

עדת אש קודש Adass Aish Kodesh



LIGHT IN THE BLUNDERING

By Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita

Stories are a unique piece of the jigsaw puzzle that completes our individuality and our understanding of what it is that creates our spiritual identity. Allow me to share one with you that will help direct you in getting ready for Chanukah.

The Sefas Emes Zt"l used to relate of how a group of Chasidim arrived at the home of the Chozeh of Lublin to spend some time with the Tzadik. Before leaving home, an interesting thing happened, someone from the town handed them a kvitel (a paper with a request for blessings) asking them to present it to the Rebbe. What made this unique was that this particular Yied was known as a "Mosser," someone who was so villainous that he would slander his fellow Jews to the authorities. This was a crime that could tear at the very fabric of the community and therefore such miscreants had nothing to do with the world of Rebbe's and their Chasidim. It was there for astounding to the Chasidim when this arch enemy handed them a kvitel asking that it be presented to their Rebbe for a blessing, yet here they were, with that very piece of paper in hand as they approached the Tsaddik's table. The Rebbe started to read the request and to the astonishment of the Chassidim he murmured, "This Yied shines in all quarters of the heavens." Those standing around the Rebbe heard these words and were shocked, they knew how low this fellow was, yet the holy Tzadik had described how all the Heavens shined with this guy's spiritual light.

Sometime later the Rebbe's son Rav Yosef Zt"l asked his father to explain how it was possible that such a trouble maker had the spiritual energy to "shine" throughout the heavens.

The Tzadik of Lublin explained that at the very moment he read the Yid's kvitel, that very same fellow was lighting his menorah back in his home. The light of this mitzvah lit up all the heavens.

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A grandson of the Rebbe of Lublin, The Rebbe Reb Pinchas Menachem of Piltz added some clarity to this issue. The mitzvah of lighting the menorah is especially suited to raising the souls of Yidden who may have fallen away and become disenfranchised from their Jewish roots. This special mitzvah came to us via the Kohanim who, as children of Aaron Ha'Kohen had the ability of bringing peace and warmth to the Jewish people. Aaron was known as the Ohev Sholom (lover of peace), rodef sholom, (pursuer of peace), and sought to raise every single Yied to their ultimate heights. Thus this singular mitzvah, which came to us via the efforts of his descendants, has the ability to bring those furthest away from Torah life to a greater spiritual level.

This then is the special hold that Chanukah has for Klall Yisroel. Those who may have drifted from their connection with their "pintele Yied" find those lights beckoning and guiding them ever closer.

In Parshas Vayeshev we find Yosef tasked to find his brothers who had gone with their flocks to the valley of Hebron.

"A man discovered him, and behold! He was blundering in the field; the man asked him, saying, "What do you seek?" And he said, "My brothers do I seek; tell me please, where they are pasturing?" Chazal tell us that the "Man" is none other than the Angel Gavriel. The Kotzker Rebbe Zt"l explains that Yosef was embarking on an excruciating difficult path that would take him from the coveted place he held in the home of his father to the decrepit depths of Mitzrayim, the spiritually darkest place of the world. The Malech is giving Yosef advice. Keep asking yourself "what do you seek?" Wherever the future will take you, always remind yourself of what it is that is truly important in your life, "What do you seek?" Will bring you back to your roots, your true focus. For Yosef, and for all of us, what we seek is our connection with the Eibishter. We will certainly flounder at times, and we must remain true to our original task as Jews, What do you seek? Should be the question that lies on your tongue as you face life difficulties.

To help us remain true to this quest, Hashem gave us Chanukah, when even the most lost amongst us can rekindle the illumination that is within each and every neshoma.

I have seen this happen over the years, how Yidden who have very limited understanding of what it is to be a Yied, and very little feeling for that spark that lurks within them, became enraptured with the flickering candles, and wondering what it is that is draws them to a higher level.

It's the Malech Gavriel asking his very special question to all of us, "What do your seek?" Yes, what do you seek Reb Yied?

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