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BASED ON THE SEFARIM OF REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLEV ZT"L
AS TAUGHT BY MOHOROSH ZT"L AND THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT"A

נתנדב על ידי
הרוצה בעילום שמו
לזכות זרע של קיימא

CHIZUK FROM THE PARSHA

IN YOUR HANDS

ראה אנכי נתן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה

See, I present before you today a blessing and a curse.

Two painters sit side by side, paintbrushes poised over blank canvases. The first painter surveys the palette before him and carefully begins dipping, mixing, and painting. Layer by layer of vibrant color, he savors every moment until he finally completes his breathtaking magnum opus.

The other painter sits before the same set of paraphernalia: canvas, brushes, paint — but his mind is elsewhere. With dismal thoughts filling his brain, he subconsciously chooses colors that match his mood. Instead of creating a work of beauty, he fills the canvas with bleak, morbid strokes.

A New Choice Each Day

The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan* 1:36) that each day is a gift from Hashem, to be used however we choose. ראה אנכי נתן לפניכם היום — Hashem grants us the day itself, ברכה וקללה — whether it will be a blessed or a cursed day is up to every person. Like a blank canvas before us, **we** decide what to make of each day. The *passuk* then continues, אֶת הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל מִצְוֹת ה'... וְהַקְלָלָה אִם לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ — It all depends on our choices. Will we create a masterpiece or a disaster? The decision is in our hands.



The last letters of the words "אֶת הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְעוּ" spell out ת-ו-ר-ה, alluding to the fact that the Torah is what gives a person access to all of Hashem's blessings. The Torah is called אור — light (*Mishlei* 6:23). Chazal teach us that just like light dispels darkness, so does the Torah (*Bamidbar Rabba* 14:10). In our physical world, the truth is obscured by many distractions and temptations. There is so much that muddles our minds, shrouding every decision in uncertainty. However, Hashem has entrusted us with the key to combat the darkness and clear up the confusion: the Torah. Learning Torah guides a person through every moment, every choice, and every challenge, granting him a life of blessing and happiness.

Our Light in His Hands

Learning Torah is not just the source of *bracha* — it's actually the source of our very existence. Just like Torah is compared to light, the *neshama* — the life force of each person — is also compared to light (*Mishlei* 20:27). Chazal say (*Devarim Rabba* 4:4) that Hashem tells us, "My candle (the Torah) is in your hands and your candle (the *neshama*) is in My hands. See to watch over My candle and I will watch over yours." **When a person learns Torah, he infuses himself with life, and he infuses his life with meaning.**

Let's make the most of each day by filling our lives with Torah, and may we be zoche to the fulfillment of the Rebbe's promise (*Sichos Haran* 17): "When the Torah reveals her face to a person, he will no longer desire any reward — he will want nothing but the Torah itself."

Zos Hatorah Parshas Re'eh, Kuntres Seder Derech Halimud

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

SHIDDUCHIM

A tiny bundle swaddled in pink, just a few hours old, lies asleep in the hospital nursery. Another tiny bundle, this one swaddled in blue, lies in a crib thirty miles away. Unbeknownst to them or to their parents, these little babies are destined to marry each other, a few years down the line.

Chazal teach us (*Sotah* 2a) that each *neshama* is paired with its match forty days before it descends onto this world. Why, then, do we see so many *bachurim* and single girls getting older, with no *shidduch* in sight? Where are their preordained *zivugim*, and why is it taking so long for them to find each other?

"We must solve the *shidduch* crisis!" *Shadchanim*, *askanim*, and heartbroken parents cry. Yet in order to solve the problem, we must understand what the problem truly is. The true crisis is in mindset, where unrealistic expectations, inflated egos, and misplaced priorities play center stage.

Young adults entering "the *parsha*" (and their parents) subconsciously draw up a checklist of qualities that are "absolutely crucial" in a potential spouse. Personality, intelligence, money, looks, *yichus*... Flawless perfection down to the last detail. A suggestion that is

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FRIENDS!?!

Dear ...,

Time and time again, Mohorosh used to remind us, **"There's no such thing as a friend — the only true friend is one's spouse."** Nobody else really cares about you or has your best interests in mind. Spend time with your wife — if you want to go out to eat, go on vacation, or just have a good time, don't do it with your so-called friends — do it with your wife. Leaving her home alone in order to party or vacation with friends is foolish and wrong.

Protect Yourself

Socialize with people who encourage you in your *avodas Hashem* and help you grow. At the same time, know that even that has its limits. Beware of exploiters — some people pretend to be helping others only in order to gain their trust and take advantage of them later. Know this well — as soon as anyone begins to interfere with your personal life, you must have the good sense to set boundaries before you lose everything.

