

# Embracing Darkness - Building the *Mishkan*

Likutei Halachot Hashkamat Haboker 1:3-1:5

Class 2

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After introducing the idea of looking at the good points in yourself and others and how that point is the point of godliness within us and then seeing how that's connected to waking up from ones spiritual sleep, we are now going to take this idea a bit further and deeper.

## Topics covered:

- Why do we fall?
- Turning the darkness into light
- Ups and downs - the spiritual roller-coaster
- The sign of a true leader
- The Tzaddik of the generation
- How to discover your purpose in life
- The real *sigufim*, self-afflictions
- Why the Jewish people suffer so much
- We are worthy these days of revelations like those at Mount Sinai
- Falling in order to go up higher
- Rising up in order to know how to fall
- Failure is the secret of success
- How to fail successfully
- Colorful people – the uniqueness of each person
- How to fix the education system
- All we need is love
- Living the reality of redemption
- Accepting the outcasts
- Building the temple
- How to heal others

## THE GOOD IS FOUND IN THE DARKNESS

1:3

Rebbe Natan quotes a verse in Psalms 57, 'Awaken my soul awaken, O harp, and lyre, I will awaken the dawn'. The verse is telling us how a person can wake themselves up from their spiritual sleep; that is through finding the good points. The harp and the lyre are musical instruments and as we've seen last

time the secret of making music is to choose the right notes at the right time, that is; by finding and choosing the good points among the seemingly evil that surrounds it. Even if from a persons' perspective he isn't doing anything good, there must be, says Rebbe Nachman, some point of good lying dormant within the 'no good', and a person needs to awaken that point and then that point will shine and awaken the person completely.

Like we said above, the good point in a person is godliness which is infinite, and no matter how much evil surrounds that one little point of good, when a person taps into it, he can awaken the infinite within him and it will automatically spread and will take over all other aspects of him and every other part of him. That's what is going to wake him up from his spiritual sleep.

The above verse says, "I will awaken the dawn," the word here used for dawn is *shachar* which also means darkness. That seems absurd because dawn is precisely the time when the light begins to shine. Both in this verse in Psalms "I will awaken the dawn," and in the Shulchan Aruch that we began this lesson with "A person should awaken the dawn", the word used for dawn is *shachar*/darkness. To understand that we can look what King Solomon wrote in *shir hashirim* the Song of Songs, "I'm dark but I'm beautiful, the daughters of Jerusalem."

**So, Rebbe Natan here is explaining that the good point in a person is called *shachar*/dawn/darkness. Because when a person begins looking for his good points, he finds that they're covered in layers and layers of darkness and defects. Therefore, it seems to him, that it's black, it seems to him that it's dark. Because it's residing in darkness, the darkness that is dark from his perspective, but really it's beautiful. So when he judges himself favorably, and looks for the good points within himself, then the good point itself says, "I am black but beautiful, don't look at my darkness," because the darkness is not from me, as Rashi explains on that verse. Because the small good point in a person, even in the most evil person that did the most sins, the good point, though it looks dark is really beautiful, precious, clean and 100% pure without any impurities mixed in. Only that the darkness is surrounding it and making it hard to see. But when a person puts the effort into looking at the good, then the point itself is going to wake up and say, 'Here. Here I am, I'm really pure. Don't look at my darkness. Look at my purity.' Because a persons' true self is completely pure no matter what. And that's why she says, "I'm dark but I'm beautiful, don't look at my darkness." Because in my true inner self I'm just completely pure and completely holy.**

The sages say in the *Midrash* on this verse, "I'm dark but I'm beautiful," that 'I'm dark through the sin of the golden calf but I'm beautiful through the building of the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary.' Meaning, even though a person has done many awful sins, and has distanced themselves from Hashem they are still beautiful and capable of building a sanctuary for Hashem. If they search for and focus on the good points they can depart from the 'evil' right away and have a complete turn-around, from serving idolatry to building a sanctuary for Hashem.

