

## הַשְּׂמֵטָה:

"אֶחָד הָיָה אַבְרָהָם" (יחזקאל ל"ג) - שְׂאֲבָרְהֶם עֲבַד הַשֵּׁם רַק עַל-יְדֵי שְׁהִיָּה אֶחָד, שְׁחָשַׁב בְּדַעְתּוֹ שֶׁהוּא רַק יְחִידִי בְּעוֹלָם, וְלֹא הִסְתַּכַּל כָּלֵל עַל בְּנֵי הָעוֹלָם, שְׁסָרִים מֵאַחֲרֵי ה' וּמוֹנְעִים אוֹתוֹ, וְלֹא עַל אָבִיו וְשָׂאֵר הַמוֹנְעִים, רַק כְּאִלוֹ הוּא אֶחָד בְּעוֹלָם, וְזֶהוּ: "אֶחָד הָיָה אַבְרָהָם".

וְכֵן כָּל הַרוּצָה לְכַנֵּס בְּעִבּוֹדַת הַשֵּׁם, אִי אֶפְשָׁר לוֹ לְכַנֵּס כִּי אִם עַל-יְדֵי בְּחִינָה זֹו שִׁיַּחֲשַׁב שֶׁאֵין בְּעוֹלָם כִּי אִם הוּא לְבַדּוֹ יְחִידִי בְּעוֹלָם, וְלֹא יִסְתַּכַּל עַל שׁוּם אָדָם הַמוֹנְעוֹ, כְּגוֹן אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ אוֹ חוֹתָנּוֹ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּבְנָיו וְכִיּוֹצֵא, אוֹ הַמְּנִיעוֹת שִׁישׁ מִשָּׂאֵר בְּנֵי הָעוֹלָם, הַמְּלַעֲיָגִים וּמְסִיתִים וּמוֹנְעִים מֵעִבּוֹדַתוֹ יְתִבְרַךְ. וְצָרִיךְ שֶׁלֹּא יַחּוּשׁ וְיִסְתַּכַּל עֲלֵיהֶם כָּלֵל, רַק יִהְיֶה בְּבְחִינַת: "אֶחָד הָיָה אַבְרָהָם" - כְּאִלוֹ הוּא יְחִיד בְּעוֹלָם כַּנֵּ"ל:

against an entire world of idolaters and proclaim his belief in the one, true God. In the context of our lesson, "Avraham was one" teaches that the first patriarch of the Jews saw himself as though he were alone in the world, as the Rebbe explains next.

4. **not his father or anyone else....** The Midrash teaches that Avraham's father, Terach, was an idolater. After Avraham destroyed his father's statues, Terach turned his son over to the ruler of the land, Nimrod, who had Avraham thrown into the furnace at Ur Kasdim for refusing to worship idolatry (*Bereishit Rabbah* 38:13). Despite great adversity, even the threat of death, Avraham was not swayed by those who sought to deter him from serving God. Rebbe Nachman explains that Avraham succeeded in overcoming all opposition because he paid no mind to everyone else—i.e., for him, it was as if these obstacles did not exist. It made no difference what got in his way; neither Terach's power over Avraham as his father, nor Nimrod's power over Avraham as the preeminent ruler of the region, could force him to be untrue to his belief.

5. **And it is the same for anyone...as discussed above.** Rebbe Nachman now applies his teaching about "Avraham was one" to all those who desire to serve God and come closer to Him. Such a person must pay no heed to anyone who seeks to undermine his determination, whether through logical arguments or emotional pleas. This is true even of the opposition of those closest to him, including parents, spouse, children and in-laws, all of whom believe

## Prologue<sup>1</sup>

“**E**chad hayah Avraham (Avraham was one)” (Ezekiel 33:24).<sup>2</sup> Avraham worshipped God only because he was “one,” because he considered himself alone in the world.<sup>3</sup> He paid no attention whatsoever to people who turned him away from God and hindered him, or his father or others who would interfere. Rather, it was as if he was the only one in the world.<sup>4</sup> This is the meaning of “Avraham was one.”

And it is the same for anyone who wants to embark upon the service of God. The only way for him to get started is by thinking that other than himself, there is absolutely no one else in the world. He should pay no attention to anyone who would hinder him, such as his father and mother, or his father-in-law, and his wife and children, or the like; or to the obstacles that he has from other people who ridicule, instigate against or obstruct his service of God. He has to be unconcerned with them and pay them no mind. Rather, he should adopt an “Avraham was one” attitude—as if he is the only one in the world, as discussed above.<sup>5</sup>

1. **Likutey Moharan II Prologue.** The lesson’s main theme is strengthening oneself to overcome all obstacles to serving God.

It is not known when Rebbe Nachman taught this lesson, nor why Reb Noson inserted it here, as the Prologue to the Second Part of *Likutey Moharan*. Indeed, Reb Noson’s prayer based on this teaching appears in Part I of *Likutey Tefilot* (#149).

2. **Avraham was one.** During the reign of King Tzidkiyahu, with most of the Holy Land in ruins, God sent the prophet Yechezkel to rebuke the Jewish people (*Radak*). Although the Jews were guilty of the atrocities enumerated (*loc. cit.*), they nonetheless considered themselves deserving of the Land. The full verse reads: “The word of God came to me, saying, ‘Son of Man, the inhabitants of these ruins in the Land of Israel speak, claiming, ‘Avraham was one, yet he was granted possession of the Land. We are many; the Land has [surely] been given to us as a heritage.’” Commenting on this verse, *Rashi* cites Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai’s explanation of the Jewish people’s reasoning: Avraham was given only one mitzvah, [circumcision,] yet he inherited the Land, we, who have been charged with numerous commandments, have certainly been granted possession of the Land.

3. **Avraham worshipped God only because he was one...alone in the world.** Rebbe Nachman reads the words “Avraham was one” as alluding to what it was that enabled Avraham to stand up