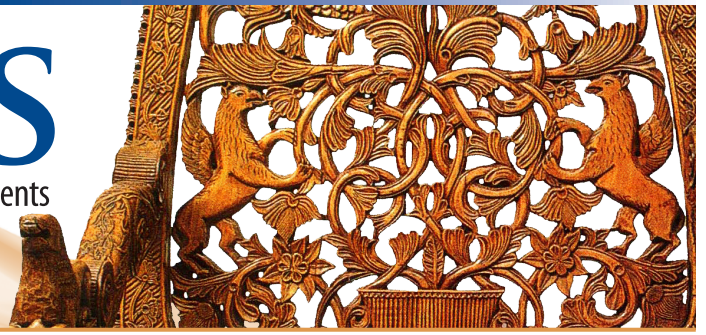


# PATHWAYS

Crossing the Narrow Bridge with Rebbe Nachman and His Students

PARASHAT SHELACH • 5773 • VOL. 3 NO. 35

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## Loving the Land

Compiled by Ozer Bergman

The spies who gave a bad report about the Land of Israel were severely punished (Numbers 14:36-37). That in itself should teach us a lesson about criticizing our holy homeland (and our co-religionists!). Here are some selections from *Likutey Eitzot (Advice)*, based on *Likutey Moharan I*, 20. I have added some comments from here and there. May we all soon see the ingathering of the exiles and the rebuilding of the Promised Land and the Holy Temple. Amen!

\*

To be a true member of the people of Israel is to move always to higher and higher levels. To do this is impossible except through the sanctity of Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel). Every upward movement that we ought to make towards holiness can be accomplished only through Eretz Yisrael. The same is true of prayer. The ascent of prayer comes about only in the Land of Israel (*Likutey Moharan I*, 20).

\*

The quintessence of Eretz Yisrael is faith—“Dwell in the Land and cultivate faith” (Psalms 37:3). As a result of the power and wholeness of the faith we can attain by being in the Land, we are able to unite our physical world with the spiritual worlds... Being in the Land of Israel is the key to rising from level to level, for our faith brings us to the realization that as much as we may know about God, we really know nothing at all (*Likutey Halakhot, Hilkhos Nedarim* 4:16).

\*

It is through the power of the Torah that we draw into ourselves that we can attain the level of Eretz Yisrael. Likewise, when we are present at the time that the Tzaddik draws Torah into the world and teaches in public, we ourselves have a share in the Torah that is revealed at that time by the Tzaddik. This also gives us the strength to come to the Land of Israel (*Likutey Moharan I*, 20:6).

\*

It is impossible to come to the Land of Israel without difficulties and suffering. The root of all the difficulties and suffering lies in the slanderous image of the Land which is spread by the wicked. They are the source of all the obstacles. But the power of the Torah that we draw into ourselves

enables us to overcome all the obstacles, the difficulties and suffering (ibid.).

\*

“[Rebbe Nachman had a perilous journey to Israel.] He then said that we would be able to get to Eretz Yisrael easily...but we should be prepared to suffer and undergo hardship in order to get there... Someone who wants to reach Eretz Yisrael should go there even if he has to travel on foot, as Abraham was told to do when God said, “Go to the land I will show you” (Genesis 12:1) (*Tzaddik* #141).

\*

When a person attains the level of the Land of Israel, he is worthy of being called a “man of strength and valor.” However, before he attains this level, “One suiting up for battle ought not to boast; that is for one who has successfully returned” (I Kings 20:11). But when he has gone through the battle successfully, he is worthy of the name “man of war” (*Likutey Moharan I*, 20:10).

\*

[Reb Noson asked Rebbe Nachman,] “What did you mean when you said that Eretz Yisrael is so great that this is the main victory?” He took me to task for this and answered, “I meant the Land of Israel quite literally, with its houses and apartments”... Even if [a Jew] encounters many obstacles, he should overcome them all and go, because the main victory is getting to the Eretz Yisrael (*Tzaddik* #141).

