# THE LIGHT of EMUNAH

Questions and answers that address many pressing challenges today's generation face. Beautifully entwined with emunah, chizuk, and guidance that can be applied in one's daily life.

Written by: Harav Reb Yoel Roth Shlita







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## CAN YOU GIVE ME GUIDANCE ON HOW TO ORGANIZE MY SHIUREI

## TORAH?

## 🥹 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

I must begin with thanking you for all the *shiurim*; I should really send you a separate thank-you letter, that adequately expresses my immense gratitude and how my life has been transformed by listening to the *shiurim*.

I must highlight the *eitzah* of the *Seder Derech HaLimud*; this fired a connection in me to the holy Torah, and I have begun learning all fifteen *shiurim* that Mohorosh designated for a person to learn every day. This is aside from Gemara, I learn seven *dafim* every day, so that I can complete it every year. I wanted to know if the Rosh Yeshivah can clarify how much, and in which manner, one should learn the fifteen *shiurim* Mohorosh set aside for us.

Thank you.

#### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ב׳ פרשת קרח, א׳ דראש חודש תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

How fortunate you are that you utilize your time to learn the holy Torah, and you don't allow yourself to be fooled and distracted. The following are the fifteen *shiurim* that Mohorosh designated, and how one should organize them.

The first *shiur* is *Chumash*, Rashi, and targum, divided according to the days in the week. On Sunday learn from *rishon* until *sheini*, on Monday till *shlishi*, and so on.

The second *shiur* is Nach. The Rebbe would say that Nach is a *mussar sefer*, and that by learning through it, one will be awakened to do *teshuvah*.

The third *shiur* is Mishnayos. Mishnayos has the power to cleanse a person's *neshamah* of all its impurities. The Maharam Papirsh<sup>1</sup> would say, "It is

1. Sefer Or Tzaddikim 22:11.

advisable for one to learn *mishnayos* every day, and if someone has the capability to learn eighteen chapters, מה טוב ומה נעים, and I want to have a *chelek* with such a person. When one learns eighteen *perakim* every day, he rectifies the sin of בגם הברית, and in addition this is a *segulah* to weaken one's *yetzer hora*. This is also a *segulah* to cleanse one's *neshamah* from all it's impurities."

The fourth *shiur* is Gemara. One should learn Gemara — *Talmud Bavli* — every day, one *daf* at a time, and not be hindered if he doesn't exactly understand everything he is learning. Gemara illuminates a person's life, and it incinerates the *kelipos* that are created by his *aveiros*. As the holy Rebbe says in *Likutei Moharan*,<sup>2</sup> יקלמוד קרילית" עלי יתַלמוד בְּנִימַטְרָיָא אותיות שָׁל שָׁמָה "לִילִית" עלי יתַלמוד בְּנִימַטְרָיָא אותיות שָׁל שָׁמָה הַלָּמוד לָהַכְנִיעָ in the word *Talmud* equal to the same number as the name of the *kelipah* that causes a person to sin with תָּבָם הַבַרִית the *kelipah* that lurks over him.

The fifth *shiur* is *Talmud Yerushalmi*. When one learns the holy Torah, Hashem forgives him for all his *aveiros*. Chazal state: "When a person takes upon himself the *ol haTorah*, Hashem considers it as if he has never sinned."<sup>3</sup>

The sixth shiur is Tosefta. Mohorosh would say that

<sup>2. 1:214.</sup> 

<sup>3.</sup> Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 4, halachah 8.

when a person learns a *daf* of ב׳בל׳, י׳רושלמ׳, and a *perek* of ב׳בל׳, ב׳בל׳, ב׳ד every day, he builds himself a בי״ת בנצחי – an eternal dwelling. His investments will accompany him to the next world.

The seventh *shiur* is *Medrash Rabbah*. Mohorosh would always advise us to establish a *shiur* in *medrash*, as this arouses a person's desire to be righteous. Chazal state:<sup>4</sup> הָבִיר אָת מי שָׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם – Do you want to become acquainted with the Ribbono shel Olam? לַמוֹד אַגָּדָה – לַמוֹד אַגָּדָה - thus, learn *agudah*.

The eighth shiur is Medrash Tanchuma. Breslever chassidim would always learn lots of medrash. R' Nosson instructed his *talmid* R' Nachman Toltchiner to constantly review medrash. After R' Nosson was niftar, R' Nachman Toltchiner would give a shiur in medrash in his beis hamedrash. He would teach with such sweetness and clarity that people would sit and listen to him for hours. Once a great Rav was a guest in the town, and he participated at R' Nachman's shiur. He was amazed at the chizuk and eitzos that R' Nachman was able to convey, and after the shiur the Rav approached R' Nachman Toltchiner and asked, "I have also learned through this medrash, how is it that I never found the inspiration, seichel, and chizuk that you seem to find?" R' Nachman answered, "I have the introductions of my Rebbes - the holy R' Nachman and R' Nosson; when one learns medrash

<sup>4.</sup> Sifri, Eikev 11:22.

with their introductions, it is a completely different experience."

