

# STANDING ELEVATED

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי ש"י בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

## ATTACHED TO TORAH

Shlomo Hamelech writes that a person should be occupied (תשגה) with his love for Torah. The Chachomim explain that this tremendous love of Torah should cause one to make mistakes (שוגג) and drop all his affairs in order to run and learn Torah. Yet, the Torah will look after the person and cause him to find favor in the eyes of others.

The Gemara describes how Rabbi Elazar ben Pedas would be totally involved with his learning, that he would sit and study Torah in the lower market of Tzipori, without realizing that he had left his cloak in the upper market of Tzipori. It occurred once that someone attempted to steal Reb Elazar's cloak from the upper market, and he found it protected by a poisonous snake.

(עירובין נד, ב, רש"י ור"ח, ומהרש"א בחדא"ג שם)

Once while deeply engrossed in his learning, Rava placed his hands under his feet, crushing his fingers until they began to bleed. Yet, being completely absorbed in his learning, he did not feel a thing. A nearby heretic ridiculed him, "You rash people! Similar to the way you accepted the Torah without knowing its difficulty." Rava replied, "We follow Hashem with innocence and Hashem protects us."

The Rebbe derives from here that one's approach to Torah should not be logical and calculated, rather unreserved with total dedication.

(שבת פח סע"א וברש"י שם)

Once during the winter, Reb Yosef from Lubavitch traveled in a horse drawn sled on a dangerously slippery and bumpy path. The sled shook violently and swayed from side to side, eventually causing Reb Yosef to fall overboard into the snow. Unfortunately, the driver did not notice and continued on without him, and Reb Yosef, immersed in deep concentration, felt not a thing of the freezing snow in which he was sitting. A while later, a group of Chassidim passed by and saw Reb Yosef sitting in the snow. When asked what he was doing there, he looked surprised and replied, "I am on my way to Lubavitch."

(רשימות דברים ח"א עמ' רכז)

Two Chassidim once traveled to the city in order to purchase merchandise for their respective shops. Having arrived, one of them reached into his pocket to remove the list of merchandise for which he had come, but instead, he accidentally removed a maamer chassidus

and began to learn from it. The other chossid, having noticed that his friend was holding a maamer, came over, and he too was soon peering intently at the paper that his friend was holding.

So steeped were they in the maamer, that they completely forgot where they were and that they had come to buy merchandise. They remained immersed in their learning until the storeowner wanted to close up and was forced to drag them outside, where they stood and continued learning the maamer.

(רשימות דברים ח"א ע' רלח)

## CONNECTED ABOVE

There was once a chossid who lived in seclusion, and spent his time serving Hashem. Eventually, he returned to civilization, and became a shamash in a shul, where no one recognized his greatness. Once the Rov saw the shamash filling the lamps in the shul, as some of the oil spilled over the side. The Rov recognized that this was not out of clumsiness, but out of dveikus and kavana. He informed the kehila of the man's greatness, and told them, "This shamash should really be the Rov, and I should serve under him."

(ס' חסידים כת"י, בראשית חכמה שער הקדושה פ"ג)

The Frierdiker Rebbe related: "While in Vienna, we (the Frierdiker Rebbe and his father the Rebbe Rashab) stayed in adjacent rooms with an open door in between. It was around five o'clock in the afternoon when my father gave me a certain manuscript to copy while he sat down on the sofa, placing one foot on the sofa and the other on the ground. I approached him a number of times and saw that he was sitting motionless with his eyes open. He sat this way until three forty-five in the morning! He then "woke up," took his watch and stared at it in utter disbelief, walked over to the window and said, 'It seems like it is already nightfall and it is time to daven maariv!' I then revealed to him that almost the entire night had already passed, and I even had to remind him which day we were in, as he was completely removed from this world...

"On the following day, I found him writing a lofty concept in chassidus in his notebook, and seemingly, that is what he had been engrossed with the night before (which some say was the basis of the המשך תעור"ב).

(רשימות חוברת ח' ע 19 ואילך. לקו"ש חכ"ז ע' 275)

The Rebbe spoke how it is possible, even in our times, for one to reach some degree of הנפש. When one delves deeply into

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something, he can reach a point where he does not notice what is happening around him. The Rebbe then related the following:

"Once the Mozhitzer Rebbe fell ill and traveled to Berlin to visit the doctors there. The doctors said that the Rebbe is in need of an operation, but they are afraid that in his weak state he will not be able to handle the pain. Hearing this, the Mozhitzer Rebbe suggested that they allow him to sing a Niggun and wait until he is fully absorbed in it, and then operate on him, for he will feel nothing. The doctors did as he said, and everything went smoothly.

