

לְעֵינֵינוּ חֲדוּשֵׁי־תוֹרָה, נִשְׁיֵשׁ גְּדוּלָּהִים נְהָיו מְשַׁבְּחִים אוֹתָם

Think Before You Say Torah

THE TEACHING

On new insights in Torah (חֲדוּשֵׁי־תוֹרָה): some great figures were praised for saying Torah with no prior thought or study (בְּלִי מַחְשָׁבָה וְעִיּוֹן מִקֶּדֶם). Rebbe Nachman said this is not such a great level; one can surely do it by binding thought and speech (הַמַּחְשָׁבָה וְהַדְבָּוָר) to Hashem.

“אָבֵל טוֹב יוֹתֵר כְּשֶׁחֻשְׁבֵּינַן תוֹרָה”, “but it is better when one thinks Torah through.”

MAIN POINTS

- Even Hashem, the Midrash teaches, goes over Torah four times before revealing it.
- This is learned from the verse “אָז רָאָה וַיִּסְפָּרָהּ, הִכִּינָהּ וְגַם חִקְרָהּ” (איוב כח:כו), “then He saw it and told it; He prepared it and searched it out”: four stages, as it were (כְּבִיכּוֹל), seeing, telling, preparing and searching, before it is revealed to the world.
- How much more so (מְכַל־שִׁכּוֹן) must a person think, examine, search and clarify his words of Torah well in his mind before he says them.
- He also said that nowadays it is very easy to find new insights in Torah, since many holy works (חֲבוּרִים) of the tzaddikim of our generations have spread.
- And about the Zohar’s phrase “פָּתַח רַבִּי יִצְחָק”, “Rabbi Yitzchak opened”: as soon as he opened his mouth, Torah poured out. Even so, it is better to reflect and think Torah through (in Yiddish, טראכטן).

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Inspiration is precious, but a Torah thought that has been turned over, examined and clarified carries more light. Before sharing, take the time to think it through.

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