

WHAT IS FAITH (PART II)

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Rebbe Nachman teaches : for those things which the human mind cannot comprehend, one must rely totally on faith!

For a better understanding of these concepts, consider the following quote from Rebbe Nachman and part of a discourse from *Likutey Halakhot* concerning faith and intellect.

The Rebbe teaches: Regarding those things which God granted the human mind the ability to understand, it is a great mitzvah to sharpen one's intellect and comprehension so as to understand them clearly. However, for those things which the human mind cannot comprehend, one must rely totally on faith (*Likutey Moharan* I, 62:2).

Reb Noson writes: The essence of everything in this world can

be seen it its “face.” Just as man is instantly recognizable by his face, so too, everything in existence can be recognized by its face. This can be understood in business, where we first look to see what’s on the “surface” of the deal – is the merchandise good, the price reasonable, etc. Only afterwards, if the thing looks good, do we start to read the fine print. In this sense, the “face” relates to truth, for we can rarely “dress up” the true value of an item. This is why when a merchant is honest and the merchandise he is selling is priced accordingly, he has an “enlightened face.” His face discloses his inner truth.

“Shema Yisrael... God is One.” The truth is one. There can be countless lies, but the truth can only be one. Anyone who looks for the truth will see God everywhere. This is, in fact, man’s mission in this world – to seek out the truth – God – wherever he goes.

But this truth cannot be attained, until we have faith. Faith is the most important prerequisite for achieving truth. The entire world operates on faith. For example: When pricing merchandise you’re interested in purchasing, you ask the price. Do you buy it? If you believe that merchant’s price is fair, you do. If you suspect there’s something wrong and don’t trust the merchant, you don’t. The same rules of faith apply whether we are talking about purchasing a house, commodities and stocks, or milk and bread from the grocer. How about accepting someone’s check? Do you trust that it will be covered? Wherever you turn, you must have faith in the people you deal with – otherwise, no deal. Unless you have faith and trust in others, you cannot survive in business.

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In whom should we have faith? In whom do we put our trust? In

someone we consider truthful and honest. No matter how wise and intelligent a person may be, ultimately he must place his faith in someone else. Even chairmen of multi-conglomerate boards must place their faith in their assistants' reports – in the work of people they trust. Thus, all business is ultimately conducted through faith and trust.

Where does this faith come from? As with everything else in this world, it has its roots in a supernal concept above. The faith needed in order to succeed in even the mundane world of business stems from a pure faith in truth, in God. Thus the prophet says of this spiritual faith (Habakkuk 2:4), "The righteous man shall live by his faith." Faith is the foundation of all. With it, we can seek the absolute truth and come to recognize God from and within everything in the world.

Yet, the fact is that not everyone knows which is the best investment, which is the best merchandise to purchase. Actually, very few people do; and even then, we see that only a limited number succeed. Most people do not. The Talmud teaches: "No one knows in which field [of business] he will prosper" (*Pesachim* 54b). Even with the best intentions, not everyone has the right advisers or devoted truthful friends, who can counsel him how properly to invest and profit. Most people fail to grasp *all* the intricacies of business, especially when the transactions are conducted in distant lands, and they lack expert advice.



Faith is the foundation of all!

In Torah, however, we were – and still are – very fortunate. Moshe Rabeinu, our True Shepherd, brought us the Torah from Heaven, from God. He visited the “distant land,” saw the truth with his own eyes, and brought us the means of success. He was loyal to the Jews: he fought for them, battled for them, and when they sinned before God he stood by them even offering his own life on behalf of all the Jews. Moshe brought us the means of serving God, the “merchandise” – Torah and mitzvot. By believing in him, by accepting Moshe as a true and loyal friend, we can engage in our search for the absolute truth. Our merchandise is tzitzit, tefillin, Shabbat, Torah, prayer, charity, kindness, etc. With this “merchandise” we can find our prosperity and success.

Furthermore, we do not have to understand it fully. We can rely on Moshe Rabeinu and trust his judgment, that what he gave us is the right advice. Even if we do not fully understand it, it will become clear later on. That is the beauty of having a true and loyal friend upon whom we can rely.

Conversely, if we decide we have to understand everything

absolutely clearly before jumping into a deal, how will we ever succeed? How will we ever accomplish anything? We'll always wonder if someone isn't pulling the wool over our eyes, always question if the price is right, and so on. Ever notice how quickly successful businessmen move when, after reading the reports and consulting their friends, they feel the deal is right? Imagine what would happen if they tried to ponder every single factor, if they attempted to weigh every detail carefully. They'd never close a deal! By the time they finished making their assessment, the seller would have gone elsewhere or the market would have disappeared.

When it comes to Torah, however, we have the word of our true and loyal friend, Moshe Rabeinu. He brought us the Torah. He gave us the merchandise – i.e. the means to succeed in this world. He knew. He was in Heaven and saw exactly which merchandise is worth investing in. If we have faith – faith in Moshe Rabeinu, faith in the true Tzaddikim – we can – and will – succeed.

Whoever believes in truth is attached to the truth. Truth and faith go together, hand in hand. Each supports and strengthens the other. By believing in the Torah, we draw upon ourselves the truth of the Torah. Though we may not yet understand what we are doing, it will become clear to us as we study and progress in Judaism. But first, we must believe. We must have faith (adapted from *Likutey Halakhot, Giluach 4:1-3*).

(taken from the book [Crossing the Narrow Bridge: A Practical Guide to Rebbe Nachman's Teachings](#); chapter 5; Faith pp. 64-68)