This is especially true in regard to money matters. Be very cautious when lending money — countless people have been robbed of their life's savings by "friends" who "borrowed" money but never repaid their loans. If a friend asks you to lend him money, find a polite way to decline his request.

Stop being a slave to peer pressure. Focus on what really matters. Take a few moments every day to say the following *tefilla*:

"ותקננו בעצה טובה מלפניך — Hashem, please help me know the right way to conduct myself, and protect me from bad relationships. Help me remember that I have no one in this world except You."

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah #2, page 237

slightly lacking in any area is nixed without another glance. Days slip by; then weeks, months, and even years pass with the "perfect" *shidduch* still as elusive as ever.

The truth of the matter is that perfection does not exist. When a person can't overlook any flaw or accept anything different from what he expected, the outcome is tragic. If he cannot settle for anything less than the "perfect match" (which has never existed and never will exist), he will continue to search... forever.

Whose Idea?

Part of what makes the *shidduch* process so challenging is the uncertainty. There are so many names and so much information to filter through with no idea of which might be "The One." Wouldn't it be nice if, along with each suggestion, we would get a message from *Shamayim* telling us if it's even worth pursuing?

Here's the secret: every *shadchan* (and even layman) who suggests a *shidduch* is a messenger sent from the One Above. All interactions and conversations are part of Hashem's intricate orchestrations — how can we dismiss a direct message from Hashem with a flippant, "Oh, it's not for us"? How dare we turn down His suggestion without giving it due thought?

The proper course of action in *shidduchim* is to let Hashem lead you. **As long as the prospective match is physically and emotionally healthy, has *yiras Shamayim* and good *middos*, don't be the one to say no!** Have no fear — if you say yes to the *shidduch* but it isn't meant to be, Hashem will not allow it to proceed. However, if it is the right one and you turn it down, it will ultimately happen anyway, regardless of how vehemently you reject it. The question is only how long and painful your journey will be.

How dare we dismiss a direct message from Hashem with a flippant, "Oh, it's not for us"?

Ridiculous Requirements

Getting married is a *mitzva* — the very first one in the Torah — and is a prerequisite for *avodas Hashem*. It's impossible for a person to remain pure and holy unless he is married, and therefore, the *yetzer hara* ensures that we have many foolish reasons to turn down possible *shidduchim*.

Background

*Where are they from? What type are they? In which shul do they daven? Are they from our town? From out of town? From another continent? It makes no difference. All Jews are one — all *neshamos* are hewn from the same pure source. Differences in background or "type" should not have any bearing on a *shidduch*.*

Financial Status

*Will they support the couple? For how long? How about providing a down payment for a house? Finances shouldn't either play a decisive role in *shidduchim*, because nobody's wealth is guaranteed to last. Additionally, the Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan* 1:69) that *parnassa* comes solely in the *zechus* of one's wife — even if the other side won't contribute a penny, one must follow Hashem's command and get married. *Parnassa* will naturally follow.*

Yichus

A single man in his mid-thirties came to Mohorosh for guidance

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turned them down due to trivialities.

Mohorosh tried to persuade him to go through with that shidduch, but the man was not convinced. Finally, the man admitted that he wanted a girl with great yichus, as he was a grandson of the Turei Zahav. Mohorosh exclaimed, "Great! The girl is just the right one for you — she is a granddaughter of the Magen Avraham."

From one moment to the next, the man's entire demeanor changed, and he left the room with a spring in his step and hope in his eyes. Mohorosh smiled at those present and explained, "Didn't Hashem promise Avraham Avinu, 'ואנכי מגן לך' (Bereishis 15:1) That's what I meant when I said she's a granddaughter of the Magen Avraham."

Are you looking for yichus in a shidduch? Are you looking for prestige? What can be more impressive than being a direct descendant of the avos hakedoshim?

A Rung Up, A Rung Down

Chazal tell us (Yevamos 63a), "Lower your standards and get married." As long as a person arrogantly refuses to consider certain shidduchim because they're not "good enough" for him, he will just prolong the process and the difficulties involved. Conversely, when a person can step off his high horse

and consider shidduchim even of lower status than himself, he will merit finding his zivuge easily.

Aryeh was a man of means who rubbed shoulders with the upper echelons of society. When Zundel's son was suggested for his daughter, Aryeh was highly insulted. "Zundel? He's just a simple guy. That shadchan has some nerve!"



After a couple of years, Zundel's fortune started to look up while Aryeh's business took a nosedive. A few investments gone sour and the man of means was no more — Aryeh was reduced to a "simple guy" who could barely make ends meet. The "unlikely" shidduch was suggested again, and mazel tov! This time, there was no ego at play, and the mechutanim happily drank l'chaim.

