

telling him to do such special things to get close to Hashem, it's really just advice from the *yetzer hara*. This is because most people aren't able to do such big, hard *avodos*. The *yetzer hara* convinces him that the small things that he does aren't worth anything. Since he can't do the big *avodos*, he gets very depressed and broken. He decides that there's no way for him to get close to Hashem, and he gives up on himself.

But, the *tzadik* teaches us that the exact opposite is true. It's specifically the smaller actions which seem insignificant to us that bring a person close to Hashem. If a person is *mechazek* himself with the small actions that he does every day, that is what will bring him close to Hashem. A person doesn't realize that if he simply follows the Shulchan Aruch - he washes his hands *negel vasser* when he wakes up in the morning, he davens in shul with a *minyana*, he learns a little Torah every day, acts properly with others, and doesn't try to be deceptive - all things that he does every day either way, he is doing exactly what Hashem wants from him. This is what is important to Hashem. And, these are the *mitzvos* that will stand by him forever, because they are things he can always do. The "bigger" *mitzvos*, on the other hand, don't last, because they are too hard to do for an extended time.

Chazal tell us (*Brachos* 24b) that when a person screams while davening Shmone Esrei, it is a sign that his *emunah* is weak. The reason behind his screaming is the belief that Hashem is so far away in heaven that the only way He can hear you is if you scream very loudly. This person doesn't realize, however, that Hashem is standing right next to him and hears even a whisper that comes out of his mouth.

Chazal also tell us that when a person answers "אמן יהא שמיה רבא" out loud, he can annul any harsh decrees. We see from here that even such a "small" action like answering "אמן יהא שמיה רבא" out loud has an amazing *koach* to save a person's life and save him from all hardships and decrees.

The same thing goes for eating kosher food. In today's day, there are, *baruch* Hashem, so many foods available with good *hechsherim* that it's simply not challenging to only eat kosher. But, when a person pays attention to what he puts in his mouth and makes sure that he's only eating proper *hechsherim*, it's looked very highly upon by Hashem. This is what brings a person to have proper *emunah*. The *heilige* Rambam once received a letter from people who had core questions on *emunah*. He answered them in a return letter (see *Degel Minchah Efraim, Parshas Eikev*) that such questions arise when a person eats not-kosher food. The food enters their blood and clogs up their minds, diminishing their *emunah* in Hashem. This shows us that such a seemingly insignificant action such as eating kosher food - which is very easy to do today - brings a person closer to Hashem.

Mohorosh said that when the Yidden came to America after the Holocaust, they found that the state of *kashrus* was very poor. There was no good *shechitah*, and there was no *cholov yisroel* milk to come by. Only a very small number of *ehrlliche* Yidden tried to acquire proper kosher food for themselves and others. For example, the Tzelemer Rav, *zy"a*, was *moser nefesh* to open a kosher *shechitah* as well as a factory for *cholov yisroel* milk and milk products. With this, he saved innumerable Yidden from eating *treifus*, *chas v'shalom*.

In those times, a Yid once came to the Satmar Rebbe, *zy"a*, and asked if he can be *meikil* and give not-kosher butter to his children, because in Shulchan Aruch you can find certain *heterim* for *treife* butter. The Rebbe answered him with a smile, "Maybe the butter is *basar b'cholov*?" The person was very confused. Where might *basar b'cholov* apply to *treife* butter? But, he obeyed the Rebbe and didn't give his children the butter. It wasn't very long before it became clear that the Rebbe was correct. The factory used to mix in meat fats to enhance the taste of the butter.

There is another "small" *mitzvah* that every person can fulfill: the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*. This is a *mitzvah* that many people think they can only fulfill with incredibly large amounts of money. They don't realize that a penny also brings Hashem much pleasure. Every penny that a Yid gives to *tzedakah* brings him closer to Hashem. Truthfully, it goes even further than that. You can fulfill the *mitzvah* without even giving a penny. By just giving a smile or a good word to another Yid, you can already fulfill the *mitzvah* of giving *tzedakah*. Chazal say (*Kesubos* 111b) on the *posuk* (*Beraishis* 49:12) "ולבן שיניים מלכלב" that it's more important to "make another person's teeth white" - meaning to make another person happy - than to give him a drink of milk.

There are many people who walk around very sad and depressed. They are angry at the whole world, and they feel as though they have no one in the world who cares to give them a second glance. When you give such a person a simple smile and a good word, it can literally save his life. He feels like he's worth something.

A Letter From the Rosh Yeshiva, Shlit"a

SWALLOW AND GO ON

Dear...

I received your letter.

I beg of you, remain strong! Don't let the *yetzer harah* break you. A *shidduch* is completely up to Hashem. If you want your *shidduch* to come already, you have only one choice: turn to Hashem.

