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RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"L

PARSHAS KI SEITZEI

JUSTIFYING THE JUST

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PARSHAS KI SEITZEI

WITH

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT" L

BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

JUSTIFYING THE JUST

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Part I. Praise the Righteous

Righting the Right

When two people or two sides come to a *beis din* because of a dispute, so the Torah tells us what the primary obligation of the judges is: **וְהִצַּדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצָּדִיק** – And you should justify the just (Devarim 25:1). It's true that the judges have other functions too. But their primary function is **וְהִצַּדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצָּדִיק**. The *dayanim* are obligated to declare the righteousness of the *tzaddik*; to speak up for the one who is in the right.

It's a big subject; to be a Jewish judge is not simple. *Dayanim* have to be capable *talmidei chachomim* and they have to be wise in the ways of the world too. And therefore nobody should attempt to judge *dinei Torah* unless you have *semicha* that gives you permission to do so; it's a mitzvah only for the select few. And yet we're going to see now that this mitzvah

is more all-encompassing than just the function of a *beis din*; we're going to see that it applies to all of us.

One Tree, Many Branches

You know, in his sefer *Ma'alos HaTorah* (*Perek Alef*), the brother of the Vilna Gaon teaches us a very important rule. He says it in the name of his brother but it's found in the Rishonim as well. It's an idea that opens up for us a panorama of opportunity. He writes there that although the six hundred and thirteen *mitzvos* of the Torah are commandments on their own, they are also intended to be much more than that. They are actually six hundred and thirteen general principles that serve as models to guide us in our everyday lives.

And so we'll say that one of our functions in this world is to *declare the righteousness of the tzaddik*. וְהַצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק means much more than merely protecting the righteous one from his accusers in *beis din*. Included in these words is a general intention for everyone. "And you should justify the just," is a model to follow, a way of life. We must elevate righteousness in the eyes of the world by finding ways and means of speaking up for and justifying the *tzaddik*.

The Hope For America

That's why when people ask me what's going to be with all this trouble in America, recession and crime and inflation, other things, I tell them that the best thing for the country would be if President Reagan called up Rav Moshe Feinstein and asked him to handle the affairs of the nation. Oh, Rav Moshe! A brilliant man with a tremendous Torah mind. There would be nothing better for our country. If President Reagan would hire Rav Feinstein, that would be the most fortunate government. The President can go back to taking care of his ranch and sipping cognac and we would be the most fortunate people to have a *tzaddik* in the Oval Office. Of course, Rav Feinstein wouldn't accept the offer – he's too busy with more important things – but he's the most capable.

That's how to talk about *tzaddikim*; always to praise them, to lift them up. Tell people that the Satmarer Rav was a very big *tzaddik*. Absolutely! I met him personally once, at midnight in his home; he was an extraordinary *tzaddik*.

Now, I understand that there are ignorami who like to talk; they like to display their ignorance. But that's why we have to do the opposite; we speak up for the righteous. We praise the Satmarer Rav for his courage in fighting for authentic Torah principles. You know, to say the truth is not always easy; it can be quite uncomfortable. There are a lot of people

who believe in certain principles but they don't want to put themselves out; they don't have the level of *mesiras nefesh* needed to fight for these principles. But the Satmerer Rav was willing to expose himself to public opprobrium for the sake of the Am Yisroel.

I say the Satmarer just as an example. We have many *tzaddikim boruch Hashem*, all types, and our function is to speak about all of them, to sing their praises.

The Holy Shtiebel

The *tzaddikim* of the past too. You know the *chassidim* when there's a *yartzeit* they get together and sit around the table in the *beis hamedrash*; there's a little bit of cake and some whiskey and they talk about stories of *tzaddikim*. So some people think it's a waste of time. But a *rebbe* once said that he saw in the distance over a *beis hamedrash* a light in the sky, an *anan shel kavod*. And he said it's because in that *beis hamedrash* they're sitting and talking about *tzaddikim*, stories of *tzaddikim*.

