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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

WINNING THE BATTLE

וְהָיָה כִּקְרִבְכֶם אֶל הַמִּלְחָמָה וְנִגַּשׁ הַכֹּהֵן וְדִבֶּר אֶל הָעָם...
אֶל יֵרֵךְ לִבְבְּכֶם אֶל תִּירְאוֹ... כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הֵהָלָךְ עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לָכֶם

At the time when you draw close to war, the kohen should say to the nation,
"Have no fear, for Hashem is the One Who goes with you to fight for you."

War. Klal Yisrael stands at the ready, rows of soldiers equipped to fight for the sake of Hashem. Before heading out to battle, the kohen mashuach milchama has to speak to the army and reassure them in preparation for combat.

The Torah is eternal. Although parts of it seem to have only been applicable long ago, the truth is that every word in it is relevant to every person — forever. If so, how does the subject of the *kohen mashuach milchama* apply to us today?

Another Kind of War

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:115*) that when a person wants to come close to Hashem, the *yetzer hara* works relentlessly to thwart his every attempt.

It's a constant battle, a never-ending war. The person tries to daven. Tries to learn. Tries to overcome his temptations. Tries to conquer his bad *middos*. Tries to do all the right things as he tries to improve his connection with Hashem. Yet as he keeps hitting obstacles, he becomes discouraged, because this relationship that he wants so badly begins to seem unattainable. However, the Rebbe teaches us that the opposite is true. Hashem, in His infinite mercy, conceals Himself **within** the difficulties, readily accessible to those who don't let their challenges stop them.



Keep Going! Keep Trying!

This is the lesson of the *kohen mashuach milchama* — it's a message that's applicable for every person, forever. The *passuk* reveals the method for overcoming one's *yetzer hara* and emerging the victor:

וְהָיָה כִּקְרִבְכֶם אֶל הַמִּלְחָמָה — When a person finds himself under attack, helpless in the face of the *yetzer hara*'s cunning strategies, וְנִגַּשׁ הַכֹּהֵן וְדִבֶּר אֶל הָעָם — he must listen to the words of the *tzaddik*. The *tzaddik* calls out to all who will listen, "אֶל יֵרֵךְ לִבְבְּכֶם אֶל תִּירְאוֹ" — Don't be frightened when you are confronted with challenges! Don't be disheartened when your *avodas Hashem* comes with an enormous amount of struggle! כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הֵהָלָךְ עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לָכֶם — Hashem is with you in your difficulties! He will fight for you! All He wants is to see you persevere. Keep going, keep trying!"

When a person remains steadfast and refuses to abandon Hashem for any price in the world, he will succeed in peeling back all the layers of concealment and find Hashem right there, waiting for him.

Toch Hanachal, Shoftim 5764

MOHOROSH
SPEAKS

ELUL! ELUL!

The month of Elul is here, marking the imminent arrival of the *yamim noraim*. In just a few short weeks, we will be crying out, "ותשובה ותפלה וצדקה מעבירין את רוע" (הגזירה) Let's prepare ourselves by working on *teshuva*, *tefilla* and *tzedaka* **now**, instead of waiting for later to try to annul decrees which have already been transcribed.

Elul is a time for introspection and improvement. All year long, we tend to operate by habit, going about our day-to-day lives without thinking much into our actions and interactions. In preparation for the *Yom Hadin*, we must shake ourselves awake and rouse our *neshamos* from slumber. We must take a good, honest look at ourselves and reevaluate: "Where am I up to in my *avodas Hashem*? What should I be doing differently?"

It's a time to make amends for the past and implement changes for the future.

Trembling in Awe

In days of old, the mere mention of the word "Elul" struck a chord in every heart.

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WITH OR WITHOUT HEART

Dear ...,

Hear this story that R' Nosson related (*Chayei Moharan* 441):

The Rebbe spoke extensively about the importance of tefilla, hisbodedus, and saying Tehillim. On one such occasion, R' Yudel (a talmid) asked, "How can a person be zoche to daven with feeling and with heart?"

The Rebbe responded, "Tell me, who taught you anything about the feelings and heart? The most important thing is the words of the mouth." The focus of hisbodedus is to speak to Hashem even without feeling.

You Don't Have to Feel Anything!

Not a single *mitzvah* that we do has the requirement of feeling joy or satisfaction while doing it. It doesn't say anywhere regarding *hilchos tefillin* that one can only don *tefillin* when he feels a passion for the *mitzvah*. We must serve Hashem in every situation — regardless of whether we "feel" it or not.

