

The CHASSIDUS PERSPECTIVE with Reb Yoel Kahn

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HISKASHRUS TODAY PART TWO

Practically speaking, there are a few days until *Gimmel Tamuz*. What should we do during this time?

Certainly our *hiskashrus* should be increased in every way, both our own and that of others; our own through learning more of the Rebbe's Torah, and making more *chassidische farbrengens* during these days, and obviously all the things that the Rebbe wrote in his letter for *Yud Shvat* must be applied and observed. But it can't simply be limited to just these few days; we must place ourselves in a completely different mindset, and enter the Rebbe's army.

What does that mean?

The point is this: Learning the Rebbe's Torah, going on *mitzvot*, learning Chitas and Rambam, and following all the other directives, is something that is surely required of us. But let us think for a moment what was the Rebbe's main idea?

On the one hand, there's a *nekuda*, something all of the *Rebbeim* share; what they have in common is that they're all shepherds of Israel, they're concerned for Jews, are *mashpia* to Jews, giving spiritual and physical energy in all areas. Still, every Rebbe has something unique. There are *sichos* about how the Alter Rebbe was *chochma* and the Mittlerer Rebbe was *bina* etc., and so, when we speak of *hiskashrus*, there must be something special in relation to this specific shepherd.

Everyone knows the Rebbe's *koch*, and this was addressed immediately in the first *maamar* in which he said that our job is to draw the *ikar shechina* down into *tachtonim*, to make the world into a dwelling for Hashem.

It's interesting, amazing really, that even as a child, as the Rebbe's famous letter states, from the day he went to *cheder*, and even before he went to *cheder*, he always thought about what kind of *geula* there will be, the kind for which the *galus* will have been worth it, and for which we should be able to say later "*odecha Hashem ki anafta bi*" (I will thank you Hashem for having

been angry with me), not just good, but the kind of goodness for which we'll be able to understand and thank Hashem for the *golus* with our whole heart.

It's an incredible thing. They recount various things about different *gedolei yisroel*; they say about a certain *tzadik*, I don't remember who, that as a child lying in his crib, he suddenly started crying and he couldn't fall asleep, and what was it? Something about his *tzitzis* was out of order, and when they fixed it and placed it back on him, he stopped crying and fell asleep. They say about another *tzadik* that when he nursed from his mother, he made a

bracha. So there definitely were wondrous things about their childhood, "*butzin butzin m'katfeihu yedia*" (their nature is identifiable at a young age), and each one probably had his *zahir tfei*, and the *neschama* of this *tzadik* was connected to *tzitzis* which is why it affected him, the *neschama* of that *tzadik* was connected to making *brachos* etc.

But all of these are specific things. We don't hear any other stories, and I think we aren't hearing them because there aren't

any, that what should be in a child's head? What should he be thinking? What should be bothering him? That the Jews are in exile, the *shechina* is in *galus*, and therefore we must repair and replace this with such a goodness, with such a *geulah*, that everything will have been worth it. And this was on the Rebbe's mind as a small child, even before he went to *cheder*, and when he accepted his role as leader of Jewry in an official, revealed way, this was the "statement": That the time has now come for making the world into a dwelling for Hashem.

Is what the Rebbe said then still true today? Maybe times have changed, or maybe we sinned, and "the sin ruined things"?

Aside from what the Rebbe said then in the *maamar* of *Yud Shvat*, the Rebbe kept saying throughout the years that our generation is the last generation of *golus* and the first generation of *geulah*. That's what the Rebbe always said, and particularly in his first *maamar*.

There's *nevua* and there's Torah. Based on many of the Rebbe's *sichos* it transpires that prophecy on its own is not an eternal thing. Instead, in order to be able to determine whether someone is a true prophet or not, Hashem gave us a test: The positive prophecy of a true prophet never changes, and if it does it is proof that it's not true. Yet prophecy on its own is not essentially eternal.

But Torah is different; Torah is inherently eternal, and the whole world was created from Torah. And just like the process of *Matan Torah* began with Avraham Avinu and went on for seven generations, until Moshe came along and he was the seventh, "and all the sevenths are beloved", and he brought it down here to earth, the same applies for the revelation of *pnimius hatorah* which will occur when Moshiach comes, and the Torah we have now is nothing compared to Moshiach's Torah. So this light began to shine with the Alter Rebbe's *chassidus*, *chassidus Chabad*, and it followed the same pattern until 'Moshe' came and all sevenths are beloved, and the seventh generation brings it down to earth.

So if you'll ask: The Torah speaks about the ten *sefiros*, but maybe they changed? There may have been ten *sefiros* at one point, but maybe that changed now? Why, you ask? I don't know, maybe "the sin ruined things", we'll find reasons. But no, we're talking about something which the Torah says.