The golden calf that the Jewish people made in the desert equals all the sins in the world, all the sins in the world were included in the sin of the Golden Calf. When the Jewish people came out of Egypt they were on the 49th level of impurity the lowest level possible, and they were raised up from the 49th level of impurity, all the way up to the other extreme, the 49th level of holiness, when they received the Torah at Mount Sinai. And it says, *paska zuhamatan*, the poison that was in them from the time of the bite of the primordial snake during the sin of Adam and Eve, all the spiritual defect that was within mankind since

the time of Adam, all left them when they were standing at the foot of Mount Sinai. So here they are at an awesome high level, an historically high level, and then at that place, they sinned, and they made for themselves a golden calf?! It's hard to understand how a nation that were brought to such high levels, after witnessing the ten plagues, crossing the red sea, and hearing Hashem speaking to them directly, can sin in such terrible ways and create for themselves a golden calf, an idol to worship.

#### ONLY WHEN IT'S DARK IS THE TRUE LIGHT REVEALED

One thing this is teaching us is that even if a person is so pure and holy and has reached such high exalted levels, they can fall, so to speak, to the lowest level possible. They can seemingly do all the sins in the world, or the sin which includes within it all possible sins. They need to believe, nevertheless that they are still beautiful. Why does that happen to a person? Why does a person fall after reaching such high levels? The reason that happens to a person is to teach them to find their true inner self, to seek out and find the good points within the darkness. When we are searching for the *chametz* before *Pesach* we need to wait for the night, shut all the lights and use a little candle. Wouldn't it be easier to see the crumbs with the lights on? Why are we waiting for the night and shutting all the lights in order to find the *chametz*? Because only when it's spiritually dark one can really focus on the good points of holiness.

**Rebbe Natan here is saying that even after the Jewish People sinned with the Golden Calf, and Moses came down from the mountain and he broke the *luchot*, the tablets, nevertheless, they didn't give up. And since they didn't give up they were able to continue and go on and build the sanctuary for God, which is the highest level possible. Why is that? Because even though they fell to such low places and sinned in the worse ways possible they still realized that that's not the true self, the true self is *naava*, is beautiful. That's why it says, "I'm black from the aspect of the golden calf, but I'm beautiful from the aspect of building the sanctuary." This is brought about through the little sparks of good that a person finds in themselves, even though they so to speak did all the sins possible. And that's why immediately after they sinned with the golden calf, they were commanded to build the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary. Because God already forgave them.**

#### THE SIGN OF A TRUE LEADER

**"Because Moses prayed for them." Rebbe Natan goes on to explain that all this was brought about through Moshe. How did Moshe save them from the punishment that they were deserving for sinning with the Golden Calf? The way he did that is he looked at the good points inside them, even though he brought the Jewish people out from Egypt and he did so much for them. And now they're rebelling, so to speak, and they made for themselves a golden calf. And they're going against everything that he taught them, right at the foot of Mount Sinai, which was the greatest revelation in all of history. One would think he would rightfully be angry. Nevertheless, he was only full of compassion and therefore was able to find the good points and focus only on the good in them. That's how he was able to pray for them. And that's how he was able to arouse God's forgiveness and prepare them for creating a sanctuary for Hashem. That's how Moshe said to God, "Why are You getting angry at Your People"? It's**

a bit difficult to understand the complaint that Moshe had against Hashem, what do you mean 'why are you getting angry at the people,' they just received the Torah and immediately rebelled against Him in the most horrible way! Isn't that a good enough reason to get angry?! But Moshe was so strong in this idea of finding the good in everyone that even after they sinned, with all the sins in the world, he was able to truly see that they're really not deserving of any punishment because they are truly good, holy, and pure people. That's a true leader. By finding the good in them all the evil got pushed away. That's how he was able to come to God and to say, God, why are You getting angry at Your People. They're good people. Whatever they did wasn't really them. He's able to say this with a full heart and with pure intent because he's focusing on their good points. That's how he was able to earn their forgiveness from Hashem and that's how we were able to build the sanctuary, and that basically is what made us a nation. Even though the Jewish People did all the sins in the world it doesn't compare to the spark of good which is infinite. The spark of God which is infinite completely blows away all the myriads, millions, billions, trillions of sins that a person could have possibly done. Since it's infinite it overcomes any possible number and automatically wipes away everything else. So that's why Hashem forgave them and was able to give them a new set of *Luchot*/tablets. And that's when we became a Nation.

