

The Weekly Farbrenge


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FAITH IN TZADDIKIM (I)

COMPLETE FAITH

The Torah says that after *krias Yam Suf* the Yidden believed in *HaShem* and in Moshe his servant. As the *Midrash* points out, from here we learn that a belief in the *ro'eh ne'eman*, the faithful shepherd, is really a belief in *HaShem*.

The Rebbe explains that a person's *emuna* in *tzaddikim* is an extension of his *emuna* in *HaShem*: he believes in the messengers whom *HaShem* has placed in every generation.

(מכילתא בשלח פ"ו, לקו"ש חכ"ד ע' 291)

One *Motzaei Shabbos* before *havdala*, the Baal Shem Tov instructed his *talmidim* to buy candles to light up the *beis midrash*. Though there was no way they could have possibly had money on them, the *talmidim* put their hands in their pockets to take out money, and hurried to buy candles. Such was their faith in the Baal Shem Tov.

(ת"ו חל"ו ע' 56)

The Baal Shem Tov explains that the reason for a person's superrational faith in a *tzaddik* is the connection that exists between his own *neshama* and the *neshama* of that *tzaddik*. The *zechus* to recognize this connection depends mainly on the refinement accomplished in the course of his previous *gilgulim*. That explains why we may find very fine people who do not believe in a *tzaddik*, while some very coarse people, with undesirable *middos*, do believe in him.

(מאמרי אדמו"ר הקו"ש ענינים ע' רצט)

THE POWER OF FAITH

Not long after their *chassuna*, the wife of Reb Shlomo Bayever of Slutsk lost her sanity. The young woman did not speak a word and returned to her parents' home, rendering her husband an *agun*. This situation remained unchanged for six years -until the Baal Shem Tov came to visit Slutsk. Reb Shlomo's father, a great *gaon*, and the wife's father, Reb Eliyahu Moshe, hurried to ask for advice and a *bracha*. After ascertaining that the two fathers-in-law were on good terms, the Baal Shem Tov told them: "With *HaShem's* help, I can heal her completely, but only on condition that the couple divorce." The parents offered to give a lot of money for *tzedaka* instead, but the Baal Shem Tov repeated his demand.

A few days later they returned to declare their

agreement, but added that they could not guarantee the consent of the young woman. The Baal Shem Tov instructed Reb Eliyahu Moshe to go and tell his daughter that the Baal Shem Tov, an esteemed miracle worker, was in Slutsk and wanted to see her. The two men looked at each other in astonishment, and Reb Eliyahu Moshe, mustering all his courage, explained that his daughter hadn't spoken for the past six years. The *tzaddik* did not respond, and they left with broken hearts. Reb Shlomo, having been already exposed to *Chassidus*, insisted that the Baal Shem Tov's instructions be followed.

When he returned, he said, "About six years ago, a *kitrug* was decreed against you in *Shamayim*, that the woman would lose her mind and that the man would remain an *agun*. However, now that you have been willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of your simple *emunas tzaddikim*, and you have even undertaken to divorce, you have been cleared in the *Beis Din shel Maala* and the decree has been removed." The Baal Shem Tov then *bensched* them with sons and daughters and with long life.

(ספר השיחות תש"ג ע' 158)

RECOGNIZING THE SOURCE

A couple once came to Reb Yisroel of Koznitz asking for a *bracha* that they find a large amount of money which they had lost. The *tzaddik* refused to *bensch* them, using various excuses, but the couple persisted. At one point the man placed a gold coin on the table and offered it to the Rebbe for *tzedaka*, but the *tzaddik* said, "If you give me *sixty* gold coins for *tzedaka*, I will perhaps be able to help you." Hearing that price, the woman was shocked. She grabbed the gold coin and assured her husband, "*HaShem* will help us even without him..."

The *tzaddik* was pleased: "Until now you placed your trust in *me* and forgot *HaShem*. Now that you trust in *HaShem*, your *bracha* is on its way."

