



BEING CONNECTED

Direct Line

The Torah repeatedly commands us to connect ourselves to *HaShem*.

Chazal ask: How is this possible? How can a mortal attach himself to *HaShem*?

They answer that this can be accomplished - by connecting to *talmidei chachomim* who are constantly attached to the *Shechina*. When we bond with them, we are thereby connected to *HaShem*.

(כתובות ק"א ע"ב, ס' המצוות להרמב"ם מ"ע ו')

The Rebbe once explained that we connect to a Rebbe only because of his direct connection to *HaShem*, and not because of his qualities. In this context the Rebbe related:

Someone once asked the venerable chossid, the Rashbatz, whether the Rebbe Rashab had *ruach hakodesh*. The Rashbatz replied, "To me it makes no difference! I know that he is a Rebbe. If a Rebbe needs *ruach hakodesh*, then he surely has it, and if not, then what is there to be excited about...?"

To this the Rebbe added: "Someone once came and told me that the Frieddiker Rebbe had told him, 'Connect to me, and you will be connected to whom I am connected to.' This person was very excited, thinking that the Rebbe had meant his father, the Rebbe Rashab. I did not want to disappoint him, but in truth, the Rebbe had meant that he would be connected to *HaShem*. In truth, that is what matters to us."

(תו"מ ח"א ע' 94)

Fertile Field

The Frieddiker Rebbe once compared a *bracha* from a Rebbe to rain falling on a field. If the field is plowed and planted, the rain will promote growth, but not if the field lies fallow. Similarly, for the Rebbe's *brachos* to be fully effective, one must make due preparations - by connecting with the Rebbe through studying *Chassidus* and observing its customs.

(אג"ק רי"צ ח"ד ע' רע"ט)

In a letter to some young students the Frieddiker Rebbe wrote:

"I was pleased to hear you thanking *HaShem* for your connection with me. However, you must consider whether you are truly connected with me, or whether it is all imaginary, or perhaps it is just an empty slogan. True *hiskashrus* must bring one to action. You know that I demand from all *talmidim*, especially those connected with me, to bring the light of Torah and *mitzvos* into Yiddishe homes and to create there an atmosphere of Torah and *yiras Shamayim*. Have you fulfilled this? With what are you connected to me? Until you take part in one of those activities, your words about *hiskashrus* are empty slogans."

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ח ע' רכ"ב)

The Frieddiker Rebbe once said:

"For the followers of the Baal Shem Tov it was enough to be connected, to be *mekushar*, which means to follow the Rebbe's instructions. For example: continually reciting words of Torah, and being dedicated to *ahavas Yisroel*.

"For the followers of the Maggid, that wasn't enough. His students had to be near him and learn from his conduct.

"As for the Alter Rebbe, both *hiskashrus* and learning from the Rebbe's ways weren't enough; the chassidim were also expected to *understand* the Rebbe."

(סה"מ תש"ט ע' 89)

Continued Connection

When the Alter Rebbe passed away, the Mittlerer Rebbe was in Kremenchug, arranging homes for the family. When news arrived of his father's passing, he fainted and could not come to. Each time he was revived he would recall the sad news and would collapse in a faint.

Finally, someone had an idea. He brought a box of manuscripts of the Alter Rebbe's *maamorim* and the next time the Mittlerer Rebbe opened his eyes, they showed him the box. The Mittlerer Rebbe took a look at it and said, "We have with what to live." And he did not faint again.

(לקו"ס פרלוב ע' פ"ה)

On *Motzoei Shabbos Vayikra*, *Beis Nissan* תר"פ (1920), a few short hours before the Rebbe Rashab passed away, he said to those around

his bed, "I am ascending to Heaven; the writings I am leaving for you (*Ich gei in himmel, di ksovim loz ich far eich*). Take me in to the *zal* so that we will be together."

The Rebbe explains that his departure is directly connected to the remaining *ksovim*, because by studying his teachings we will actually have the Rebbe himself, even as he stands in Heaven.