**So, this happens really to every single Jew.** Every single Jew goes through this kind of thing where they feel that they fell so much and they can't really get up, they're not really worthy of anything. And the truth is that they won't be able to get up if they keep thinking negatively. But if they start to look at the good points within them, even though those good points look like they're very dark because he didn't really do anything good that he can think of. Nevertheless, if he focuses and he works on this, he will be able to find the good points and then automatically all the bad will be wiped away and he'll be able to wake himself up from his spiritual sleep.

## YOUR TRUE PURPOSE IN LIFE

The interesting thing is that Rebbe Natan keeps repeating this idea that the good point in a person is dark. How do you know what's your purpose in life, why you came down to this world? Whatever is dark for you, whatever is difficult, you should know that that's why you're here. Wherever you're suffering you should know that behind that suffering is your true purpose and that's where you should look. You know the game called Stratego, where each player needs to go to war with the other player until they reveal the opponents king. This represents war in general. You always know where the king is wherever you see the most guards, the part that is most heavily guarded. So how do you know where your unique spark that you were brought into this world for, that no one else in the world in all of history has that unique spark that is within you, and that's what you're here for, that's your purpose in the world. How do you know what it is? Where you see the most obstacles. Where you see the most darkness. That's how you know that that's what you're here for; whatever is the most difficult for you. That's how you know.

So, when someone sins gravely they should know that specifically at that point, at that time, those aspects, that's where the truth lies, that's where your purpose is hidden. Rebbe Nachman uses the parable of the Lost Princess in the first story of his 13 stories, the Lost princess is in the place of the 'no good.' Something that looks 'no good' to a person, instead of running away from yourself, delve into it and find what is this

coming to teach me. Where is my good point, what am I here to fix? There are people that take on themselves, what's called *sigufim*, self-afflictions, in order to rectify themselves and fix the damage caused by certain sins. It could be fasting for many days or not speaking for a long time, there are some kind of *sigufim* in which a person needs to suffer afflictions by rolling around in the snow without clothing, all different kinds of things that are mentioned in the Kabbalah how a person can purify themselves, and heal from the damage of certain sins. But if someone does all those things, he afflicts himself and does many fasts and makes himself suffer, but then when something doesn't go right in his life, he loses it and quickly gets angry and blames himself or others, that defeats the purpose. We don't have to afflict ourselves really, because Hashem is sending to each person exactly the afflictions that he needs. A person has enough problems in their life they don't have to bring to themselves more problems. The test is how are you going to deal with your problems. Something bad that suddenly happens to a person, are they going to accept it and look deep into it and find the good point within it? Or are they going to get angry and try to run away? So, we learned from here that God sends us difficulties, he sends us darkness, only in order for us to find the light. But since the gift is wrapped up in many different wrappings so it's difficult to see that it's a gift, it's not immediately apparent. If someone gets a gift and he doesn't like the wrapping and throws it away, he's going to miss out on receiving what's inside. But if someone takes the gift and realizes that what he sees is only the outside of it, and he must unveil it, he needs to open up the wrapper, look beyond the *klippot*, then he'll find the treasures within.

This is what the Jewish people are made of. And this is what made us a nation by mount Sinai. This is what we went through when we received the Torah and this is what we are going through throughout history. This is why the Jewish People go through so much suffering as a nation and as individuals. Only in order for us to reveal the true good from within us.

#### THE SECRET OF THE 13 ATTRIBUTES OF MERCY

So then Hashem taught Moshe the secret of the 13 Attributes of Mercy. And that's what Hashem said to Moshe after the sin of the Golden Calf, "I'm going to pass all My Good in front of you." What does that mean? Rebbe Natan here is telling us that Hashem revealed to Moshe the good point in all things which is "all" Hashem's Good. And that is the secret of the 13 Attributes of Mercy, the sparks of good which is contained within every single person, even the biggest sinner. So, when Moshe saw this, he was able to arouse Divine Mercy, so to speak, and bring about forgiveness for all the Jewish people, even though they sinned in the worst way possible.

