

Crossing the Narrow Bridge with Rebbe Nachman and his students

TRANSPARENT

By Ozer Bergman

As longtime readers of *Pathways* know, for *Parashat Tetzaveh*, in which Moshe Rabbeinu's name does not appear even once, we often write about the concept of tzaddik. We're doing it again this year!

I'm often asked, "What does it mean to be *m'kushar* (attached) to the tzaddik?" For those yet unfamiliar with this idea, allow me to explain. In a number of lessons in *Likutey Moharan* and in *Sichot HaRan*, Rebbe Nachman teaches that prior to beginning one's *tefilah* (prayer), a person should say, "*Hareinee m'kasher atzmi l'khol ha-tzaddikim ha-amitiyim sh'b'dor*—I am attaching myself to all the genuine tzaddikim of the generation." First of all, this does *not* mean one is praying to a human being, God forbid. We Jews pray to God and only to God. What this attachment means, in part, is that we want our *tefilah* to ride on the tails of the tzaddik's prayer. However well we pray, however much of a hearing our *tefilah* may get, it's better received when it's part and parcel of the tzaddik's prayer.

Not only that. Each prayer is much more than its own particular self. It is also a part of the structure of *tefilah* that we Jews have been building for thousands of years. The name of this structure is "Mishkan." The materials in the Mishkan (Tabernacle) had to first be given to Moshe Rabbeinu in order to be used, because he was the one who built it. Similarly, for a *tefilah* to be included in "Mishkan," one must give it to the builder—i.e., the tzaddik. Rebbe Nachman is not the first to make use of this concept.

In his commentary on the *siddur* (on the *l'shem yichud* for *talit*), Reb Yaakov Emden writes that doing a mitzvah *b'shem kol Yisrael* (in the name of all Israel), is quite important. Why? Because tzaddikim do mitzvahs better than we, and by attaching our doing to their doing, our mitzvahs are more perfect.

This is some of what being *m'kushar* can do. But what is it, or how does one be *m'kushar*? Rebbe Nachman answers the question in *Likutey Moharan*. The attachment, affiliation and bond meant by being *m'kushar* to the tzaddik is being in love with the tzaddik. How

much in love? So much so that your soul is bound in the tzaddik's, and you love him as much as you love yourself (cf. Genesis 44:30). What indicates the degree of love? The degree and extent to which one submits to the standards that the tzaddik sets.

To say or proclaim that one loves the tzaddik and then turn around and do whatever one wishes is fantasy at best and hypocrisy at worst. Loving someone means taking his *ratzon* (desire) seriously and trying to abide by it. In the case of loving the tzaddik, there is the additional element of being the inferior in the relationship: I should abide by his standards because I want to do what he wants to do, and also because he knows better.

Paradoxically, this submission and attachment does not strip a person of his identity. It actually frees the person to be who he is meant to be. The tzaddik is not looking to clone himself thousands of times over. He is seeking to help each person become unshackled from the bonds of misguided thinking and from the attachment to momentary pleasures. Attachment to the tzaddik is detachment from what keeps you from becoming the Jew you are meant to become.

The tzaddik's intent in teaching us how to be Jews is not for his sake, God forbid. It is solely for God's honor. The more we accept the tzaddik's teachings and apply them, the more our thinking and behavior give God honor. The better we become at integrating the tzaddik's teachings into our lives, the more invisible he becomes until finally he is transparent. He is there healing and inspiring, teaching and guiding, but not there, because God and God's honor are his sole focus.

*a gutn Shabbos!
Shabbat Shalom!*

—Based on *Likutey Moharan* I, 135

SIDEPATH

There are times when we do not feel like repenting. For whatever reason, we aren't motivated to return to God. Then again, there are times we try to repent, but cannot find the right gate.

There are twelve gates in Heaven, corresponding to the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Each Jew has to direct his prayer to the gate of his tribe, no other tribe will do. Sometimes we begin to repent and successfully find the gate we need—only to discover that, when we get there, the gate is closed. Reciting Psalms has the power to arouse even the unmotivated to repent. The Psalms can also direct our prayers to the exact gate we need or even open the appropriate gate (LM II, 73).

PARASHAH PEARLS

By Chaim Kramer

27:20 You must command the Israelites to take to you pure, pressed olive oil for lighting...outside the Curtain

We Should Constantly Try To Enter Into Holiness

TetZaveh (תצוה, you must command) shares the same root as *tZeVet* (צות, join). God commanded Moses to join together the Jews in order to illumine their souls with the light of Torah (the Ark). The Jews were commanded to bring Moses pure olive oil—i.e., the pure drops of goodness inherent in each individual. A person must keep on trying to enter into holiness despite being "outside" that realm (LH II, p. 63a).

The Chanukah Lights Draw Illumination From The Torah

The main illumination of the Menorah came from the Ark; thus, the Menorah stood right outside the Holy of Holies. Though now we lack the illumination that was apparent in the Temple, we can experience a taste of that light through the Chanukah lights, which draw their illumination from the Torah.