Sippurei tzaddikim are very important. The Torah spends so much time talking about Avrohom and Yitzchok and Yankev and the other *tzaddikim* because that is Torah. Talking about *tzaddikim* is Torah. And so when people get around their table, let's say in the *shtiebel* and talk about their own *rebbe*, very good! By raising up the honor of the *tzaddikim* they're refuting all the fools who make everything else in the world important. It's a *mitzvah*.

Shidduch Conversation

But not only *chassidim*. Everyone. If you're a boy or a girl, someday you'll have to go out with somebody, with a *chosson* or a *kallah*; they call me up on the phone all the time and they say, "What should I talk about when I go out the first time?"

Talk about the *gedolei Yisroel*! Praise them! Certainly! And even though she may be a Satmerer and maybe you're a Lubavitcher, but I'm sure there are certain *gedolim* that you both agree on. Certainly. There are plenty of *tzaddikim* on all sides! Sefardim, Ashkenazim, Chassidim, all kinds!

Talk about Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky in Monsey. Praise Rav Pam in Kensington. Why should you talk about the elections or about the weather? Talk about *gedolei Yisroel*. I think the Shechina will come down on them for that.

His Memory Should Be a Blessing

Even if you hear others mention the name of a *tzaddik*, speak up; that's what Mishlei tells us. Everyone knows that זִכְרֵ צַדִּיק לְבִרְכָּה – *the memory of a tzaddik is for a blessing*. (Mishlei 10:7). Now, Mishlei is not telling us a command here; he's telling us a fact – Hakadosh Baruch Hu will see to it that when a *tzaddik* is remembered he will be acclaimed for his good deeds. That's a promise from Hashem: "a man who lived for Me, I'll make sure to it that he's remembered *l'vrachah*."

Now, that's the *poshut pshat* but it's not everything. Because the Gemara learns from this one step further – "If someone mentions the name of a *tzaddik* and he doesn't bless him, he's *oiver* the *asei* of *zecher tzaddik l'vrachah*" (Bereishis Rabbah 49).

It means that we don't sit back and wait for Hakadosh Baruch Hu to do it; if He's going to bless the memory of a *tzaddik*, then we should do the same. If it's His will then let us do it all the way. That's why when you mention a *tzaddik* who's departed we say *zal* or *zatzal*. It's a command. זִכְרֵ צַדִּיק – *When a tzaddik is mentioned, לְבִרְכָּה – make it your business to bless him.*

But it doesn't mean that you should wait until he dies. Yes, that too; even after he's gone we should bless him when we mention him. But when he's living, absolutely you have to bless him and praise him. It means if you mention the name of a *tzaddik* or even if someone else does, don't let that opportunity go by. If a *tzaddik's* name is mentioned, say "Ah! What a man he is. What a glorious personality.' Speak about it.

That's the mitzvah of הוֹצִיָּקוּ אֶת הַצַּדִּיק. When a *tzaddik* is spoken about in this world, a living *tzaddik*, it's a mitzvah to declare his righteousness, to look for ways and means of speaking good about him.

The Tzaddik Nistar

Now, I'll add one more thing; not only *tzaddikim mefursamim*, famous *tzaddikim*. There are very many hidden *tzaddikim* too. Here's a man – I know him – when it's slippery outside, so he has a little bag in his pocket; he walks down the block and puts his hand in the bag and he scatters sawdust so that people shouldn't slip. Not only on his own sidewalk; on the public sidewalks. He's concerned about the welfare of the Am Yisroel. It's a *frum* Jewish neighborhood and someone might go to the hospital as a result of a slippery sidewalk. He looks like a simple man, very unassuming. But he's a *tzaddik*; he's concerned for his fellow Jews.

There's another *tzaddik* in my mind, a woman. She has a big family of children and she teaches girls how to be *frum*. She teaches them and she

inspires them. What a great accomplishment that is! That woman is a *tzidkanis* of the *madreigah rishonah*, a tremendous accomplishment.

