

Dvar Torah for Bein Hamitzarim 5761

Based on *Likutey Moharan I*, Lesson #282

One of Rebbe Nachman's suggestions is to “go with a Torah lesson” for a month or two. This means to study one of the lessons in *Likutey Moharan* and view all facets of life—one’s Torah learning, prayer, mitzvot, marriage, children, work, etc., etc.—through that lesson. Lesson #282, however, is an exception. This lesson, the Rebbe said, one should “go with” *all the time*.

Nu, so what does the lesson say? The main theme of this lesson, known as “Azamra” (I will sing), is to look for the good point in every Jew, including oneself. The Beit Hamikdash (Holy Temple) was and is destroyed, we were and are exiled, due to *sinat chinam*, baseless hatred (*Yoma* 9b). So now is a very good time “to go with” this lesson.

Rebbe Nachman teaches that finding a good point in someone has some very, very positive affects. Finding even one good point in someone—even someone who seems to be a nasty individual, without any redeeming qualities—moves him (or her) to a totally different spiritual place. Before your positive judgement, Nasty may have been viewed by Heaven as a no-goodnik, someone who deserves to be kept away from spiritual success. The “after” picture is totally different. Thanks to your having acted as Nasty’s advocate, s/he is now viewed by Heaven as worthy of walking Spiritual Road.

So, you’re probably wondering what qualifies as a “good point.” Certainly any mitzvah, even once observed, even under duress—like attending afternoon Hebrew school in preparation for one’s bat mitzvah—would count. Even an “accidental” mitzvah—you lost a dollar and a poor person found it—or a “by the way” mitzvah—you turned on the light to read the newspaper and someone learning Torah by the window was able to learn more easily—is a good point.

In fact, ignorance can create good a good point. Nasty might publicly humiliate people who don’t observe mitzvot “the right way.” Before condemning him we should consider the possibility that he doesn’t know any other way of motivating people. Who knows? If we had an inkling of how dysfunctional Nasty’s childhood really was, we’d see that he’s doing amazingly well, all things considered.

(Finding a good point isn’t alchemy that transforms wrongdoing into mitzvah. Nasty’s being dysfunctional doesn’t make public humiliation a mitzvah, even for a noble cause. It just means he’s a better person than we may otherwise have thought. That’s the point.)

Now, once Nasty—or you or I—has been judged favorably and turned on to Spiritual Road, he has the opportunity to continue on till he actually becomes Decent or even Pleasant. He may need a lot of good points to get there, so we have to keep on judging him—and ourselves—favorably.

That’s not so easy. If it were, Reb Noson once said, we would have brought the whole world to repent by now. Rebbe Nachman talks about “finding the good point” in two separate sections. In the first section, he discusses finding the good point in someone else, and in the second, about finding it in oneself. Some individuals can’t find any good in others and so can’t find any good in themselves (*Kokhavey Or*, p. 75, #18).

Some individuals are just the opposite. They can't find good in themselves and so can't find any good in others. This is why even if one is disappointed or frustrated by not having all the good points he would like to have had, he should still acknowledge and be happy with the good points that others have (see *Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* #119).

“In another little bit the wicked person will no longer be; think about his place and he will not be there” (*Psalms* 37:10).

“In another little bit”—if you can find a good point, even a little one;

“the wicked person will no longer be”—as wicked as you thought.

As a result:

“think about his place”—the wicked deeds, the exile that he was in;

“and he will not be there”— but in mitzvah, redeemed from exile.

agutn Shabbos!
Shabbat Shalom!

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(An annotated version of Lesson #282 is available as part of Volume 11 of Breslov Research Institute's translation of *Likutey Moharan* and as a separate booklet, *Azamra*, which contains selections from Reb Noson's works. If you are interested, please [write to us](#).)

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