

Nourishment for the Neshama

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Rav Moshe Weinberger explains what it means to "conquer" the world - how and why we are instructed to conquer physicality with spirituality

Below are notes from Rav Moshe Weinberger's shiur

CHTY000519951225 The Toldos Yaakov Yoseph Of Polonoye (5) The Prototype Of The Tzaddik (2). This shiur can be purchased at www.ravmosheweinberger.com

I am sharing these notes because Rav Weinberger explains from the Toldos Yaakov Yoseph more on understanding the role we can play in bringing bracha into our lives.

We started learning last time the important principles and real controversial parts of the concept of tzaddik from chassidus. we spoke about the need of the generation following the BESHT that would draw strength from tanach but allow for the charismatic leadership after the death of the BESHT. We mentioned the difficulty of a person such as Reb Yaakov Yosef to be the one who would describe this tzaddik in his sefer and see him as withdrawn and much less the charismatic type. The tzaddik draws together heaven and earth. we want to see what a Rebbe is supposed to be.

Introduction. He uses two terms chomer and tzura. Chomer means physical matter and tzura means spiritual form. These two, physical matter and spiritual form although they are in conflict with each other, one is constantly struggling one attempting to conquer the other, physical matter and spiritual form, but despite the struggle the two of them need each other and form a single unit that is greater than either of its component parts. In the world of chomer and tzura struggling, opposed and fighting with each other, there is a very deep need for each other. that is something that is important to understand. Let's look inside.

he is discussing the concept of the Torah being called a briss, a covenant, made with the Jewish people through the Torah, by means of the Torah. he is explaining how is the Torah a briss.

the allashik teaches on the verse in bereeshis that Hashem blesses adam and chava and tells them to be fruitful and multiply and to conquer the earth. what is this idea of conquering? what kind of a conquest is taking place. what does it mean to conquer the earth. the nature of all physical matter is to deteriorate and ultimately to be nullified. It is the nature of all physical matter. to be and then not to be. and if something is lacking in its soul, if the soul is not there, it can't exist and everything in the world has a soul. It might not be the same soul as a human being, the soul of a human is unique but everything has spirituality as Rambam explains in Pirke Avos everything has a certain type of soul. the plant, the nefesh is sameach but everything has a spiritual element including a rock that enables it to function in that form that Hashem wants it to. If the nefesh in the soul is gone, then it can't exist.

and so it is with all that exists in the spiritual world. nothing in the physical world can exist unless there is a continuous influx of spiritual energy on whatever level it is on. obviously a rock does not have neshama or higher levels of ruchnius. It has what the nefesh of a rock is. but everything continues to exist because of its sense in the higher world that infiltrates into this world to enliven all things.

toldos tells us the human being himself was made in such a way, and this is a yesod in chassidus in general, we discussed it earlier, that a person is created in such a way that a human is a ladder the bottom is planted on earth and the top ascends to the heavens. the human being includes within him all four levels of existence. the physical body, that is one. the nefesh is two. the ruach, is three. and the neshama is four. It includes the four worlds. there are four levels of existence. In kaballa there is the world of atzilus, berisa, y and asiya, and in the physical world we have the four elements fire, water, wind and earth. the human

being comprises within him the physical body, the *guf*, which is the lowest level, then the *nefesh*, then the *ruach* and the *neshama*. If a Jew observes torah, he studies torah, and torah has these four aspects, four levels of learning, *pardes*, which means *pshat*, *remez*, *drush* and *sod*, the simple meaning of the text, the hint, the deeper we can extract meaning, and the mystery hidden meaning. there are four aspects of torah and four levels that exist within the human being, the physical and then the three spiritual *nefesh ruach* and *neshama*. there is a simplistic way to look at it, the four levels mean body, the *nefesh* is that spiritual quality that is responsible for our physiological biological needs, the *ruach* is that spiritual quality responsible for our emotional needs, and the *neshama* is that which is responsible for our intellectual grasp and understanding of things. with the body there are four. these four, the body, *nefesh ruach* and *neshama* correspond to the four levels of torah learning, *pshat* simple, body and so on. the simple reading in *tanach* when you read the verse and understand on the simplest level, the simple translation of the verse corresponds to the physical reality that we are living in, to the physical *gashmius* reality that we live in. and so on. he says something important here. he is telling us *hashem* created a world in a state of disharmony. the world is naturally in a state of disharmony. it is very nice but there exists a separation between that which is physical and spiritual which causes there to be *hester panim*, concealment, and overall state of disharmony in the universe. that means that there is a struggle, a power struggle taking place between physical needs and spiritual needs. the same trouble that we have inside between the *yetzer hara* and *yetzer tov*. the *yetzer hara* is seeking fulfillment in *chomer* and the *yetzer tov* is seeking fulfillment in spiritual form and because of this struggle there is a terrible amount of disharmony and discontent in the universe and *Hashem* did that on purpose. the challenge of existence to somehow the spiritual form to connect, not to turn away from the physical, to the physical and harness that physical power and draw the physical existence into this unified platform serving *Gd*. that pretty much sums up all of *Yiddishkeit*, that is our job. but here is the separation between heaven and earth. *hashem* creates a human being a Jew. I am not getting into non-Jews right now. a Jew is according to the *Toldos*, partially embedded in earthliness like *Yaakov's* ladder, but his head and heart, the higher part, reaches into the heavens. therefore we are called a ladder, and all worlds rise or fall on this ladder known as the human being. should the human being succeed in drawing all physical things into the service of *Gd* then he is lifting reality, making the connection between the lower world into the higher world, the higher world is descending and the lower world being lifted up and we have the fulfillment of *Gd's* purpose the unification of heaven and earth. if we fail in this, then what could happen is not only is there a separation between physical and spiritual form, and if physical is victorious, then we have people who have a deep spiritual delight in earthiness and their *nefesh ruach* and *neshama* become involved in physical activities.