The Tzaddik In Your Own Home

You should speak up about the 'regular' Jewish women too, all the *nashim tzidkaniyos*. She sacrifices for her children. She doesn't sleep because of her children. She doesn't eat on time because of her children. She gives away from herself because of her children. She remains poor because of the sake of her children; she wants to send them to *cheder*, to *yeshivah*. And she gives up good times and luxuries for the sake of her children. A life of self-sacrifice for an ideal makes her ennobled. She's glorious!

Now, raising a family means many responsibilities and so her mind is occupied; she's harried maybe. She is dressed very plainly too. There's nothing to admire in the way that gentiles would.

But we say that she's the one who's going to **וְתִשְׁחַק לַיּוֹם אַחֲרָיו**. She'll be laughing on the last day because **עַז וְהָדָר לְבוּשָׁה** – *her plain clothing is actually the most beautiful and the most long-lasting*. There are sequins set into her dress, diamonds sewed into her dress; all the diamonds of good deeds.

That's the clothing that will never go out of style. It will be admired to no end in the Next World. In the Next World the *tzaddikim* look at women's dresses, and they'll encounter all the sequins; and they're real sequins, all the diamonds, all the doubloons, real gold sewed into her dresses. And therefore, the Jewish mother, the *Eishes Chayil*, she's going to laugh in the Next World.

That's the way we make our way through this world; with praises of the *tzaddikim*. That's what the Torah wants; as much as possible **וְהִצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק**. That's the *ratzon Hashem*, that we should raise up the righteous ones.

Part II. Praise the Righteous Ideals

A Second Branch

Now, while we're on the job of **וְהִצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק** we have to consider that there's a second chapter in this program and that is to praise *tzedek*. We should praise Torah and *mitzvos* too; we should praise all forms of *tzedek*, of *avodas Hashem*. **וְהִצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק** means that you have to open your mouth and speak highly of *all* the good things in this world.

It's a separate chapter but it's the same idea. Absolutely it's included; it's the will of Hakadosh Baruch Hu and a perfection of character to talk to people about how good it is to keep *Yiddishkeit*. Or how good it is to eat kosher food. Or how good it is when a couple lives *b'kedusha v'teharah*. There's nothing like it in the world!

Talk to your friends, your family, and tell them how good it is that we are part of a nation that keeps all the *issurei d'Rabanan* that protect us from the pitfalls of the outside world! How good it is to follow the *dinim* of *yichud*! So many people – even decent people – have ruined their lives because of entanglements but the *frummeh*, we are saved from that because of the laws of the Sages.

Sweet Torah, Geshmakeh Davenen

How good it is to do *mitzvos*! How good learning Torah is! A line of Gemara! Ah, to learn a piece of Gemara, the *shakla v'tarya* and to know it, to be able to say it outside, there's nothing better in the world, nothing sweeter.

Speak about how good it is to *daven* with *kavanah*. Say, "Last night I davened such a good *Ma'ariv*! Ah! A *mechayeh*, a pleasure to *daven* with *kavanah*!" People will hear that and remember it forever.

When I was eleven years old I was once walking in the street with two European Jews, old-time European Jews. So one of them said to me as follows. He said, "When I was in Europe when they came out of the shul after *Maariv*, so they used to say, "Ahh, *ich hub gedavent ah geshmaken Maariv*." He rubbed his hands together. "Ahh, it was a pleasure, that *Maariv*."

I can't forget that; it was more than sixty years ago; at least sixty-five years ago and I remember it like today. He said, "Ah, a *geshmake Maariv* I davened." That man raised up in my mind the ideal of davening. Davening? A pleasure? Yes. It's a pleasure to *daven Maariv*.

Righting the Upside Down World

It's our function in the world to speak up about what's right, what's *tzedek*, that it's right, that it's good. Especially today when *הוי האַמרים לרע טוב וְלַטוב רע* – *Alas for those who speak about good things as if they are not good, and the things that are not good, they say that they are good* (Yeshaya 4:20). It's an upside-down world! So who's going to speak up for *tzedek*? Mayor Koch? Mayor Koch speaks up only for the opposite of *tzedek*.

