



Illuminating words that we merited to hear from The Spinka Rebbe Shlita

1. What is the Goal?

Three basic questions that everyone clarifies with themselves before embarking on a journey:

1. **Where am I right now?**
2. **Where do I actually want to go?**
3. **How do I get from here – to there?**

As long as these three points are not clear to him – he will wander across the land frustrated and aimless, and will never reach the goal.

It's no wonder that in our biggest journey, life itself, we often find ourselves frustrated and aimless, and do not reach the goal. Because, truly, **when was the last time we stopped ourselves and asked in the simplest words, these three basic questions?**

Where am I right now? Who am I – and why not just stay here?

Where am I aiming to go? What is the purpose? What is the goal?

And the question of all questions: **How do we get there?** What is the recipe? Where do we sign up for a course that will teach us how to conquer the great goal for which we gathered here on planet Earth?

And if we haven't asked ourselves until now, perhaps now, at this very moment, is the time to ask – and to seek answers.

Let's start with the first and most basic question:

Where are we right now?

A person descended to this world, HaKadosh Boruch Hu placed them at a certain starting point – from which they are supposed to strive and reach the coveted goal.

Where is this starting point?

2. An Insight in the Heart of a Forest

Reb Asher led the chaverim to go out to the 'feld' (field), to seclude themselves among the trees of the field.

From time to time, the veteran chaverim, those who already knew the experience of walking in a dark forest, **would go out with a new chaver, for whom this was the first time in their life that they were about to disappear under the cover of darkness...**

It is not difficult to imagine the experience that went through them in the first moments, when the car's engine died, and everyone scattered among the paths of the field, leaving them alone, under a starlit sky, in a desolate and dark field.

It is obvious that on that night they were not at all engaged in hisbodedus or an open conversation with the Borei (Creator)... All their body and soul mechanisms were focused on one question: How do I get out of here – for goodness sake?!

Let's leave that new chaver who is walking in fear on the dark, rocky ground, and try to imagine ourselves in the same situation:

How would we feel if we were thrown late at night into a dark forest, without chaverim, without a car, without a cell phone, without any contact with the outside world – and with only one promise: Tomorrow morning, bli neder, they will come to pick you up...

This is an experience difficult to endure.

But wait, why is it so difficult? **Just one night, in a relatively safe area, so why is it so frightening to us?**

Because in those moments it becomes clear to us – how dependent we are. On people, on objects, on places.

In times of routine, we are not always available to grasp this, **but when we are brought to extreme moments like a night of solitude in the forest – suddenly it becomes clear that we are simply not confident in ourselves, suddenly it becomes clear how much our happiness and sense of security depend on people, places, and times...**

And what can we do, we are just like that. Ever since we got familiar with life, we got used to the idea that the way to be happy is precisely with all sorts of external achievements, with things that picture well in the eyes of others. We got used to the idea that the way to live well is only with as much control over life as possible.

The more our happiness and joy of life depend on something that is not I myself – the more dependent we are.

And dependence – is a kind of disability. A kind of exile.

The starting point for each of us – is dependence on externality. **We identify ourselves in an external and superficial way, we have no idea who the 'self' is that is deep inside.**

3. The Golden Cage

Every person invests in themselves. The question is who is that 'self'?

If our starting point is an external self-perception – it's no wonder that most of our investment, most of our thoughts and preoccupations, are dedicated to developing the external self...

When I measure myself, whether I am worthy or not, according to external data – I will do everything to increase the external value.

And what happens to the true self? To the internal and true 'I'? It remains stuck behind, small, dry, undeveloped...

The Rebbe noted a small example, known to all of us:

A great time arrives, like Rosh Hashanah for example, and you enter the Beis Knesses packed to capacity. Everyone stands there seriously, their eyes fixed on the machzorim, and you, you so want to be part of it...

When your 'self' is external, when all you know about yourself is the external layer of your personality – **all you have to do is simply assume a serious expression, fix your eyes on the machzor – and behold, you are part of it...**

But honestly: Is this serious face – you? Are you really connected to what you are doing? Absolutely not, but who cares, the main thing is that it looks good...

Life according to the external layer, is life in a golden cage. Everything glitters – but the Neshama is imprisoned in a dungeon. **You are looking to escape, you feel good anywhere – and you don't understand why...**

4. From Yourself, to Yourself, You Shall Flee

Now, that the starting point is clear – the answer to the second question is also easier:

Where do I need to get to? What is the purpose? What is the goal? **Answer: To the discovery of the internal self...**

Our goal in this world is to reach a state where we are not dependent on anything external, where no external data can shake our joy, where no event, no person, or no time can steal myself from me...

The goal is to leave dependence on externality – and to reach 'Ein' (nothingness), **to reach an internal and complete understanding that the external shell is not the story, that there is only one great Ein Sof, and only on Him can, and should, I be dependent...**

Close to four thousand years ago, the first call went out to Avraham Avinu: **'Lech!'** (Go!)

And this call echoes to this very day, within the Neshama of every Yid: **Lech!**

Get out of your external and superficial perception! Go forth!

Where to?