People think that nowadays since we're in such a low generation we're not worthy of revelations like there were in the past by Mount Sinai and other great events that happened in the history of the Jewish people. But if we look in the Torah, we see that the Jewish people also sinned back then, they sinned in very horrible ways. Like he says here the Golden Calf is equal to all the sins in the world. So, if they sinned so terribly at the time of receiving the awesome revelation of the Torah, and right afterwards they went to ever higher levels to build the *Mishkan*, so it must be that we can also reach such high levels no matter what we've been through. No matter how grave our sins are, no matter how far we are today from true spirituality, we can definitely reach those high levels that they reached back then. So, the difference between then and now, is that they knew the secret of arousing the 13 Attributes of Mercy, which are the

good points within every single person and within oneself. So, a person needs to always look at the good within themselves and then no matter what they did, no matter what mistakes they've done in their life, they can always get out of it. Well, it was actually Moshe their leader who found the good points in them and aroused Divine Mercy, as Rebbe Natan will explain. It is the secret of connecting to the Tzaddik who is the aspect of Moshe of the generation to get one out of all those dark places. As Rebbe Nachman says, "The redemption of the Jewish People depends on connecting to the True Tzaddik" (sefer hamidot 151).

The 13 Attributes of Mercy that we say during special prayers have the power to arouse Divine Mercy and in essence to arouse the good points within every single person. That's why in the 13 Attributes of mercy it says, 'He creates kindness for the thousands.'" Rebbe Natan explains that even if a person has thousands or myriads of sins and defects, nevertheless, the little bit of good that he finds in himself pushes away everything. And the 13 Attributes continue, "He bears sin." [By finding the good points] a person is brought entirely onto the side of merit.

## THE DESCENT FOR THE SAKE OF THE ASCENT

**To summarize part 1:3, what Rebbe Natan here is saying is that the good that one finds in oneself is actually found in the darkest places, and specifically in those dark places is where you're going to be raised up to the highest levels.** Because we have a rule that every descent is only for the sake of ascending. Every time someone falls it's only in order for him to go up much higher. That's what Rebbe Nachman says. Whenever anything bad happens to a person, whenever they mess up, even if they think it's all their fault, it's really just a decree from heaven in order for you to get up higher. The main thing is never to give up, rather to continue to look at the good within every situation and especially in yourself. But another lesson that is apparent in Rebbe Nachmans teachings is that not only every decent is for the purpose of ascending but also every ascent is for the purpose of descending. Sometimes, we are raised up to such awesome sublime levels only in order to have the strength to handle the fall that comes later, and to light up the dark places that couldn't have been lit up otherwise. That is what Rebbe Nachman explains (LM1 6), that a person needs to be an expert in *Halacha*, in walking, to know how to rise and how to fall. Because, like we said, when we descend, when we go down, we find the lost treasures. We find those sparks that we couldn't have found when we were high up because the sparks are hidden in the darkness. God, so to speak, forces us to fall against our will and we think that we made a bad mistake, it was all our fault and we judge ourselves harshly. But really, God decided that we should fall to those places only in order that we should find the lost treasures and raise ourselves up and help other people that are in those places. So instead of blaming yourselves and blaming your surroundings, Rebbe Natan is explaining, we should embrace everything. Embrace everything that happens to us. As long as a person is not trying to indulge in their lusts and desires, as long as a person doesn't say "I will sin and repent," as long as they are shaken by their fall and feel remorse, it can be guaranteed that the fall was heaven-sent and you must embrace it.

