

Parshat Devarim: The Tzaddik Speaks to You

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July 16, 2023



“These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Israel, on the east bank of the Jordan, in the desert, in the Aravah, opposite the Red Sea, in the area of Paran, Tophel, Lavan, Chatzerot and Di Zahav.” Devarim (Deuteronomy) 1:1

In Parsha Devarim, Moshe Rabbeinu speaks to all Israel, that is the entire Jewish nation. No one was able to say, “Moshe’s words don’t apply to me.”

This is the case when a true Tzaddik speaks, when he teaches; each individual can find themselves in his lessons. This is the case with Rebbe Nachman’s teachings. There is always something for you to find in one of the hundreds of lessons in *Likutey Moharan*, or *Sippurey Maasiot* (Rabbi Nachman’s

stories), or other works.

We think these teachings are about Hashem and Judaism, and they are, but they are also about each one of us. In order to truly come closer to Hashem and to live the life of righteous Jews, we have to know ourselves. Rebbe Nachman teaches us how to find ourselves: the methods include learning, *hitbodedut*, joy, etc. The tzaddik also teaches us who we are in relationship to Hashem: beloved and precious, capable of personal spiritual greatness, uniquely vital to the history of the world, and at the same time, quite small in comparison to His Greatness. He teaches us what we need to do and how to do it.

The true tzaddik has many messages for us, and at different points in our lives, one lesson might apply to our personal situation more than another, but they are all valid and relevant.

Rebbe Nachman teaches that a tzaddik lives and breathes *Azamra*, seeking and finding the *nikuda tova*, the good point, inside each person. Moshe was able to be the leader of the Jewish people because he loved us and he saw the good in us. He was able to show each Jew (in ancient times and still today) the teachings he or she needs in order to live righteously and grow spiritually. Rebbe Nachman's Torah does the same for this complicated time in history.

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