

# SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER  
BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF MOHOROSH ZT”L  
GIVEN OVER BY THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT”A

PARSHAS VAYEISHEV  
20 KISLEV, 5785  
ISSUE #32

## CHIZUK from the PARSHA

## JOY AT ALL COSTS

וַיְהִי ה' אֶת יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי אִישׁ מְצַלִּיחַ

*And Hashem was with Yosef and he became a successful man.*

Perhaps the most oft-repeated maxim from the Rebbe – although many people don't know its source – is מצוה גדולה להיות בשמחה תמיד (*Likutei Mohoran 2:24*) – it is a paramount obligation to always be happy. This isn't just a “good idea” or “worthwhile advice”; **the Rebbe's directive to remain happy, come what may, is absolutely crucial for survival.** The moment a person allows sadness to overtake him, he is in deep trouble. The Rebbe says – and doctors concur – that every physical and emotional malady is rooted in a lack of *simcha*. Spiritually, too, sadness is dangerous, because the moment a person allows himself to fall into a depression, sin is not too far away. Thus, remaining happy at all costs is of utmost importance.

This is easier said than done. When life throws yet another curve ball, how can we maintain a positive frame of mind? Let us take a lesson from Yosef Hatzaddik – for who went through more difficulties than he? He was despised by his brothers and nearly killed, yet “mercifully” sold into slavery instead. Cut off from his family and everything that was familiar to him, he spent years in service of a depraved non-Jew and his family. Faced with temptation again and again yet somehow overcoming it, he was nevertheless framed with a scandalous libel which landed him in prison. Bad enough yet? Ironically, at that very juncture in his life, the Torah says about him, “וַיְהִי אִישׁ מְצַלִּיחַ,” on which *Chazal* say (*Bereishis Rabba 86:5*) that he was a גבר קפוח – a dancing person. Yosef was always cheerful, always energetic... in prison! How can it be? In the face of so many difficulties and the thousand reasons he had to be depressed, how was he able to keep a smile on his face and in his heart?



The answer to this lies in the words of the next *passuk*: וַיֵּרָא אֲדֹנָיו כִּי ה' אִתּוֹ – Potifar saw that Hashem was with Yosef. How so? He saw his young servant constantly murmuring, constantly whispering... something. When confronted, Yosef Hatzaddik explained that he was talking to Hashem and asking for success – this was how Potifar understood that Hashem was with Yosef, and this is what imbued him with joviality despite his difficulties.

Let us internalize this lesson and do whatever it takes to remain *b'simcha*, regardless of the hardships we may face. Like Yosef Hatzaddik, the איש מצליח, we will then be *zoche* to the actualization of the Rebbe's words: (*Sefer Hamiddos, Simcha 2:1*)

“מי שהוא שמח תמיד, על ידי זה הוא מצליח”

*Toch Hanachal, Vayeishev 5765*

## MOHOROSH SPEAKS

## CHANUKAH



Think Chanukah – think light and joy. Each year anew, our *neshamos* are reignited by the holiness emanating from the *menorah* flames. Although this special time is just eight days long, we must take the light of Chanukah and carry it with us throughout the rest of the year.

What are the messages of Chanukah? How can we use this time to better ourselves and live happier, more productive lives?

The first thing we need to work on during these holy days is positivity. All year long, we are just busy with the grind of daily life; too often, we sigh and grumble about the various difficulties we are faced with. Chanukah puts the brakes on that way of living, wakes us up and tells us, “Hello! Hashem is granting you so much good each moment!” This is what this *yom tov* is all about: להודות ולהלל – to sing and praise Hashem. Instead of harping on our hardships, we must shift our focus to notice and appreciate the boundless good in our lives.

Those few pre-



*(Continued on page 2)*

This issue has been sponsored  
by the Tausig family of Lakewood.  
To sponsor, email [thesparksofemunah@gmail.com](mailto:thesparksofemunah@gmail.com)

Dear ...

I received your letter.

If you have a hard time concentrating while davening and you find that your mind is wandering, don't resist your thoughts, don't try to push them away. Instead, begin focusing on the meaning of the *tefillos* from the place you are up to. If your mind drifts again, don't fight with your thoughts – just try to concentrate from there onward.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:233*) that a person's mind can sometimes be likened to a beast rivalry arena. In times of old, kings used to engage in animal matches – each king brought his own animal to fight the other's, in the hope that his beast would triumph. The satisfaction that a king felt when his animal won was tremendous. The Rebbe brings this as a comparison to a person who battles inappropriate thoughts. His pure thoughts are likened to kosher animals, and the unholy ones are like non-kosher animals, sent by Hashem to battle the pure thoughts. When a person triumphs over the impure thoughts, he brings Hashem great pleasure.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:72*) that pushing away a bad thought is not just an exercise in futility – it actually makes the problem worse. Fighting just makes it stronger and more disturbing.

So what's the solution?

