

Seeing Through the Veil of Our World

written by Dovid Mark

December 24, 2018



In Rebbe Nachman's famous story The Lost Princess, the viceroy who is searching for the Lost Princess on behalf of the King who yearns to see his daughter again finds a castle ruled by another king. The castle looks impenetrable with guards all around it. Shockingly they let him right in. The story continues:

"Neither the king nor anyone else asked him any questions. He saw delicacies and fine foods there, and he ate. Then he went to lie down in a corner to see what would happen.

"He saw the king issue a command to bring the queen. People went to fetch her. There was a great uproar as they brought forth the queen, and the orchestra played and the [the choir] sang. People set up a throne for [the queen], and she sat next to [the king]."

"She was the [lost] princess! As soon as the [viceroy] saw her, he recognized her. The queen looked around, and seeing

someone lying in the corner , recognized him. She stood up from her throne, and went over and touched him. 'Do you know me?' she asked."

"'Yes,' he replied. 'I know you. You are the king's daughter who was lost.'"

"He then asked her, 'How did you get here?'"

"She replied, 'It happened when my father said [the th Evil One should take me]. This is the place of Evil.'" [Translation by Aryeh Kaplan, BRI]

"This is the place of Evil." How could the princess say such a thing? After all, the viceroy was allowed in. He ate and enjoyed himself and yet the Lost Princess referred to the place being evil.

To understand the above along with the princess's statement, it is important to understand that the castle the viceroy entered is an analogy for our own world left in an unrectified state. Our world is called *"Olam d'Shikra"* – the World of Lies. The princess is *"emunah"* – the pure faith in the Creator and the viceroy is the Tzaddik, the one who is truly righteous.

The world we live in is beautiful, and seemingly filled with all sorts of amazing things – foods, music, knowledge, and more. How could this world be the Evil Castle in the story? Yet, that is the point, no matter how much we enjoy this world, if we allow it to distract us from our true purpose, which is to rectify the Creation through our *emunah* by following the will of the Creator, then it becomes Evil.

When the viceroy asks the princess how he can get her out of the castle. She explains the following:

"'It is impossible to get me out unless you choose yourself a place and remain there for an entire year. All that year you

must long to get me out. Whenever you are unoccupied you must only year, seek and look forward to freeing me.'" [Translation by Aryeh Kaplan, BRI]

The viceroy fails a few times before ultimately freeing the princess. This is a lesson for ourselves. We have a short time in this world to fulfill our purpose. After all, as it says in Pirkei Avot: "This world is similar to a corridor before a great hall." We must utilize our time here to help reach our potential and free our own princess. We can only do this through prayer and "*Avodat Hashem*" – service of G-D.

Our world is beautiful and amazing. We must thank the Creator for sending us down here to experience it, but we must also not lose sight of the purpose of our time here. This is the ultimate challenge.