

The Daily Page

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*Taken from the Daily Kabbalah Lesson
of Dr. Michael Laitman and Bnei Baruch*

How Do You Know If You've Found A True Kabbalist?

Question from a Student: How can someone without spiritual attainment find a true Kabbalist in order to study with him?

Dr. Laitman's Answer: How can you find a true Kabbalist? Well, what is a true Kabbalist? Baal HaSulam writes that a true Kabbalist is someone who strives only toward the Creator and toward nothing else, such as anything related to this world or himself.

The only means that makes it possible to reveal the Creator, the Upper World, and the quality of bestowal is a Kabbalistic group. The group is a connection among people's aspirations to reveal the quality of bestowal among them. This quality is called "the Creator."

You aren't trying to learn a Kabbalist's earthly habits from him. What you learn from him is how to cancel yourself, where "cancelling yourself" means to cancel your egoism in relation to the goal – the attainment of the quality of bestowal. You have to accept this goal without any resistance to it, with full trust and no criticism, as if you were a baby.

Criticism and verification have to take place before you accept the teacher as your instructor. However, if you have a point in the heart, then you have nowhere to run from an instructor who is showing you the truth.

But what is "the truth"? It is the force of bestowal, deemed the Creator, and it becomes revealed inside your love for friends and then for the whole world. If you see that the other students and the teacher are trying to accomplish this, without considering anything besides the Creator important, this means you have found the right place to study.

Yet, this still doesn't give you any guarantee that you will attain the goal. From here on, everything depends on you; this is where your freedom of will starts. But at the very least you have found a teacher and a group, which is the place where the Creator can be revealed.

A teacher is not the flesh and blood person you see in front of you, but attainment of the Creator and experience along this path. What you should be absorbing from him is not the earthly things, but his connection with the Creator.

Learning To Learn From A Kabbalah Teacher

It is impossible to receive spirituality (meaning to acquire the quality of bestowal that's similar to the Creator) just by studying the books by yourself. You need a live teacher because only he can connect your present level with the spiritual level. The teacher has to serve as the intermediate level between you and the Creator. On your own, however, you will never be able to “jump” up to the Creator's level. Your teacher is the intermediate degree between you and the spiritual world. He is able to do this because he exists in both worlds simultaneously.

The Ari and Baal HaSulam both write that intermediate states are the means to shift upwards. For example, see Part 3 of *Talmud Eser Sefirot*, “Inner Reflection.”

Even if a student could ascend to the first spiritual level on his own, it would still take him a very long time to learn about the Upper World without a teacher's help, and then he would not have enough time to correct himself. Just like in this world, first you have to grow up for about 20 years, and only then can you begin to live on your own. But if you did not spend the first “20 years” of your “life” next to a teacher, then you are like a child who never received an upbringing or education, and who grew up without any support from adults.

That is why a person must listen to what the teacher tells him and make every possible effort to carry out the teacher's advice. The student should accept this advice above his own egoistic surmises. Don't be like a child who refuses to open his mouth and accept food, since what will the teacher be able to give you otherwise?

Annulment Before The Teacher

Baal HaSulam writes that if you are not connected to a teacher, or alternatively if the group is not connected to a teacher, there is no chance you will reach spirituality. It has been like that throughout history, this is how the levels are built. The only question is what does “annulment” mean, and what is “collective annulment”? What does it mean “to search for a sage, a true Kabbalist, and obey whatever he appoints to him”? Have you found such a person, whom you want to obey whatever he appoints to you?

Student: Yes.

Dr. Laitman: And are you doing it?

Student: I see that I can do it only if the group requires me to.

Dr. Laitman: He does not write group here. It is written to obey his words – if he orders you to decry the group, then you must decry it, and if he orders you to connect to the group, then you must connect to it. Why are you twisting the words? You see how you are looking for some backdoor access? Look at Baal HaSulam's words – until you obey his words in a simple and straightforward way, you cannot receive from him what he is trying to deliver to you, through that channel that you are devotedly building toward him. What does it mean “toward him”? Toward the things that he teaches you.

You do not understand that a teacher is not a person, but this is the nature of levels. You are also called “a level.” Not your beastly flesh, but the desire in you.

Who are you?—The point in the heart. And next to you there is something from a higher level called “teacher,” and above him a higher level called “Creator.” How is the teacher unique?—In that he is in some contact with you.

If you do not obey his orders to become equal to things that he orders you to become equal to, how will he be able to transfer anything to you, how will he be able to raise you upward, to your next level, where you already reach the Creator?

Student: You said to search for the Creator only in the souls.

Dr. Laitman: Not necessarily. If the teacher tells you to annul before the group, then do it. And if not, then do not. Does Baal HaSulam write “group” to you? I added it to the words “to obey to him.” Meaning, why obey? Why benefit oneself? Why hear? Because I am telling you, that the spiritual teacher tells you that you will find the Creator in the group, and that you must connect amongst yourselves. But this is not the condition you must fulfill in order to hear his words. That is because if you do not annul yourself beforehand, you will not hear his words with regards to the group either.

Student: Where should we press so that this sense of hearing will open up for us?

Dr. Laitman: On annulment.

Student: What is annulment?

Dr. Laitman: “Annulment” means to subjugate the pride, the notion – the “we” and the “I” – before the message that the teacher probably has.

Deciding To Annul

The central thing that may be drawn from the article “The Teaching of the Kabbalah and Its Essence” is that one must listen to his teacher’s words, obey them, implement them with all his strength above his beastly mind, above his supposedly wise comprehensions. Instead, he must subjugate himself before the teacher’s words—before the group. One needs to check if he is indeed doing so, if he is accepting it upon himself. But once he has decided, it has to be a final decision. Otherwise he damages the adhesion for himself and cannot accept a thing—he cannot be bestowed upon from above. He is simply not opening his mouth, like a baby, and if he does not open his mouth, then what can be done? He is not agreeing to receive what you are giving him.