It's important to realize that it's impossible for a person to think two things simultaneously; therefore, the trick to remove bad thoughts is to simply think of something else, and they will eventually disappear on their own. When a person thinks about Torah or *tefilla*, or even something mundane like business, he can rid himself of his bad thoughts.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

*Adapted from The Light of  
Emunah #1, page 25*



cious minutes spent in the glow of the flickering flames is the perfect time to pause and introspect. Think and thank! Are you healthy? Thank Hashem! Is your family healthy? Don't stop praising Him! Have you got eyes?

Ears? Teeth? Wow! How about hands? Feet? Knees, ankles, toes? Do you have clothes in your closet? A coat to wear? Shoes? How fortunate are you! Oh, and what about the countless opportunities to do *mitzvos*? Are you an observant Jew? That alone is reason for celebration! The more a person focuses on the incredible blessings in his life, the more he will realize that the good far outweighs the bad.

Gratitude opens one's heart for *hisbodedus*. At times, although a person yearns to discuss his troubles with Hashem, he finds himself unable to articulate his thoughts. A trick to open up his heart and his mouth is to begin by thanking Hashem. After enumerating all the good things in his life and expressing gratitude for them, he will come to the acute realization that Hashem is at his side, with him every moment. Thus encouraged, it will be easier for the person to turn to Hashem, certain that He will help him as He has done so in the past.

**War, Reenacted**

Three times a day during Chanukah we add *al hanisim* to our davening.

על הנסים... ועל הגבורות... ועל המלחמות

What exactly was this war? What were we really fighting against and what implications does that have for us today?



At the peak of the Greek empire, the *Yevanim* sought to obliterate our belief in *hashgachas Hashem*. They wanted us to think just like they did, that the world runs its own course and all that happens is purely by chance. Be it nature, happenstance or luck, they believed that Hashem was totally uninvolved in the world.

Despite their concerted efforts, the Greeks did not succeed; the *Chashmonaim* were victorious in a war that very clearly defied nature. This is a message of hope to all future generations – when a person clings to Hashem, talks to Him and begs Him for help, he will never be forsaken. Yes, it may seem that based on *teva* there is no way out, but Hashem isn't limited to nature. He can do anything.

The war between the Greeks and the Jews was not an isolated experience; still today, we can fall into the trap of Greek ideology and forget that there is a Master Planner precisely orchestrating every last occurrence. When our belief in Hashem's *hashgacha* is lacking, we completely lose ourselves any time our carefully-laid plans go awry, feeling helpless and hopeless in the face of the laws of nature. However, we must take the lesson of Chanukah and remember the strong falling into the hands of the weak, the many falling into the hands of the few... despite all "nature", "happenstance" or "luck".



(Continued on page 3)



Chanukah reminds us that Hashem is the only One running this world. A person who accustoms himself to speak to Him constantly, thanking Him for the past and turning to Him for the future, will always be happy and serene.

**Darkness and Light**

*The Bergenstein family sat around their kitchen table, enjoying a hearty supper. Suddenly, a clicking sound was heard and their entire house was at once engulfed in darkness. Blackout!*

*The little ones screamed in terror. Quick-thinking Meir leaped to his feet on the way to unearth some flashlights, only to send poor Gitty (who happened to be standing right behind him) backward with seconds of supper in her hands. Chicken, mashed potatoes, ketchup and green beans went sailing through the air, landing squarely freshly-bathed Yossi and ever-particular Shani who burst into tears at this unexpected “gift.” Trying to be helpful, Gitty bent down to begin cleaning up the mess but was nearly trampled by another Bergenstein who was tripped over his sister and hit the floor with a bang.*

*Just as the cries in the Bergenstein home escalated to a deafening crescendo, another click sounded and the lights switched back on. Instantly, peace reigned once more. Now able to clearly see the people and objects around them, all the bumping, hitting and running over each other immediately ceased.*

Chanukah, when our lights get “turned on again,” is a time to work on gaining an awareness of the needs and uniqueness of the various people around us. Spouses, children, parents, in-laws, friends, neighbors and colleagues each have their own feelings, likes and dislikes. In the darkness of a selfish frame of mind, it is so easy to “bump into others” and them flying, or “trip over others” and cause them to tumble. Let us use this time of increased light to develop a heightened appreciation of others and accept others, even with their differences.

May we use the *yom tov* of Chanukah to readjust our focus, enriching our lives and the lives of those around us.

*Sichos Mohorosh Erech Inyanei Chanukah*



ly, Yaakov Avinu loved Eisav and did not reprimand him, and Eisav later committed many terrible *aveiros*. This is true today, too – if a person does not seize the opportunity to be *mechanech* his children while they are still young, he will mourn his actions later on.

