

Spirituality First

written by Chaim Kramer
January 4, 2021



Once Moshe Landau, a wealthy follower of Rebbe Nachman, returned from a business trip to Berditchov. Hearing that Reb Noson was in town, he went to see him straightaway without even going home first.

Reb Noson received him warmly. Then, as usual, he began lecturing Landau about the importance of serving God rather than running after one's worldly desires, which all lead to nothing anyway since the material world is full of sorrow.

Landau smiled and said, "I have just come back from Berditchov with some beautiful merchandise. I'm perfectly comfortable. What could be wrong with this world?"

Reb Noson replied, "A man could return from a successful business trip and bring expensive presents for his family. He might even bring his wife an exquisite gold ring. But she may

not like it, and she'll start an argument, and he'd rather be dead than alive."

Landau, who had indeed bought his wife a ring, went home to give it to her. Just as Reb Noson had said, she was extremely unhappy with her gift and started such an argument that Landau came running back to Reb Noson, saying, "Oy! Were you right!"

This world is compared to a fleeting shadow (Psalm 144:4). We may try with all of our effort to grab ahold of its materialism and enjoy what this world has to offer. However, if our purpose is to lavish in this world's excitement, we will never be truly satisfied. This is because the nature of our short life here is to prepare us for our future. However, by using materialism in order to advance our spiritual goals, our life becomes a springboard for our true permanent existence, and we can enjoy the best of both worlds.