home for my off Shabbos. It's long and draining for me. What does Hashem want from me?

ANSWER

Every so often [when you're in yeshiva], take a break. For example, in the afternoon, go to a quiet place.

QUESTION

20) *Is it better to learn alone because “A person who learns discreetly gets wiser”? Or is it better to learn in a Beis Midrash with others because then others see me learning and they can get more inspired to learn better? And what about a case where others aren’t particularly inspired by seeing me learning, or if I’m just writing my notes or chiddushim and I’m not learning out loud, and I enjoy learning in this way – do I still need to be learning in the beis midrash around others or can I learn in privacy?*

ANSWER

A person has to give *maaser* (a tenth) of his *ruchniyus*, by giving a 10th of his time of learning to learn in the beis midrash so that he benefits others who will see him learning. The rest of your time can be spent as you see fit, according to what your soul needs.

QUESTION

21) *I’m embarrassed to admit that I had a laptop for several years – with Internet connection on it. I left it by a relative of mine who uses it for Torah purposes, but I have no idea if he’s using the Internet on it or not. I know that my relative blocked the internet on it. My question is: Since I still own this laptop and it has Internet connection on it, am I doing something wrong by letting it remain with my relative? Do I need to convince my relative to disconnect the Internet from it? (I think he needs the Internet connection on it to send e-mails). Or should I sell my laptop that’s in his possession, and then disconnect the Internet on it or at least put a filter on it so that the next buyer won’t have Internet connection on it?*

ANSWER

Sell it, after you have the internet disconnected from it!

DAVENING BY GRAVES OF TZADDIKIM

1) *When a person goes to daven by the grave of a tzaddik and he tells the tzaddik to daven for him, is the tzaddik davening for him at that moment or does the tzaddik daven for him until he receives his salvation? And how much effort does the tzaddik do in order to save the person?*

ANSWER

There are no ironclad rules for this. Every case is different.

QUESTION

2) *How can it be that a great tzaddik davens for a person yet the person isn't saved? Especially if he has gone to several tzaddikim. And in addition, sometimes a person davens at the grave of a tzaddik for siyata d'shmaya for something, not necessarily for a big yeshuah but simply because he needs something, and nothing happens. How can this be?*

ANSWER

Only Hashem can do anything!!! Even Moshe davened to get into Eretz Yisrael yet he wasn't answered.

QUESTION

3) *Why was Moshe Rabbeinu's grave hidden so that the Jewish people wouldn't be able to beseech him by his grave as they were being exiled from Jerusalem? They could still go to other tzaddikim's graves and ask those tzaddikim to daven for them.*

ANSWER

Because he is the most chosen person of Creation, until the coming of Mashiach.

QUESTION

4) *Why did certain tzaddikim say that if people will come to daven by their graves that they will get saved? Does that exclude the graves of all other tzaddikim?*

ANSWER

Every person must according to his *cheilek* (portion) and according to his *shoresh* (soul root). Every person had their own unique avodah.

QUESTION

5) *Is there a concept of going back to the grave of a tzaddik and also holding back from going sometimes and then going back again later, so that it will be more meaningful?*

ANSWER

Every 30 days.

QUESTION

6) *Does the tzaddik recognize the person coming to his grave? Does he know what the name of the person is and what tikkun the person needs?*

ANSWER

It depends on who the tzaddik is and what his relationship with the world was.

QUESTION

7) *Is there a difference between going to the grave of a tzaddik when it's full of people versus less people? Does it affect how much our tefillos there are answered?*

ANSWER

If there is a *tzibur* (*minyan*, quorum of 10 men) it is more effective.

QUESTION

8) *Is there a difference between asking that my tefillos should be answered in the *zechus* (merit) of the tzaddik or asking the tzaddik to daven on my behalf? Or is the tzaddik always davening on my behalf, regardless of what I say there?*

ANSWER

If you say “In the *zechus* of the tzaddik” then it is not a given that the tzaddik is davening on one’s behalf.

QUESTION

9) *Does a person need to go to a grave of a tzaddik specifically on Erev Rosh Chodesh or on the 15th of the month? What is special about those days?*

ANSWER

If he is going to *daven* there, especially if he is going to ask the tzaddik to daven for him. During those days the tzaddik is more connected to his burial place.