we all have to live in a physical world but we should not have a romantic relationship with a rib steak. it is ok to enjoy but don't get carried away. the human being is himself a ladder. and he is saying there are four levels of human existence, the physical, *nefesh*, *ruach* and *neshama*. and four levels of torah. and by a Jewish person's studying torah on four levels and on observing on four levels, which means not only to keep in a physical sense but to inject and infuse into observance feelings of *remez*, *drush* and *sod*, going deeper into *mitzvahs*, then that will cause the higher world to pour its blessings up on the lower world. why will that happen? because when the human being a ladder connecting heaven and earth, and included in him is heaven and earth, the higher part of a human is like heaven because it contains the spiritual organs, the mind and heart and the lower part is the more physical, the earthly part. within a person we can bring a unification of *shamayim* and earth which is the purpose of creation. when a human being is connecting to torah on all four levels and activating all four levels of *pshat remez drush* and *sod*, all is brought together and when that happens then heaven and earth can connect and then the blessings of heaven can pour onto the earth. but if there is going to be a separation between heaven and earth, if that relationship if there is a severance between *chomer* and *tzura*, of physical and spiritual then the world is denied the privilege of connecting to the higher world and we are denied the *zechus* of having *Hashem's* *shefa* pour into our lives.

by sanctifying your physical life, on a simple level trying to live according to Torah for holiness with good intentions, then we are able to lift the lower world up to the higher world, and heaven forbid the opposite. if *chas vshalom* we do the opposite, we have the ability, the horrible ability, to take that which is most spiritual and exalted and throw it into the dirt. if we use our mind to think about disgusting things, it is like taking the King and putting him in a very filthy thing, like a toilet. when the *neshama* of a human manifests in his thoughts, if our thoughts are attached to things of impurity, it is like taking the King by his head - a frightening thought - and stuffing the King's head into the toilet. a human being himself is the ladder, the link between heaven and earth. he has a choice, to lift up all of earth to heaven or *chas vshalom* take heaven and pull it to the lowest place.

we spoke about *Rabbi Nachman's* teaching in *Tazria*, on music. music draws our emotions into a subject. music takes us to this place of heaven, connecting. the power of the song is that it engages the mind and the heart. it is not just doing something physical. it is not like enjoying a meal, where we enjoy on the level of

guf and maybe nefesh, which is connected to guf. but if we are enjoying on ruach and neshama that is a sad thing. ...if we activate our ruach and neshama on levels that are physical, like over sports, it is more than physical, if you invest spiritual energy into physical you take the neshama and inject it in base physical things. if it has an important role in your life, it can be destructive. at that point, there is ruach and neshama in it and that is scary. we are a ladder and we can schlepp shemayim into the lowest thing. but at the same time we can take the lowest thing and lift it right back to Hashem.

this is what the torah means when he says conquer the world. it has nothing to do with weapons. a tzaddik conquers the physical world, those who observe hashem's world rule the earth. tzaddikim have the power to change nature, physical existence. it says that a tzaddik rules with the fear of Gd. what does he rule over? he rules over himself with a fear of Gd. The Toldos says he rules over all the worlds. the tzaddik is the link between heaven and earth and he has access to those two worlds because they are in his hands, they are not fighting in his hands.

aaron kollner, was sitting after davening and there was a person coming there, experimenting with chassidus, and he was watching the Rebbe and the Kallner sat down and ate the apple and this skeptical fellow was thinking, he eats apples I eat apples. he wasn't so impressed. by mincha maariv the kollner said there are some who come to test the tzaddik and the skeptic thinks the tzaddik eats an apple and I eat an apple. the kollner says there is a difference. when a tzaddik comes home to shul and sees there is a fellow selling fruit and he thinks what a wonderful way to continue my conversation with HKB I can say a bracha and continue my conversation.