What is the order of the *geula* of *pnimius hatorah*? The revelation of *chassidus* through the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid was something else. As the Rebbe explained, "until Avraham came the world was operating in darkness but from when Avraham came it began to shine", there were *tzadikim* earlier but what they were doing wasn't connected to the world, Avraham began shining the light in the world and the Rebbe says that it is similarly the case with *chassidus*. However, even within this world it was still spiritual and not physical. It was Moshe who brought it down to earth, and the same is true for the revelation of *pnimius hatorah*.

The Baal Shem and the Maggid revealed this part of Torah but not in *sechel*, they spoke on a higher level, and that's not 'world'; *emuna* is something higher than the world, but it's not the world. The 'world' was still operating in darkness, and the Alter Rebbe began drawing it into the realm of Chabad (intellect), and then the world began shining. But within that sequence, there was more and more and more until Moshe came along and he was the seventh, "and all sevenths are beloved", and he brought it down to earth, and that's the whole point.

We see how the Rebbe took the deepest concepts and presented them with such *hasbara* and clarity until he enabled many topics in Chassidus to be understood using simple logic, with real comprehension. Why is that? Because the time to bring it down to earth finally came, and therefore, what is our mission? Our mission is to make the world into a dwelling for Hashem, and we do that through spreading *yiddishkeit* and through spreading Chassidus.

Everyone must take upon himself to do *mitzvoim*, to work on various things like spreading *chassidus* or spreading *yiddishkeit*... No matter what your job is, you must know that you're a soldier, there's no 'I have no energy today'.

If so, if it's such a sure thing that this is the seventh generation and that Moshiach must come, then shouldn't that mean that we don't need to actually do anything since it will happen anyways?

(Reb Yoel laughs:) It's exactly as if someone would say, "The Rambam says that Jews will only be redeemed through *teshuvah*, and he says further that the Torah promises that at the end of exile Jews will do *teshuvah* and they'll be redeemed immediately, so when a person feels inspired sometimes to do *teshuvah* he need not bother since it will anyways happen..."

That itself that he is inspired to do *teshuvah* is a result of the fact that the Torah promised! What did the Torah promise? That Jews will ultimately do *teshuvah*! So this experience itself is the manifestation of the Torah's promise!

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And that's what it says in the *maamar*, that ultimately, every one of us will do the work that we need to do, and make the world into Hashem's dwelling. So this itself is certainly the Torah's promise!

What does all of this mean practically?

Practically, our work today in *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe can't just be generic. Certainly all of the things that were previously in play must be present now, unquestionably. But what's the *zahir tfei*? The *zahir tfei* is making the world a dwelling for Hashem.

How do we do that?

First of all, there are the *shluchim*, and what do they do? They enter into the lowest place, from which there's nothing lower, and they draw the *shechina* down there, every place according to its needs: There are places where intermarriage must be prevented, there are places where *kashrus* and Shabbos must be ensured etc. And what must we focus on mainly? On the *mitvzoim* which the Rebbe made, the foundations of *yiddishkeit*. And similar work must be done for spreading *chassidus*. In that first *farbrengen*, *Yud Shvat* 5711, when the Rebbe accepted leadership openly and officially, he also said then that the purpose of all these things is spreading *Chassidus*.

That's all for the *shluchim*, but what's with all of *chassidim*, all of *anash*?

First of all, we must treasure everyone. But what must be the wish of a *yeshiva bachur*, or even *yungerleit*? What should their wish be? What should they seek? It should be to become a *shliach*.

Let's consider for a moment: the whole creation of the world, with everything that there has been until now, *matan Torah*, the *mishkan*, *bayis rishon*, *bayis sheini*, the revelation of the Baal Shem Tov, the revelation of Chabad, and everything, all of that was a preparation to making the *tachton*, the world, into a dwelling for Hashem, and that's Hashem's purpose for everything.

When a person realizes that he has the *zechus* and option to take part in such a thing, in making the world a dwelling for Hashem, that involvement must generate tremendous *simcha*, and result in working beyond any limitations. The truth is that the joy should emanate from the very fact of being the Rebbe's *shliach*,

that's the truth; the fact that we can take part in the Rebbe's work must be precious to everyone.

Aside from that, there's another thing, which is that even those who can't become *shluchim*, they too must be *shluchim*.

How?

It's a simple thing, like in *Eretz Yisroel*, where many of *anash* who can't be *shluchim* take upon themselves to visit ten homes and spread *yiddishkeit* there. Even if you can't be a *shliach* for 24 hours a day, be a *shliach* for some amount of time. But you must be a real *shliach* during that time.

The Rebbe used the theme of a military a lot (*Tzivos Hashem*, *Mitzvah Tanks* etc.). What's the difference between a civilian and a soldier? A regular person also does good things, practically speaking, but whenever he feels like it; when he's interested he does good things for 'the fatherland', yet it's on his own terms.