Also, if someone tells you something negative or looks at you the wrong way, don't take it to heart. A person can't allow himself to live his life getting insulted by every word someone might say. Is someone said something negative to you, swallow it and continue on. Especially if it's your parents who tell you something that doesn't sit well with you, you don't have to lose yourself. It's not the end of the world when a parent says something that irks you.

Mohorosh says in the name of *tzadikim* on the *posuk* (*Beraishis* 25:14), "ומשמע ודומה ומשא", *ומשמע*, a person has to be able to hear, *ודומה*, and remain silent, *ומשא*, and rise.

May you be successful in all your endeavors.

(*Atzaso Emunah Vayeitzei* 5782)



Q&A Breslev

DO YOU WANT A WIFE OR CHOLENT?

Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"a,

Thank you for the amazing life that I have. Thank you for teaching me that a person can live a good life even when things don't go as he expects. I'll explain what I mean: until I got married, I always had cholent on Shabbos. I never imagined that a Shabbos without cholent was a possibility. After I got married, there were many times that my wife got overwhelmed from taking care of the children and housework. I was very busy working, and I didn't have a Rosh Yeshiva to teach me about making my wife feel good. So my wife got very weak and overwhelmed, and the housework got neglected. Every week that my wife didn't get around to making a cholent, I would completely lose myself.

I met the Rosh Yeshiva in Uman a few years ago, and I told the Rosh Yeshiva everything I was going through at home. I told the Rosh Yeshiva that my wife doesn't even make cholent for Shabbos! The Rosh Yeshiva asked me, "Do you need a wife or do you need cholent?" These few words hit home hard and were the catalyst of a lot of change in many ways.

This past Friday night, I had challah, fish, chrein and soup. On Shabbos morning, I had challah, fish and cholent. There are many weeks when we have only challah, dips, and more recently fish as well, b"h. It's all the Rosh Yeshiva's credit. Instead of looking at what we lack, I am extremely happy with what we *do* have.

Today I was able to strengthen myself once again when I remembered the Rosh Yeshiva's words. As hard as it might be to live with a wife, it's definitely much harder without her. Thank you so much.

The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...

I received your letter. I'm very happy to hear that you have a positive outlook on life and that you're living your life just like the Rebbe teaches us. Mohorosh tells a story about a person who came to Rebbe Nosson saying that he wants to divorce his wife because he can't handle the marriage anymore. He said, "I come home after a long day of hard work hoping to find a warm meal and an organized home awaiting me. Instead, I am greeted by no food and a grand mess with garbage and everything else strewn everywhere. My wife starts yelling at me and doesn't let me breathe. Enough is enough! I want to divorce her. I can't suffer anymore!"

Rebbe Nosson answered, "I say differently. To get divorced isn't the solution. It will be much harder for you without her. I have a better solution for you: who told you to imagine that your wife will be awaiting you with a warm meal and organized house that's completely under control? When you come home and see that things don't meet your expectations, you are shocked and you get angry. Instead, imagine that there will be no meal at home and the house will be flying when you return home. Then, when you get home, you'll see that things aren't as bad as you imagined, and you will be happy!" Thus, Rebbe Nosson stopped a couple from getting divorced.

I ask of you to protect your wife's health. If a person looks down at and belittles his wife, it can cause her to lose her mind; she can have a nervous breakdown השם ישמרנו. A husband must take care of his wife. This applies especially to a Bresleaver *chosid*, because the Rebbe held *shalom bayis* of paramount importance. The Rebbe says (*Sichos HaRan* 263), "זה מעשה בעל דבר שמניח על עצמו על זה, מאד, לקלקל השלום של בני הנעורים, כדי שיתפסו במצודתו חס ושלום על ידי זה" The *yetzer hara* is on the constant lookout as to how to cause rifts between husband and wife. His goal is to cause a separation, after which it is much easier to cause them to stumble in terrible *aveiros*. "כי הוא אורב על זה מאד לתפסם בנעוריהם על ידי זה קלקול השלום בית חס ושלום שגורם בערמומיותו לקלקל השלום שביניהם". The *yetzer hara* works hard to make young couples separate, thereby causing them to fall in terrible *aveiros*.

Make your wife happy. It's the husband's *mitzvah* to make his wife happy. Chazal say (*Rosh Hashana* 6b), "אשה בעלה משמחה" It's

Sometimes, a person is so depressed that even money doesn't talk to him. You can tell him you'll give him all the money in the world, but it just doesn't talk to him. He doesn't have any excitement in his life. However, even such a person will enjoy a simple, good word. He will have hope in his life again.

There were once two poor men who went around collecting money together. One of these men was a *chosid* of Rebbe Nosson. The other man once complained that he has no *koach* left for his difficult life. Rebbe Nosson's *chosid* said to him, "I don't understand you. After Succos, you went to your Rebbe, and he gave you \$200. You used that money to buy wood for the winter, and you even had some left over. I, on the other hand, went to my Rebbe, Rebbe Nosson, who didn't give me any money, because he doesn't even have for himself. But now I see that I am much happier than you are..." The other man answered him, "That is, indeed, the difference. My Rebbe gave me money which gets used up. Your Rebbe, however, gave you *chizuk* and that is something that never gets used up." We see from here what a small smile or *chizuk* can do for a person.

