



The Need to Act

In every aspect of our lives, including our *avodas Hashem*, we tend to approach a given task systematically, adhering to a specific order. This organized approach is generally dictated by our *sechel*, our intellect, which demands that we only move to the next step once the current step is completed.

However, there are aspects of our *avodas Hashem*, that we need to approach head on, without intellectual reckoning and logical analysis. There are times that it is important to act, in all aspects of *avodas Hashem*, without regard for what we think is the logical and organized approach.

This is especially true during the last days of *golus*, in preparation for *geulah*, as it is explained in the teachings of our Rabbeim.

A LESSON FROM THE MELTING POT

In the introduction to Kuntres Umaayon there is a fascinating letter from the Rebbe Rashab. He writes to a rav who was very active in fighting the *haskalah* movement, but was feeling discouraged, claiming that “we don’t have the strength to overcome such a powerful adversary.”

The Rebbe Rashab writes: We do indeed have the strength to overcome, and the strength comes from the *etzem hanefesh*, the power of *mesiras nefesh*. Nowadays we need to approach every part of our *avodas Hashem* with *mesiras nefesh* using *kochos* that transcend *sechel*. We can’t rely on our *sechel* to determine which tasks we are likely to succeed in and which we are not. In the last days of *golus* the world in its entirety is in a state of confusion, so we really don’t have any idea what is likely to succeed and what is likely to fail.

In these last days of *golus*, we are dealing with the final *birurim*. The final *birurim* can be compared to food in a pot

לזכות

הת' אברהם אשר הכהן שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות
ח"י מנחם אב ה'תשע"ז
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' שמואל הכהן
זווגתו מרת בת-שבע שיחי'
קוגן



When we experience ahavas Hashem it is real and true, and it is the dream of Golus that makes our material drives possible at the same time

that is almost finished cooking. While the pot is boiling, all of the ingredients in it are being mixed around. There is no way to know what is cooked and what is still raw, or what came from the bottom and what came from the top. Likewise, the world nowadays is completely disorganized, and there is no order to which *birurim* we should deal with. We may imagine that a given task is very difficult to complete, when in truth it will be very easy.

We must therefore approach whichever *birurim* come our way with total devotion and *mesiras nefesh*. When a task comes our way we need to act immediately and do our part regardless of whether or not we think we will succeed.¹

OVERFLOWING WITH CHASSIDUS

The Rebbe quotes this letter in relation to our approach to learning Chassidus:

There are areas in Yiddishkeit where it is necessary to adhere to a specific measurement, and going beyond that measure is a negative thing. With regard to learning Chassidus, however, we need to learn as much Chassidus as possible, transcending any such calculations or limitations.

Although it says in Kuntres Ha'Avodah that one must be careful not to take on a *hidur mitzvah* that is beyond his reach, the Rebbe Rashab taught us that in these last days of *golus* we don't know the order of which *birurim* we are to deal with. Rather the approach must be "*chatof v'achol chatof v'shte'i*—grab and eat, grab and drink."² This means that we need to

grab all the *birurim* that come our way without any *cheshbonos*.

There is a *meshal* of a large barrel of water. How is one to know if the barrel is truly filled to the top? You need to add water until the barrel overflows, for until then you do not really know that it is full.

Similarly, we must add in our study of Chassidus, not a limited amount according to a careful *cheshbon*, but rather above and beyond all *cheshbonos*.³

DREAMING IN GOLUS

This theme is found throughout the Rebbe's *sichos*. Here the Rebbe explains it in terms of a dream:

Golus Mitzrayim was not just the first *golus*, it was also the source for every other *golus*. It is therefore a paradigm through which we can understand the idea of *golus* in general.

Among the events leading up to *golus Mitzrayim*, the Torah tells us about many dreams; the dreams of Yosef, the dreams of the winemaker and the baker in prison, and finally the dreams of Pharaoh.

Being that these dreams brought about *golus Mitzrayim*, it stands to reason that there is an inherent connection between the two.

What is the connection between the times of *golus* and a dream?

In a dream there can be a combination of opposites, for example, an elephant can fit through the eye of a needle. This is impossible to imagine while we are awake, however, our dream state makes the combination possible.⁴

Similarly, in our *avodah* during the time of *golus* we often experience opposites. A Yid may have *ahavas Hashem*, and nevertheless he can have physical and material drives. On the one hand he may be drawn towards *Elokus*, and on the other hand he may be drawn toward his own desires. These are in truth mutually exclusive, but the dream-like state of *golus* makes it possible for both to exist at the same time.