And we can just imagine those people who take on themselves all these difficult self-afflictions willingly, we don't need to do that, Hashem loves us so much that he sends us exactly enough suffering without us even needing to ask for it. All we need to do is accept it with love and with understanding that this is leading us to our true mission. Our mission is to go through all those difficulties in order to be raised up

to much higher places. And then again, we'll have to fall; it doesn't end. After the Jewish People sinned with the Golden Calf, and then built the *Mishkan*, it wasn't over. There were still many stories where they fell again, and they did even worse things. And they got up again. They were always falling and rising, falling and rising, falling and rising. That's the relationship we have with Hashem. It's not a static relationship, it's evolving, it's moving, it's going up and down, up and down, up and down. That's a true relationship, the love relationship we have with Hashem is a relationship that's constantly going up constantly going down. And that's what King David says in Psalms 139:8, "If I would go up to the highest Heavens, I would find You, and if I go down to the lowest levels of Hell here You are as well." The job of a Jew, the way a Jew serves his Creator, is not only by going up, but also by going down; by failing and making mistakes. **The Torah does not judge success by achievements, success is judged by how a person deals with their failures.** Many people nowadays, especially in the Western society, they always want to be achievers, they want to constantly achieve, they want to always succeed. But that's not the reason we were created, **we weren't created only to achieve, we were created to also know how to fall, and to fail.** But to do it in the right way. To fall with joy and acceptance, with love, judging ourselves favorably, judging others favorably, judging Hashem favorably, and always looking at the good. A person would be much more successful by falling and looking at the good than they would be by always achieving goals. One can even see this by looking at the stories of most successful people in the world, even with mundane success. People that were successful in business, for example, first had many many failures and never gave up. Almost all of them. If you read some of their stories you can see that they failed tremendously and most people in their situation would have given up. The only difference between those that made it and those that didn't, is that the ones who made it are the ones who never gave up. They really fell and failed at those same low levels as the biggest losers. There's no special uniqueness inherent in those who succeeded, the only thing different that they have is that they never gave up. But anyone can do it. **If only schools would grade the children based on the way they deal with failing as much as they grade them by successful scores, we would all be much better off. Because the real test in life is not if you're always able to attain the best marks but how well you're able to cope with falling and failing.**

## THE TRUE TZADDIK

1:4

As we've seen, it wasn't ourselves that aroused the good point in us after the sin of the Golden Calf, it wasn't us that aroused the 13 Attributes of Divine Mercy, it was Moshe our teacher. So here in part 1:4, Rebbe Natan is teaching us the idea that we need a *Moshe Rabeinu* in our lives. Sometimes we are so steeped in darkness that we can't get ourselves out, we need a *tzaddik* on the level of Moshe to get us out of it. It says (Devarim 34:10), "No one like Moshe will ever arise again in the Jewish People," the Zohar explains that no one "like Moshe" will ever arise again but Moshe *himself* comes back in every generation enclothed in the body of the *Tzaddik* of each generation (שער מאמר רשב"י פירוש האדרא רבא, see Likutei Halachot Yayin Nesech 4:10, and Chochma Utvuna 2:13).

## BUILDING THE *MISHKAN*

We need a Moshe in our world, we need a *Tzaddik* that we can connect to. Because like at that time when the Jewish people sinned with the Golden Calf they couldn't get out of it on their own, they needed a *tzaddik* like Moshe to seek out and find the good points within them, and thereby arouse Divine Mercy. And this shows the importance of a person always needing to search for and to find a big *tzaddik* who can get them out of all the dark places they find themselves in. In every generation there's one *tzaddik* that has in him the soul of Moshe, and the job of every Jew is to seek out and find that *tzaddik*. When someone merits to be connected to the *tzaddik*, then no matter what they've done, he's always going to help them get out of it, by looking at the good within them and judging them favorably. Since Moshe was completely good and completely pure, he was able to find the good within everyone. And then he gave them the commandment of building the Temple, building the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary. How is the *Mishkan* built? With what physical material can we possibly build a *sanctuary* for the Divine Presence? We mentioned this last time that the *Mishkan* was built with every single person's unique contribution, what's called "*nidvat lev*", offering of the heart, each one had a unique contribution to give. That contribution is the unique spark of good which is in every single person. Every single person has something unique and something special that no one else has. And when they find what that is, and tap into it, and bring it together with the unique good point of others, that's how the sanctuary for God is built.