(אג"ק מהור"י צ"ח ע' קיג, לקו"ש ח"ז ע' 24)

Reb Yankel Landau related:

At the *farbrengen* of *Yud-Tes Kislev* תרע"ט (1918), the Rebbe Rashab said that in the World to Come, too, one should ask to be with the Rebbe.

Fired with emotion, Reb Zalman Havlin jumped to his feet and said, "Who knows if we will be able to find the Rebbe's door?"

The Rebbe assured him, "Don't worry, you will find the door..."

At this point, I asked the Rebbe what will be when they ask me, "What connection do you have with the Rebbe? Did you do what the Rebbe told you?" And the Rebbe replied, "Indeed! One must heed the directives," but immediately added, "Yet, we have a Rebbe. [One can say:] I was together with him; I heard Torah from him, and I learned his *Chassidus*."

Reb Yankel Landau later added:

It seems to me that 'I heard Torah from him' refers to the teachings we heard from the Rebbe during his lifetime in This World, and 'I learned his *Chassidus*' refers to our ongoing study of his teachings after his *histalkus*.

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 184)

CONSIDER THIS!

- What does it mean to connect to the *Shechina* through the *tzaddik*? How does this show in the chossid?
- Why must *hiskashrus* comprise of Torah and *avoda*? What does it mean to be "*mekushar*"?

Lego, Clicks and Magna Tiles

Can children play with building toys on Shabbos?

■ **Halacha** rules that if one builds or fixes a firm vessel he transgresses the prohibition of *binyan*, and if he demolishes it he transgresses *stirah*. However, building or demolishing a flimsy structure is only a *melacha* when it is attached to the ground and not a movable vessel.¹

■ **Poskim** list three levels in fastening parts of a pre-existing vessels (*kli shel prokim*):²

1. **Chazak**: a strong connection that cannot be easily separated (e.g. tightening the leg of a chair, snapping together Ikea furniture) is prohibited *min haTorah*. Some *poskim* add that it must also be skilled work, and this seems to be the Alter Rebbe's stance as well.³
2. **Hiduk Yafeh**: fastening two parts that can be easily separated (e.g. inserting a broomstick back into a broom or closing a salt shaker) is prohibited *midrabanan* out of concern that one may connect them in a very tight manner.⁴
3. **Rafeh**: a loose connection is permissible on Shabbos.⁵

■ The Mishna states that one may screw the lid on or off a vessel on Shabbos. *Poskim* explain that although the lid is well attached, it is not considered a *melacha* since it is meant to open and close regularly. The Alter Rebbe delineates three categories: (1) Made to be opened during Shabbos itself – permissible to open and close. (2) Is shut for more than a day but less than a week – prohibited *midrabanan*. (3) Is shut for over a week – prohibited *min hatorah*.⁶

■ Contemporary *poskim* apply these two considerations to toys, namely: (a) how strong is the connection, (b) how long the parts of the toy are normally kept together. (Building a toy house or parking lot may pose another problem of making an *ohel arai*, temporary structure, which is prohibited.)⁷

In practice:

- **Lego** – are not so firmly attached and may be used so long as one intends to disassemble them on Shabbos after use, but not if one intends to leave them built.⁸
- **Clicks** – are firmly connected, but do not require much skill. Following the Alter Rebbe they may be connected on Shabbos provided that one intends to dismantle them on Shabbos.⁹
- **Magna Tiles** – are permissible since they are loosely connected and are usually disassembled after use.