And so this *mitzvah* comes and tells us that it's up to us. We're obligated to speak good words about Torah living. That's what it means *tzedek*; doing *mitzvos*, learning Torah, *yiras Hashem*, *ahavas Hashem*,

middos tovos. Jewish homes! Yeshivahs, Beis Yaakovs! That's the biggest *tzedeck* there is and we have to let the world know. We are the ones chosen to be propagandists for the Torah.

Russia, Russia, Russia

You know that up until recently, when the Communists were still in charge in Soviet Russia, so the Russians worked very hard to influence American public opinion. They had thousands of agents in the United States, people all over the country, who had only one job: They wandered around, they made their way into newspaper offices, into Hollywood, into the offices of politicians – they put themselves everywhere – and whenever they had a chance they said something positive about Communism or the Soviet Union.

Now, you wouldn't know they were agents. They were cunning; you didn't know they were propagandists. But at every opportunity they got in a few words to praise communism, to speak against President Reagan, to knock the American government, to talk against nuclear arms. They were infiltrating society everywhere; private life, public life. Thousands and thousands of agents. And they had one purpose – to work on behalf of the Kremlin; to praise what the Kremlin wanted them to praise.

Agent Emes

Now, we have to realize that this is a *mashal* for our function in this world. But *l'havdil*, instead of being agents of disinformation, we are *sheluchei d'Rachmana*; we are the agents of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, agents of the truth.

You know who says that? Not I. Rabbeinu Yonah says that in his *Sha'arei Teshuva*. In the third *sha'ar* (148) Rabbeinu Yonah says that every person has to be a *shaliach ne'eman* for his Creator to speak up on behalf of *avodas Hashem*.

בְּאֶשֶׁר יִתְיַצֵּב בְּתוֹךְ הָעָם וְיִדְבֵּר עִם חֲבֵרָיו – *When you're standing among the people, you should plan your words with wisdom, and carefully prepare what will come out of your mouth,* וְיִתְבּוֹנֵן בֵּינֶה וּיְדַבֵּר וְיִשְׁגִּיחַ בְּכָל מוֹצֵא שִׁפְתָּיו, – *to speak words that aggrandize the service of Hashem,* לְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁבְחָה עֲבוֹדָתוֹ, – *and words that praise awareness of Hashem,* וְלִשְׁבַּח עֲבָדָיו, – *and to always use your words to make great His servants.*

Talking in Shul

Now pay attention to what that means. Imagine you're going to a *bris* or you're going to a *bar mitzvah*. What are people doing there? They stand around and talk. So before you go, Rabbeinu Yonah says, plan what

you're going to say. Imagine you're a trained Communist agent and they sent you from Russia to go to *brissim* and *bar mitzvahs* in order to spread propaganda. Only here it's Hakadosh Baruch Hu who hired you and you're looking for opportunities to spread His propaganda.

So as you're standing and talking before the *mohel* comes; they're getting ready and everyone is waiting, so you say to your neighbor, "You know I was just in Mirrer Yeshiva yesterday and I was watching the yeshiva boys; they're so nice, so decent. I really think there's nothing more holy in the world than a yeshiva bochur. I hope I can make all of my children into *bnei Torah*. I'll marry my daughter only to a *ben Torah*."

Or say "I was in Williamsburg last week. It's a *mechayeh* to look. Everyone dressed with *tzniyus*. How good it is to see Jewish little girls, everywhere, with stockings all the way up. And even when they're dancing rope and their dress are flying up, you see their stockings. They don't reveal any of their flesh. How beautiful that is!" You have to praise that! We shouldn't overlook such important details.

Or "I had to go pick up something in Boro Park yesterday. It's so crowded there with big beautiful families! There's nothing better! Fathers and mothers, children, baby carriages! So many baby carriages! It's a pleasure to see decent families. And everyone is happy, smiling. There's nothing like living Jewish. Nowhere in the world except in *frum* neighborhoods can you see that."

