

Crossing the Narrow Bridge with Rebbe Nachman and his students

A STORY FOR THE ROAD

By Ozer Bergman

"On the road I told a story. Everyone who heard it had a thought of *teshuvah*."

Let me tell you a story. But first, just in case you're unfamiliar with "The Lost Princess," here is a two-sentence synopsis. A king got angry at his daughter and told her to get lost. She disappeared and the king's faithful viceroy searched for her for many, many years till he found her and brought her home.

About 40 years ago, Reb Gedaliah Kenig, z"l, who lived in Yerushalayim at the time, was visiting the United States. Part of his schedule included a trip to California, where he would be speaking to a group of Jewish graduate students who had a burgeoning interest in Judaism and Rebbe Nachman. It was decided that Reb Gedaliah would speak about the Rebbe's story, "The Lost Princess."

The class began with each of the graduate students offering what he thought were the most important lessons of the story. One shared historical lessons, one philosophical insights, a third detected Kabbalistic nuances and a fourth pointed out psychological premises. Then they turned expectantly to Reb Gedaliah to hear what he would say.

In a quiet voice he said, "The main lesson of the story is that the damage caused by a moment's anger can take years and years to fix."

When Rebbe Nachman told this story, he did not say why the king became angry with his beloved daughter, the princess. Nor did the Rebbe explain why the king said what he did ("May the No-Good One take you!"). The Rebbe does tell us that the king was full of remorse, and the viceroy took note, becoming so inspired and motivated that he spent years of his life looking for her. (Recall that when he set out, the viceroy did not know whether or not he would find her!)

Once the viceroy sets out, the king all but disappears from the story. Only when they first cross paths do the princess and viceroy mention him—"Because of what my father said am I here"—but the king suffers tremendous grief because she is lost. The viceroy's sole focus is bringing her home.

Throughout his story—our story!—the viceroy models so many positive traits, each

of which we need at various points in life. He is not shy. When he sets out, the viceroy asks for everything he needs to get the *teshuvah* done. Although he doesn't know where she is or where to go, he sets out confident that he will find the princess.

The viceroy is unafraid to explore the unexplored, to try a new path when old ones don't work, to challenge inner uncertainty or to let go of security. He's not afraid to call society's bluff or debate authority in order to find the princess. Despite everything he undergoes, the viceroy knows she is real and her message true.

Throughout the story, the viceroy's faith underlies everything: his persistent doggedness, his courage, his hope and his overcoming his blunders. He needs some faith to get started, and more and more faith as the search continues, because the closer he gets to freeing her, the harder the search becomes.

Yet when the viceroy is finally whisked away to the Pearl Castle on the golden mountain, he needs something new and something old. He needs his old friend, patience, but he needs to use it in a new way. Until now, he used patience to forge ahead despite a seeming lack of progress. Now he needs to use patience to do nothing. Now he needs patience to make a plan.

This is new. Although faith must inform everything we do and is often the primary tool we need to use, there are critical junctures where we need to use *chokmah d'kedushah* (holy wisdom). Although there are times in life when we can only muddle through, there are also times God wants us to think ahead and plan how we will free the princess.

For now, though, the plan remains hidden. The mysteries remain. Rebbe Nachman doesn't tell us why we—as princess—are exiled, and he doesn't tell us how we—as viceroy—will free the princess. He just tells us what we need to know: that we can and we will free her. Have faith!

*a gutn Shabbos!
Shabbat Shalom!*

—Based on *Sipurey Ma'asios*, "Avedat Bat Melekh" (*Rabbi Nachman's Stories* #1, "The Lost Princess")

SIDEPATH

Groan away the bad desires. Rebbe Nachman once said: For a quarter of an hour's worth of pleasure, a person can lose both this world and the next! (*Likutey Moharan* II, 108).

Rebbe Nachman once took hold of R' Shmuel Isaac near his heart and said to him, "For the little bit of blood in your heart, will you lose this world and the next? Groan it out! Cry and sigh a lot until you get rid of the desires for this world" (*Tzaddik* #441).

PARASHAH PEARLS

By Chaim Kramer

16:20 Righteousness, righteousness you must pursue

Acts Of Righteousness Have Double Potency

The word "righteousness" is repeated in this verse because one who does acts of righteousness and charity not only attains righteousness for himself, but draws rectification for evil, too (LH II, p. 196a).

17:8 If a matter of judgment is hidden from you

Tzaddikim Can Help Us Attain Understanding

YiPALei (אלפי, if it is hidden) has the same letters as *ALePh* (אלפ, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet). *Aleph* literally means "study," and the form of the letter *aleph* (א) represents the tzaddik (the upper point), the disciple (the lower point), and the "tent of meeting" where the disciple receives from the tzaddik (the line between them).

If a person does not understand a certain teaching, it indicates that something is lacking in his *aleph* (i.e., his study). He must turn to the Temple, where the Sanhedrin—the true tzaddikim—sits, to rectify his *aleph*. Then he can transform his *ALePh* (אלפ) into *PeLE* (אלפ, wonder), for he will attain lofty understanding and clarification of the law (LH II, p. 200-101a).