QUESTION

10) *And if a person went to several graves of tzaddikim and he wasn’t answered should he go to others for a *yeshuah*? Or should he keep going back to the graves of those tzaddikim?*

ANSWER

Each person should do according to what his personal share is.

QUESTION

11) *How does coming to the grave of a tzaddik help a person? Many people come to the grave of a tzaddik and say Tehillim and start davening, is that the ideal way to go about it?*

ANSWER

It's certainly better to learn there. The proper way is to first learn the Torah teachings of the tzaddik and become connected to them, and then to daven there.

QUESTION

12) *What does lighting a candle by a tzaddik's grave do? Does it have to lit at his grave or even if one lights it in his own house?*

ANSWER

It is written *Ner Hashem Nishmas Adam*, "The flame of Hashem is the soul of man." Through lighting a candle there, it awakens a revelation of the tzaddik's neshamah. It is better to do so at the tzaddik's grave. It is very worthwhile to do.

QUESTION

13) *How much should a person make the effort to go to the kever of Rebbi Nachman?*

ANSWER

He guaranteed what he guaranteed. As a general note, though, it is better for a person to work on having more of a direct connection with Hashem.

SMILING VS. FLATTERY

When I smile at people and give compliments to people or greet them, I feel happier with myself. I am usually very self-absorbed, either in my thoughts or in my self in general, sometimes thinking about my own ruchniyus or sometimes thinking about Torah but other times I am simply absorbed in various thoughts and fantasies, and when I smile at others or compliment them I feel like I'm coming out of my self-absorption and entering into others.

This helps me come out of my self-absorption in general, and especially from feelings of sadness or worry. I am aware that the Rav has spoken about how smiling and complimenting others can often be stemming from a desire to flatter others, which is false connection with others and not a true connection. So, practically speaking, is it generally a good thing or a bad thing when people smile at others, compliment others, and greet others?

ANSWER

When you smile/compliment/greet others, it should be with the awareness that you are trying to avoid flattering them. Practically speaking, try to minimize this act of smiling/compliment/greeting others, so that you can restrict this particular movement of the soul and balance it. Every “light” needs a “vessel” to contain it and hold it. In this case, the “awareness” is the “light”, and minimizing the actions of flattery is the “vessel” that will hold the “light”, your awareness to flattery.

However, you should certainly continue to smile at others, to be sensitive to others and also for your own self-improvement.

LACK OF MOTIVATION & THE SOLUTION

1) *What is the source of a person's wishes and wants (retzonos) and why is it that a person lacks a ratzon?*

ANSWER

The root of all our wishes comes either from our *nefesh habehaimis* (animal soul) or *nefesh Elohis* (G-dly soul), either from our *yetzer hora* or our *yetzer tov*. When a person lacks a will (*ratzon*), it comes from a dominance of the element of earth in his soul. His earth gets too heavy and slows down the movements of his soul, which are his wishes and wants, weakening his faculty of *ratzon*, sometimes even to the point where he despairs.

QUESTION

2) *Why would a person not care about himself? Why is it that only when a person can't take anymore suffering that he starts to wake up to take care of himself? Why would a person be unwilling to change even when he knows that he's not going in a good direction, and only when he's at 'rock-bottom' does he wake up? Are we able to daven for a person to change? If a person*

doesn't pity himself then is it true that Hashem doesn't pity him either? How do we get a person to pity himself and be responsible for himself? And if Hashem isn't giving him the will to change then how does a person make any effort and utilize his free will? Even if a person isn't trying to make progress, is that all from Heaven since Hashem is in charge of everything?

ANSWER

Usually this happens when a person went through difficulties in his past, which caused his will to weaken. Tefillah can always help, but a person also has to do some work. Hashem gives a person “*bechirah* (free will) which depends on His will” – as it were, a person can either choose to act according to Hashem’s will, or *chas v’shalom* he may choose to do the opposite of Hashem’s will. *Bechirah* (free will) is in a person’s hands, and one may not blame his choices on Hashem.

QUESTION

3) What can we do for a person who doesn't have the energy to change but really he does want to change, he just doesn't know how exactly he needs to change since he's having an internal conflict and he doesn't have that much motivation and he can't be consistent? Are we allowed or not allowed to daven to Hashem to change him?

