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LEARNING THE SATMAR RAV'S WAY IN AVODAS HASHEM

QUESTION I love to learn about different paths of avodas Hashem, halachah, and hashkafah and the different views of Gedolim on how to live life. I'm afraid of learning sefer V'Yoel Moshe (*authored by the Satmar Rav zt"l*) because I'm concerned that it will make lose respect for all other views of the Gedolim if I identify more with the Satmar Rav's views. Does the Rav think I should be concerned about learning this sefer or not? And what does the Rav think about this sefer in general, and its author?

ANSWER Don't be concerned. It is all kadosh, kadosh, kadosh (*it is a very holy sefer*)!

ASKING TZADDIKIM FOR ADVICE

QUESTION 1) I deal with the tzibbur and sometimes people have very complex issues and questions, such as questions about shidduchim or medical issues and other serious issues, which needs to be asked to a Gadol. When sending in a question to a Gadol, does every detail of the question need to be described? Or is it enough to send in the question in general, without writing all the details, or is it not necessary to write down all the details of the question, because people will say to me, "Why do all of the details of the question need to be written, since he has Ruach HaKodesh?"

ANSWER To give a very general description, there are two kinds of Ruach HaKodesh. There is one kind of Ruach HaKodesh where the tzaddikim understands all of the details of an issue, through the enlightened understanding of Ruach HaKodesh that he has attained. There is another kind of Ruach HaKodesh which does not make the tzaddik

aware of all the details, but merely gives him the answer, in any of the following ways. Either the words come out of the tzaddik's mouth, as Gemara in Tractate Berachos says, that a possuk (*verse*) can fall into one's mouth [when one wakes up in the morning] and this is a small level of prophecy. In the same way, words can come out of a tzaddik's mouth [through Ruach HaKodesh] which answers the person's question, or, he becomes aware of the answer mentally in his thoughts, or he hears a voice telling it to him, or he will see the answer in the form of writing. In this kind of Ruach HaKodesh, the tzaddik is not aware of the reason for the answer. Another phenomenon that is close to this is when the tzaddik gets a muskal rishon (*initial perspective*) about the issue which is Ruach HaKodesh, and this is coming from a spiritual illumination that comes from the intellect of the neshamah [as opposed to his second thoughts, which are already mixed with human logic and which are not in the category of Ruach HaKodesh]. Sometimes he can even sense this with the spiritual sensitivity of his soul.

In the second kind of Ruach HaKodesh, there is no necessity for him to know every last detail of the issue. But in the first kind of Ruach HaKodesh, there are varying levels. If the tzaddik is on a completely righteous level, the tzaddik can see the questioner's soul at its source in the soul of Adam HaRishon, and even more so, he can see the soul root of the person as it was before Creation. But only rare individuals throughout the generations had this ability. Any person who possessed Ruach HaKodesh saw things within the limitations of his understanding, just as no Torah scholar sees exactly what another Torah scholar sees in the Torah.

Therefore, the answer that the tzaddik saw in his Ruach HaKodesh is modified to the spiritual level of the tzaddik,

and accordingly, the tzaddik will understand the general issue and the details of the issue, based on his particular level. When this happens, the tzaddik will sometimes become aware of details even by employing the use of his human logic, to understand what he sees in the spiritual spheres.

It resembles what happens with prophecy, where the prophet saw a certain vision and he needed to interpret what he saw, as the Ramchal describes, in sefer Kelach Pischei Chochmah. It was also similar to what happened when asking questions to the Urim V'Tumim, where the Kohen needed to use his daas in order to combine the letters properly and understand the answer. The answer that the navi or Kohen found did not come to him as a clear understanding, it had to be discerned. He had to analyze the information and combine it properly. With this kind of understanding, he was made aware of all the details.

Even more so, there were Sages who were able to answer questions based on wisdom and cleverness, combined with *siyata d'shmaya* (*assistance from Heaven*) and prayer to be guided to the truth. This is also entailed knowing all the details of the issue or question at hand.