The Medrash says (Bereishis Rabba 68:4) that Hashem occupies himself with building ladders. What does this mean? In order to arrange for a match to be made, the Master Shadchan sometimes brings one person a few rungs up and sends another a few rungs down, just so that they should view each other as "a man of my standards." The reason for painful life experiences, such as losing money, fame, or honor, may be only in order for a shidduch to happen. Wouldn't it be worthwhile to avoid this by stopping to reject those whom we think are "of lower quality" than us?

Ending the Crisis

It's time to end the shidduch crisis!

In your search for "just the right one", are you turning down suggestions just because they are less than ideal... in **your** mind, at least? It's time for a good look in the mirror — you, too, are imperfect! Swallow your pride and allow Hashem to lead you, and you will be'ezras Hashem find your zivug quickly and easily.

undeservedly superior to David Hamelech — he wanted to know if he still had a chance at reaching the loftiest levels in avodas Hashem.

Yeravam wasn't off-target at all. With teshuva, even a habitual sinner can reach the greatest heights — as Chazal teach us (Brachos 34b), "במקום שבעלי תשובה עומדין, אין צדיקים, "גמורים יכולין לעמוד — A ba'al teshuva reaches a higher plane in Shamayim than great tzaddikim.

Despite all this, Yeravam did not act correctly. **A person can't make teshuva conditional on whether or not he can still reach perfection.** This is why Hashem's response was the opposite of what he wanted to hear, because a person must be ready to do teshuva even if he would only be zoche to a very low level in avodas Hashem.

R' Nosson concludes that if a person is prepared for this — he desires nothing but Hashem, regardless of what his teshuva will or will not accomplish — and he doesn't abandon his avodas Hashem for anything in the world, "יוכל לזכות מדרגה לדרגה חיי עולם" — he will be zoche to attain greatness in avodas Hashem and to acquire eternal life.

Keep Trying

Continue to strengthen yourself in shmiras einayim — don't focus on the fact that the yetzer hara causes you to fall again and again. Rather, keep trying to protect yourself even from one less glance, and always remember that **"one look less is one scorch less."**

Learn a daf Gemara every day. Even if you don't understand what you're learning, simply say the words of the Gemara, and this will help you overcome your nisyonos. The Rebbe teaches (Likutei Moharan, 1:214) that the word "לילי" has the same gematria as "לילי" (the klipah that causes a person to sin with p'gam habris). **By learning a daf Gemara every day, you'll be zoche to become an erlicher Yid.**

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

Q & A

HOW CAN I OVERCOME MY NISYONOS ONCE AND FOR ALL?



QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

Since my days as a young bochur, I have always had a hard time with shmiras einayim. I am now married for several years, but I still struggle in the area of kedusha — I am ashamed to say that I have stumbled with the most severe aveiros. Every time this happens, I promise Hashem that I won't do it again, but my kabbalah doesn't last — before long, I succumb to my yetzer hara again.

No one knows what's going on with me, and I don't know what to do. I want to overcome this struggle once and for all — not just for a week or two.

Please help me. Thank you.

THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

You can't imagine the greatness of *teshuva*. When a person pours out his heart to Hashem, specifying exactly how he has sinned and how he regrets his actions, and he says, "Hashem, please forgive me for — I am starting anew," he is completely forgiven.

Teshuva can't be done with conditions. You write that you want to do *teshuva* and rid yourself of your sins "once and for all, and not just for a week or two" — see what R' Nossan says about this:

"A person must be ready to do *teshuva* and serve

Hashem even if he can't reach perfection. The reason why many people don't bother trying to serve Hashem is because they only want to serve Him if they'll be able to become a great *tzaddik* — but this thinking is flawed. Even if a person can only remove one small 'burn' of Gehinnom, it's still worth it for him to serve Hashem his entire life — because a single moment of pain in Gehinnom is more painful than all the suffering in this world."

Who First?

This "conditional *teshuva*" was the cause for Yeravam ben Nevat's downfall. Chazal teach us (*Sanhedrin 102a*) that when Hashem said to Yeravam, "Repent — and then I, you, and the son of Yishai (David Hamelech) will stroll together in Gan Eden," Yeravam asked, "Who will be first — will it be me or the son of Yishai?" and Hashem answered him, "The son of Yishai will be first!" Upon hearing that Dovid Hamelech would be the leader, Yeravam refused to do *teshuva*.

R' Nossan says that this entire story is difficult to understand. Yeravam ben Nevat was no fool — how could he have possibly asked such a question as, "Who will be first?" Of course David Hamelech would be first! How would it be possible for a person who had sinned his entire life to be placed higher than a *tzaddik* who had spent his entire life serving Hashem with *mesirus nefesh*?

R' Nossan gives a powerful explanation:

When Hashem approached Yeravam ben Nevat to awaken him to do *teshuva*, Yeravam was indeed very inspired — but he had a question. He wanted to know if, by doing *teshuva*, it would be possible for him to become truly great despite all his past sins. He didn't mean to ask if he would be

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