

Out to the Field – First steps; Re-balancing the scales

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Continued from last week [here](#):

Likutey Moharan I:24 – Week 2

A Breslover chassid has to try his best to live the Rebbe's teachings in practice and fulfill them according to their simple meaning. To do this, hisbodedus becomes the foremost workshop where a person can dedicate himself to working through the issues how exactly to implement the teachings in his own life and address any obstacles he encounters in his attempt to do so.

Over the years, I have been able to work myself up to 50 minutes of hisbodedus a day. I started years ago with a commitment to 10 minutes a day, and have slowly added 5

minutes here and minutes there to my total time. (As an example, my resolution this past Rosh Hashana was simply to add 5 minutes to my daily time; increasing it from 40 minutes a day to 45 minutes. Since then, I added another 5 minutes once I learned that a friend had been diagnosed with a terminal illness.) Today, I make time for hisbodedus early in the morning before work, before my wife and children wake up, and before there are any disturbances in the atmosphere. The early morning is exceptionally quiet, with nothing to disturb my special time alone with Hashem.

Before I started my first day of hisbodedus focused on *Likutey Moharan* I:24, I remembered something that Rabbi Chaim Kramer wrote in his introduction to "[The Fiftieth Gate](#)",

"Reb Noson usually starts his prayers [that he composed in Likutey Tefillos] not with the end goal of the Rebbe's lesson but with what he saw to be the 'jumping off' point, the trait one has to work on first in order to attain the other levels discussed in the lesson."

I then opened up the "The Fiftieth Gate" to lesson 24, and read the opening words of Reb Noson's prayer to determine what that jumping off point was:

"How blessed are we! How good is our portion, how pleasant our share and how beautiful our heritage! It is a blessing to us that through Your great love and kindness we have received Your holy Torah and can carry out Your precious mitzvos, which are 'more desirable than gold, even an abundance of the finest gold.'

I have come to plead with You, Hashem, my God and God of my fathers, to help me carry out all of the mitzvos with the utmost joy. It is certainly fitting to rejoice and delight in You, Hashem, our God, whenever we have a privilege of carrying out a mitzvah. Every single mitzvah is bound up in Your unity, and through performing each mitzvah we are able

to become attached to You and merged with You, Hashem. How good You have been to me in making me a Jew and not a non-Jew, and in lifting someone as lowly and needy as myself from the dust and dirt. Each day and every moment I have the privilege of carrying out such precious, lovely mitzvos. Loving God, You are the source of joy. Shine happiness upon me and let me be truly joyous whenever I do a mitzvah. Every day let me do many, many mitzvos with great joy and delight."

From this prayer, it was clear that I needed to focus my time in hisbodedus to on the topic of simcha and specifically performing mitzvos with simcha. Once I began my simcha-focused hisbodedus, I realized just how off kilter I had been for the past few weeks. I had been spending only about 20% of the time thanking Hashem for all of the good things in my life and 80% of the time kvetching that I needed help with this or that (however lofty or mundane it was). Despite the fact that I was devoting 50 minutes a day to hisbodedus, I still felt almost as if I was just getting myself agitated in my pleading to Hashem. Perhaps it was precisely this type of unbalanced hisbodedus which the Rebbe was referring to when he wrote, "Improper hisbodedus leads to anger." (*Sefer Hamidos, Ka'as* #35, translated into English as "[*The Aleph-Bet Book*](#)"). I discussed this issue with a close friend and he advised me to turn my hisbodedus into 90% thanking Hashem and 10% requests for the future since this would help me equalize after having been performing lopsided hisbodedus for so long.

I began to follow this suggestion and will let you know how it went next week.