- 1, ראה שו"ע ר' א"ח סי' ש"ד ס"א ובסי' ש"ג סי' ט"ז. וראה שם סי' ט"ז וסי"א.
- 2, ראה שו"ע ר' סי' ש"ג ס"כ' - כ"א.
- 3, ראה מג"א סי' ש"ג ע"פ הסמ"ג לאוין ס"ה סק"א ("גבורה ואומנות"), שו"ע ר' ס"כ בכלי של פרקים.
- 4, ראה ב"י ס"ו ס"ש ג.
- 5, וראה שו"ע ר' שם ס"א לפרטים ותנאים בזה (כשמניח משהו שדרכו להיות חזק רפה או רפה ואינו רפה).
- 6, ע"פ שו"ע ר' סי' ש"ז ס"א.
- 7, ע"פ שו"ע ר' סי' ש"ז ס"א. וראה שם סי' ט"ז וסי"א.
- 8, וי"ל שגם אם תכנן להרוס אבל בסוף שבת אינו חייב להרוס היות שהבניה מעיקרא היה באופן של עראי.
- 9, לפי שיטת רבינו שהצריך גבורה ואומנות י"ל שקליקס אינם בגדר חיבור חזק רק בגדר הידוק, ולכן יש מקום להקל, אלא שמפני שיש שמניחם לימים רבים לכן יש לשים לב שישחק בהם רק בתנאי שיפרקם בו ביום.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח ר' אברהם דוד בהרה"ח משה יהודה ע"ה

לכבוד היאהרציי"ה תמוז תשס"ג

נדבת משפחת ווילהלם שיחי

OUR HEROES

Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel



Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel, the daughter of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was born on Yud Tes Kislev תקנ"ט (1798), the day that the Alter Rebbe was freed from prison. She married Reb Yaakov Kuli Slonim and later moved to Chevron in Eretz Yisroel. She was a saintly woman to whom many *mofsim* are attributed, and many people came to her home to seek her blessing and advice. She passed away of the 24th of Shvat תרמ"ח (1888) and is buried in Chevron.



While preparing to travel to Eretz Yisroel, Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel went to the Tzemach Tzedek and expressed her fear of travel, being that it was then winter and she would perhaps fall sick from the rain. The Rebbe replied, "No worries! You will travel between the rain drops!" For the rest of her life, not a drop of rain ever fell on her!

They began their journey from Lubavitch, traveling to Shklov, where they changed wagons which would take them further. Upon his return to Lubavitch, the wagon driver, who had been hired for the first leg of the journey, told everyone about his wonderful trip from Lubavitch to Shklov: Not one drop of rain had fallen on his wagon! Unfortunately, he had not been so lucky on his return trip, when he was buried with rain and mud.

(This wagon driver would always pride himself with this story. The Rebbe Maharash once told him, "Listen, the *goy* who drove the Baal Shem Tov was also part of the *kefitzas haderech*, yet he still remained the same *goy*...")



During this time period, there was a group of bandits in Chevron called "The Black Hand," who would break into Yiddish homes, robbing and plundering, cursing and threatening all the while. This carried on, until one day the group leader's wife was having difficulty giving birth and both she and the baby were in grave danger. Having no other choice, the chief bandit sent a message to the home of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel pleading for a blessing. She returned with a message that if he would cease his wicked activities against the Yidden, everything would be alright. The *goy* swore that he would stop and hurried home, where he thankfully found out that his wife had given birth. The Yidden of Chevron were thus able to live without fear.

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Speak to Yourself

Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Weinreb, Executive Vice President Emeritus of the OU, related:

During the winter of 5731 (1971), I was torn with an inner turmoil regarding my career, community service and Torah learning. I was also in a dilemma about my children's schooling, and in addition some questions of *emunah* bothered me.

A Lubavitcher friend suggested that I consult the Rebbe. Although I had attended *farbrengens*, I never had a relationship with the Rebbe. Still, I placed the call to the Rebbe's secretariat.

When the secretary answered the phone, I heard the Rebbe in the background asking, "Who's calling?" I replied "A *Yid* from Maryland," and said that I was at a very uncertain stage in my life and needed direction.

Then I heard the Rebbe say in the background, "Tell him that there is a *Yid* in Maryland that he can speak to. His name is Weinreb." I couldn't believe my ears. I was certain that I hadn't said my name...

The secretary repeated the Rebbe's words to me, so I replied, "But my name is Weinreb!" Then I heard the Rebbe say, "He should know that sometimes one needs to speak to himself..."