(סיפורים חסידיים ח"א ע' 62)

After having miscarried a number of times, a certain woman asked the Rebbe to *bensch* her with a *bracha* for children. The Rebbe gave her some directives and a *bracha*, but a while later she miscarried again. Greatly disappointed, she asked the Rebbe what had gone wrong. In a handwritten response, the Rebbe wrote, "The couple forgot that it is *HaShem* Who is the Source of *bracha* and its deliverer and so on, and placed their trust only in human beings - myself."

(א"ק חכ"ט ע' ל, ושמ ע' 19)

The Mitteler Rebbe explains the advantages of *davening* at the *kever* of a *tzaddik*. They include the following: The *tefilos* there are accepted more readily because of the *kedusha* of that place; one is more aroused in his *davening* because of sadness over his loss; and one feels insignificant from his awe of the *tzaddik* and this enables his *tefilos* to reach a higher level. This applies even to most Yidden, who do not perceive the lofty revelations there from the *neshama* of the *tzaddik*.

(קוב"ה השתחות ע' יג)

CONSIDER

Why is it so important to recognize the *tzaddik* as *HaShem's* messenger?

Why is it necessary to have faith in the power of the messenger at all? Why isn't it enough to have faith in the sender alone?

Upon arriving home, Reb Eliyahu Moshe began telling his wife about the Baal Shem Tov and his wonders, when suddenly their daughter spoke up, asking to hear more. Over the next while she continued improving mentally, though physically she was still very weak and soon fell ill. One day, she cried and begged to be taken to the *tzaddik*, and Reb Eliyahu Moshe suddenly realized that, amidst all the excitement, he had forgotten to relate the Baal Shem Tov's message. The young woman immediately agreed, and on the following day they traveled to Slutsk. When the young couple entered together, the Baal Shem Tov told them of the need to divorce and gave them four days to think it over.

For the next three days they fasted and said a lot of *Tehillim*, and on the fourth day they returned to the Baal Shem Tov. They relayed their readiness to divorce for each other's benefit, due to their *emuna* in the *tzaddik* and the *bracha* that he would *bensch* them with. Hearing this, the Baal Shem Tov went into another room for a while.

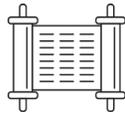

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DAVENING FOR CHILDREN

To what extent should children be trained to daven?

A father is obligated to train his children to daven, either under the general rubric of chinuch — according to the view that it applies even to mitzvos derabanan — or because the need to beseech Hashem for mercy is equally applicable to children.

From when a child can speak, his father is to educate him to recite "Torah tziva," and then also "Shema Yisroel." While some view this as an initial training for davening, the Alter Rebbe seems to understand this to be part of teaching him Torah, and the possuk "Torah Tziva" was chosen to inculcate in the child that the Torah was given from Hashem.

Once the child reaches the age of chinuch for davening — between ages 6 and 10, depending on his emotional and intellectual development — he should be trained to recite parts of shema and Shemoneh Esreh.

What about reciting krias shema bizmana? Some poskim exempt the father since he is often not home during those hours of the morning and evening that the child is awake, but the Alter Rebbe writes that one should teach his child to recite shema b'zmana. When the son reaches age 12, the father is obligated to train him to recite shema in the proper time.

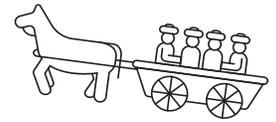
The obligation to train a chinuch-aged child in Shemoneh Esreh is unanimous. This is either due to the aspect of asking for mercy, or because the appropriate times for davening give more allowance than the times for shema. The Alter Rebbe writes that the father should train his child to daven "morning and evening," which some understand to mean only Shacharis and Maariv, but not Mincha which occurs when the father isn't necessarily next to his child. However, others include Mincha as well.

The prohibition to eat before davening (unless it's needed to daven) does not apply to children, and they may eat breakfast before davening.

One should be careful to train a child gradually and not overburden the child, which can backfire and cause them to dislike davening. Begin with the primary sections of davening, such as birchos hashachar, birchos krias shema, shema, and Shemoneh Esreh. Once they are accustomed to those, gradually add more sections, with the goal of them saying the entire davening by age 12.