'Lecha!' (To yourself!) Go to yourself, enter into your inner essence!

Go from yourself – to yourself, from your external self, the dependent, the complicated, the unstable – to your internal self, the infinite, which does not depend and does not change in the face of any achievement or any loss, which does not get dizzy from any compliment and is not shaken by any word of insult...

5. A Seventy-Year Story

And it's not easy.

It's not easy to disconnect from an external self-perception, it's not easy to stop measuring myself against others, it's not easy to let go of understanding, control, or anything that gives us a sense of external security. Because what can we do, the externality – is more present. **The external 'I' is louder, knows how to demand its due more strongly – certainly compared to the quiet and delicate inner Neshama...**

But at the end of the day, investment in the external self – is an investment with increased risk, and with definite negative results!

Because the end of externality – is to be swallowed into a grave, to turn to dust. The powerful and loud story of externality is a story of seventy to one hundred and twenty years, and that's it, it's over...

And the truth is, even during life itself – not too much happiness awaits us there, in the external self... Most of our lives, after all, we are driven crazy by the need to prove ourselves or measure ourselves or advance ourselves. **External life is a proven recipe for endless emotional turmoil...**

6. We Are All Yerushalmi Timhonim...

There is a well-known parable that describes a certain timhoni (eccentric/confused person) who sat at the entrance to Yerushalaim and 'helped' the traffic lights...

He would stand there day after day, in the scorching summer and in the stormy Yerushalmi snows, in the late hours of the night and during busy midday times – and 'direct' traffic devotedly.

When the traffic light turned red – he would signal cars to stop. And when everything turned green – he would wave his hands as a sign of approval...

Such were the days and nights of this devoted man, who did everything with full volunteering and a deep sense of mission, all to protect the drivers on the road from serious accidents...

One evening it turned out that the man was not lonely, for behold, he married off his son!

Excited and happy, he led his son under the chuppah – but immediately after the Chasan entered the cheder yichud, the man apologized to all the celebrants: **"I have to run, my job is waiting for me – Yerushalaim cannot be left abandoned!"** ---

Now a question: If we had blocked his exit from the hall, and explained to him sweetly that with all due respect to the strange 'mission' he had undertaken – **there is a son getting married here, and he needs his father to be by his side in these exciting moments...**

What would he do? Without a doubt, he would try to slip out by any means, **and if he didn't succeed – he would rave, stomp his feet, cry out in injustice and even act a bit violently – and rightly so from his perspective.** He truly and sincerely believes that the entrance to Yerushalaim depends on him, and if he is not there – the city will become a disaster area, cars will collide with each other, and everything will turn into crushed metal...

It's easy for us to disdain that timhoni, **but don't we act that way?**

When a person gets caught in an emotional storm, when anger bubbles within them, when they are filled with anxiety, when they erupt in shouts – they are not to blame. **They do it because they are sure that everything depends on them, that everything depends on their understanding or their control, they are completely caught up in this strange thought that without their control – the whole world will be destroyed...**

Therefore, they scream, therefore they are agitated, therefore they erupt...

If only they understood that nothing depends on them – there would be no source of worry or anger in them, they could return to serenity and calmness, they would be free and relaxed...

This is the difference between a person caught in the external self – and one who has reached their true 'I'.

7. Revelation in the Midst of a Storm

And here the third question arrives, crying out on its own:

How?

How do we get out of our external perception – and reach the purpose? How do we discover the inner self in this confusing and so external world?

What is the way?

A person's yetzer overcomes them every day, with new temptations, with convincing explanations for why it is better to invest in the external layer of life...

And were it not for HaKadosh Boruch Hu helping them – they would not be able to overcome it!

A person would never abandon this external perception – were it not for HaKadosh Boruch Hu awakening them!

When the Borei sends us obstacles, when He brings us to crossroads where our externality gets stuck, when external achievements begin to creak, when understanding slips from our hands,

when things get out of control – **that is the help He gives us, to disconnect us from the external self!**

When reality is the opposite of everything I imagined, when understanding and control run out, I might be swept into destruction, despair, breaking, falling into misery – but precisely there also lies the opening to my personal redemption! **Precisely these moments, if I agree to let go and flow with how HaKadosh Boruch Hu leads me – are the opportunity to connect even more to the true 'self', and to disconnect from external dependence!**

Instead of fearing the unknown that these moments bring up in us – let us understand: Behold, here my truth is revealed! Here I discover how fragile externality is and how it does not give me true security!

And there, precisely there, I truly meet myself.

8. The 'Way' in Brief...

The 'way' to achieve internal connection in those moments of storm, passes through:

Tefilah, Hope, Silence.

Eemunah, Waiting, Patience.

Simple action, contemplation, To Be.

To let go, to give up, to be silent, to restrain oneself.

To distance from myself things that steal me from myself.

To stop fleeing from the places where HaShem brings me.

To stop striving for absolute stability.

To learn to cope with what I have...

To fight and insist on discovering the Borei – and not to be swept into revenge or regaining control...

Gedanken from the Spinka Rebbe Shlita.

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Written entirely according to the writers understanding.

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