

Friday Night, Parshas Bo 5766

At the first meal, Mohorosh *Shlit"a* spoke inspiring words about the greatness of the midnight hour, based on the words of Rebbe Nachman in *Lekutei Mohoran I*, lesson 149.

Rebbe Nachman says, “It is written, (*Tehillim* 119:62) ‘I will arise at midnight to give thanks to You because of Your righteous ordinances’. Midnight has the *segulah* (spiritual benefit) of a *pidyon* (spiritual redemption), for it sweetens harsh decrees. This is alluded to in the above verse ‘because of Your righteous ordinances’; “righteousness” symbolizes a decree and “ordinance” symbolizes mercy. If righteousness seems to overpower ordinance – the remedy is to ‘arise at midnight’. The exact moment of midnight is six hours after the beginning of the night, whether in summer or winter. This is the time midnight begins and it continues for two hours. In the morning, it is good to gaze at the sky, for through this one draws upon himself knowledge (See *Zohar, Parshas Beshalach 57*)”. (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman).

Mohorosh explained that the greatness of rising at midnight is indescribable and unimaginable. It is precisely at that moment that the Gates of Heavens are opened and one can then achieve all of his heart’s desires from Hashem. Whoever merits being awake at this time, and to recite the *Tikkun Chatzos* and do *hitbodedus* (personal prayer) with Hashem, his virtue is very great and he is praised in all the worlds. In regards to the midnight hour it is written, (*Eichah* 2) “Pour out your hearts like water before Hashem’s countenance”. At the midnight hour, one is literally “before Hashem’s countenance” and can express all of his thoughts aloud before Hashem as referred to in the verse (*Tehillim* 77), “In the night I will call to remember my song; I will converse with my heart; and my spirit will make a diligent search”. At midnight one is able to search and find all of the good points within himself and to entreat over the rectification of his soul before Hashem (*Lekutei Mohoran* part I, lesson 54).

Rebbe Nachman says here, that “midnight has the *segulah* of a *pidyon*”, that is, just like giving *pidyon* money to a *Tzaddik* to help redeem his soul. Once Rebbe Nachman said that if he knew someone worthy of accepting a *pidyon nefesh*, he would give him one every day, indicating that a *pidyon* would be beneficial every single day. If so, we have a way to give a *pidyon* everyday and that is through being awake at midnight and reciting the *Tikkun Chatzos* and pouring out one’s heart before Hashem. During the winter nights this is much easier, for Rebbe Nachman says that midnight begins six hours after the beginning of night and most

people are in any case still awake then. Even in the summer this can be accomplished with a little will-power; recognizing the greatness of the hour and what can be achieved at this supreme point of time.

Rebbe Nachman links the above concept to the verse (*Tehillim* 119:62) “I will arise at midnight to give thanks to You because of Your righteous ordinances”; that is, when the attribute of judgment – which is justice – seems to overpower ordinance – which is mercy – the advice is to rise at midnight and sweeten the judgment. At midnight we are able to convert night – which is the time when the attribute of justice rules – into the brightness of day and draw down the attribute of mercy to all places that need it. The night is divided into two sections and at midnight the stark darkness of night has passed and the light of day begins to come closer as it is written of Abraham *Avinu* (*Bereishis* 14), “And he divided himself against them [his enemies] at night”, referring to the point of midnight (as Rashi explains there). From that point on Hashem’s Supreme Will is revealed and many wondrous miracles (mentioned in the poem recited on *Shabbos HaGadol* and the night of *Pesach* titled “The most wondrous miracles at night”) occurred specifically at that hour. Therefore, after the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdosh*, this precious time was designated for mourning its destruction because the prayers at this time are very desirable (*Shulchan Aruch, Orach Haim, 1*). Happy is the one who awakens at midnight to recite the *Tikkun Chatzos* which the Ari z”l prescribed, and afterwards expresses his heart to Hashem. For through this, he will merit to accomplish great feats and draw upon himself tremendous abundance. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

Mohorosh connected the above concepts to our *Parsha* in a wonderful way. It is written (*Shemos* 11) “And Moses said: ‘Thus says Hashem: at about midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt’”, and Rashi explains “This prophecy was said to him while he stood before Pharaoh, for after Moses left Pharaoh’s presence, he did not see his face again”. We need to understand this, for the *mitzvah* of “*Kiddush HaChodesh*” (sanctifying the New Month) was related to Moshe *outside* the metropolis of Egypt because it was full of idols (see Rashi *Bereishis* 12:1) and Hashem did not reveal His *mitzvot* in a defiled place. If so, why was the prophecy of “at about midnight” related to him *within* the city?

According to the above words of Rebbe Nachman, we can understand this very well. The prophecy of “midnight”, which demonstrates the exalted custom of rising at midnight, has the power of a *pidyon nefesh* – to sweeten harsh decrees and draw mercy and compassion upon the souls of Israel casting the decrees upon their enemies. Therefore this prophecy was related to Moshe specifically *inside* the city

and in front of Pharaoh, to show the supremacy of the hour and its ability to distinguish between the unclean and the pure; doing justice and judgment with the wicked and kindness and mercy with the righteous. Through this prophecy of “midnight” the souls of Israel will be redeemed from the *klippos* (husks of impurity) which are abound in the city limits of Egypt and will be freed from all evil. It will be a *pidyon nefesh* (soul redemption) for all of Israel and they will be healed from all their wounds. May Hashem grant us the merit to always be awake at midnight and to attain the great achievements of the hour, until we merit seeing the redemption of Israel from the exile, soon and in our days. *Amen v’amen.*