

# *The Rebbe's Pharmacy*

## *Pills of Chizuk for Today's Spiritual Illnesses—Part 29*

*This week's article is a continuation from last week. "The Illness: Day after day pass me by and I'm not able to accomplish anything in my learning. The Rebbe's Prescription: By focusing on one day at a time and learning small daily portions, you will see incredible progress." You may email [leventermusic@gmail.com](mailto:leventermusic@gmail.com) to receive a copy.*

### **Through a constant attachment to Torah, we can live beyond the boundaries of time.**

Rebbe Nachman describes this daily attachment to learning and avodas Hashem as being "above time." In general, we think of seventy years as a long period of time. We experience time passing very slowly, and thus, it seems to us like it takes a while for a lifetime to be complete. However, this is only because of our lack of *dass* — awareness of Hashem. The truth is, that the higher level of awareness that we have, the more we see that time is really flying by very quickly. The clock doesn't stop even for one second. A moment comes and goes like the blink of an eye. Sometimes, when we look back ten or twenty years, we get a sense of quickly time is really passing. But in any given moment, it seems to most of us that time is dragging along slowly.

To help us understand this idea, Rabbi Nachman compares it to one who is sleeping. When we sleep and fall into a dream state, it could seem to us like we're living an entire lifetime of seventy years. In our dream, we're experience countless things throughout the course of many years. However, when we finally wake up and look the clock, we realize that we just took a fifteen minute nap!

So why did it seem like such a long time? The answer is that when we were asleep our level of awareness was only a minute fraction of what it is during our waking state. Thus, it appeared to us like fifteen minutes was seventy years. Now that we're awake, however, it is clear that only

short

period of time really passed. Nonetheless, even in our waking consciousness, seventy real years still seem like a really long time, but once again, this is only due to our lack of awareness.

However, when we're able to attach ourselves to avodas Hashem during each and every moment of our lives, then we begin to experience time in a completely different way. Our entire life becomes like one day, and on a higher level, like one moment, since all that exists in our consciousness is the current moment that we're in.

### **We can also taste the awareness of Mashiach and do complete teshuva.**

This level of awareness is an aspect of Mashiach. Even though Mashiach's soul has existed since the beginning of time, when it will come time for him to come to redeem us — speedily and in our days, amen! — Hashem will tell him, "Today, I have given birth to you." This is because Mashiach's level of *daas* is so great, that despite all of the incredible amount of things that have happened throughout the course of all of history, to him it is all like one day.

The amazing thing is that we also have the ability to tap into this awareness and through this bring Mashiach. The Sages say that R' Yehoshua Ben Levi went to bring Mashiach. When he asked Mashiach when he was going to come, Mashiach responded to him with this verse: "Today! . . . if [the Jewish people] listen to [Hashem's] voice."

From here we see the incredible power we have in our hands. By simply taking it one day at a time and listening to Hashem's voice by doing our best to fill that day with learning and avodas Hashem, we can bring the ultimate redemption. We can attach ourselves to an aspect of the elevated consciousness of Mashiach which is beyond the bonderies of time.

This is the main teshuva that we must do in our lives, like it says in Pirkei Avos, "Do teshuva 'one day' before you die." The commentaries note: how do we know when the last day of life will be? Because of this question, we cannot take this statement of the Sages on it's simple level. Rather, the real meaning, they explain, is that we must do teshuva ev-

ery day, since perhaps today is our last day.

The true depth of this commentary is that we must take our lives one day at a time. We must try to focus only on what we can accomplish today, in this very moment. Through this, we can fly in our learning and achieve the greatest levels in avodas Hashem. Through this, we can attach ourselves to our Creator and be in a constant state of teshuva.

### **Additional advice in order to strengthen our connection to Torah.**

In order to achieve this goal and attach ourselves to learning with a constant *deveikus*, Rebbe Nachman gives us a number of additional pieces of advice. As was mentioned before, we should try to take a portion of a sefer — such as a daf gemara, two mishnayos, an amud of mishna brura, or a page of Zohar, etc. — and learn the same amount every day.

Each one of us must assess for ourselves how many of these regular portions we can take on and which sefarim we would like to learn, without becoming overwhelmed and creating stress in our lives. It is best to should start with an amount which we feel like we can easily accomplish, and then, if we find that we can do more, we can add on another sefer.

We shouldn't approach them as just fulfilling obligations, rather we should see our daily portions like a tray of delicious desserts. First, we take a few bites of Chumash with Rashi, then some halacha, then some gemarra, chasidus, Arizal, etc. Ideally, we would like to have a daily tasting of as many desserts as possible, but at the same time we must recognize our capabilities and only take on what we can handle.

When we're studying our daily portions, Rebbe Nachman

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recommends that we learn bekiyus and go as quickly as we can. He says that we should read the words on the page out loud and try to understand the simple meaning (pashut peshat) of the Torah we're learning. We should do our best not to ask kashes in our mind, especially if the kasha is based on another section of the Torah which is not mentioned on the page we're studying.

If we get stuck for more than a little while and we can't understand something, we should just keep going. We should not waste time going over and over the passage which is difficult for us, since more often than not, our confusion will be cleared up in

the continuation of the sefer. And even if not, by accustoming ourselves to learn quickly, we will be able to finish the entire sefer and then begin it again. Certainly, the second time around, we will have a much deeper understanding and most if not all of our uncertainties will be easier to grasp.

Nevertheless, even if we never clarify our confusion, Rebbe Nachman says that in the next world we will understand every piece of Torah that we learned in this world. Thus, by going further in our studies, we will acquire much more knowledge when we go to heaven, which is obviously our primary concern.