***Yiddishkeit
has nothing
to do with
feelings!***

Yiddishkeit has nothing to do with feelings! A person must serve Hashem even when he feels cold and apathetic. This should be one's entire aspiration: to serve Hashem with simplicity and sincerity, and to find joy in the basics of *Yiddishkeit* — davening three *tefillot* each day with a *minyan*, and learning *Chumash*, *Mishnayos*, and *Gemara* each day. One must find joy simply in being a Jew and being able to serve Hashem.

Unconditional Jew

Establish a set time to learn the Rebbe's *sefarim* and *sichos* and you'll get all the *chizuk* you need to stay strong with your *Yiddishkeit*. The Rebbe related the following story (*Sichos Haran* 48):

The Baal Shem Tov zt"l once heard a bas kol proclaim that he had lost his entire portion in Olam Haba. He became very dispirited over this, until he declared: "I love Hashem even without Olam Haba!"

The Rebbe concluded that every person who wants to serve Hashem must be prepared to do so even if he receives no reward at all. Only in this way can one be zoche to become a truly *erliche Yid*.

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

Adapted from Atzaso Emunah Volume 6, Letter #501

When the *chazzan* recited, "ראש חודש אלול יהיה ביום..." during *birchas hachodesh*, all

the *mispallelim* trembled in fear and awe. Just hearing about the impending month of Elul was enough to shake them awake and galvanize them to *teshuva*.

As a six-year-old child, R' Moshe Kobriner zt"l was playing outside with his friends when his sister passed by and called out, "Moishele! We have already bentched Rosh Chodesh Elul! Even the fish in the waters are trembling in awe — how can you still be playing?"

R' Moshe later said his sister's words, said with such temimus, gave him a jolt that he felt again every Elul of his life.

A fraction of this immense awe is possible even for a person in today's generation to feel. How?

Jake's future was hanging in the balance. Accused of money laundering and tax evasion, his court case was looming, and he knew he was only days away from a possible life sentence. Each time he thought about his ever-nearing trial, his heart lurched and he broke out into a sweat.

Rosh Hashana is the day when the fate of every human being is decreed. Life or death, health or illness, prosperity or poverty, happiness or heartbreak, and everything in between — it all depends on this day. How can Elul **not** strike at least a little fear in our hearts?

***Fear in
itself is not
an end
goal —
action is
needed.***

At this time of year, every Jew must be stirred to do *teshuva*. So much is hanging in the balance — we must do whatever we can to tip the scales in our favor.

Take Action

Fear itself is not an end goal. R' Nosson of Breslev once remarked that many people become so aflame with an Elul-induced passion, but they don't actually **do** anything to prepare themselves for the *Yom Hadin*. Feeling the holiness and trepidation of the approaching *yamim noraim* is admirable, but if it isn't an impetus for change, it isn't enough. In order to actualize the potential of Elul, action is needed — we must work to improve in our *avodas Hashem*. In these potent weeks, let's make a point of acquiring *zechusim* by davening a little more, learning a little more, and taking a few more minutes to talk to Hashem.

The *Zohar* teaches (*Vayakhel* 206a) that each time the *aron kodesh* is opened in *shul*, the *sha'arei rachamim* open as well, and it's an *eis ratzon* to daven for anything we need. The *Arizal* adds that the forty days from Rosh Chodesh Elul

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until Yom Kippur have this same power. It's a tremendous *eis ratzon* — a time when all the doors are open for us — and one who increases his *tefilla* during this time will merit great *yeshuos*.

Grand Plans

Ahh, summer! Tzvi walked home with a spring in his step, his vacation stretching before him. He had big plans for his precious few weeks off, a long list of all that he hoped to accomplish.

The days flew by and all too soon, the long-anticipated break was drawing to a close. Tzvi ruefully thought of all his dreams that had unfortunately never made it past the planning stage...

When the month of Elul stretches ahead, we assume that there is ample time for all our new resolutions — realistically speaking, however, there isn't much time at all. In preparation for Rosh Hashana, Breslever *chassidim* try to complete the entire *Tanach*, *shisha sidrei Mishna*, *Tikunei Zohar*, all the Rebbe's *sefarim*, and the relevant *halachos* of the *yamim noraim*, all in addition to the regular *shiurim* kept throughout the year. We must use these sacred days well and not squander even a moment.



On the Other Hand...

Even doing all the right things has a risk. In our desire to maximize every moment and accomplish as much as possible, we sometimes take on too many new commitments than we can handle. Inevitably, we fall short of our expectations and soon fall prey to disillusionment.

It is important to remember that **this holy time doesn't "expire" so fast** — Hashem gives us an "extension" every year. We can continue to work to improve ourselves until Simchas Torah, and then until Zos Chanukah, which is a continuation of the *yamim noraim*. Even after that, we must not get discouraged by our failure to accomplish as much as we hoped to.

