

“Sit beneath your own level And Be Redeemed!”

Tu Bishvat

Transcribed and translated from previous recordings of

HaRav Eliezer Berland Shlit"a

The Baal Shem Tov said: How hard does a person have to work so that Eliahu HaNavi should wait for you at the entrance, but just one haughty thought about how you are better than some other Jew in the world and you lose everything...

Every day the geula is supposed to come. The geula could come this very second. Any moment the geula can come. If we do what we need to do, the geula will come right now! **So on what does it depend? Only if a person is truly humble, only if he believes that he is inferior to everyone else.** Everyone is a bigger tzaddik - everyone is holier and more pure than I am. Rabbeinu said (Likutei Moharan 14:5), “For a person has to humble himself before: 1) those who are greater than him, 2) those who are his equals, 3) those who are lesser than him, 4) and sometimes, when he actually is an inferior person, he must even humble himself relative to his own level. **He should imagine himself lower than he really is, corresponding to, ‘Shvu ish tachtav’ (every person must sit beneath his own level) (Shemos 16:29).**” And Reb Nosson explains (Likutei Halachos, Orlah 5:6) that there are four periods in the year comprised of three months each. And during each period a person needs to work on a different type of humility. “And the four periods begin in Nissan. Therefore Teves is the fourth period which is the main rectification. This period is made up of three months, Teves, Shvat, and Adar, so that **Tu B'Shvat is the middle day of this period...which is the fourth of the four stages of humility, the stage of being so lowly and humble as to even be on the level beneath one's own level...**”

Rebbe Nosson explains that the four periods come to break the four types of pride, which Rabbeinu speaks about in Torah 14. **The first level of**

humility depends upon believing in all the tzaddikim, in all the Admorim. One needs to believe that all the Rebbes and all the Rashei Yeshivos are all tzaddikim. **The way of Breslov is to believe in everyone, to believe in every Jew, in every Admor, in every tzaddik.** A person thinks that he is the greatest tzaddik there is, greater than all the Admorim, greater than all the Rebbes. He even dares to speak against them, about this Admor, about that Rebbe. How can you speak about Rebbes, the holiest and purist Admorim? The first thing to do is to recognize that you are on a lower level than all the tzaddikim, Admorim, Rashei Yeshivos, lower than all the Rabbis that are disseminating Torah day and night—even if you merited to know about the tzaddik that is on such a high level that no one has any conception at all of who he is, no one needs to know about this. You need to honor all the tzaddikim, to know that they can perform wonders, and to believe that they are truly tzaddikim! You need to believe that they can do miracles and wonders. Do you think you are being jealous on behalf of your own Rebbe? Does it bother you that there is some other “tzaddik” who is really serving Hashem? Or that there is another tzaddik that does miracles and offers salvation? You can't stand it that there are other tzaddikim. It's your problem that you're a fanatic. You are so impure that you cannot stand any tzaddik in the world, because you yourself are sunk in infinite impurity. So Rabbeinu says that the first thing you must do is to stop speaking against the tzaddikim! Stop speaking

disparagingly about Rebbes! Stop thinking that you are the greatest tzaddik in the world.

The second level is concerning the average people. You need to know that you are on a lower level than a regular person. Do you think you can reach the level of a simple person who says Tehillim with tears running down his face? Did you even once cry when you said Tehillim? There are simple people—they're average folk. They're not Admorim. They're not Rashei Yeshivos, but they cry when they say Tehillim. They only have to open the Tehillim and already they start shedding tears. Have you reached their level? You haven't even reached the dust of their feet! So know that there are regular Jews that are all day clinging to Hashem, and you are on a lower level than they are.

So what do you have to be so haughty about? You still think you are better than anyone? Perhaps you think that you're better than evildoers and Shabbos desecrators, that you are a bigger tzaddik than they are. Rabbeinu says that this is the third level of humility: "Before those who are lesser than you." **Well, do you know what an evil Jew is—do you have any idea what a Jew is?** In another second he will do teshuva and he will pass you by—by millions of levels and millions of light years. You could never keep up with his pace. You know how many Shabbos desecrators have done teshuva, how many people who ate on Yom Kippur that did teshuva? Today they are already Rashei Yeshivos. They are already great tzaddikim in their own right. Today, you can't even reach the dust of their feet. Rebbe Akiva would say, "Who will bring me a talmid chacham and I will bite him just like a donkey does." And in the end, he became Rebbe Akiva, the head of all Yisrael. So understand that you are actually lower even than evildoers.

The fourth level is the highest level of humility which is: "He must humble himself relative to his own level. He should imagine himself lower than he really is." However much a person makes himself small and realizes his own lowliness, he needs to believe that he is, in actual fact, even lowlier than that!

These four levels of humility parallel the four periods of the year. The months of Nissan, Iyar and Sivan are the level of believing that you are lower than all the tzaddikim. During Tammuz, Av, and Elul, it is believing that you are lower than the average person. Then in Tishrei, Cheshvan and Kislev, it is believing that also all the evildoers will do teshuva. And in Teves, Shvat, and Adar we can come to the

epitome of humility, and **Tu B'Shvat is the middle point of this fourth period in which we can reach the humility of Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe had such humility that he thought he was the worst of the worst, and he felt lower than his own level—he saw himself as being on the bottom rung. He didn't think he was better than any Jew in the world.** The whole year a person should search for his own humility, to see his lack of intelligence, his lack of knowledge, his lack of understanding. Look: I made a mistake. Here, I made this kind of mistake and there I made that kind of mistake. And this is how a person comes to greater and greater levels of humility.

The Baal Shem Tov said: How hard does a person have to work in order to merit to see Eliahu HaNavi in a dream, and how much does he have to work to merit saying "Shalom" to Eliahu HaNavi. How much so that Eliahu will return your "Shalom," and how much does a person have to work on his humility in order to merit to learn with Eliahu HaNavi. How much does a person have to work that Eliahu HaNavi should wait for you at the entrance. But if you had a single thought of pride—that maybe you are better than a single Jew in the world—then you lose everything.

Together with working on humility, a person needs to serve Hashem with all his might, so that he is actually trembling, and in this way he should serve Hashem. And this must be with tremendous joy and enthusiasm, because **when a person merits feeling his own lowliness, suddenly he feels that he has a completely different blood pulsing through his veins.** His blood is pounding at a different rate, in another form. Suddenly, he feels that everything is different: the circulation of his blood has changed. Suddenly, everything becomes easy. His limbs become light—something has happened to his limbs, his blood. **And then he begins to feel the good life, the eternal life, a taste of The World to Come.**

To advertise, dedicate an issue, or to receive a blessing from the Rav please call:

(Israel) 052-718-6265

(US) 917-284-9657

(UK) (+44) 238-228-0223

Website: RavBerland.com

Blog: rabbieliezerberland.blogspot.com

Please help us translate:

<http://rabbieliezerberland.blogspot.co.il/p/dedicat-e-english-tzamaa-nafshi.html>