

SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
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CHIZUK from the PARSHA

ALONE WITH HASHEM

What could be better than a life of peace? No arguments, no resentment, never any hard feelings... When living amongst people with different natures and needs, is such an existence even possible?

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:14*) that we can only live in peace with others when we have *yiras shamayim*, the knowledge that Hashem runs the world. When a person knows with certainty that nothing can ever happen without Hashem's consent, he doesn't get upset at others. He who has *yiras shamayim* lives in harmony with all those around him.

The problems begin when a person forgets about Hashem. He then lives in suspicion of others, afraid that they will harm him. Thinking that people are at fault when things go wrong, he is quick to blame and bad-mouth others, causing arguments and strife.

בדד ישב מחוץ למחנה מושבו

He (the metzora) must sit alone outside the camp.

In the times of the *mishkan* and the *Beis Hamikdash*, Hashem did not allow people to spread anger and resentment. He who spoke *lashon hara* and caused *machlokes* became a *metzora*, a leper, and had to go sit alone.

Seclusion is terribly painful for a person without *emunah*; his "religion" is people and he feels unbearably lonely without them. Outside the camp, cut off from everyone else, the *metzora* could do only one thing: think. He had to think and think until he came to the realization that Hashem runs the world. Alone, the *metzora* was forced to realize that everything is from Hashem and that there is no purpose in speaking *lashon hara*. Alone, he began talking to Hashem instead and turned to **Him** for help. This is exactly what the *metzora's* isolation needed to accomplish; once he was cured of his spiritual malady, his *tzora'as* was cured as well.

Today we have no *Beis Hamikdash*, no *tzora'as* and no *chutz lamachaneh*. But *lashon hara* **does** exist. Can anyone say that he is truly clean of this *aveira*?

Chazal say (*Bava Basra 166*) that *lashon hara* is one of the sins for which we all need to do *teshuva*. Let's solve the root of the problem: the lack of *emunah*. We need to realize that Hashem is the One Who makes everything happen and is therefore the only One to talk to. By strengthening our belief in Hashem, we'll stop speaking negatively about others and we will be *zoche* to a life of peace and happiness.



Toch Hanachal, Tazria-Metzora 5761

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

THE POWER IN YOU

“ A terminally ill Yid came to the Chazon Ish and broke down in tears, crying that the doctors had given him only four days left to live. Terribly afraid, he begged the Chazon Ish to help him.

The *tzaddik* listened intently and then took out a *Chumash Bereishis* and began reading the *pesukim* of *brias ha'olam*.

“The first day, Hashem created light and darkness. The second day, Hashem separated the upper waters and the lower waters. The third day, Hashem created dry land and all plants. The fourth day, Hashem created the sun, moon and stars.”

The Chazon Ish looked up to meet the sick man's fearful gaze and exclaimed, “Look at all that Hashem created in only four days! Vast oceans, countless varieties of plants, the sun, moon, and galaxies full of stars... and you are thrown off by a prognosis of four days left to live? Look at how much Hashem can change in that time!”

He advised the Yid to turn to the Healer of all healers and beg Him for a *refuah sheleima*, after which he blessed him with complete recovery.

The sick man dutifully followed the *tzaddik's* advice. He found an empty *shul* and stood before the

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This issue has been sponsored as a *zechus* for a *shidduch b'karov* and for *parnassa b'shefa*.
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Dear ...

A non-Jew once approached Hillel Hazakein with the desire to convert, on the condition that Hillel would teach him the entire Torah while he balanced on one leg. The great *tanna* replied with these few but powerful words: דעלך סני ' לחברך לא תעביד' - don't do to others what you wouldn't want to be done to you. (*Shabbos 31a*)

You ask how you can create an atmosphere of love and connection in your home - treat your wife and children the way **you** would like to be treated. How would you want them to speak to you? In which manner would you want them to conduct themselves towards you? Don't do to them what you wouldn't want them to do to you.

If you want to improve your *shalom bayis* and be a better husband and father, be careful with the way you speak to your wife. When Moshe Rabbeinu gave the Torah, Hashem instructed him: כה תאמר לבני ישראל - Rashi explains (*Shemos 19:3*) that the term תאמר is an expression of gentle speech; Hashem instructed Moshe Rabbeinu to speak softly to יעקב בית - the women. This teaches us how essential it is to **speak gently and kindly at home.**

Be generous with compliments - there's no limit to how many you can give. The more you will invest in your relationships, the more you will benefit.

