

# The Fundamentals of Avodas Hashem

***Attributes that one should emulate throughout his life:***[\[1\]](#)

Rabbi Yehuda Ben Teima stated: One should be as bold as a leopard, as light as an eagle, as swift as a deer, and as strong as a lion in order to fulfill the will of your Father in Heaven. The following is the meaning of these attributes:[\[2\]](#)

**Be as bold as a leopard:**[\[3\]](#)

*Not to let oneself be intimidated by scoffers:* One should [be as bold as a leopard[\[4\]](#) and] not allow himself to get intimidated or embarrassed by those who scoff [at his service of G-d[\[5\]](#)].

*Answering back to scoffers:*[\[6\]](#) One should not answer brazenly[\[7\]](#) towards scoffers [which scoff at his divine service].[\[8\]](#)

## ***Sparks of Chassidus***

In previous times, when persecution of Jews and Judaism was common, the Mesirus Nefesh in service of G-d was in the most literal sense, to give up one's life to serve G-d. In current times where most Jews live in democratic countries which provide freedom of religion the Mesirus Nefesh required is on a different scale. One's Mesirus Nefesh today involves not being affected by the words of scoffers and continuing his service of G-d despite the common public consensus which ridicules his method of life.[\[9\]](#)

*Moshe was humbled by our Mesirus Nefesh:*[\[10\]](#) The Alter Rebbe taught that the humility of Moshe which surpassed the humility of all other people was mainly affected by his foreseeing the challenges that the Jews in the time of the footsteps of Moshiach would face and succeed. When he saw the Mesirus Nefesh in which the Jews at that time would serve Hashem against all the concealments and public ridicule he became humbled in his own service.

**As swift as a deer:**[\[11\]](#)

*Walk towards Mitzvos and good deeds:* One is to be as swift as a deer. This means that one's feet should only walk towards Mitzvos and good deeds.

### **As strong as a lion:**[\[12\]](#)

*Overcome one's inclinations:* One should be strong like a lion. The main character of might is found within the heart. This means that one is to overcome his inclination and prevail it just like a warrior subdues his enemy and wrestles him to the ground. Thus in the morning every person is required to strengthen himself like a lion and overcome his desire [to continue sleeping] by awaking some time prior to dawn.

### **As light as an eagle:**[\[13\]](#)

*Control ones sight:* One is to be as light as an eagle. This refers to ones sight, that one should close his eyes to avoid viewing evil. Just like the eagle changes his glance very swiftly when he flies across the heavens, so too one should swiftly close ones eyes when seeing evil.[\[14\]](#) Seeing evil is the beginning of sin, as the images which the eyes see is transformed into a desire of the heart which persuades one to sin.

*Woman:*[\[15\]](#) It is a Biblical prohibition to look at any part of a woman for the purpose of pleasure.