Right now, we're still in exile because everyone's running away from themselves. As soon as people start to face themselves and look at the good within themselves and not run away anymore, then the sanctuary, will be built, and God will once again reside within the people. The sanctuary is built of all the sparks of good of each person like it says in the Torah (Shemot 25), that there were actually 13 different kinds of raw material that the *Mishkan* was created from, this perhaps parallels the 13 Attributes of Mercy that we mentioned above. The 13 raw materials were gold, silver, copper, blue and purple dye, crimson yarns, linen, goats' hair, rams' skins, *tachash* skins, acacia wood, oil, spices, and various stones. And the person who was in charge of collecting this material was Betzalel, a 13 year-old boy. 13 is the numerical value of the Hebrew word for 'love' *ahava*. It's only with love that the unique good of each person can come together. Then Hashem says, "And they will make for me a sanctuary and I will dwell within them," it doesn't say among them but 'within them,' within every single one of them. Because there were all different kinds of material that were given, some gave valuable material such as gold and silver, others, all they had were skins of animals or even only animal hair, so that's what they gave. Each person gave the 'offering of their heart', their unique good that no one else had. Whatever God gave them in their specific life, whatever struggles they had, and whatever good point they were able to find in themselves, that's what they gave. Each person gave their own small uniqueness to the whole of the people, that's how the sanctuary for God is built. And who actually erected the sanctuary? That was Moshe himself. Because the *tzaddik* is the one who is able to put together all of the unique good points of each person and with that, build the sanctuary. The redemption will come when we'll be able to do that again. When we'll be able to look at the good within ourselves and within each other, and connect them to the *tzaddik* of the generation, the Moshe of the generation who brings it all together. Then we'll be living in a reality of redemption.

## SUPERNAL COLORS



Rebbe Natan goes on to talk about the 'supernal colors.' Each person represents another supernal color, and only together can we compose the whole supernal painting. And that's how we build the sanctuary for Hashem. That's why God says, "Israel, through you, I will be glorified." Because it's full of beauty, it's full of so much color, when each person has their own uniqueness and together they create something very beautiful. But when everyone's trying to be the same, and everyone is trying to break themselves and run away from who they really are, then they can't build the sanctuary. Each person needs to just find what their own unique good is. Obviously, it needs to be according to the *halacha*, the laws of the Torah, but it must be unique for each person. We pray, "Give us our portion in the Torah," each person has their own unique portion in the Torah. Sadly, the education system today focuses on making each child fit into the 'system' which often strips them of their uniqueness. Many schools nowadays are trying to make everyone the same, like a cookie cutter, trying to fit everyone into the same pre-defined little box, without considering each persons' uniqueness. And that way they are suppressing the true self and true value of the students, what they thrive at and the purpose they were brought to the world. This is the opposite of everything Rebbe Natan is teaching here about awakening ones' true self. Everything we're learning here is how to awaken ones' true uniqueness. And when we're trying to compel others to be something that they're not, it just dims the *nekuda tova*, the unique point of good, the point of godliness in each individual, and it makes them unaware of their true self. And that is what's pushing away the redemption. Even those so-to-speak evildoers that society wants to reject and cast away, they have something without which the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary, will not be complete. So if we keep sending them away we'll never be able to be redeemed. We will never be able to have the Divine Presence reside within us if the evildoers are not part of it. Because every single person, Rebbe Natan says here, 'even the worst,' has something good that no one else has. Like is explained in LM1 34. And God glorifies himself in the unique aspect of every person, even the evildoer. Every person has a unique aspect that Gods glory shines through. So, if any single person is rejected then the puzzle is incomplete. Then the sanctuary is incomplete and can't be erected. This is the aspect of the various materials, the multiple colors, that were in the temple. The Temple was made up of many different colors there was gold, silver, copper, etc... Each person brought their unique offering of the heart; their unique goodness. And through that we created the place where God can dwell and be glorified. A place where we can bring the Divine Presence down into this world.