You write that this is hard for you because you didn't hear this kind of talk when you were growing up. As with everything else, *tefilla* is the solution. Say the *tefilla* from R' Elimelech from Lizensk: שנדבר כל אחד את חברו בדרך הישר והרצוי לפניך and add your own words afterwards. **"Hashem, please help me speak kindly to everyone. Help me speak gently and to my wife and children and not get upset with them."**

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #1, page 263



aron kodesh for hours, crying and beseeching Hashem to heal him. Four days passed, then five, then six. The man recovered completely and lived another ten years in perfect health.

Can I Really?

We can all rattle off fifteen stories about the power of *tefilla* - if not more. Every Yid believes that *tefilla* brings *yeshuos*, yet typically, he will forget to turn to Hashem when he has a problem. Why is that?

Usually, it isn't his belief in Hashem that is lacking, but rather his belief in **himself**. So it is with many of us - the *yetzer hara* tries to break our morale by making us feel insignificant and powerless. *I'm no more than a simple person; how will my little tefilla help?* The truth is, however, that even the most simple Yid wields a tremendous power...

The Final Blow

The *tzaddik* R' Uri of Strelisk was known as the *Saraf*, the burning one, because of his intense fire and passion for *avodas Hashem*. Every *mitzvah*, every *tefilla* was with a fiery devotion for Hashem.

A *poritz* once passed the *shul* where R' Uri was davening. Hearing the tremendous fervor in his *tefilla*, the *poritz* remained rooted to his spot, listening in tremendous awe until R' Uri had completed his devotions. He then approached the *tzaddik* and said, "Listen here, Rabbi, if the Jewish people weren't taken out of exile after your prayer, I doubt they ever will be redeemed."

R' Uri responded with a well-known *mashal*:

A wise and powerful king had a beautiful palace with magnificent gardens all around. Right in the center of the property was a terrible eyesore - a tremendously thick tree that had stood there for as long as anyone could remember.

The king wanted a garden planted in that prominent place, and he desperately wanted the tree uprooted. Knowing that it wouldn't be simple, he came up with a plan. He sent a team of servants to make announcements across the kingdom, calling, "Hear ye, hear ye! He who will succeed in cutting down the tree near the royal palace shall receive a reward from the king's treasury!" Hearing this, all able-bodied men in the kingdom rushed to the royal gardens, each with his own method of how to get rid of the tree.

Each person tried but was met with disappointment. For days and weeks they attempted, employing all sorts of sophisticated machinery, yet the tree just would not budge! One by one, they raised their hands in defeat and advised the king to accept the unfortunate reality: the tree was there to stay.

Suddenly, a teenaged boy weaved his way out of the crowd, walked up to the king and confidently announced, "I will get rid of the tree in honor of my beloved king."

The crowd burst into loud gales of laughter, mocking what they called "misplaced idealism." After all, what could a thin, lanky teenager accomplish in place of all the muscle-boasting men?



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Undeterred, the boy strode over to the tree with a simple axe, gave a few vigorous blows, and the impossibly thick trunk crashed to the ground.

An awed hush fell over the crowd. What was this boy, a superman? A magician?

The boy just smiled and explained, "It's really quite simple. You see, people have been trying to knock down this tree for weeks, but they were all met with failure - or so they thought. In truth, their efforts had weakened the tree to the point of near-collapse. Right then, so close to success, the exhausted men conceded defeat.

"I tried to get the tree down - not because I think I'm stronger than them but because I believed I could give the final touches on the job they had almost completed."



"The same it is with us Yidden in galus," Reb Uri concluded.

We all try to 'take the tree down.' Each *mitzvah* is another blow at the tree's thick trunk and another step out of *galus*. Although our *tzaddikim* have hit the tree already countless times with their awesome might, it has never yet been the right time for Mashiach. When the right moment will come, even a simple Yid doing an "ordinary" *mitzvah* will be able to bring Mashiach, because the *tzaddikim* have invested so much of their power in shattering our *galus*.

Who, Me?

In our efforts to improve ourselves and come close to Hashem, the *yetzer hara* tries to convince us that we are incapable, that our goals are only misplaced idealism. "After all," he says, "there are so many people who are older and greater than you who didn't reach *shleimus*. Why do you think **YOU** will succeed? Just let go of your dreams. Be realistic and accept reality - your bad *middos* are here to stay.

We need to say **NO!** to that voice. It isn't true! Yes, you can succeed even if others haven't. Yes, you can succeed even if **YOU** haven't... yet. Keep banging, keep trying even when you think you're not accomplishing anything.

The same is true with *tefilla* - are you davening and davening for something specific but are not seeing results? Tried everything already? Don't give up! Keep davening - every little *tefilla* brings your *yeshuah* one step closer.