ANSWER

Daven for Hashem to help him. The person himself needs to take one small, easy point to work on. That is how he will progress, slowly but in a stable manner. I want to emphasize that the person needs to take a small, easy point to work on, and he will need to do it consistently.

CLARIFYING THE OHR HACHAIM'S VIEW ON BECHIRAH

The *Ohr HaChaim* (in *parshas Vayeishev*) says that when Reuven heard what the brothers planned to do to Yosef and he wanted to save him from the pit, there was a possibility that Yosef would get harmed because a *baal bechirah* (human beings, who have free will) are able to harm someone even no harm had been previously decreed in Heaven on the person, whereas a creature that does not possess *bechirah*, such as the animals, are not able to harm a person if it wasn't previously decreed on the person to get harmed. The source of this is in the *Zohar* (I:185b), that Reuven reasoned that the snakes and scorpions in the pit can't harm Yosef if he's a *tzaddik*, because then Hashem would save him with a miracle, but Yosef was

still in the dangers from the brothers, because they would be able to harm him, and therefore Reuven realized he needed to save Yosef from the brothers. This is a very difficult concept to understand, and also, the *Ramchal* disagrees with it. What is the way to understand this?

ANSWER

There is a very big argument about this concept, as it's well-known. But both views are correct, and let us see how. There is a point higher than *bechirah*, known as *yediah* (Hashem knows everything that will happen), and from that higher view, Reuven wasn't making anything happen. However, our *avodas Hashem* is always to act from our *bechirah*, because a person is given *bechirah*. Since *bechirah* is more revealed with a person, it seems that a person can use his *bechirah* to harm another person. However, an animal has a lot less *bechirah*, and therefore an animal is being run for the most part by the mode of *yediah*, which is higher than *bechirah*. And therefore, an animal can't harm a person unless it was decreed by Heaven. So the *avodah* of a person is contradictory. On one hand, a person needs to believe in *bechirah* and thus he must act according to the Torah. On the other hand, a person also needs to believe in *yediah*, to know that he doesn't do anything, because only Hashem does everything [as we say in the Ani Maamin]. And this brings a person to *bittul*, to nullify his sense of self, when he realizes that he doesn't do anything. This is the depth of the concept of *malchus*, submitting ourselves before Hashem out of humility, where one recognizes "I have nothing of my own." [שאל ליבי תשעה-ט (תשובה קס"ט)]

TZADDIKIM WHO ARE ABOVE TIME & SPACE

The sefer *Nefesh HaChaim* explains that there are worlds above time and above the definitions of the Torah, which is a spiritual reality above our world and which does not apply to the world we live on, which is the world of action, where we must follow the Torah's rules. It seems that the spiritual worlds that are above our world are only a reality that we can know about when we learn sefer *Nefesh HaChaim*, but when we close the sefer we're back living on our world. My question is that there are tzaddikim, both who passed away and those who are currently living, who don't align all their actions with the defining parameters of the Torah of the 'world of action' that we live on, and these tzaddikim live beyond time and space, and they don't always keep every aspect of halachah, especially with the example of not davening during zman Tefillah. I understand that these tzaddikim are very connected to these higher

worlds but I don't understand how they are able to ignore the reality of the world of action that we live on. Since they are tzaddikim, I want to understand their behavior.

ANSWER

Even when one is very attached in his soul to the higher worlds that are above time and space, he is never allowed to diverge from keeping *halachah*. However, there are some times where the tzaddikim rely on leniencies in *halachah*, in cases where most *Poskim* do not agree to a certain view and only very few existing opinions in the *Poskim* permit something, and, at a time of pressure [*b'shaas d'chak*] for the necessity of the light that was needed for their souls, these tzaddikim permitted certain views for themselves even where it wasn't in accordance with the views of most opinions in the *Poskim*.

TZADDIKIM WHO DAVEN LATE

What is the reason behind why there are Chassidish Rebbes don't try to make *zman tefillah* and they daven late? How can it be that there are *tzaddikim* who are so careful with every *halachah* and they are the greatest *ovdei Hashem*, but they *daven* very late, not just once in a while but as *l'chatchilah*, to begin with? Since we have an obligation to be *dan l'kaf zechus* a *tzaddik*, what is the way to understand their conduct?