QUESTION 2) Also, when a Gadol or tzaddik write a response to a question, is it to be regarded as “advice”, or do we need to look at it as a decision coming from Hashem, since a tzaddik is called an extension of Hashem [because Hashem communicates to us through the words of tzaddikim]?

ANSWER It depends on what goal the questioner has in mind. If the questioner wants advice, then the Gadol's answer is “advice” to him. If the questioner is seeking a psak, this will depend. If he is going to the sage because he wants an answer based on the Ruach HaKodesh of the sage, he is not obligated to listen to the sage's answer. But if he ask the sage a question because he wants to hear the word of Hashem and he believes that the word of Hashem is revealed through the sage, who is worthy to hear the word of Hashem, then he is obligated to listen to the sage, because it is the word of Hashem. Similarly, if the sage tells

him that he heard the word of Hashem, the questioner is obligated to listen. But this barely ever happens.

QUESTION 3) Also, what if the person asking the question has a certain subconscious motivation that he wants to get a certain answer from the Gadol? Will his ulterior motives cause the Gadol to give him an answer that's not accurate?

ANSWER Yes – “In the way that a person goes, he is led in.” For this reason, many times the answer that one receives is not accurate.

QUESTION 4) How should a question to a tzaddik be asked? Is this something that depends on which tzaddik one is asking and does it also depend on each questioner?

It depends on the level of the sage and on the question being asked. In cases where the answer depends on the understanding of the sage, one should indeed suspect that the answer is being manipulated by the motivations of the questioner.

QUESTION 5) Are there are any ways for a person to decide upon the answers to his questions? If yes, how can a person know which way is appropriate for him to use, in order to answer his questions?

ANSWER Same answer as above.

QUESTION 6) Are there several approaches which a person needs to use, in order to decide upon an answer to his questions or issues?

ANSWER Yes. Besides for the ways already mentioned in the previous responses, the following approaches are also ways [for one to arrive at clarity on his issues, on his own]: (1) By removing himself from any subconscious ulterior motivations (*negios*), which allows the initial understanding to be true. Similar to this, the Ramban says that when one learns Torah lishmah, he can then decide the answer to his question based on the first thought that comes to him, because learning Torah lishmah removes all obstacles from him and allows him to receive spiritual illumination from the source of understanding. (2) Alternatively, by having emunah that only Hashem manages everything (*except for one's free will*), the answer to one's question is also

coming from the Creator, because here is one is allowing the Creator to decide for him. But in order to do this, one needs clear emunah.

All of the aforementioned ways are true and proper, and it is a matter which depends on each person's soul root as well as his current spiritual level. The better a person recognizes himself, to that extent will he know when and how to go about this and which approach to take.

.REWARD IN GAN EDEN & IN THE NEXT WORLD

QUESTION If a Jew keeps the mitzvos and he learns Torah but he doesn't change internally (*as many people are familiar with*), will he not get any reward in Olam HaBa (*the Next World*), since he never changed his pnimiyus and he remained with all of his material desires?

ANSWER There are always inner changes and growth that a Jew will gain, just by keeping mitzvos and learning Torah [even if he doesn't try to have any inner, spiritual growth]. They might be very minimal changes, or even very tiny changes. Even with the smallest changes that a Jew gains merely from keeping mitzvos and learning Torah earns him reward in the Next World. It is possible that there were some areas of his character which didn't go through any change at all, and there also may be areas where his character became worse on this world, and there may be other areas of his character will changed for the better. Any good changes of character which a Jew gained on this world become transformed into his reward in the Next World, from the seventh century and onward. However, in Gan Eden, reward is given also for any actions that are done even if a person didn't go through any changes because of them.

CAN GENTILES BECOME CLOSE TO HASHEM?

QUESTION I heard of a Rav who said that there was a non-Jewish doctor who was able to develop a technique of using his mind to quickly reach a state where he is "unbounded and where everything is one", and the doctor

used this technique to create an "energy flow" which he reached through reaching this state of oneness in his mind, and he claims that he can use it for healing. He also claimed that he has scientific proof that this kind of technique was able to cure cancer in animals. The Rav who discussed this said that the gentile doctor was really accessing "d'veykus" (*connection to Hashem*), and anything that he was able to reach was because he felt d'veykus.