(לקו"ש חכ"ז ע' 275)

The chossid Reb Yankel Kaidaner related: "While traveling with the Mittlerer Rebbe on one of his journeys, we stopped over in the city of Krislaveh. On our second night there, the Rebbe said an incredible maamer, the likes of which none of the chassidim have ever heard. After hearing the maamer, we chazered it and then went to eat. Upon finishing the meal, the Rebbe's meshares rushed over and told me that now would be a good opportunity to gaze at the Rebbe's face. Knowing how the Rebbe in his humility did not like it, I hesitated, but the meshares said, "Do not worry; he will not see you at all."

"I followed the meshares to the Rebbe's room, and when he opened the door, I saw the Rebbe standing in the center of the room, motionless, his face flaming and his eyes wide open. Shocked, I jumped back; but the meshares grabbed my sleeve and said aloud, "You have nothing to fear, he is now in the ruchniyus'dike worlds and will not hear or see anything." "How do you know?" I questioned, knowing him to be a simple man. "This is not first time that I have seen him this way," he replied.

"I stood at the doorway, looking to make out any movement, but the Mittlerer Rebbe remained still, unaware of the people walking about the house. I stood there from ten o'clock at night until three in the morning, when the meshares had the table set for the Rebbe to eat, as the Rebbe had not eaten the entire day. A helper then approached the Rebbe with a kvort of water for the Rebbe to wash his hands, but the Rebbe did not move. The meshares tugged the Rebbe's sleeve, asking the Rebbe to wash, but the Rebbe turned away and walked to a wall, standing immobile as before. Being that I could no longer see the Rebbe's face, I left for the night.

"The following day, the meshares related to me that the Rebbe had continued to stand that way until four o'clock, and then, with great simcha, had sat down at the table on his own. The Rebbe revealed that during the previous day's maamer, his father the Alter Rebbe had come to him, along with the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid, and they had praised the maamer tremendously. After saying the maamer, he had repeated it for the Alter Rebbe and the Alter Rebbe had revealed to him great secrets of the torah. This had occurred while he had stood motionless the previous night and was the cause of his unusual simcha."

(סיפורים נוראים ע' לד)

## ABOVE THE WORLD

A certain melamed wanted to go into business, so he went to seek counsel by the Alter Rebbe and by one of the Poilische tzaddikim. The Alter Rebbe advised him not to become a businessman, yet

when he traveled to the other tzaddik, he was told that he should indeed go into business. When he informed the tzaddik of the Alter Rebbe's opinion, the tzaddik exclaimed: זלמניו ווייס ניט די "כוונה, ניט – ניט וועלט", נאר "וועלט און אויס וועלט" (as the Alter Rebbe was called by the talmidim of the Mezricher Maggid) knows not the true kavana; one must not behave in a manner of 'no world', rather while being (involved) 'in world(ly matters)' one must nevertheless stay 'above the world'."

When the melamed returned to the Alter Rebbe and related his exchange with the polische tzaddik, the Alter Rebbe said: "This would have been true if you were a businessman and you wanted to become a melamed, for this would demonstrate that even "in world" (business) you know that there is "no world" (hence the desire to become a melamed). But," the Alter Rebbe concluded, "In your case, you want to go into business..."

(תשורה תשם"ד מרשימותיו של הרא"ב בלעסאווסקי)

Reb Shmuel Michel Treinin from the city of Petersburg was a very wealthy man and had acquaintances amongst high ranking ministers in the Russian government. By nature, Reb Shmuel Michel was always neat and well groomed, and in addition, had a most somber and serious personality. So of course he was very particular that his clothing be buttoned appropriately; each button in the right hole...

Once, Reb Michael Beliner, also known as "Michael Der Alter," arrived in Petersburg to intercede on behalf of a certain yeshiva bochur that he be released from army service, thus being able to continue learning Torah undisturbed. Reb Shmuel Michel, due to his influence in government circles, accompanied Reb Michael to one of the ministers whom they felt would be instrumental in helping out.

While walking on the main street of Petersburg, Reb Shmuel Michel noticed that Reb Michael's buttons were not aligned properly, for Reb Michael was dressed as he would in Lubavitch.

Careful (so that he not be admonished), Reb Shmuel Michel turned to him and said, "Reb Michael, we are now walking on Nievsky Prospect (the main street in Petersburg), perhaps it would be a good idea to straighten your buttons?" Reb Michael glared at him and responded curtly, "Gevald Reb Shmuel Michel! What is your mind on?!..."

(תו"מ הי"ד ע' 193)

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