There could be a scenario of a person who does his work, but not like a soldier. Let's take the students in *yeshiva* for example, they learn, they learn *nigleh*

and *chassidus*, they go on *mitvzoim*, they do everything, but what if today I have no energy? Today I'm exhausted? And today I'm not in the mood? Imagine if a soldier on the front would say that tomorrow or the next is the wedding of a good friend of his, and he must go, so he wants to be let free? It's clear that that's a joke; there's a battlefield, and so why are you wasting our time with the wedding of your friend?

The same should apply for a *bachur* in *yeshiva*; you're a soldier, "*yotzei l'milchemes beis dovid*", (engaged in the battle of the house of Dovid) and when you're enlisted in *milchemes beis dovid*, when you're operating in the military, there's nothing else. Your job is to go, to "write a divorce to your wife", a 'divorce' from everything else. [Certainly there can be a case where attending a wedding is part of the job, but we're not talking about that; we're talking about where it's not a part of the job.] You're not a civilian, you're a soldier.

Similarly, everyone must take upon himself to do *mitvzoim*, to work on various things like spreading *chassidus* or spreading *yiddishkeit*, each of which has various aspects, or involvement in promoting the *sheva mitzvos bnei noach*. There are various options,

but what's your job? No matter what your job is, you must know that you're a soldier, there's no 'I have no energy today'.

If you commit to an arrangement like the one they have in *Eretz Yisroel*, to visit neighbors, and you do it on Friday or Tuesday, then Friday and Tuesday it is, and there's nothing that can get in the way of that. You're in the military, and the Rebbe spoke about this a number of times in *Yud Shvat maamorim*, about "*kol ha'yotzei l'milchemes beis dovid*".

We discussed earlier about how everyone is discussing the preparation for *Gimmel Tamuz*, and there certainly must be preparations, but we must first and foremost place ourselves in a different mindset; not only do we do what we have to do in these days leading up to *Gimmel Tamuz*, but we also have to think about the day after *Gimmel Tamuz*, and what our job is then.

Forget all of the discussions and theories about why what happened on *Gimmel Tamuz* happened. It's not our business to think about the things that Hashem does, and to offer explanations for them; our job is to know one thing, "*yotzei l'milchemes beis dovid*", to enter the Rebbe's army, and that's all.

It certainly must be in collaboration with the *shliach* of that city, or else it ruins the work; things must be orderly, but as stated previously, we must know that we too are *shluchim*.

It's clear that we must be a part of the Rebbe's army, but we must know what to do; how do we know what to do? Sometimes we have questions?

Questions often come from a lack of knowledge. If we'd learn the *maamorim* with the *sichos* we have from the Rebbe, and especially if we'd learn the *igros kodesh* which the Rebbe wrote, then we can see the Rebbe's approach to various things from those letters.

Aside from that, if we're already speaking of learning, it's well known that the *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe is through Torah, so it must not just be in order to know everything and have the answers to all the questions, but simply because this is the act

of *hiskashrus*. And this is for everyone, even soldiers; the Rebbe is *adoneinu moreinu v'rabeinu*: There's the *adoneinu* (our master), and we're his soldiers, and then there's *moreinu v'rabeinu* (our teacher and Rebbe), so we must be his students, and that too must be done in a militaristic manner, with no excuses.

As for the amount of time, it's not really a matter of quantity, it could even be ten minutes, but those ten minutes must be done right. Learn something of the Rebbe's Torah every day. And that doesn't mean learning whichever *sefer* you find on the table today, and then learning the next *sefer* you find there tomorrow; it means really learning.

"It's not really a matter of quantity, it could even be ten minutes, but those ten minutes must be done right. Learn something of the Rebbe's Torah every day."

So there's the *inyan* of learning the Rebbe's torah, and there's the benefit of gleaning vital information; the *maamorim* and *sichos* certainly have many more explanations, but in order to know what to do when questions come up, going through the letters a lot will yield answers for many of the questions. It's usually possible to discover the Rebbe's approach to pertinent matters, and if there's a topic which isn't covered, then we should assume that if we'd need to know it the Rebbe would have addressed it, and if the Rebbe didn't address it then it's not relevant for us to know.

In any case, we must get involved in all of these things; we must enter the army, with *kabalas ol*, but with a *geshmak*. We must know that ultimately, whether a day earlier or a day later, in our time, *ba'agala didan*, we'll have "*aloh naaleh v'yarashnu osah*". The questions about whether all of this is really still applicable today are the *meraglim's* line of thinking, "*ki chazak hu mimenu*", we just can't. True, if we'd just go along with the world's limitations then it really is a dark world and a bleak situation, but when we go with the attitude that "*chafetz banu hashem*", when we go with the Rebbe's *shlichus*, then we're certain that "*aloh naaleh v'yarashnu osah*", and we'll make the world into a dwelling for Hashem, which is the deepest desire of the Rebbe.

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