Now, I was always under the impression that d'veykus is something that only a Jew can experience, such as by reaching the higher levels of the soul, which are called Neshamah, Chayah, and Yechidah. I thought that goyim (*gentiles*) can only access lower levels of the soul, the Nefesh and the Ruach, and that only a Jew can reach the higher levels of the soul which are able to experience d'veykus with Hashem.

This Rav is saying that all people universally, even goyim, are able to attain all of the highest levels of the soul, and that even goyim can reach d'veykus with Hashem. Can the Rav please explain to me if the goyim also have the levels of Neshamah, Chayah and Yechidah? And are goyim also able to reach a state of d'veykus?

ANSWER The goyim can attain all of these levels, but only on the level called kelipas noga, as is taught in sefer Eitz Chaim and which is explained in the beginning of sefer Tanya. Therefore, the goyim can also reach d'veykus in Hashem, but only by way of this kelipah (*shell*). From a deeper perspective, there is the Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chayah, and Yechidah which are on the side of kedushah (*holiness*), and which also exist in the category of kelipas noga (*the intermediate level between holiness and impurity*), and which also exist in the side of the "three impure shells" which are totally evil.

CAN GENTILES DO HAVDALAH, HACHNAAH & HMTAKAH?

QUESTION Are goyim (*gentiles*) not able to do the same avodah (*inner spiritual work*) as Jews? Aren't gentiles also able to become "present in the moment" and use any of the ways of subjugating, separating, and sweetening one's

inner evil (*hachnaah, havdalah, hamtakah*), as other gentile authors have written about?

ANSWER A gentile can reach the outer layer of avodah, not the inner layer of avodah. A gentile can separate from materialism but he is not able to sanctify it. Meaning, gentiles can do *hachnaah (subjugating their evil)* and *havdalah (separating themselves from evil)*, but they cannot do *hamtakah (sweetening and harmonizing the evil within oneself)*.

HOW I CAN BE HAPPY IN AMERICA?

QUESTION

The Rav has said that there's a certain *ruach hatumah (spirit of impurity)* that is very strong in America, which causes people to have a very lenient attitude about media and internet use, to the point that even Rabbonim are quick to give a heter for internet use, both for others and even permitting media use for themselves, when they deem it necessary.

I am seeing more and more how even bnei Torah had to bring Internet into their homes so that their wives could work when they were stuck at home because of the corona lockdown. It pained me so much that people weren't being *moser nefesh* not to have Internet. I feel like I can't live here anymore, because I see how *tumah* can so easily make its way into everyone's homes and no one is fighting this enough, and they just say sheepishly, "What can we do?"

Everyone needs to ask their Rav about what they need to

do. And we can't live without *parnassah*." I feel that I can no longer live in America with such a permissive attitude towards media use. I am considering moving to Eretz Yisrael and certainly it will become a family discussion.

But, in the meantime, how can I remain happy and full of *simchas hachaim* as I live in America, when there's so much *tumah* around me and I feel like everyone, even bnei Torah, who never would have dreamed until now of bringing Internet into their homes, are succumbing to the *nisayon* with the Internet, when it feels so spiritually dead over here?

ANSWER 1) You should cycle back and forth between two different states: (1) Feel deeply an emotional disconnection in your soul from everything in your surroundings. (2) Reach a state where you have the inner *emunah (faith in Hashem)* that this is the will of Hashem, Who dwells amongst the Jewish people even when they are in a state of the worst *tumah*. Keep repeating the cycle between these two different states [emotional disconnection from surroundings, versus believing in Hashem that this is His will].

2) Have times where you access this state of *emunah*, cycling back and forth between being the state of having *emunah* in Hashem that this is His will, and with the emotional disconnection from your surroundings. You need to keep cycling back and forth between these two states so that you will still be using your power of *bechirah (choosing between right and wrong)*.



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