Agent in Training

Now, it could be that nobody else is talking about it. They're busy with trivial things. Who is getting this *kibud* or that *kibud*? Or what's on the menu for breakfast? But you know that you're in this place on a mission. You're hired by Hakadosh Baruch Hu and you're sent with a purpose; you're a propagandist.

And don't think it doesn't have an effect. You may be the biggest *tzaddik* but if somebody whispers something in your ear it has an effect; *everybody* is affected by what he hears. So little by little you're spreading a knowledge in the world that's worth millions of dollars of propaganda work.

You know how important it is? Rabbeinu Yonah says that for this you'll get a *גְּדוּלָה עַד לַשָּׁמַיִם* – *a great merit up to the heavens*. You'll get rewarded in a very great measure. And you can do it, he says, *בְּלִי עֲמָל וְיָגוּעַ* – *without too much work*. It's a bargain! All you have to do is open your mouth and say the right words.

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Table Talk

So when you're a father of a family, make up your mind when you're sitting at the table, you won't waste the opportunity. Now, just to show up at the Shabbos table and hope that the right things come to your mouth, no. Then you'll just chatter, incidental talk. You have to prepare beforehand.

Now, the children never know that it's planned, that it's intentional. They think *agav urcha* you happen to mention it but actually you're doing it with a scheme, a wonderful scheme. It's the scheme of וְהִצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק, making the righteous ways righteous.

You'll say some good words. "Ah Shabbos! How lucky we are that we keep Shabbos! What a wonderful thing it is to honor the Shabbos. What a big mitzvah is, *oneg Shabbos*; how important it is to eat the *maachalim* with the intention of *kavod Shabbos*." Make Shabbos great in the eyes of your family. Give them a taste in the importance of Shabbos.

On Sukkos, give them a pleasure in the mitzvah of sitting in the *sukkah*. Speak about the *possuk* לְמַעַן יֵרְעוּ וּרְתִיכֶם בִּי בְּסֻכּוֹת הַיּוֹשְׁבֹתִי. Whatever mitzvah you're talking about, make the people understand the happiness of the mitzvah, the importance of the mitzvah. Elevate it. The other things, gentile things, foolish things, that's nothing. *Torah u'mitzvos*, the Torah ways, that's the only righteous thing.

Heap on the Praise

Praise the *frum* institutions. "How wonderful is Bais Yankev or Bais Rochel, whatever it is. They're teaching girls the way of the Torah, it's wonderful. In a world like ours where all the filthy things are made important, our girls are extraordinarily good." These girls all come out in the streets; you see crowds and crowds of girls – all *frum* girls. All of them idealistic. And they'll become mothers of big families – what a wonderful thing they're doing.

Praise all the *yeshiva ketanas*, all the *mesivtas*, all the *kollelim* – praise them. Praise all the houses that have big *mezuzahs* on them. Praise the boys who wear their *tzitzis* out and behave on the street. Praise them! Praise all the good things!

Of course you'll say some ordinary talk too; you're a human being after all. But you're always on the lookout for opportunities to propagandize for the Torah, for the Jewish home. Don't just take it for granted; they know, why should I say it? Oh no! It's something we have to do, it's an obligation. Talk always about how Torah living is a happiness! What a special and holy way to live! A life of *tznius*, of *bein*

adam lachaveiro, of awareness of Hashem! Be a Torah propagandist, a *shaliach d'Rachmana*.

1930 Part III. Praise the Righteous One

A Painful Example

And now we're coming to the third chapter in this subject of **וְהַצְדִּיקוּ** **אֶת הַצְדִּיק**, of raising up the name of the *tzaddik*. And it's the most important chapter because we're going to see that the first two are included in this one.