*A Gutn Shabbos! Shabbat Shalom!*

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## HEALING LEAVES

FROM THE LETTERS OF REB NOSON OF BRESLOV

Compiled by Yitzchok Leib Bell



Just strengthen yourself greatly, keep yourself happy and cast aside any bad thoughts! Do not ruminate too much. Spend your day in the three prayer services, Torah study, reciting Psalms and conversing with your Creator. Speak with others about whatever topic God presents to you so that you can clarify your thoughts. Then the conversation will likely turn to the *takhlit*, the ultimate goal, and you will be able to speak about the greatness of God. (*Letter* #464)

# Rebbe Nachman's Torah

Compiled by Chaim Kramer

**They began to spread an evil report about the land that they had spied out, telling the Israelites: "The land that we passed through and spied out is a land that consumes its inhabitants. All the people that we saw in it were huge!"** (Numbers 13:32).

A lower level of holiness is always nullified before a greater level. Just as a person can be "consumed" by the holiness of the Land of Israel, so too, an ordinary person can be "consumed" by the tzaddik and transformed into his substance – meaning, his good characteristics and righteous deeds (*Likutey Moharan* I, 135).

Elsewhere, Rebbe Nachman teaches that just as a gravely ill person seeks a world-renowned specialist to heal him, so should a Jew seek the best spiritual "specialist" to heal his soul (*ibid.*, I, 30:2).

\* \* \*

It is good for a person to be attached to a tzaddik, even if he does not seem to receive much from him.

In the course of life, "that which is consumed is transformed into the consumer." For instance, when an animal ingests grass, the grass is transformed into the animal. A person who eats meat transforms the animal into part of himself.

The same concept applies to the Holy Land, which is called "a land that consumes its inhabitants." When one enters the Land, which is the concept of faith, he is consumed by it – that is, he is transformed into its substance, becoming a man of faith.

*When one enters the Land,  
which is the concept of faith, he  
becomes a man of faith.*

Similarly, when one is associated with a tzaddik, who is the concept of the Holy Land, he is consumed by the tzaddik and is literally transformed into the tzaddik's substance – i.e., his good characteristics and righteous deeds.

However, closeness to the tzaddik is of no benefit to someone who does not wish to come close to God. This is compared to food that cannot be consumed: if a person eats something that his body cannot tolerate, then it is neither digested nor transformed into nourishment. Instead, the body vomits it out. One whose motives are impure will not be "consumed" by the tzaddik, but will be rejected by him. So too, the Holy Land ejects those who do not pursue holiness, as it is written, "So the Land will not vomit you out for defiling it, as it vomited out the previous nation" (Leviticus 18:28) (*Likutey Moharan* I, 129).

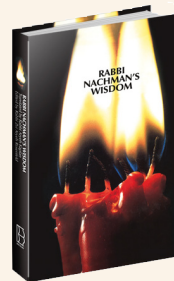
## SIDEPATH

Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom translated by R. Aryeh Kaplan, zt"l

34. Faith is like charity. The Torah says of Abraham, "He had faith in God, and He counted it as charity" (Genesis 15:6).

Through faith, one is worthy of having children. The Hebrew word for faith is *EMUNaH*. Turn the letters into numbers, and the *gematria* is *BaNIM* (children).

35. The Rebbe said, "Great atheism is coming to the world." It has already been predicted that there will be great temptations before the Mashiah's coming, when



"many will purify themselves and be refined, and make themselves shining white" in faith. Fortunate indeed is the person who resists these temptations and remains firm in his belief. He will be worthy of all the good promised to us by the prophets and sages of old.

Knowing full well that this has already been predicted, it would seem ridiculous for a person to succumb to any temptation to abandon his belief. But still, it is a great trial. Many will fall away, and for this reason it is written that "the wicked will act wickedly."

The Rebbe said, "Still, I am revealing this for the sake of the faithful few who will remain strong in their belief. They will certainly have great conflicts within. But when they see that this has already been predicted, it will give them additional strength and encouragement."

36. The Rebbe also said, "There will come a time when a simple, religious person will be as rare and unique as the Baal Shem Tov."



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*The photo on the front is a close-up of Rebbe Nachman's chair, which is displayed in the main Breslov synagogue in Jerusalem.*