Follow us on Twitter @OfBreslov

17:11 Do not deviate from the word that they will tell you, either to the right or the left

Find The Golden Mean

"Deviating to the right or the left" refers to the extremes a person can adopt in his spiritual devotions. Rebbe Nachman often counseled his followers to avoid being overly lenient ("right") or overly stringent ("left") (see LM, II, 44; *Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* #235).

17:19 He should read in it all the days of his life

Proclaim Your Faith

The Hebrew word *ve-KaRa* (וקרא) can mean either "read" or "call." Just as the king must "call forth" to draw life, we, too, must "call out" our declaration of faith—the Shema—to draw the intellect of God. Thus, the mitzvah of reciting the Shema is known as *KRiAt Shema* (קריאת שמע), and the mitzvah of reading the Torah is called *KRiAt HaTorah* (קריאת התורה) (LH III, p. 172-87a).

18:4 The first shearing of your sheep

Every Good Deed Draws Us To God And God To Us

The wool of the shearing contains many, many thousands of individual strands and hairs, representing all the good deeds that a person accumulates during his lifetime. With every good deed—even one that seems as inconsequential as a "hair"—one can draw himself to God and draw God to us. We give the first shearing to the Kohen, who represents *chesed* (kindness), because conceptually, the Kohen is the one who draws out the good from within each person and illumines the lives of others with the knowledge of their many good deeds (LH V, p. 266a).

18:13 Act with simplicity with God

The Path To True Faith

Tamim (תמים, simplicity) also means "perfection." One must always be wholesome, complete and perfect with God. In this way, he displays true faith (LM I, 18:3).

19:15 Two witnesses

Our Faithful Witnesses

The "two witnesses" symbolize truth and faith. Alternately, they correspond to *tefilin* and circumcision, or Shabbat and circumcision (LH VII, p. 10-12).

20:19 Man is a tree of the field

Be Environmentally Conscious

Trees contain many sparks of holiness that fell as a result of the sin of Adam and the sins of ensuing generations. We must take care of the trees and the environment because in them, many, many thousands of holy sparks await rectification through our good deeds (LH II, p. 170).

21:1 If a corpse is found

Desecrating Shabbat Is Like Desecrating Human Life

ChaLaL (חלל, corpse) implies *ChiLuL Shabbat* (חלול שבת, desecration of Shabbat). A corpse, which represents death, is the opposite of Shabbat, of which it is said: "Those who taste her merit life" (Shabbat Musaf Liturgy). From this, we learn that desecrating the sanctity of Shabbat is akin to desecrating the sanctity of human life (LM I, 277:4).

KITZUR L" M WEEKLY

14 — To Draw Peace (continued)

25. Speaking with one's friend about moral instruction and fear of Heaven, and awakening him to repentance, serves as a rectification for nocturnal emissions (קרי, *KeRY*). [We see the expression of this reality in the verse,] "If you make a fine man (יקר, *YaKaR*) out of a base one" (Jeremiah 15:19), since *KeRY* and *YaKaR* have the same Hebrew letters [thus indicating a conceptual connection].

15 — The Hidden Light

1. A person who wishes to experience a taste of the "hidden light"—that is, the secrets of the Torah to be revealed in the future—must elevate the attribute of fear to its source. This elevation is accomplished through "judgment"—namely, through *hitbodedut* and conversing with one's Creator, whereby a person expresses his heart before God and evaluates and judges himself on all of his activities. By doing this, a person eliminates all of his fears, and he elevates fear from its fallen state.

For when a person does not evaluate and judge himself, he is then evaluated and judged on high. Subsequently, his judgment is "clothed" in all [sorts of other] things, and everything in the world becomes God's agent to execute the judgment passed against him. Consequently, this person can now receive his punishment and judgment through anything in the world. We perceive this phenomenon empirically. For when some kind of harsh judgment or suffering, God forbid, comes to a person, in most cases, it comes about through some minor circumstance, some small thing which one would never have thought could develop into illness or suffering like this, God forbid. All this occurs, however, because the verdict passed upon this person on high has "clothed" itself in this particular thing, in order to execute the appropriate judgment.

All this happens when a person does not evaluate and judge himself. But when a person does judge himself, then the judgment passed on high is annulled and he need not fear or be afraid of anything—since his judgment is not "clothed" in anything else. For he has already nullified the judgments himself by judging himself on his own, and fear is not "clothed" in any other thing in order to rouse the person, because he has already roused himself on his own. In this way, a person elevates fear to its source, so that he will fear only God and nothing else, and he will thereby merit to taste the "hidden light."



Jerusalem, Israel
Tel: 972.2.582.4641 • Fax: 972.2.582.5542

North America:
POB 587 • Monsey, NY 10952-0587
1-800-33-BRESLOV
Tel: 732.534.7263 • Fax: 732.608.8461

To subscribe to this weekly publication please visit:
breslov.org/pathways
To dedicate in memory or merit of someone please
email: pathways@breslov.org