Because who is the *tzaddik* that deserves our attention more than anyone else? Who do we have to make righteous in the eyes of people? You'll be surprised. The answer is Hakadosh Baruch Hu. **צְדִיק ה' בְּכָל דְּרָכָיו** – *Hashem is the real Tzaddik; He's righteous in all of His ways.*

And therefore that's the final part of tonight's talk. Included in this great function of **וְהַצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק** is that we have to be **עוֹמְדִים עַל הַמִּשְׁמֶרֶת** – we have to be on guard always to speak the praises of Hashem; to speak always about His righteousness, His *chessed*.

Now, before we start chapter three just one example to better help us understand the subject. I wasn't planning on talking tonight about the Holocaust but I'll say something very briefly because it's connected to our talk. It's an example of the obligation to speak up and be *matzduk* Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

You know when it comes to the Holocaust, I get phone calls all the time. People yell at me: "Why do you say that Hakadosh Baruch Hu was punishing the Am Yisroel? Don't say those things." They say that they were all *tzaddikim* in Europe and we just don't know why Hakadosh Baruch Hu would do such a terrible thing to them. "We don't know the secrets of Hashem," they say.

Shifting the Blame

You know what that means in plain English? It means instead of putting the blame where it belongs, let's blame Hakadosh Baruch Hu. And therefore *it's important to defend the honor of Hakadosh Baruch Hu* and say the truth. And the truth is that in Europe the Jewish nation was actively throwing away the Torah. Not in ignorance, not *tinok shenishba*; they actually hated Judaism. Not all of them, but there were so many of them that it became a wave of revolt against the Torah; a national and violent revolt against Hashem and His Torah.

Reb Elchonon Wasserman *zichrono livracha* said: “The Jews in Europe declared war on Hashem and now He has declared war on them. That’s why He’s sending His armies against them.”

But Jews today are busy carrying out a propaganda campaign against Hakadosh Baruch Hu. They say it’s a *kitrug* on the *kedoshim*, accusing the *kedoshim*, to say the truth. But the *kitrug* on Hakadosh Baruch Hu, that they keep quiet. Where’s the *kavod Shomayim*?!

And so we have to speak up for the Tzaddik. Hakadosh Baruch Hu – for nothing at all – brought such a *kilayon*, a destruction?! We have to study the details and justify Hakadosh Baruch Hu’s ways in the world. One day we’ll dedicate the whole lecture to the topic and you’ll be educated a little bit but for now we’ll leave it; it’s a very painful subject. But the *klal gadol*, the general rule, is that one of our important functions in this world is to raise up the honor of Hashem. Just like in *beis din* the judges have to justify the just we have to find ways and means of praising Hashem; of lifting Him up in the eyes of the world.

Speak Up For Rain

Not only the Holocaust; I’m talking now about much simpler subjects. Because wherever you turn people are doing the opposite of justifying Hashem. The world is finding faults. Don’t you go on the street sometimes and you hear two old ladies talking – worse yet, two yeshiva boys talking: “It’s such nasty weather today.”

Nasty?! Hakadosh Baruch Hu is being nasty and He’s sending nasty weather to bother you? What is it? It’s raining? Hashem is feeding you, He’s feeding the world, and you’re blaming and criticizing.

And so when the rain comes down and the world is complaining, that’s the time for you to speak up; it’s an opportunity. Speak up for the One Who feeds the world. Say it to whoever is willing to hear: **מְשִׁיב הָרוּחַ: וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם מִכָּלֵל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד** – *How great is the One Who makes it rain!*

Watermelons are coming down in the rain. Challah is coming down. Drinking water is coming down. Bathwater is coming down. Cholent is coming down. The potatoes, the barley, the beans. Even the meat is coming down. After all, what is a cow except for the grass that it eats? So even the cholent meat is coming down in the rain.

Speak Up For Air

Speak up for the One Who gives us air to breathe. Last week I heard a man complaining about Brooklyn air. An old man sitting on a bench on Ocean Parkway criticizing the Tzaddik Shel Olam. “Fech, this dirty air,”

he said. Now, he didn't know he was complaining against Hashem but that's what it is.

So we have to do the opposite. "Ah, Brooklyn air! We thank You for that, Hashem!" Say it! Speak up! Air is a cocktail mixed especially for our benefit; the exact proportion of oxygen and nitrogen, a tiny bit of carbon dioxide, other important gasses. And it's perfect!