## CONNECTING IT ALL TOGETHER

So that's why specifically after the sin of the Golden Calf, when Moshe needed to search and find all of the good points within every single person in order to arouse the 13 Attributes of Mercy, that's when we were commanded to build the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary. Because the sanctuary is built from these points of good within each person. And that's what the sages mean when they explain the verse, "I'm black but beautiful", 'I'm black through the sin of the Golden Calf, but I'm beautiful through the building the sanctuary.' When a person sees that they are full of darkness and full of bitterness, that's when they'll be able to arouse their unique goodness and begin building a sanctuary for the Infinite. Hashem made a person fall into darkness in order to show them who they really are, by giving them some fault or some failures and suffering. When a person accepts it and looks at it deeply they are able to find who they really are. All this is only possible since they fell; and only since they fell they are able to build the sanctuary.

Now we can begin to understand the many verses in Psalms where King David is thanking Hashem for his failures and suffering.

Rebbe Natan goes back to the point of speaking about the Prayer Leader. The person who can find the good point in everyone, he's the one who is able to lead the prayer, because he knows all the aspects of the sanctuary. The person whose job it is to lead the congregation in prayer needs to know how to unite the good within every single person. And through that the congregation together is building a sanctuary. But when a congregation rejects certain kind of people, or they give a feeling that everyone needs to be the same and fit into a certain criterion, they're missing the whole point. The whole point is to have as much color as possible. And only then can we build a beautiful congregation where God can reside within. The building of the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary, is through this, through finding the good.

And now we can understand the different parts of this lesson, how what Rebbe Nachman said originally about a prayer leader is connected to this idea of finding the good points within every single person, and how all that is connected to the idea of building the sanctuary.

To review what we learned today:

The first thing Rebbe Natan told us is that all these amazing ideas that we spoke about last time about a person finding in themselves the good and looking only at the good in themselves and others, which through that you can bring yourself and others to have a complete turnaround and become a completely new person. The place to find the good is specifically where things are difficult; places that are dark. By accepting the failures and accepting the difficulties in the suffering, then suddenly, we're going to see the sparks of light that are shining from those places. Like the diamonds that are lost in the dirt or the gold that someone must dig through the mud in order to discover. Then it starts to shine, and then they realize that they have something really really valuable. But if you would just run away from your suffering, run away from your problems, run away from the dirt, run away from the mud, you'll never be able to find the diamonds and the gold.

The second thing Rebbe Natan told us today is how we build the sanctuary for Hashem. This is how we get redeemed. By finding the good in every person, even if a person looks like their terrible, it's someone that we can't stand, it's difficult for us to connect to them. We should know that they have in themselves something very very unique, something that is needed. For Hashem to be glorified through the Jewish people he needs that part also. It can't be missing. Because if we're missing one little piece, then the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary, can't be built.

## A NEW SONG

1:5

Now Rebbe Natan explains how all this is in the verse he began with, 'Awaken my soul awaken, O harp, and lyre, I will awaken the dawn.' How can I wake up? I've done so much bad in my life, I'm full of suffering, full of evil, with what am I going to start changing my life? What is it that is going to wake me up? That I arouse the good point, the dawn/*shachar*/darkness. How do I turn the darkness into dawn? Through the harp and the lyre. This is the secret of making music like we explained last time that music is made by selecting the right notes at the right time. And every single person is another note that needs to be

aroused in order to create the song, like it says, “The redeemed will sing a new song,” the redemption is called a song, a new song. It's a song of the uniqueness of every single person working together in harmony. That's what the verse says, ‘Awaken my soul awaken, O harp and lyre, I will wake up the *shachar*.’ This is how a person wakes up from his deep spiritual sleep and begins to make music.

