

Lessons from the Chassidische Parsha

The teachings of the Alter Rebbe in Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah

Reclaiming our brotherly relationship

ד"ה מי יתנך כאח לי וגו'

פרשת תרומה
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The Beis Hamikdash, like the Mishkan discussed in the Parsha, was the conduit through which G-dliness was able to come down into the world and unite with the Jewish people. When the Beis Hamikdash stood, Hashem's presence was openly revealed and they were able to experience a deep connection.

This relationship was two-directional. The Jewish people's yearning and Mesiras Nefesh from below to Above would arouse a downward flow of G-dliness from Above to below.

This unique relationship was reflected in the two Keruvim which stood on top of the Aron. The Torah teaches *"and their faces were each one (facing) to their brother"*, representing a deep and innate love and unity, like that shared between two brothers.

When the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed, the Aron and its Keruvim were hidden. This alludes to the loss of this special brotherly relationship. G-dliness was no longer openly revealed within the world so that we could connect "face to face".

In Shir Hashirim we read;

מי יתנך כאח לי יונק שדי אמי אמצאך בחוץ אשקך גם לא-יבואו
לי: אנהגך אביאך אל-בית אמי תלמדני אשקך מיין הרקח
מעסיס רמני:

"If only it could be as with a brother, nursing at my mother's breast: I would find you outside, I would kiss you.... I would lead you, I would bring you to the house of my mother, of her who taught me— I would let you drink of the spiced wine, of my pomegranate juice."

"If only I could be with You as a brother" is the cry of the Jewish people in the times of exile. It expresses our yearning to once again experience the unity with Hashem that we shared when the Beis Hamikdash stood.

The Pesukim proceed to explain how even in Golus it is still possible for us to still achieve this type of relationship.

Our sages teach that after the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed, the only place Hashem can be found is in "the four Amos of Halacha". This means that through the study of Torah in Golus we can connect to Hashem in the same way that one did when the Beis Hamikdash stood.

This is Hashem's answer, *"nursing at my mother's breast"*. The Torah, which nourishes the soul, is likened to milk. More specifically, the mother's milk refers to *Torah SheBaal Peh*, which is the feminine dimension of Torah. Just like nursing brings delight to the infant, the understanding of the wisdom of Torah draws down a revelation of *Taanug* - spiritual delight from Above.

This answer will satisfy the Torah scholars who are able to learn Torah and experience this connection on a full-time basis. But

what about the majority of the Jewish people who as business people, find themselves 'outside' of the tents of Torah?

The verse continues *"I would find you outside"*. Even the businessman can "find" Hashem and experience a deep brotherly relationship. They do this specifically on the "outside". Their Avodah is through giving Tzedaka and through engaging in their business *Leheim Shamayim*, to refine the sparks of holiness within the physicality of the world. These sparks become elevated on Shabbos through davening with *Kavanah*.

This Avodah of the businessman, who faces greater spiritual struggles and challenges, creates an even deeper level of relationship with Hashem than the Torah study of the scholars. This is expressed by the words *"I would kiss you"*.

Chassidus explains that a kiss embodies a love that is so powerful that it cannot be expressed in words. Unlike the *Hamshacha* through the Torah study of the scholars that is contained within the Divine wisdom of Torah, the Avodah of *Birurim* elicits a *Hamshacha* that is so lofty, it cannot be contained within Keilim.

But this is not enough. Even the businessman must have set times for Torah study in the Beis Hamedrash - *"I would lead you, I would bring you to the house of my mother, of her who taught me"*. This Torah study strengthens and focuses the businessman to be able to engage in their Avodah on the "outside" and to reveal the *Hamshacha* that they affect.

"I would let you drink of the spiced wine": Torah is likened to wine that *"brings joy to Elokim"*. Even though their Torah study is limited in time and perhaps in quality it gives Hashem great Nachas and happiness. 'Spiced wine' gives even greater pleasure, alluding to the additional quality of the businessman's Torah study over that of the full-time scholars. Why is this?

The strongest fragrances come from a source which itself is bitter or acrid. It is not easy to get out of the headspace of the business world to learn Torah, especially when one is tired at the end of the day. The sacrifice and effort (the bitterness) that the businessman has to make fixed, committed time to learn, is the source of the unique fragrance of Nachas that they give Hashem.

The verse concludes that even those who are absolutely unable to learn Torah, can still give Hashem Nachas and joy with their Mitzvos. The Mitzvos are alluded to by *"my pomegranate juice"* as our sages teach that even the 'empty' Jews (the one's who are unable to learn Torah) are filled with Mitzvos like a pomegranate (is filled with seeds).

Through this may we merit to see the Aron and Keruvim restored in the Third Beis Hamikdash, when we will experience the ultimate and eternal revelation and relationship with Hashem.