

THE POWER OF FAITH – BUILDING ONE'S FAITH

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Rebbe Nachman teaches: The Jews are called IVRim-אִיבְרִים because their faith enables them to oVeR-עוֹבְרִים (pass over) all the difficulties, all the wisdoms and pseudo-wisdoms which they encounter (*Likutey Moharan* I, 64:2).

The world is a very, very narrow bridge The main thing is not to be afraid! (*Likutey Moharan* II, 48). Faith keeps us sure-footed on this narrow bridge of life, enabling us to face its challenges and cross over safely to the other side.

With faith, survival is always possible. Even if, God forbid, we are visited with suffering, we can always find consolation in God. This is possible because we believe in Him and trust that whatever He does, He does for our ultimate benefit. On the other hand, a person without faith has no life. As long as things appear to be going okay, his life seems to be in order. But, as usually happens, difficulties and hardships develop, and then he has nowhere to turn. Having no faith to rely upon, his life turns very bitter. The only way to overcome every obstacle is with faith (*Rebbe Nachman 's Wisdom #32*).

When one has simple faith in God, one can achieve a very great level of spiritual awareness, a level that is above even great wisdom (*Rebbe Nachman's Wisdom #32*).

Who can say that he has complete faith? Were a person to believe that God listens to every single word his lips utter, he would certainly pray with a tremendous level of concentration and intensity (*Likutey Moharan I, 62:2*). How many of us are on this level? Thus, there is always room for growth in faith.

Rebbe Nachman once said, "Through faith a person can reach such a great state of longing that he goes beyond himself and doesn't know what he is longing for [i.e. he attains a level higher than the one he is on] (*Tzaddik #425*).

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"Believe," said Rebbe Nachman, "that if you can spoil, then you can also repair" (*Likutey Moharan II, 112*). This in itself is a most powerful statement. Why do we question ourselves when we think we committed a sin? Because we believe that we made a mistake and this will produce negative results. We are apprehensive. We fret. We may even worry. All because we *believe* it to be wrong. This shows that we already have a

degree of faith within us! If so, said the Rebbe, since you already have faith in yourself, then believe that just as you spoiled something, you can rectify it (*Likutey Halakhot, Eiruvey Techumin* 5:35).

Faith is linked to and dependent upon the mouth, as is written, “I will make known Your faith with my mouth” (Psalms 89:2). If a person talks about faith – saying that he wants to believe or speaks words of belief – then his faith is strengthened (*Likutey Moharan* II, 44). By the same token, we must be careful not to utter words contrary to faith, even in jest, for it can bring a person to atheism, God forbid (*Likutey Moharan* II, 44).

Over and over again a person should say to himself: I believe in God! I believe in God! Repeating these words helps instill in us the inherent faith that we all so desperately need. Reb Noson used to say that the more a person repeats something, the more it is embedded in his mind and heart (*Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Rosen*). Repeat words of *emunah* (faith) to yourself, your family, your friends. Even if it has no effect on them, it *will* have a positive effect on you.



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Conversely, we should never utter a word of wickedness. We should never say that we will commit a sin or be wicked, even though we have no intention of carrying out our words. The power of speech is so powerful, it can eventually lead a person to sin. Yeihu was anointed king of the Ten Tribes. He was to replace Achav, a devoted idolater. To convince the Jewish people, who were themselves trapped in idolatry, that they should follow him, Yeihu said "Achav served [the idols] a little, but Yeihu will serve a lot" (2 Kings 10:18). Though at the time Yeihu was God-fearing, and had absolutely no intention of ever serving idolatry, he did eventually fall victim to his own words. We therefore see the importance of not speaking words of wickedness (*Rebbe Nachman's Wisdom* #237).

A person's faith should be so solid that he sees the thing in which he believes – right there in front of his eyes (*Likutey Moharan* I, 62:4). Believing is seeing! Believing in something strongly can bring us to a level of understanding as great as if we saw the thing with our own eyes. Therefore, to attain faith, we should speak it and about it; avoiding its opposite at all costs, even if our true intention is to mock the heretical ideas of the non-believers. We should yearn for faith, and we should constantly pray to attain it.

(taken from the book, [Crossing the Narrow Bridge: A Practical Guide to Rebbe Nachman's Teachings](#), chapter 5, Faith, pp. 71-73)