May we all merit to use this Elul wisely and be *zoche* to an uplifting Rosh Hashana and a growth-filled, successful year.



person is more *makpid* on things than his parents, he may not speak to them with *chutzpah* or disparagement, and he may not show disdain for their way of life. Rather, he should daven for them and all Jews, that they should all do *teshuva* and conduct themselves according to the Torah.

If you honor your father-in-law while simultaneously remaining firm in your path of *chinuch*, he'll eventually have the sense not to bring his devices when he comes to visit. On his own initiative, he'll stop showing your children video clips and the like.

You can calmly and respectfully tell your father-in-law, before he arrives at your home, that you're raising your children to be shielded from the internet, as this is what they're taught in *cheder* and in school. Explain that it's confusing to them when they see their grandfather using technology. If you speak to him with *derech eretz* — not in a controlling way, but rather by explaining how it affects the children — he'll stop bringing his technology into your home altogether.

It's Not Frumkeit — It's Common Sense!

Regarding your father-in-law's repeated requests for you to bring a computer into your home — what can I tell you? Hundreds of homes have been destroyed by computers, tablets, iPods, iPads, etc. The internet uproots every trace of *yiras Shamayim*, destroys every bit of *emunah*, causes the entire home to fall apart, and ultimately leads a person to fall into a deep abyss.

It is therefore forbidden to bring into one's home any device which can connect to the internet, or which can be used to watch movies. This is not a matter of *frumkeit* — it's simple common sense. Heedless people may ridicule this and mock the *tzaddikim* who say not to bring these devices into one's home — but they're only making a mockery of themselves. They'll end up paying a heavy price, *Hashem yerachem*.

And About Kiddush...

Regarding your question about *kiddush* and wine — you didn't write any specific reason why you shouldn't be able to be *yotzei kiddush* from him, so I can't answer that question. You can use grape juice to avoid the halachic problems that may come up with wine, but *chas v'shalom* to cause a rift between your wife and her parents.

In the *zechus* of honoring your parents and your wife's parents, may Hashem bless you with *nachas* from your children.

Q & A

MY FATHER-IN-LAW LIKES TO SHOW MY CHILDREN VIDEO CLIPS



QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

Thank you for the shiurim and chizuk. I now learn Torah each day and I'm about to finish Tanach for the first time in my life — I feel like a completely different person than I was before.

I wanted to ask how I should conduct myself with my father-in-law. Whenever he comes to visit, he shows my children video clips on his smartphone. I try to tell him that I don't let my children use technology or watch videos, but it doesn't help — he claims that a little is fine, and that I should show my children videos to teach them what's okay to watch and what's not.

My father-in-law travels a lot for business, and we don't always have a way to reach him. He keeps telling us that we should get a computer or tablet so that we can maintain contact with him over the internet.

Additionally, when he stays with us for Shabbos, I'm not sure if we can be yotzei kiddush from him, whether or not we're allowed to drink from his wine, and so on... what is the halacha?

It also happens that he sometimes speaks about topics that are not appropriate to discuss in a Jewish home, and I never know what to do.

Now that my children are getting a bit older and are beginning to understand a bit more, I need to know what to tell them and how to conduct myself in these situations. I hope the Rosh Yeshiva will give me guidance.

Thank you.

THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

How fortunate are you that you learn according to the Rebbe's *sefer derech halimud* (as is explained in *Sichos Haran* 76). Whoever accepts the Rebbe's words with simplicity and sincerity merits a beautiful life — he is *zoche* to learn the entire Torah and to become closely connected with Hashem.

Parents on a Different Path

The Rebbe gives us a way to be *erlich* and pure, while at the same time honoring parents even if they have chosen a different path in life.

Regarding the fact that your father-in-law shows your children video clips — know that **kibbud av v'eim is a mitzvah with great reward for those who follow it, and severe consequences for those who transgress it.**

One must be very careful regarding the honor of his parents. The Rambam writes (*Hilchos Mamrim*, 5:15) that if a person shames his parent — even with words or even just with a hint — he is cursed by Hashem. Therefore, one must be very careful to speak to his parents in a respectful manner, with *derech erez* and *hachna'ah*.

Strongest Chinuch

Good for you that you've resolved not to bring any devices with internet capabilities into your home, and that you wish to raise your children to be *erlich* and pure. On the other hand, know that the most powerful way to be *mechanech* your children is by showing them how parents must be respected. Children are very perceptive — they pick up on the slightest nuances and cannot be fooled. Even when a

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