

תמים ביחידות



Rabbi Boruch Sholom Kahn of New Haven, Connecticut, relates a Yechidus with the Rebbe he merited to have at the age of seventeen:

“I went into the Rebbe for Yechidus, after having previously written to the Rebbe for a Brocho and Aitza for my “*Pizur Hanefesh*.” “How,” I asked, “would I be able to attain more of a *תוקף הדעת*, a strong-mindedness? For instance, what should I do to stop myself in middle of speaking idle words, and in other areas in general?”

[Although the Rebbe had sent me a letter in response (on 25 Menachem Av, printed in *Igros Kodesh Chelek 4*, p. 472), the Rebbe also spoke to me during my Yechidus regarding some of the points that he had already written.]

The Rebbe told me: “During Davening, you should accustom yourself to *daven* from inside the *siddur*. And should you start to become distracted by other thoughts, you should gaze and focus on the letters inside the *siddur*. During learning as well, you should have your *sefer* or *Ma’amar* which you’re thinking about close to you, and as soon as you feel yourself getting distracted, look in the letters of the *sefer*.”

[In my letter the Rebbe writes how the *אותיות* are *מאירות*, and how their shine will cause the *darkness and distraction to scatter*...]

The Rebbe quoted the Posuk from Megillas Esther: “*זבבואה לפני המלך אמר עם הספר ישוב מחשבתו הרעה*.” The Rebbe’s intention was that if I look in the *sefer*, my distracting thoughts will go away.

The Rebbe then continued:

“You should learn the first page, and the first few lines of the second page of Perek 41 of Tanya by heart, and throughout the day whenever you should feel the need, you should verbalize the lines of “*והנה ה' נצב עליו כו' אם עובדו כראוי*”.

The Rebbe also pointed out, that in general when I have questions or need advice, I should ask the advice of my Mashpia, and of course not to forget the 3 Shiurim of Chitas...”.

himself from the way of the Torah and the Jewish tradition which goes back more than a hundred generations to the time when the Jewish people became a holy nation at Mt. Sinai.

Jewish history has clearly demonstrated what has been the mainstream of Jewish tradition and the very basis of Jewish existence throughout the ages. We have always had deviationists, from the time of the Golden Calf worshippers to present-day assimilationists. But **all** these have been passing phenomena which came to a more or less swift end when some of the deviationists returned to the mainstream of Jewish tradition, while the others, the outcasts, were lost.

The same was true in regard to the Baal worshippers during the period of the first Bais Hamikdash in Jewish history, the Sadducees during the time of the second Bais Hamikdash, followed by the first Christians, later the Karaites, etc., etc.

The common denominator that bound all Jews together, and served as the basis of Jewish survival, cannot be considered in terms of territory – for Jews have been without a country for the greater part of their history. Nor can it be considered the language – because Jews spoke different languages, at different times and countries, and even during the time of King Chizkiah, there were Jews who spoke Aramaic.

Nor can other cultural or social factors be considered as the common denominator of Jewish survival, since these too have changed from time to time and from country to country.

The only things which have not changed in Jewish life are Shabbos observance, Kashrus, Tefillin, and all the other Mitzvos of the Torah, both the written Torah and the oral Torah. It is therefore the Torah and Mitzvos which is the basics of Jewish life and survival. Consequently, the more one’s daily life and conduct adheres to this pattern of Jewish living, the more one is attached to the Jewish people, and conversely, the more concessions one is willing to make, the more one lessens one’s bonds with the Jewish people, until one may become an outcast G-d forbid.

As for the “charge” that some people make to the effect that this kind of traditional Jewish life is “fanaticism” and the like, this is also nothing new, for there have always been Jews, from the time of the Golden Calf worshippers mentioned above who considered themselves “modern” and called others fanatics, fundamentalists, and the like...

With blessing, *M. Schneerson*