ANSWER

Any *tzaddikim* who *daven*[ed] late was because they were an *ones*, they were not obligated to *daven* since they didn't feel spiritually prepared or physically clean enough for *davening*!

The inner root behind it is because their soul root comes from Don, or, they have a "spark" (*nitztoz*) of Don in their souls, and Don's role is to "gather together all the camps", and that is why Heaven made them exempt from *davening* when the time came to *daven*, and therefore they *davened* later.

This is only what we can say to judge them favorably, but we are not allowed to use this reason in practice!

QUESTIONS ON RAV MORGENSTERN'S APPROACH

1) In the approach of HaRav Yitzchok Meir Morgenstern shlit”a there is an emphasis on connection to tzaddikim and on how we can't grow in avodas Hashem unless we connect with tzaddikim on all levels. Does the Rav agree to this also?

ANSWER

That is the path of Breslev, as is well-known. As you know, I am not a Breslever. Rather, I study/teach the Torah teachings of Breslev as part of general Avodas Hashem that includes every path of avodah. This is the approach that I received from *Mori v'Rabi*, HaGaon R' Gershon Edelstein shlit”a, who told me that he received this approach from Rav Dessler zt”l. He said to me, “Look at sefer *Michtav M'Eliyahu* (of Rav Dessler) and see which sefarim he used...” That is the path which I received from my Rebbi.

QUESTION

2) Also, Rav Morgenstern shlit”a speaks a lot about the avodah of tzaddikim, and sometimes I feel, what's the point of learning about the ways of tzaddikim who are way beyond me? Is it because we gain light just by thinking about the great levels of avodah of tzaddikim even though these levels are beyond us?

ANSWER

There are a few gains to thinking about the avodah of tzaddikim, and I will mention a few of them. (1) It causes a general awakening in a person to do what Hashem wants. (2) It is a way to enter inwardly into the inner spiritual world. (3) It is a way to study the different ways of avodas Hashem. (4) It is a way to acquire subtlety, similar to the teaching of Chazal that “Serving the Torah is greater than learning it.”

QUESTION

3) Is it possible that a person doesn't need to do any avodah and all he needs to do is think about tzaddikim and of their exalted level and of their avodah, and by default he will become connected to the tzaddikim and then he will reach everything from there?

ANSWER

Every person has to serve Hashem according to his ability, and *chas v'shalom* for a person to remain satisfied with just contemplating the ways of the tzaddikim.

QUESTION

4) Rav Morgenstern also says that we need to try to reach the level of prophecy – not just an illumination of prophecy, but the actual level of prophecy itself (each person on his own level). What does that mean?

ANSWER

The inner dimension of prophecy, the “way to prophecy”, is the way of *d'veykus*, and this would result in *niv sefasayim*, in the lips moving and uttering a prophecy. It is discussed in sefer *Chovas HaTalmidim*. See sefer *B'Tiv Yerushalayim, darkei hasagah*, which explains a lot about the way to prophecy. Nowadays the way to prophecy exists, but the level in which prophecy is uttered from the lips is non-existent today.

MASHIACH BEN YOSEF & MASHIACH BEN DOVID

What is the most important aspect of avodas Hashem? Is it Torah, Tefillah, emunah, or shemiras haBris (kedushah)? And are these linked with the different paths of Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Yehudah?

ANSWER

Each Gadol saw one particular major point according to his *shoresh* (soul root) and held that a particular point was the most important. The emphasis on Torah and *shemiras HaBris* are both rooted in the path of “Mashiach ben Yosef”, who is the trait of *Yesod*, which is rooted in *Chochmah* (Torah) and which is also known as the trait of *Yesod-Tzaddik* (*kedushah, shemiras haBris*). The path of “Mashiach ben Dovid” focuses more on *tefillah* and *temimus* (earnestness).

THE TEN MARTYRS

Why did Rebbi Yishmael Kohen Gadol (of whom Hashem said “Yishmael my son”) have to undergo such torture when he was killed by the Romans?