Breathe it in! Right now, take a deep breath. No drink in the world is as pleasant as a breath of fresh air. You don't believe me? So try out my experiment; it's an experiment anybody can carry out at home. I illustrated it many times here: Take a bucket full of water and put your head into it and remain there for about three minutes. And think how good it would be just to breathe one breath – don't breathe under the water though. Then you pull your head out. Ahhh! *Baruch Hashem* for air! *הַהָלֵל* – *Every breath!* *וְנִשְׁמָה וְנִשְׁמָה* – *For every breath you have to say hallel!*

The Sun and the Cold

We could give a thousand and one more examples. Give Hashem credit for the sun. Every day we do it, only we do it like people who are walking in their sleep. *בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת* – *We're thanking Him for the sun, for light.* Oh! He's doing a great thing for us! From 93 million miles away He's sending down light to us. A remarkable thing!

People complain about the heat of summer. What are they *meshugeh*?! You know Who you're speaking against? Who made the heat? The heat of summer is a benison, a blessing that causes the fruits to ripen. A man walks through the kitchen when the wife is baking *challah* and cake and he complains about the heat. But later when he sits down at the table he does justice to the *challah* and the cake and he forgets about the heat.

The cold too. We have to tell people that the cold is a blessing for the earth; it causes the earth to desist from producing in order that it should recover all the materials that it had expended during the summertime. The earth during the wintertime regains those materials and replenishes its store in order to prepare for the coming spring. All these things we have to say. *וְהַצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק!*

Chazarah and Homework

Now I'm going to repeat briefly what we said here tonight in order we should have in our hands the general idea when we go home. We studied tonight the subject of who and what we should aggrandize in this world; what we have to be *matzdik*. And it's a very serious subject. This is not something you come here and listen for entertainment and then you

go out and forget about it. This is a program for life; **וְהַצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק** is a program for perfection.

Number one we said was that we have to be *matzdik* all of the righteous ones; all the *tzaddikim*. Always defend them and sing their praises. And we should not spare words. We should talk at length about them, as much as we can.

That should be our conversation. That's why the Torah spends so much talking about Avrohom and Yitzchok and Yankev and the other *tzaddikim* because that is Torah. Talking about *tzaddikim* is Torah.

Praise the Ways

The second chapter, we said, is the importance of aggrandizing ideals – praising the ideals of *tzedek* and the acts of *tzedek* and *avodas Hashem*; every form of kindness, *middos tovos* and *gemillas chassodim*, *emunah*, *daas*, *yiras Hashem*, *bayshanus*, *anavah* and all the good qualities, *mitzvos* and *ma'asim tovim*. And speak at length about it!

Praise everything that's connected with *avodas Hashem*. Praise all the ways of the Am Yisroel. The Torah learning and *davening* and *tznius* and *chessed* and *tzedakah*. Talk and talk and talk! Be a propagandist for *avodas Hashem*.

The Grand Finale

And finally, if chapters one and two mean that we're obligated in declaring the righteousness of Hashem's chosen ones and Hashem's chosen ways, so it comes out now that it's only Hashem; the first two parts are really only Hashem. **צְדִיק ה'** – *Hashem is the Tzaddik*. And so the third chapter, the grand finale, is the one that includes the first two: We are obligated to speak up on behalf of Hakadosh Baruch Hu as much as we can.

I know people don't do it. Even when they're *davening*, saying words of praise, they're only saying words; when they stop *davening* they forget all about it. But that's not for us. We have to be different; we have to step forward and do more.

We should always speak about Hashem; whatever Hashem does in the world – and He does everything – we'll say **כָּל דְּעֵבֶר רַחֲמָנָא לְטָב עֵבֶר**, that *it's all good*. When He causes rain to come down and the sun to shine; when He causes the wind to blow and cold to come. Everything! It's a never-ending mitzvah. Tell the world, cry out from the rooftops, "Hashem is the Tzaddik."