If you reread the details of the letter-writer’s question, you will see that the discussion is about a teenager who no longer listens to his parents, relying on his own wisdom (or lack thereof) instead. In this case, admonishing him or trying to enforce proper behavior will not be effective at all; quite the opposite, it will be as Shlomo Hamelech says (*Mishlei 9:8*), “אל תוכח לו, פן ישנאך” – do not rebuke him for it will only push him further away.

*Tefilla* remains the most effective tool, whatever the situation may be. One must constantly daven for success in raising children to be righteous Jews. Even for a person whose children have turned their backs on *Yiddishkeit R”l*, it is vital to continue davening for them because *tefilla* is the most powerful cure. Even when it seems as if there is no hope, a person who remains strong with *tefilla* and *his-bodedus* will witness miracles.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

*Adapted from The Light of Emunah #1, page 147*

**THE ROSH YESHIVA SAYS:**

*This week was our long-awaited siyum on Maseches Bava Basra, and we have already begun learning Maseches Sanhedrin. Don’t be left behind! Learning a daf Gemara helps a person become an erliche Yid and protects him from so many tzaros. Hold onto the daf; stay strong with learning Torah each day. R’ Sheftil, the son of the Shelah Hakadosh, wrote the following in his will: “Learning a daf Gemara each day should be as important to you as putting on tefillin. Do it every day without compromise.”*

**TO HEAR THE DAILY DAF SHIUR GIVEN BY THE ROSH YESHIVA,**

**CALL KOL BRESLEV: (212) 444-9191 and press 1, 3, 1**

# Q & A

???

## CAN TEFILLA REALLY TAKE THE PLACE OF CHINUCH?

### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

I recently read a letter from the Rosh Yeshiva, written for a mother who was seeking advice regarding her son who does not behave the way he should. In the letter, the Rosh Yeshiva wrote that the way to merit *erliche* children is by constantly davening for this.



This seems odd to me, because if a home is not the way it should be and the *chinuch* is not up to par, how can *tefilla* be enough? If the children are lacking in *tznius*, if a child buys himself a smartphone, or if any other hashkafic issue arises, is it enough to simply turn to Hashem and ask Him to take “responsibility” and help the situation? Or is it the responsibility of the parents to establish and enforce proper behavior?

Can *tefilla* really take the place of proper *chinuch*? How can it be that davening for righteous children is all it takes to raise an *erliche* family?

Thank you.

### The Rosh Yeshiva’s Response:

Dear...,

The letter you read is not a letter of general guidance to all parents in all situations – it was addressed to parents of children who no longer listen to what they say. When dealing with grown children who have strayed from *Yiddishkeit R”l* and who spurn all attempts to set them back on track, giving *mussar* only backfires. *Chazal* teach us (*Yevamos 65b*) that just as it is a *mitzvah* to admonish a person if he will accept *mussar*, so too it is a *mitzvah* to remain silent if the rebuke is sure to be rejected.

Of course, parents must teach their children the proper way to behave. *Chinuch* begins when children are very young and still receptive to what their parents have to say.

Those who raise their children properly from a young age will reap the rewards of their hard labor, whereas for those who are too lazy or afraid to do so, the end is very bitter.

Shlomo Hamelech famously said (*Mishlei 13:24*), חושך שבטו שונא בנו ואהבו שחרו מוסר – he who spares the rod hates his child, while a parent who loves his child makes sure to discipline him. *Chazal* teach us (*Shemos Rabba 1:1*) that if a parent is not *mechanech* his children, they will ultimately leave *Yiddishkeit*. We see this multiple times in the Torah, once with Avraham Avinu – he remained silent when he saw Yishmael busy with *avoda zara* and eventually had to drive him away so that he would not influence Yitzchak. Similar-

(Continued on page 3)

### KOL BRESLEV: (212) 444-9191

Shiurim, Daily Inspiration, Songs, Stories for Children and more!

Israel: 0797040066 / England: 03303502361 / Canada: 4383008080



### KVAL FUN EMUNAH: (212) 444-9169

Hotline for Women - Shiurim, Daily Inspiration, Recipes and more!

Israel: 0797040069 / England: 03303502363 / Canada: 4383209090

#### Subscribe Today!

Receive this newsletter weekly, as well as short clips of life-changing inspiration!

Email: visit [rabbiroth.org](http://rabbiroth.org) to sign up  
Whatsapp: (845) 244-1624

For the daily inspiration in Yiddish,  
email: [chizikyomi@gmail.com](mailto:chizikyomi@gmail.com)

#### Inspiration to your Door

Looking for more? You can receive all Breslev books and pamphlets, as well as CD's, USB's and SD cards with shiurim and/or songs, delivered to you!

[shop.breslevcenter.com](http://shop.breslevcenter.com)  
Or call: (718) 387-2691

#### Sponsorship Opportunity

Take part in the *zechus* of spreading *emunah* to thousands of readers!

Email: [thesparksofemunah@gmail.com](mailto:thesparksofemunah@gmail.com)

[BreslevCenter.com](http://BreslevCenter.com)