In Chassidus it is explained that this understanding can help a Yid in his *avodas Hashem*. We need not despair that we are "living a lie," *chas v'shalom*; rather, we must understand that when we experience *ahavas Hashem* it is real and true, and it is the dream of *golus* that makes our material drives seem possible at the same time.

Furthermore we can take a lesson with regard to the approach we need to take in our *avodah*:

Some people may think that the only way to serve Hashem is in an orderly fashion, with a steady progression from easier tasks to more difficult tasks. This approach would hold merit in a perfect world, where everything was in order. However, during *golus*, being that the world is in a dreamlike state, we do not need to reckon with the conventional approach to *avodas Hashem*. We need to approach whatever task comes our way without questioning if we are "up to it" or not.⁵

GRAB AND EAT, GRAB AND DRINK

The Rebbe explains the Mishna in Eiruvim⁶ with regard to learning Torah:

When it comes to learning Torah it is not necessary to make calculations or preparations before one begins to learn. We must “grab” what we can and learn as much as possible.

“Shmuel said to Rabbi Yehudah, grab and eat, grab and drink, for the world that we are going from is like a wedding feast.”

“The world that we are **going from**” refers to the level of *mehalech*, which means progressing in a radical way—making a jump in *avodas Hashem* from one level to another level far removed from the first.

Since we are talking about making a jump from one level to a far removed one, calculated preparations are unnecessary. What is important is that you “grab and eat” whatever you are able to.⁷

CHASSIDUS FOR THE UNINITIATED

It is interesting to note, that when a person feels that he can accomplish a task, he will apply himself to it diligently. Even if he knows that it will be very hard, so long as he thinks he can accomplish it, he will work day and night and toil endlessly because he knows at the end he will prevail.

When it comes to a task that a person doesn't think is physically possible, he will not even begin. His thought is, why even try if I am bound to fail?

For example, if you tell someone to teach *alef-beis* to a Jew who does not have any Jewish education, he will gladly comply, for this is practically attainable. Even if you tell him to teach *nigleh*, he will comply for it is very understandable even to a novice—it

“makes sense.” But if you tell him that he needs to teach Chassidus even to the uninitiated, he will claim that it is impossible, it is just too hard to understand.

During these last days of *golus* such calculations have no place. We need to teach Chassidus to everyone, even the uninitiated.

We need to realize that as Chassidim we are to follow the teachings of our Rabbeim and ignore *cheshbonos* that hold us back from doing our *avodah*. The Rebbe spoke about how the Friediker Rebbe fought the Communist regime to spread Torah and mitzvos, regardless of the fact that it did not seem physically possible to prevail. And he demanded the same from each of his Chassidim.⁸

REACHING ANOTHER JEW

There is a *maamar Chazal* that says, “Adorn yourself first before adorning others.”⁹ Seemingly this means that one should not attempt to affect positive change in another Yid before first making sure that his own *avodah* is complete. How then is a Chossid supposed to approach shlichus, when he knows that he is lacking in many areas of his *avodas Hashem*?

The Rebbe's answer is threefold:

Firstly, we have the abovementioned letter from the Rebbe Rashab, that in the last days of *golus* one must accomplish whatever task comes his way without making *cheshbonos*.

Second, if the Rabbeim gave you this mission then it cannot wait for you to complete your own *avodah*, rather you must strive to fulfill it immediately.

Third, and most important, is to realize that as a shliach, one has the *kochos* of the *meshaleiach*. The personal state of the shliach is therefore not as important as one might think. By following the shlichus he becomes “*kemoso*” like the *meshaleiach* himself.¹⁰

This is not limited to shluchim. Every single Yid who has the opportunity to have a positive influence on another Yid must rise to the occasion. Some people may claim that they are not cut out to be leaders, that they need to perfect themselves before helping others. However our Rabbeim have told us that in these last days of *Golus* we need to grab every opportunity that comes our way.

This means that if *hashgacha pratis* brought you to a situation where you can be *mashpia* on another Yid to bring him closer to Torah and mitzvos, you must grab the opportunity without any calculations.¹¹

In the *zechus* of our *avodah* now in these last days of *golus*, despite the redoubled darkness, may we be *zoche* to make the ultimate jump to the revelation of Moshiach, speedily in our days, now! **🕒**

1. Kuntres Umaayon, p. 22.
2. Eiruvim, 54a.
3. Toras Menachem vol. 18, p.166.
4. See Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 232.
5. Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, pp. 85-86.
6. Eiruvim, 54a.
7. Toras Menachem vol. 3, p. 130.
8. Sichos Kodesh 5731 vol. 2, p. 282.
9. Bava Metzia, 107b.
10. Sefer Hasichos 5748, vol. 1, p. 98.
11. Likkutei Sichos vol. 30, p. 168.