ANSWER

Because, as it is well-known, all of the ten martyrs were a result of the ten droplets of seed that escaped Yosef’s body when he was trying to get away from Potiphar’s wife. *Shaar HaGilgulim* says that Rebbi Yishmael Kohen Gadol was tortured the most from all the ten martyrs because he was a reincarnation of Yosef himself. According to another view, however, the ten martyrs were an atonement for the sale of Yosef. (2) *Rabbeinu Bechaye (Vayeishev 38:1)* says that Yosef caused his own sale and therefore he is included in the ten brothers who sold Yosef, thus there had to be ten martyrs to atone for the ten brothers who took part in Yosef’s sale. (3) And, on a deeper level, it was because Yosef was the root of all the brothers and therefore he was punished more than all the other brothers, thus Rebbi Yishmael Kohen Gadol, who was a reincarnation of Yosef, was tortured the most from all the ten martyrs.

GUIDANCE FOR LEARNING KABALLAH

1) It is famously said that learning sefer Zohar will take us out of Galus. Many Gedolim held that learning Kaballah is for everyone and that the conditions that were always needed are no longer needed in our generation, while other Gedolim stayed far away from learning Kaballah because of all the conditions that are needed to learn it. I would like to know if the Rav can clarify this topic for me. What are the conditions needed for learning Kaballah in today’s generation, and which conditions are not needed?

ANSWER

Every person has to look for their unique *cheilek* (share) in Torah, and that is the main thing a person should be searching for [regarding his learning].

QUESTION

2) I am young in my twenties and I’m very drawn towards learning this part of Torah, but I never learned it in an organized fashion. How can I know if I am ready to learn Kaballah?

ANSWER

You have to know what's drawing you towards learning it, and after you see which factors are drawing you into it, you should examine if it's proper or not.

QUESTION

3) What is the way to start learning this part of Torah? And which sefarim should I use?

ANSWER

The Chofetz Chaim and Chazon Ish both recommended people to learn *Niglos HaZohar*. The Chazon Ish said that this is the best *mussar* sefer. After learning it, a person should read through it just for the sake of reading it and learning it superficially, and gradually a person can purify his soul and his character and his body, and then he can start to learn *Otzros Chaim*.

QUESTION

4) Since a person needs to be in a state of purity when learning Kaballah, does washing the hands 40 times with kavanah about Hashem help for this?

ANSWER

Only when there is no other alternative.

QUESTION

5) If I do not need to go the mikveh, do I need to go to the mikveh each day before learning Kaballah?

ANSWER

It is more proper to do that.

QUESTION

6) Which sefarim of Kaballah am I allowed to learn if I didn't go to the mikveh yet [when I am obligated to go the mikveh due to tevilas Ezra reasons]?

ANSWER

You can read [Zohar] without trying to understand it.

QUESTION

7) Does Kaballah have to be learned from a Rebbi or can I learn it from sefarim?

ANSWER

If one is using sefarim to learn *Kaballah*, he needs either *ruach hakodesh* to understand it, or he needs *giluy neshamah* (revelation of the soul), which is also a kind of *ruach hakodesh*.

KABALLAH – KESER D’RADLA & MASHIACH’S PATH

1) The Rav explained that the level of *Keser d’Radla* (the path of Mashiach) is above the level of the need to connect with tzaddikim. What is the concept of *Keser d’Radla*, is it a direct relationship with Hashem without any intermediaries? Will that be the revelation of Mashiach?

ANSWER

Yes! Yes!

QUESTION

2) If that’s true, that’s hard to understand because Mashiach will teach the whole world how to become close to Hashem completely, so everyone will be connecting to Hashem through the tzaddik, through Mashiach, so we see that even in the most complete level of *d’veykus* to Hashem we always need the tzaddik to help us [so how do we see that *Keser d’Radla*, the path of Mashiach, is a closeness to Hashem that doesn’t require being connected to a tzaddik]?

ANSWER

Mashiach will teach the world how no one needs anyone and how we only need HaKadosh Baruch Hu. It will be the revelation of negating all dependency on people [and to only be dependent on HaKadosh Baruch Hu].



Questions in all spheres of life in general
and the *nefesh* in particular
are welcome in the Q&A system
and will be transferred to the Rav, *Shlita*
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