**By learning bekiyus, we can get the big picture and achieve a deep understanding.**

This is one of the reasons that Rebbe Nachman says our main limud should be bekiyus. Although it is good to learn a small amount in depth (be'iyun) every day, nonetheless, if we focus too much on the details of one section, not only are we unable to cover lots of ground and learn many sefarim, we are also greatly lacking in our ability to understand the section we are concentrating on.

On the other hand, when we learn quickly, we have the time to complete the entire sefer and many others as well. Then, after we finish, we can start over and learn the sefer again. Each time we go over the sefer, we get a deeper understanding, until after a number of times, G-d willing, we will know the entire sefer in depth.

**Since bekiyus requires less concentration, it is more accessible to us on a daily basis.**

Another reason that our primary limud should be daily portions bekiyus is to make

sure that we're constantly attached to learning. As explained above, we have many internal and external obstacles which prevent us from sitting down and learning each day. And unfortunately, as the generations continue to decline in spiritual capacity, it is all too common that these obstacles are too difficult for us to overcome and we end up with many days that are empty of Torah.

While learning be'iyun is very important and gives Hashem great nachas, it requires a certain level of clarity of mind which many of us are currently lacking. With all of our problems and distractions, we simply can't focus hard enough to really get it. Thus, we end up wasting precious time in the beis medrash not really accomplishing anything.

On the other hand, learning bekiyus requires much less deep concentration, and thus it is more accessible to us on a regular basis. Even if we're tired or confused and our mind is not able to grasp complicated concepts, we can still manage to understand the basic meaning of a gemarra with Rashi.

And even if we find that we simply don't have the time or ability to focus and learn a gemarra with Rashi, we can open an Art Scroll and read through the daf. And even if we still find that this is too hard, we can try learning mishnayos or Chumash with Rashi. And even if we don't have the attention span to sit in front of a sefer and learn at all, nonetheless, we shouldn't throw in the towel and give up. Nowadays, there are countless shiurim available to us on almost any sefer that we would like to learn. So we can just put on our headphones and connect our mind to the Torah whenever we have a free moment.

Thus, by focusing on the simple meaning and learning bekiyus, we can attach ourselves to the Torah throughout our day, even if we're physically and spiritually weak.

This method of learning is also useful for those of us sitting in kollel every day. If we look honestly at how much time our mind is actually involved in learning, many of us will see that we're not engaged in the Torah for long periods of time. We end up shmoozing with our chevrusa, talking on our phone, daydreaming or even falling asleep. Therefore, it may be that we're better off spending our time learning daily portions bekiyus to ensure that we're attached to the Torah every single day of our lives.

If this is not true and we are some of those who are able to sit for hours learning be'iyun, then great! The ultimate goal is that we should be constantly attached to the Torah. Thus, if we truly prefer learning be'iyun and we're able to concentrate for long periods of time, then there is no reason to stop. Nonetheless, even for those of us learning hours a day be'iyun, it is still important to have regular daily portions of bekiyus in order to get a broader understanding. And as discussed before, if we look hard enough, we can always find time to do so, in between and around our kollel obligations.

**Chevrusa or no chevrusa, we must attach ourselves to learning.**

Another reason that Rebbe Nachman recommends learning daily portions is that they don't require a chevrusa. Very often, many of us struggle to find a chevrusa who shows up on time and has the compatible midos to work well together with us. As a joke, it is said that it is almost as hard as finding a shidduch! Thus, we waste time waiting and trying to find the right one.

In addition, even if we already have a good chevrusa, sometimes he's sick and doesn't show up. Or maybe he has an appointment and has to come late or leave early. Because of this, we end up losing countless hours of learning.

Of course the solution is not to do away with chevrasas altogether. Learning Torah with another Jew is an invaluable Jewish tradition which helps us get a deeper understanding of our studies. Rather, the answer to the problem is that we can't be dependant on our chevrusa. This means that whether he shows up or not, we're going to be attached to our sefer. Even if he falls asleep, we're not going to stop our constant connection to Torah. For this reason, it is imperative that we have daily portions which we learn by ourselves. As explained before, our bekiyus learning does not require such in depth analization, and thus we don't need someone else to help us clarify our kashes. Through this, we create our own independant relationship with learning which we can maintain whether we have a chevrusa or not.

**Our goal: to travel the entire world of Torah, one day at a time.**

To help us understand our relationship to Torah, Rebbe Nachman gives the following comparison. Amongst the upper class non-Jews, it is very popular to boast about all of the countries that one has visited and all of the different cultures one has seen. It is a great virtue to have travelled the world and to be well versed in numerous languages. Lehavdil, we should approach learning Torah in a similar way. We should have a strong desire to see all the holy sefarim from beginning to end and be well versed in their subjects. We should approach learning as if we're gathering invaluable information from numerous places in Hashem's Torah. Of course, it is not in order to brag to others like the goyim do. Instead, it is in order to understand all of Hashem's teachings and be able to attach ourselves to Him on a constant basis.

Through this, we can completely transform our relationship to learning and avodas Hashem. Every single day of our lives can be unbelievably productive, filled with Torah and mitzvos from beginning till end. Then, after years have passed, we will look back and be able to see how far we've come and how much we've accomplished. We've elevated ourselves beyond the boundaries of time by focusing only on filling each moment with learning and avodas Hashem, and through this we've achieved true teshuva and closeness to our Creator.

*Based on the Torah of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zt"l and his primary talmid R' Noson zt"l, as given over by R' Nisan Dovid Kivak, Shlita. For further comments and questions, or to sign up to receive the articles by email, you may contact: [leventermusic@gmail.com](mailto:leventermusic@gmail.com)*