Hang in there. You never know which small deed will finally uproot the tree and bring the *yeshuah*.



know that without *tefilla*, you'll have nothing. No matter how much effort you put in, if you don't bring Hashem into the picture, you will taste only bitterness. The more you ask Hashem to give you a beautiful and joyous Pesach, the more enjoyable and uplifting your *yom tov* will be.

Every Pesach, Mohorosh used to tell the following story:

R' Dovid of Mikolev zt"l was a close *talmid* of the holy *Baal Shem Tov*. One year, he decided to make wine for his *Rebbe* for Pesach. How he toiled over the wine... He was busy with *kavanos*, *inyanim* and *chumros*, all so that the *Baal Shem Tov* should have extra-*mehudar* wine for Pesach.

R' Dovid guarded his precious barrel carefully as began his trip home. To his great dismay, the border police officer flippantly flicked open the barrel, rendering all the wine *yayin nesech* and unusable.

Empty-handed, *R' Dovid* returned to his *Rebbe* and brokenly told him the entire story. The *Baal Shem Tov* gently asked, "Did you remember to ask Hashem for it to work out well?"

The *Baal Shem Tov* was right. He had forgotten to daven for success, and that was why his efforts didn't bear fruit.

Without *tefilla*, everything else is a waste of time. Take a few moments each day to ask Hashem to grant you a joyful *yom tov* and protect you from eating *chametz*, *chas v'shalom*. This is how you will be *zoche* to a beautiful *yom tov*.

Below is a *tefilla* you can use to daven every day:

"Hashem, please help me be *mekabel* the *yom tov* of Pesach with joy and protect me from even the tiniest bit of *chametz*.

"What should I do if *yamim tovim* fill me with so much tension? Every time *yom tov* nears, I become stressed and anxious; help me not get upset at my wife or children and make me love spending time with them.

"Hashem, please give me the gift of living with *emunah* and help me remember that You are always with me."

The *Rebbe* says (*Sefer Hamiddos, Simcha 1*) that when a person does a *mitzvah* happily, it is a sign that he is an *erliche* Yid. May you be *zoche* to do all the *mitzvos* of Pesach with joy.

HOW CAN I AVOID THE PRE-PESACH TENSION?

Q & A



Question:

First of all, I wanted to thank the Rosh Yeshiva for changing my life. Thank you for awakening my *neshama* and making me taste the sweetness of *Yiddishkeit*.

As Pesach nears, I am once again filled with the stress that accompanies me each year in the weeks and months before *yom tov*. Since Tu B'shvat we've been busy with the anxiety-provoking job of getting the house *chametz*-free.

I would appreciate if the Rosh Yeshiva can give me some perspective on this matter and help me see the beauty of Pesach.



The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...

I received your letter.

A person who lives with the guidance of a *tzaddik* lives a beautiful and meaningful life. *Yamim tovim* become enjoyable and uplifting for him, as the Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:135*) "He who has a connection to a *tzaddik* can feel the holiness of *yom tov*." Anyone who is truly *mekurav* to the Rebbe can tell you that once he started learning the Rebbe's *sefarim* and implementing his *eitzos*, *yom tov* was transformed from being stressful to joyful.

The *yetzer hara* works overtime to make *yom tov* full of tension and fighting, because these sacred times put his entire "career" at risk. All year, we are so busy with our everyday struggles that we lose our focus and forget what's really important. *Yom tov* is a time when we can disconnect from the world and reconnect with Hashem - this is what the *yetzer hara* is afraid of. When we prepare for the *yamim tovim* with joy and use the holy days to spend time with Hashem and with our families, all his work from the entire year is for naught. Therefore, he ensures that *yom tov* will come with so much negativity that we will not be able to maximize these precious days.

The Tzanzer Rav *zt"l* told the following story:

Velvel was very disorganized. Mornings were a disaster for him - it took him hours to find his clothing and things and get his day started. One day, a helpful friend advised him to take a few minutes each night to write down where all his belongings are, and then he would find everything easily the next morning.

Excited with the idea, Velvel did exactly as he was told. He wrote everything on the list: My shirt is in the closet, my hat is on the couch, my jacket is hanging over the back of the chair, etc...

The next morning was a breeze. Velvel went through the list and actually found all his clothes right away. But soon he began to scream, "Oh no! I know where all my belongings are, but where am I?"

Foolish man. Yet we sometimes look the same way. When *yom tov* nears, we get very busy with all the "props" - cleaning, cooking, shopping, etc. But what is all of it worth if we are stressed and short-tempered, if we ourselves are "not there"?

You ask how you can be *zoche* to feel the beauty of Pesach;

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