

Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

STONES, SOULS, AND THE ONLY FIGHT THAT MATTERS

“THE ONLY FIGHT THAT MATTERS
IS THE FIGHT WITHIN YOURSELF.”

Stones, Souls, and the Only Fight That Matters

1. The Mystery of “Stones” and “Stone”

The Torah tells us Yaakov lay down to sleep:

“He took **from the stones** of the place...”

And later:

“He took **the stone**...”

First *many stones*.

Then *one stone*.

What happened?

Chazal reveal that Yaakov gathered many stones around his head for protection, and every stone said:

“Upon me should the tzaddik rest his head.”

Each stone begged for the privilege of supporting holiness.

So Hashem fused them into one.

But we usually read that wrong.

We imagine the stones fighting, so Hashem fuses them to avoid jealousy.

No — the fusion wasn’t a divine compromise.

It was the **impact of Yaakov’s presence**.

When a tzaddik puts his head — his vision — upon something, it becomes unified.

A tzaddik sees essence, not fragmentation.

He sees the hidden good beneath the

cracked surface.

Where everyone else sees separate stones,
he sees **one foundation**.

2. Why We Place Stones on Graves

Here in Poland — in cemeteries soaked with tears — you notice something:

We don't put flowers on graves.
We put **stones**.

Why?

Because a stone is *even*.
And *even* is made of two words:

אב – father

בן – son

Past, present, and future fused into one.

A stone says:

Nothing truly ends.

Relationships don't disappear.

Souls don't die.

They shift form.

From body-to-body to soul-to-soul.

That's why in a house of mourning we cover mirrors and pictures.

Not superstition — transformation.

When you can no longer see the loved one physically...

And you no longer see *yourself* physically...

You begin encountering each other spiritually.

3. Supporting a Tzaddik: Eternal Impact

When you support a tzaddik — with your time, your money, your encouragement, your presence — you're not helping *his* dreams.

You're attaching yourself to **eternal dreams**.

Dreams of kindness.

Dreams of teaching.

Dreams of elevating people and communities.

Your job may come and go.

Your house may be sold.

Your car will rust.

But the good you attach to a tzaddik's mission...

That becomes "the stone" — eternal.

Just like the gemach in Tarnów. The city is gone. The community was erased. Yet the act lives on through descendants — and even through us, simply by hearing it.

4. The Three People Inside You

Zohar says every human being contains:

- A **tzaddik** side
- A **rasha** side
- A **beinoni** middle side

Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

Not just potential.
Simultaneous realities.

You might be a tzaddik in prayer.
A beinoni in charity.
A rasha in honesty.

We are a mosaic of contradictions.

But when a tzaddik looks at you, he doesn't see the contradictions.
He sees the **core** — the stone beneath the dust.

Like Yaakov, who called thieving shepherds "my brothers."

It wasn't a strategy.
It was genuine vision.
He saw their souls.
He saw the one stone beneath many broken pieces.

5. Menashe: When Even Heaven Didn't Want to Listen

King Menashe — arguably one of the worst kings in Jewish history — prayed from inside a pot where he was being cooked alive.

The angels slammed the gates of heaven shut.

"Don't let his prayer in."

What does Hashem do?

He bores a hole through His **Kiseh HaKavod**, His Throne.

Why?
To hear the prayer?
No.

To get to the **soul underneath**.

Beneath the failures.
Beneath the sins.
Beneath the filth.

Hashem reached into the raw essence of Menashe — the part untouched by corruption.

And from that place, He says:

"Now I will answer you."

Because on the soul-level, Menashe was still holy.
Still His.
Still redeemable.

If Hashem looks at *you* that way, shouldn't you look at *yourself* that way?

6. The Only Fight That Matters

Yaakov wrestles with an angel all night.

Who wins?

The angel injures Yaakov's hip.
Yaakov injures nothing.

So how is he "Israel," the one who overcame?

Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

Because victory isn't knockout.
Victory is **not letting go**.

The angel says:

"Let me go."

Yaakov says:

"Not until you bless me."

Whoever refuses to quit — wins.

That was my wife's grandfather.

7. The Story of Yisrael ben Chaim — The Quiet Giant

He lost everything.
Moved from camp to camp.
Survived Buna–Monowitz.
Endured death marches.
And yet — he fought, and fought, and fought.

Yom Kippur arrived in the camp.
His brother said:

"If you refuse to work, they'll kill you."

So he deliberately crushed his own wrist
between two coal carts — just enough to be
sent to the infirmary, but not enough to
cripple himself for life.

So that he wouldn't work on Yom Kippur.

Who does that?
A man with one fight — the fight *within*.
A man who refused to let the Nazis decide
his Judaism.

A man whose soul was a stone —
unbreakable.

And then a miracle:
Years later, he marries Charna — who
escaped the Holocaust by **seven minutes**.

Two stones, two stories, two destinies...

Becoming one *even*.

8. The Unified Stone

Yaakov teaches:
There is only **one** fight.

Not against enemies.
Not against circumstances.
Not against the world.

Against yourself.

Your fear.
Your anger.
Your excuses.
Your laziness.
Your smallness.

If you conquer that — the world bows.

Like Yisrael ben Chaim.
Like Yaakov Avinu.
Like every Jew who refuses to shut down
spiritually, even when the universe throws
everything at them.

Here in Poland — the land of our people's
ashes and their courage — the message is
clearer than ever:

Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

**We are one stone.
We come from one Source.
We fight one fight.
And we never, ever, quit.**

May Hashem bless us to live with that
strength — and to uncover the
tzaddik-stone within our own souls.

SHABBAT-TABLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Which “stone” inside you is waiting for holiness to rest upon it?**
What part of your life is ready for elevation?
 2. **Where do you see the “one fight” playing out in your own struggles?**
What would victory look like for you?
 3. **Think of someone you judge harshly.**
What hidden good might a “Yaakov-vision” reveal in them?
 4. **What eternal legacy are you building?**
After your lifetime, which “stones” of good deeds will still stand?
 5. **Where have you experienced a moment like Menashe — being seen for your soul, not your failures?**
How can you offer that grace to someone else?
-