Furthermore, the Menorah stood opposite the Table (Exodus 40:24). This teaches us that through the illumination of the Torah via the Chanukah lights, we can attain the level of eating in purity (LH III, p. 121a-242).

28:29 Aaron will carry the names of the sons of Israel on the Breastplate of Judgment upon his heart

Through Hitbodedut, We Can Rectify "Fallen Loves"

The heart is the site of "fallen loves"—i.e., one's love for immoral or otherwise forbidden things. Because a person develops "fallen loves" through poor judgment, he rectifies them with the proper judgment, as represented by the Breastplate (LM II, 5:13; *ibid.*, II, 5:16). Nowadays, this rectification is best accomplished through *hitbodedut*.

28:36 Make a Forehead Plate out of pure gold and engrave upon it, in the same style as a signet, "Holy to God"

We Must Draw Wisdom into Our Faith

Tzitz (Forehead Plate) can also be translated as "looking." *Pituchei chotem* (the engraving of a signet) can also be translated as "opening that which is sealed."

A person sees with his eye. The Hebrew word *ayin* (עין, eye) sounds like the letter *ayin* (א), which is numerically equivalent to 70, the sum of *yod* (10) times *zayin* (7). *Yod* (י) represents the *sefirah* of Chokhmah (Wisdom) and *zayin* (ז) represents Malkhut (Kingship), which is associated with faith.

When a person draws wisdom into his faith, his eyes grow beneficent. Then he can see Godliness in every object that he looks at, and elevate the sparks of holiness within it (LM I, 94:2). This is the meaning of the present verse. When a person uses his eyes correctly, he can open up and release the sparks of holiness that were sealed in darkness and impurity, and make them holy to God.

29:38 This is what you must offer upon the Altar: two one-year-old sheep every day, continually

The Daily Sacrifice And The Incense-Offering

The daily sacrifice was offered upon the Altar that stood in the outer courtyard of both the

Tabernacle and the Temple. The *ketoret* (incense-offering) was placed on the Golden Altar that stood inside the covered area of the Tabernacle and the Temple, near the Holy of Holies. The daily sacrifice always preceded the incense-offering.

The Ari writes that the meditations of the daily sacrifice were meant to elevate the lower realms to the higher realms, while the meditations of the *ketoret* were meant to descend into the realm of the *kelipot* and elevate the sparks of holiness from there. We may ask: If the *ketoret* is meant to elevate from the realm of the impure, shouldn't it be the first offering? And, since it deals with the realms "outside" of holiness, shouldn't the *ketoret* be placed upon the Altar in the outer courtyard, and the daily sacrifice be placed upon the inner Altar?

The reason for the order and placement of the sacrifices can be seen in the life of every person who begins to draw close to God. At first such a person finds that he can serve God based on his initial fervor. Only after a while does he begin to face obstacles that confront him. Thus, he can establish himself "in the courtyard" (the daily sacrifice) and continue to take steps away from his material background towards holiness. His next step is to enter the "inner sanctum" (the site of the *ketoret*, which elevates the impure), for now he is ready to think back on his misdeeds and "handle them"—i.e., to rectify the impurities he has caused. Having elevated himself into holiness, he can now tackle the obstacles that confront him, and overcome them (LH VII, p. 178a-356).

29:43 They will be sanctified by My glory

The Tzaddik Draws Others To Serve God

MiShKan (משכן, Tabernacle) is similar to *MoSheKh* (מושך, draw or attract). The *tzaddik* is compared to the Tabernacle. The *tzaddik* draws people to himself so that he may teach them how to serve God. Just as the Tabernacle revealed God's glory, so does the *tzaddik*.

As an attracting force, the *tzaddik* is comparable to the earth's gravitational pull. The earth is associated with humility. This teaches that a person who strives to attain humility can feel the attracting power of the

tzaddik, who is also humble, and be drawn to serve God (LM I, 70).

KITZUR L"M WEEKLY

**10 — "And these are the laws"
(Exodus 21:1)**

5. These arrogant people think that they, too, are able to pray, and since they have fasted and afflicted themselves, they think that they are *tzaddikim*. But the truth is that they are not. Were they to examine themselves, they would see that after all of their fasts and other similar practices, all their physical desires are still bound to their bodies. What is more, the pollution of their fathers' lust from the time of their conception is still attached to their bodies, because their fathers did not sanctify themselves during marital relations. Were they to look at this, they would undoubtedly be seized by a great trembling and would not make the mistake [of thinking that] they are *tzaddikim*, or that they are able to pray or perform redemptions. Likewise, each person should reflect upon all this and not make the mistake of thinking that he is a *tzaddik*. Rather, he should endeavor to bring and to return all his prayers to the true *tzaddikim*, because only they know how to pray and to elevate prayers in the proper fashion. The Holy One, Blessed be He, desires the prayers of the *tzaddikim*, and He sends fluent prayers to their mouths so that He may have pleasure from them.



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