Assembly Notes

PARSHAS SHOFTIM 5784

Assembly Theme: Good thoughts, Good actions

the lubavitch multi-academy trust
lubavitch girls' school

A society requires a system of governance and justice, in order to protect everyone. In Shoftim we hear Moshe telling the people who were about to enter the holy land: "Appoint judges and officers in all your gates…". "Gates" refers to the nerve center of the city, where all public services were located.

This is a Mitzvah which is to be fulfilled by the city as a whole, not by each individual. Yet, every word and every mitzvah in the Torah also contains a direct message to each individual how to live a better life and how to make the world a better place.

The Rabbis explain that every person has seven "gates" for connecting with the world. Two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and one mouth. All of them require "judges" and "officers".

The "judge" clarifies what the law is. The judge is Hashem's Torah, by which we arrange our actions. But we also need "officers" in order to implement the law. The officers are the determination and commitment of each person to overcome inertia and distractions; and to control their desires.

The eyes should look up to Heaven and see the good that we can do and should certainly not look at inappropriate things. Our ears should refuse to listen to negative talk (Lashon Hara). One who refrains from listening to Lashon Hara is assured that Heaven will refuse to hear negative things about them (from the accusing angels). The aroma of the nostrils refers to our thoughts; to allow only positivity and sweet atmosphere into our minds. And our mouth and speech should be used for Torah and Tefillah, good talk and positivity and encouragement to others.

This will help us to bring true peace to our land and to all the world.

STORY OF THE REBBE

Someone asked : How is it that the young people in Lubavitch are so attached to the Rebbe with love and dedication, ready to go out of their comfort zone to go on Shlichus and Mivtzoyim? They were born after Gimmel Tammuz; their parents didn't even see the Rebbe!

Perhaps a story about the Frierdikke (Previous) Rebbe (Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, the Rebbe's father in law) and the Rebbe will help us to

understand what is Hiskashrus (connection) to a Rebbe.

The Frierdikke Rebbe was arrested in Russia in 1927. He was released through a true miracle; but he was forced to leave Russia. After Simchas Torah almost all of his Chassidim came to see him and say Goodbye. After that they didn't see him again. Even though there were no photographs and certainly no videos. the Chassidim and their children remained loyal to the Rebbe, to Torah and to spreading Yiddishkeit.

One Chossid, Reb Yankel Lipsker, did not manage to get to see the Frierdikke Rebbe before he left Russia. So he never saw his Rebbe and never saw his picture so he didn't know what his Rebbe looked like.

גוט שבת!

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In 1942 Reb Yankel was with a group of Chassidim who fled to Kutais, Georgia during the War, to be far away from the German Nazis.

One Friday night he had the following dream. He was on a plane which flew to New York. They asked him where do you want to go and whom do you want to see. He answered that he wants to see the Rebbe. He was taken to a building with three floors. He asked which floor is the Rebbe on and he was told it's the second floor. He walked up and entered and saw an old frail man with a white beard. He assumed that this was the Rebbe. The man told him two things: First of all, Mazel Tov! Second, he told Reb Yankel to learn the Ma'amor (Chassidic Discourse which begins with the words והריקותי לכם ברכה Veharikosi Lochem Bracha (I will pour out a Blessing to you).

He then was awakened by his wife who said that she was having her baby; call the midwife!! A boy was born a few hours later.

The following Shabbos was the Bris and then a Kiddush and Farbrengen with everyone. He told the Chassidim there about his dream. The wise, elderly Chassidim told him that he did NOT see the Rebbe. We know what the Rebbe was, broad shouldered and tall. He had a red beard. He isn't an old crippled man in a wheelchair! And, furthermore, there is no Ma'amor at all that begins with the word Veharikosi! Dreams mean nothing!

Five years later, in 1947, he escaped the USSR with hundreds of Chabad families. He lived in France for a few years. That year our Rebbe visited France to meet his mother and take her to New York. Everyone saw that the Rebbe was a very great and special person, even though he was not yet Rebbe.

Reb Yankel Lipsker decided to ask the Rebbe about his dream five years previously. The Rebbe was excited and asked him exactly when he had the dream and asked him to repeat every detail. Then the Rebbe told him: there has never been a Ma'amor beginning Veharikosi, not by my father in law the Rebbe and not by any previous Rebbe. BUT, just around the time of your dream my father in law gave me a new Ma'amor of his starting with the word Veharikosi! Not every dream is authentic and holy; this one was. The Chassidim remember the Frierdikke Rebbe from twenty years ago. He suffered and became frail and disabled. But his power is stronger than ever!

Rabbi Berel Lipsker told this story at the farbrengen for his eightieth birthday. He said the Ma'amor beginning Veharikosi Lochem Brocha.

We can learn from this that connecting to the Rebbe is a spiritual experience , much deeper than just seeing. Especially today, when there are so many seforim in all languages with the Rebbe's teachings and vision. Besides many hundreds of tapes, pictures and videos.

גוט שבת!

KESIVAH VACHASIMAH TOVAH!