



JEM 194239

THE REBBE SPEAKS TO HILLEL STUDENTS¹

8 ADAR 5720*

The Rebbe asked whether the students preferred to first ask all their questions and then he would answer, or did they want each question answered as it was asked. The latter was decided upon and the students began:

Question: The Rebbe said that one should spread Torah. How and in what manner is this to be done?

Rebbe: Everyone must do as much as possible in his immediate surroundings by speaking with other people in a way that shows his certainty and confidence in the matter. For confidence is a characteristic of the youth specifically. An older person is often beset with doubts and hesitations, while the young are sure of themselves. It is this characteristic that we must utilize in spreading Torah and mitzvos, and everyone must work at 100% capacity.

Every means must be employed, including newspaper and radio. But, above all, the most vital is the personal example we set in our everyday living.

Question: What was the role that the Baal Shem Tov played in the Chassidic movement?

Rebbe: We can understand what the Baal Shem Tov did by the simile of the relationship of an electric powerhouse with a lamp that is connected to it by a wire. In order to light his lamp, one must find the right switch, or push the correct button. The soul of every Jew is a part of and is connected with G-d Almighty, but in order that one can enjoy the great benefits of it, the correct switch must be found or the proper button pushed. It was the Baal Shem Tov's mission to explain and proclaim that every Jew without exception is connected with "the powerhouse," and

every one of them has a switch in his innermost being, that will be found if searched for.

Also, every one of us in our own work in strengthening Judaism, must try to find the switch in the soul of every Jew. One can never know what will make the connection, perhaps it is just one word. But by this, you open up the well or inner fountain of his soul.

Rabbi Levy, director of the Hillel Foundation at Princeton University, brought greetings to the Rebbe from Kfar Chabad. He had visited there during the summer and related his admiration for the love that is shown the Moroccan children. Never had he seen such love between Jews of such different backgrounds, upbringing, etc.

Question: What is the difference between Lubavitch and other Chassidic groups?

Rebbe: Lubavitcher Chassidim are often called Chabad Chassidim, an abbreviation of the Hebrew words *chochmah*, *binah*, and *daas*, which indicate different aspects of understanding.

To serve G-d with the emotions alone or with faith alone or even with intellect alone is not enough, for it would be an incomplete service. Rather, there must be a fusion of all of these elements, the service must permeate the entire being of a Jew and every single day. However, the intellect is the "ruler" of these elements, and it is this that the Alter Rebbe stressed when he said that a Chassid must use his intellect and not be content with a service of G-d centered only in the emotions or in faith alone.

לעילוי נשמת
 ר' מנחם זאב בן ר' פנחס ע"ה
 נלב"ע כ"ה אלול ה'תשנ"ט
 תנ"צ'ב'ה
 נדפס ע"י בנו
 הרה"ת ר' פנחס מרדכי
 וזוגתו מרת הלנה אילנה נורית
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 הרמן

Question: Can Chassidism bring non-religious Jews back to their Judaism?

Rebbe: Certainly! Today it is expected that one understands his doing and therefore many Jews can be reached only through their intellect. But in order to reach the intellect of someone else you must use your own intellect, for only through your mind can you reach the mind of another.

Question: Why is Chabad so successful in its activities?

Rebbe: Today everyone tries to understand before he does something. I am not discussing whether this is good or bad, but only stating a fact. Everyone requires proofs and understanding. Chabad Chassidus provides it. It explains aspects of Judaism so that they can be understood by the intellect. As a Chabad Chossid I have a more categorical answer: I have no doubt that Chabad Chassidus is the truth and truth must be successful.

Question: What is the function of a Rebbe?

Rebbe: As was said earlier, to find the switch in every Jew and help him become connected with the power house.

Question: I understand that Chassidism elevates the woman to a state higher than she had before in Judaism. Could you explain this?

Rebbe: Traditionally, women were not taught Torah except those laws that were directly relevant to herself and her duties. Chassidus however, teaches and demands of every one, man or woman, that the mitzvos, all of them, must be done with joy and inspiration, not automatically. But we cannot expect someone to be inspired unless he understands or feels. The woman has a right, and more—she must know of the individual providence, of the omnipresence of G-d Almighty that He created not only the heavens but also the home and the kitchen, and then she can be inspired by the mitzvah to make the home and kitchen a Jewish home and kitchen. We must explain to her in detail the teachings of the Jewish religion and the reasons why of Judaism. Especially as the woman has a great effect on her children and her husband. It is necessary, then, that she be taught the basic ideas of Chassidus

Question: How far does the power of the Rebbe extend in natural law? Does the Rebbe have preferred status as regards prayer?

[Someone added that what is meant is whether the Rebbe can perform miracles.]

Rebbe: This world is not separate from the higher worlds but is another step, the last one, in a long chain of worlds.

Everything in this world comes from and is influenced by the higher ones. A miracle is something that happens which you could not have calculated. When a Jew connects himself through his Divine spark with G-d through fervent prayer, Torah, and mitzvos, he can affect things in this physical world “from above”—that means in a way that is beyond calculation. This power is not the prerogative of one Jew but of every Jew.

Rabbi Gurewitz, of the Brooklyn Hillel Foundation, thanked the Rebbe for the interview and started to leave, but then the Rebbe said:

Now I want to ask you a question, and at the same time try to perform a miracle.

Everything has a purpose. What was the purpose of our coming together here tonight? Certainly it was not merely to ask questions and receive answers, good or bad. Rather it was to achieve something.

All of us here are young, myself included, and have tens of years yet before us. Since six million of our people in Russia, Poland and Hungary have been lost to us through Hitler, we have a special task to accomplish—the work that they could have done, at least a major part of it.

Everyone counts. No Jew is expendable. We all must work to the fullest capacity, every one of us. In our day-to-day life we must use our full strength to add to the side of good, and by this we will gain a life of happiness and harmony—and all this can be done only through a life of Torah and mitzvos tested by our 3,500 year history. This obligation lies upon every Jew and G-d has given him the power to carry this through successfully.

And if each of us, beginning tomorrow, should add in his own personal life more Torah and mitzvos and influence the environment in the same direction, if we all will do this, myself included, this indeed will be our miracle. **1**

1. The transcription of this yechidus was prepared by Rabbi Moshe Feller and edited by the Rebbe. Rabbi Feller also prepared a newspaper article about this yechidus, also edited by the Rebbe. See *Teshura Feller-Winner* 5778.