We also see this with the *mitzah* of *bikur cholim*, visiting the sick. Why do people hold themselves back from going to visit sick people? Because they think that if they go, they need to do something big and major in order to fulfill the *mitzvah*. They don't realize that the sick person would be very happy if someone were to simply come visit for a few minutes and give them *chizuk* and a good word.

Therefore, we must remember that the small things we do are very *choshuv* for Hashem. Specifically these "small" *mitzvos* will bring us the best outcome - they will bring us closer to Hashem and make us into *ehrliche* Yidden.

(*Toch HaNachal, Seudah Shlishis, Parshas Va'eira* 5775)

The Rebbe's Life Story (27)

The Rebbe reported that he was by nature quite ill-tempered. Since he aspired to become a better person and to perform Hashem's will, he decided to overcome his quick temper. In order to achieve absolute eradication of anger, a person must attain the extreme opposite nature, and become utterly benevolent. Nothing in the world should be able to provoke his temper. This is the level that the Rebbe attained in Eretz Yisrael, where he merited to completely nullify all traces of anger. From then on nothing in the world ever annoyed him anymore. He never bore the slightest grudge towards anyone; even his fiercest opponents were unable to provoke his wrath. On the contrary, he felt only love towards them. His heart was so filled with goodwill that there was no room in it for hatred. His absolute patience and kindness were legendary among all his acquaintances.

The Rebbe recounted how, in his youth, he would work very hard at visualizing his own death, to the point that he felt he had actually died and was being mourned. He added that it is extremely difficult to imagine this clearly. For the Rebbe this was a particularly tortuous *avoda* because he was terrified of anything related to death. In spite of his phobia he davened to Hashem to grant him the privilege of dying a martyr's death. For a long time he included this request in his daily prayers and conversations with Hashem. Due to his strong fear, for him it was as though he was actually sacrificing his life for the sake of Hashem.

The Rebbe cautioned against being overly stringent with Torah observance. He recounted that in his youth he accepted upon himself numerous restrictions, frequently thinking up new ones. For example, with regards to the use of water for Pesach, he worried that a trace of *chametz* would fall into the water after it was drawn from the well. Even the common solution of preparing all the water before the *yom tov* did not satisfy him, for it would be too difficult to guard the water from *erev* Pesach for all the days of the *yom tov*. In his opinion, the most appropriate water would be fresh spring water. Since there was no such spring in his town he actually considered spending Pesach elsewhere, in a location that had a fresh spring. To this extent the Rebbe engaged in unnecessary and depressing stringencies in his observance of *mitzvos*.

to be continued next week, be'ezras Hashem

your *mitzvah* to make your wife happy. Treasure your wife and talk nicely to her. Chazal say (*Bava Metzia* 59b), "לעולם יהא אדם זהיר בכבוד אשתו, שאין ברכה מצויה בתוך ביתו של אדם אלא בש" "ביל אשתו", a person must be very careful to honor his wife, because the bracha in his home is solely in her *zchus*. We see this (*Beraishes* 12:16) where it says, "ולאברהם היטיב בעבורה". The *heilige Amora Rava* told the residents of the city of Mechuza, "Honor your wives and you will become rich".

Likewise, the Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan* 1:69), "עיקר הע" "שירות בא בזכות האשה", a person's wealth depends on how a person honors his wife.

May you be successful in all your endeavors.

(*Atzaso Emunah Vayeitzei* 5782)

All Will Be Well (4)

Be aware that all will be well. This will show your trust in Hashem, which is the most essential element of a person's existence. A person's success depends solely on his trust in Hashem, and on his firm belief that all will be well - Hashem will not abandon me.

Chazal said, "Do not let this *posuk* depart from your lips: 'Fortunate is the person who trusts in You (Hashem)'... (Talmud Yerushalmi Beraishis 5:1). Trusting in Hashem means that a person always says, "All will be well".

It may seem to you that because of your many transgressions, Hashem will not help you. This is not true. What is true is that all will be well. Tehillim says, "Much pain to the wicked; but as for he who trusts in Hashem, may kindness envelop him" (Tehillim 32). Our *chachomim* commented on this verse that even if a person is wicked, kindness will envelop him when he trusts in Hashem; Hashem will show him favor, and assist him in his endeavors.

Perhaps you consider yourself despicable on account of your many misdeeds, and it seems to you that Heaven doesn't wish to assist you. Nevertheless, accustom yourself to think and say, "All will be well", and speak of how Hashem will certainly come to your aid.

(Taken from the booklet "All Will Be Well") *to be continued next week, be'ezras Hashem*

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