when the skeptic comes home. he says I want that apple but I have to eat the apple. the difference is the tzaddik has the apple so he can make a bracha and the regular person says a bracha so he can eat the apple. the tzaddik is joining heaven and earth the other is swimming in earth

the tzaddik - the whole world is in his reshus. most people, in their lives, physical matter conquers the spiritual form and that is the blessing of Hashem, to conquer the earth. all of this is based on the aishis hakodesh.

the entire world is divided into two parts, physical matter, therefore even the greatest empires come and go, all physical matter is doomed. it can only live for a period of time and then it deteriorates. not the Nishmas Yisrael. physical matter has no life at all. only if it has spirituality infused in it. from all the empires, the highest level to the lowest, they are all chomer, physical matter. the Nishmas exist like the neshama and the guf, like the heart, the mind of existence. without knesses yisrael, the neshama and the guf, the spiritual form in matter, nothing would exist.

mamshif shefa. nishmas yisrael has the power to conquer physical because of being on the level of tzadik yesod olam, connecting heaven and earth. this is the meaning of the concept always of briss. a covenant. we are trying to make two separate to bring them together. you don't have to make a briss between parent and children, but between two opposites, two pushing away or struggling, and to show the two that if they join together to form a single unit it is greater than the component parts.

the physical briss of a baby boy, upon the body is the os briss kodesh. that strength is the yesod, the joining of heaven and earth. in the sefarim, the guarding of the covenant is so important. the meaning of the tzaddik is being the master of the briss to join heaven and earth the blessing can come in, we are a bridge. for shefa to come in, it has to cross over the bridge. the tzaddik is the bridge through which all physical life is sustained. the tzaddik within klal yisrael gives life to the klal and then outward from there.

this is the blessing of peace, we end everything with the word shalom, it is the chasima, what is the job of that, a sealer, a sealant, that which joins them together, a glue. everything goes by the chasima. chanukah is the chasima, we wish chasima tova. there are 613 mitzvahs of the Torah, the final seal is chanukah. the crowning of the King is the fulfillment of His Kingdom. chanukah is the chasima, the joining link, it connects heaven and earth. that is why shalom is a word that pops up at the end of everything. shalom means heaven and earth being brought together. therefore, when you have gone through bentching and davening and learning, the ultimate fulfillment is shalom. peaceful coexistence is not killing each other. shalom in the torah doesn't mean that.

there is a concept of covenant on three levels, of olam of the physical world, olam is time, briss is soul. the briss of this world is the torah. briss in time is shabbos. shabbos is a briss in time. shabbos Hashem wants us to eat. rambam writes that a person should have delicacies. shabbos is a tzaddik in time. shabbos connects heaven and earth in time. it connects that which is completely spiritual which is not in time, time is

that connection. Friday twilight, when you are in that mysterious time zone, not here or there, a little Friday and a little Shabbos, the things that were created there were mouth of the donkey, the be'er. Maharal explains that a behema is able to talk, especially a donkey, a chomer, the most physical of animals. It schleppes. Moshlach comes riding on a chamor, the spiritual world is in control of the physical. It says Moshe got up early and went on his donkey, the physical world. The tzadik rules over chomer.

Bilaam, it was the opposite, the physical rules over him. It is in Rashi. The chomer rules over the spirit. The physical rules over the spiritual. The tzadik rides upon the chamor. The mouth of the donkey is that the mouth had what to say, what can I do there is an angel. Why did you hit me. Rashi says it is the three regalim. That koach was created erev Shabbos twilight. Why? Because you have a physical object exhibiting spiritual qualities. I explained it once in shul about Rav Shimon, he wanted to destroy the world. Everyone was on fire. He goes back in the cave and now he came out and he doesn't. What they saw when they changed their minds is an old man running with hadassim. He was erev Shabbos, the sun was setting, and this old man is running. Where is he going asks Rav Shimon, for kavod Shabbos for zachor and shomer, to remember and keep Shabbos. Look how mitzvahs are so precious to the Jewish people, then Rav Shimon was happy. When he saw the old man running he saw the world is kadal, and he became a Chassidish rebbe, not just a mekubel. He became a rebbe then, the time between heaven and earth. He saw an old man with one man in this world and one in the next. Because of the klal, zerizus, the Jewish people are always in a hurry. Hadassim is smell, it does not deteriorate because it was not involved in Adam's sin. Smelling is the sense that is most spiritualized. The old man carrying hadassim running awakens in Reb Shimon the tzadik of the world who joins heaven and earth not who runs away to heaven. The rasha swims in earthliness. But the tzadik of BESHT of the yesod is to join heaven and earth. The Shabbos in time is tzaddik.

Torah is the briss of the world. Shabbos is the briss in time. Yisroel is the briss in soul, in humanity. Therefore Torah is given on Shabbos to the Jewish people. On the day where heaven and earth have to connect, the Torah which connects heaven and earth was given to the people who connect heaven and earth. Hashem gave his strength to the people who have this position to join heaven and earth. He gave it to them on the day that joins heaven and earth.

Everything else that we will learn about the tzaddik is just reinterpreting explaining and expanding this concept.