1. מג"א סי' שמ"ג סק"ב - איכא חיוב חינוך... 2. מהר"ם ש"ס רמ"ה ס"א... 3. רמב"ם הלכות תלמוד תורה פ"א ס"א... 4. רמב"ם הלכות תלמוד תורה פ"א ס"א... 5. שו"ת אורח חיים סי' ע"ב... 6. משנ"ב סי' ע"סק"ח... 7. מאירי ברכות כ"א, שו"ת שלמת חיים סי' פ"ח... 8. שו"ת אורח חיים סי' ק"ו ס"ג, שו"ת שלמת חיים סי' פ"ח... 9. שו"ת אורח חיים סי' ק"ו ס"ג ובמסומן סם... 10. פסק"ת סי' ע"ב.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



R. MENDEL KAPLAN

R. Mendel Kaplan (5629-5680) lived in Bobroisk, where his father R. Yaakov—a Lubavitcher chossid—was a Rosh Yeshivah in the Yeshivah of Harav Shmaryahu Noach Schneerson, the Rav and Rebbe of Bobroisk. A devoted chossid of the Rebbe Rashab, R. Mendel owned a grocery store, but spent much of his day davening and learning, as well as delivering shiurim to balebatim in the local shul. His son-in-law was the well-known chossid, R. Yaakov Yosef Raskin.

After the Rebbe Rashab's histalkus in 5680, R. Mendel was heartbroken and weak. Telling his family that he needed to visit a resort town near Rostov, his main intent was to visit the Ohel and spend Tishrei with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

The Russian Revolution was ongoing, and hooligans often attacked Yidden. On the way, R. Mendel was robbed and thrown off the moving train, suffering severe injuries. Repairmen discovered him the next morning and brought him to a local hospital.

From his hospital bed, R. Mendel sent panim to the Frierdiker Rebbe begging to merit kever Yisroel, a proper burial. Refusing to partake from the hospital food, he left as soon as he recovered somewhat, and continued on to Rostov.

At that time, the Frierdiker Rebbe had not yet accepted the nesius. R. Mendel could not bear that there was no official Rebbe, and at the Simchas Torah farbrengen, he was the first to publicly referred to the Frierdiker Rebbe as

"Rebbe," despite his objections.

He passed away shortly afterward - 6 Cheshvan - and was buried near the Rebbe Rashab. When the Rostov cemetery was set for demolition and Rebbe Rashab was relocated, R. Mendel body was relocated as well.

(ס' זכרון לקהלת בברויסק ע' 301, תשורה כץ תשע"ט)

R. Mendel's son, Elyahu, recorded an episode that occurred after his father's passing:

"One day, an ardent Communist officer appeared at our door, and notified my mother that a search was planned for our home and we should hide our valuables. My mother was terrified at the sight of the armed officer, but did as he advised. Sure enough, our home was searched and our valuables were spared.

"Curious as to why this sworn Communist chose to help us, I sought him out and asked him. He told me that some years before the revolution, he was arrested on suspicion of Communist activities. To save his life, he denied any connection to the Communist party, and gave my father as a reference.

"My father was called in to confirm the denial, and he was warned that if it was found to be false, they would both be hanged. My father gave them his word. After the revolution, the man, now an officer, came to thank my father, who begged him to remain a faithful Jew. When he heard that my father died, this tough man cried, as he did when he concluded his story."

(ס' זכרון לקהלת בברויסק ע' 301)

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE PUBLIC'S BENEFIT

A Lubavitcher chossid always knew that it was near-impossible to get a green light from the Rebbe to leave a teaching job.

When Reb Yitzchok Yaakov Rosenshain, a teacher at the Toras Emes yeshiva, wrote to the Rebbe various reasons why he wanted to leave his position, the Rebbe's response focused on the root-cause for his deliberations:

"It is the yetzer hara who is hindering your service of hashem, which is to educate children al taharas hakodesh, with simchal!"

A few years passed, and Reb Yitzchok Yaakov wrote to the Rebbe again. This time both he and his wife were considering leaving their teaching positions.

"It is a priority," responded the Rebbe in his holy handwriting, "that both of you continue with your educational work. Since the teaching is for the public's benefit, while the challenges are merely personal and temporary..."

(Toras Emes, Page 410)