## THE SHULCHAN ARUCH

Now we are going to see how all of this is hinted to in the words of the *Shulchan Aruch*, the code of Jewish Law, that we began with. We thought that it's just telling us how to wake up in the morning. It says, “A person should strengthen himself like a lion to wake up in the morning to serve his Creator.” That is, a person needs to strengthen himself and wake up from his spiritual sleep, and from his falling. How is he going to wake up? By “him waking up the dawn/darkness/good points,” to arouse the spark of good, which is the aspect of darkness, of dawn. That's why the *Shulchan Aruch* uses this word *shachar*/darkness specifically for morning instead of using the word *boker* for morning. To wake up the dawn/*shachar*/darkness is to arouse the good point that lies dormant within a person and is surrounded by darkness. This is the deeper aspect of ‘getting up in the morning.’

## INCLINED TOWARDS KINDNESS

Waking up from sleep is done through the aspect of Abraham, who was the man of kindness, who's always judging everyone favorably. Our forefather Avraham. He would go around the world, and in his generation the entire world was full of idolatry. He would go around the world and make converts. How would he make converts in such a dark generation? By looking at the good within everyone and judging each person favorably. And through that he was able to arouse the unique spark of holiness within every single person. And we, the Jewish People all come from Abraham. We have the same aspect within us. And that's the *sefira* of *chesed*. There are ten *sefirot*. The *sefira* of *chesed* is the *sefira* of kindness, meaning to look at the good within others and judge them on the side of favor, of kindness. And only then will we be able to help others. If someone wants to heal, and wants to help the world, but they're always looking at the bad and looking at what's wrong with everyone else and explaining to them what they need to do to fix themselves, that's not going to help. The only way to heal a person is to find the good and focus on the good. And that's how you can arouse the inherent good within them so that they can heal themselves. No one can heal someone else. The only thing they can do is arouse the natural healing abilities within each person. Each person has in them naturally the power to heal from every illness, whether physical illness or spiritual illness. The problem is that the power is concealed within the person and going unnoticed. It's sleeping dormant within them. So, the job of a healer, is to follow our forefathers Avraham and Moshe who healed the generation by looking at the good and focusing on the good; to arouse the good within the person. Tell them that they're really good people and show them how they're really good people. Honestly, and legitimately without avoiding the reality that yes, things are hard and difficult and I've done wrong in my life. Nevertheless, there must be a spark of good, focus on that good. That's how everyone will be healed. And that's how, step by step we will bring the redemption to the world, and we will build God a sanctuary. And once again He'll be able to reside within the people.

## SHEVITI

And that's why the *Shulchan Aruch* goes on to say, right after it tells us about waking up in the morning and strengthening ourselves like a lion, it says "I place Hashem in front of me always," this is the idea of *sheviti*, that whether good or bad faces him it's all the same, he sees Hashem in every situation. No matter what happens to me whether it's good or bad, it all comes from the same place, it's all from the One God. Even though I feel far from Hashem, even though I've done evil in my life and I'm not where I want to be, nevertheless, Hashem is in front of me always, in every place He's here. I'm perfectly at one with who I am and where I am. Why? because I found myself, and I constantly find in myself the good points. And I never feel like I need to be anywhere I'm not. Wherever I am, physically, or spiritually, I can always find the good within that situation and within myself. And that's what it says (Psalms 16), "I placed Hashem in front of myself always, He is at my right side, I will never fall". The right side is the side of *chesed*, the side of Avraham, the side of favorable judgements, of always looking at the good. Even if I'm at the lowest level I always see Hashem in front of me, because He is always on my right side and I will never fall.

That's what it says in Psalms 94, "if I say that my feet slipped, and I'm falling, the kindness of a Hashem will support me." The kindness of Hashem is the *sefira* of *chesed*, it's always judging everyone favorably. And that's what's going to support me even if I fell to all those low places. And that's why I will never *really* fall. I will never completely fall because no matter how much it seems that I fell I realized that it's just revealing to me the sparks of holiness, the sparks of goodness within the mud within the darkness. If I fall in the mud then I will come out with a diamond. A person has many thoughts that are confusing them, and bothering them. It's the negative thoughts that are making him fall. But if he starts to think positively, then nothing in the world can ever make him fall.