Speak Up For Him

What He does for our people! What He did for us as individuals. We should study our lives and speak about Hashem's kindness. He causes our hearts to pump and our lungs to breathe. He makes our joints bend and our minds function. Endless kindness in the world around us and in our own bodies. Wonders and wonders, miracles of nature Hashem made with His boundless wisdom!

And most of all that we are **אַתֶּם הַרְבֵּקִים בְּה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּלָכֶם הַיּוֹם** – we're all together today under the *kanfei haShechina*. *Baruch Hashem*, Hakodosh Boruch Hu is guiding us and leading us in the right way. And many of us have already families with wonderful children, maybe grandchildren. *Baruch Hashem!* We thank You for all these blessings that You're giving us! And we should continue to speak about the *Tzaddik Shel Olam*, always, all the days of our lives.

Have a Wonderful Shabbos

Let's Get Practical

Becoming a Propagandist

We learned that the mitzvah of “Justifying the Just” does not apply only to *dayanim* in Beis Din. Rather, like all *mitzvos* of the Torah, it is a general principle which teaches us a lesson in how to live life. We must live a life of praising the righteous, whether righteous individuals, righteous ideals, or the ultimate Righteous One, Hashem. “This is not something you come here and listen for entertainment and then you go out and forget about it. This is a program for life; **וְהַצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק** is a program for perfection.”

This week I will *bli neder* set aside some time each day to prepare some words of ‘propaganda’ that I will repeat to whoever is willing to listen, and I will set out on this program of becoming a propagandist for Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

347 – Beginning of the Holocaust II | **379** – The Complainer

639 – Justify or Condemn | **845** – Praising the Righteous

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Note: Halacha prohibits reading business advertisements on Shabbos.



QUESTION

What should we think about during Chodesh Elul when we hear the shofar?

ANSWER

When you hear the *shofar* being blown there are many things to think about; not one thing. But the first thing you have to think is **אם יתקע שופר בעיר ועם לא יחרדו** – *Could it be that they blow a shofar in the city and the people are not afraid?!* (Amos 3:6). You have to be afraid right away! *Eimas hadin* – fear of the judgment. It's very important. The day is coming and you have to be afraid; you *must* be afraid.

Now, being afraid however, has to have some practical results. You're saying in *selichos* all the time something that you never do. **נחפשה דרכינו ונחקרה** – *We will search out our ways*. Do you search your ways? You never do it! Did you sit down for five minutes once in your life and search out your ways? Never! Oh, but he's saying *selichos*; “**נחפשה דרכינו ונחקרה**.” Mmmmmuh mmmmmuh. He's mumbling the words. What a pity.

So the *shofar* says, “Start searching your ways!” At least five minutes. Five minutes by the way is a very small time to make an inventory on your business. A businessman who makes a five-minute inventory will go broke. He needs much more than five minutes. But at least five minutes! At least you shouldn't be a *shakran*. The whole world is deceiving Hashem. **בפיו ובשפתיו כבודי** – *With his mouth and his lips he honors Me*; he says “I will search out my ways,” **ולבו רחוק ממני** – *but his heart is far away from Me* (Yeshaya 29:13). He doesn't think about it at all. It's a terrible thing.

So when you hear the *shofar*, think about your ways. Why is it that people, *from* people, live their entire lives in sin. He's trying to kill his wife by saying mean words to her and she wants to shorten his life by saying mean words to him. They don't want to do it *chas v'shalom*, but that's what they're doing – they're hurting each other. A whole life of *ona'as devarim*. Each time you say it it's a terrible sin. A terrible sin to say mean words to each other. And it's being done in so many houses!

Nachpisah! If you search you'll find. It's terrible what's going on in the houses. People hurt each other's feelings tremendously. And don't think it doesn't have an effect on that person's health. It affects the health; sure it does. And therefore there's no lack of things to discover. Once you search, you'll find. Oh yes, there's plenty to find.

TAPE # E-124 (September 1997)

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