

Speak to God About Everything

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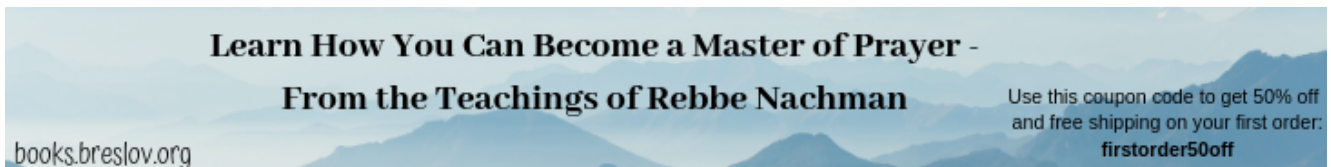
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In Sichah 7 of Sichos HaRan, Rebbe Nachman explains how we are to pray, in particular during hisbodedus, private prayer. He says that we should speak to HaShem and pour out our hearts to Him like a child speaking to his father. We should tell Him everything that is happening to us and all that is troubling us, just like a child would do. A child does not try to hide his feelings, and he does not worry about what people will think of him if he tells the simple truth. That is how we should be when we speak to HaShem.

What happens if a person feels he is not deserving to be like a child to HaShem? He feels that he is so far away, that he has sinned so much and rebelled against HaShem. How could he then come and speak to Him like a child? The Rebbe says that nonetheless, HaShem has called us His children (Devarim 14:1), and that is what we are no matter what. As our sages have

said, whether we act like HaShem's children should act or we do not act like HaShem's children should act, we are still called His children (Kiddushin 36a). Therefore, we can always come to Him as a child and speak freely. The fact that we feel so far and undeserving to speak to Him can itself be the topic of our conversation with Him.



That being said, a person may still feel that he is not worthy of being HaShem's child. Rebbe Nachman brings a story about his grandfather, Rebbe Nachman Horodenker whose yahrzeit is today, 2 Tammuz. The story seems to be unrelated, yet it serves as a guide for dealing with difficult thoughts.

Rebbe Nachman Horodenker was once travelling on a boat. The food had run out and he hadn't eaten for several days. Finally, the boat landed in an Arab city where no Jews lived. One of the residents took in Rebbe Nachman Horodenker and offered him food. He washed his hands and said HaMotzi, but before he could take a bite he had a strange thought. The verse "Do not eat the bread of one with an evil eye" (Mishlei 23:6) came into his mind. He knew that thoughts were not for naught, and despite having said the blessing for bread, he decided not to eat it because of this thought.

Only then, a new verse came into his mind, "I have sent the ravens to feed you" (I Melakhim 17:4). The word ravens, orvim (אֲרָבִים), can also be read as aravim, Arabs. Rebbe Nachman Horodenker then decided to eat the bread.

The Rebbe explains that sometimes we have confusing thoughts. However, if we wait HaShem will help us and send us a new thought that will draw us close. For example, a person wants to speak to HaShem, but he has thoughts that he is not fitting to be like a child to HaShem. What is he supposed to do? He

should not give up. Rather, he should wait and open himself up to receive good thoughts. If he holds his ground he will see that though he has acted improperly, the fact that he wants to return is itself a sign that he is really HaShem's child. With that thought in mind, he can break through the barriers and begin to speak. The difficulty he had in beginning his hisbodedus can itself be the opening topic of conversation which will lead him to deeper topics and a great closeness with HaShem.

The Rebbe assures us that if we do our part, HaShem will help us. The path is long, but with the tzaddikim as our guides we are sure to achieve what we need to achieve in this world.