The ninth *shiur* is Rambam. Mohorosh would say that the letters in the word *Rambam* correspond to the first letters of the *pasuk* מִיְחֵיָם בְּיַרְחֵמִים רָיִבִּים, the Rambam's *sefer* infuses a person with life and imbues him with *yiras Shamayim* and energy.

The tenth shiur is Tur.

The eleventh *shiur* is *Shulchan Aruch*. The holy Rebbe said, "One is obligated to learn *Shulchan Aruch* every day without fail. If one is under duress and has no time, he may study any halachah in *Shulchan Aruch*, even if he does not follow a regular course of study. Because one must go through at least one halachah every day of his life."<sup>5</sup>

The twelfth *shiur* is Zohar HaKodosh. For guidance how to learn Zohar, learn through *Sichos Haran, siman* 108.

The thirteenth *shiur* is *Tikkunei Zohar*. The Rebbe wouldn't learn *tikkunim* only in the month of Elul; rather, he would constantly review *Tikkunei Zohar*. The Rebbe once remarked, "The *Tikkunei Zohar* contains all the wisdom in the world."<sup>6</sup>

The fourteenth *shiur* is *Likutei Moharan*. The Rebbe said, "One can become a true *baal teshuvah* through

5. Sichos Haran 29.
6. Ibid. 128.

learning *Likutei Moharan*; learning with an *emes* will cleanse his corrupted blood vessels and he will become an *ehrlicher Yid*."<sup>7</sup>

The fifteenth *shiur* is *Likutei Halachos*. It is only because of R' Nosson are we able to comprehend what the Rebbe teaches us, as the Rebbe once remarked, "Nobody understands me like R' Nosson does, and perhaps R' Naftali somewhat."

In addition to these fifteen *shiurim*, also establish a *shiur* in *Asher BaNachal*; this *sefer* awakens one's heart. No matter what situation a person is in, he can find inspiration and encouragement in this *sefer*; it uplifts a person and gives him *chizuk* at all times.

Daven to Hashem so you should know how much to learn from each *limud*. Through *tefillah* a person gains clarity on how to conduct himself.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

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7. Chayai Moharan 349.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO MERIT CHILDREN?

#### 🥹 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

Thank you for all the beautiful *shiurim* that give me so much *chizuk*, especially the aspect of speaking to Hashem.

We have been happily married for five years already, but so far, we have not yet merited to become parents. We have not despaired, we encourage each other and find solace in *tefillah*, yet time drags on, and month after month, year after year, we find ourselves in the same situation with no hope in sight. What can give us *chizuk*? Perhaps there is a *segulah* that can help us hasten our salvation?

Thank you.

## The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ב׳ פרשת קרח, א׳ דראש חודש תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

Mrs. ...

By conducting yourself in a refined manner and dressing in a modest fashion, you will merit the blessings of *Chazal*, who elaborate on the *pasuk* in *Tehillim*, "Your wife will be like a fruitful vine in the chambers of your home."<sup>8</sup> If she conducts herself in a modest manner, she will be *zocheh* to children who will learn *mikrah* and *mishnah*, and engage in good deeds.<sup>9</sup>

Another good endeavor is *tzedakah*. The Rebbe writes in *Sefer HaMiddos*<sup>10</sup> that through charity one will have children.

In addition to the two *eitzos* above, see how you can assist in building an *eiruv* in the city where you live. It has been written by *tzaddikim* that someone who assists the building of an *eiruv* will merit miracles, especially in the aspect of bearing children. There is a well-known story regarding the holy Yetev Lev; a childless couple came to him for a blessing to merit children. The Yetev Lev instructed them to build an *eiruv* around their town, and very soon afterwards they were blessed with children.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

8. 128:3.

9. Bamidbar Rabbah 8:9.

10. Banim 2:22.

## WHICH STORIES OF TZADDIKIM ARE WORTHWHILE TO TELL MY TALMIDIM?

#### 🤍 Question:

.....

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

Thank you for the lengthy answer regarding my question about a *melamed* being on time. (Q&A 30)

The Rosh Yeshivah also mentioned the significance of telling stories of *tzaddikim* to my *talmidim*; therefore I wanted to clarify which type of stories the Rosh Yeshivah was referring to. There are stories of *tzaddikim* that are not even possible for children to imitate. The messages these stories convey are that to be a *tzaddik* one must be on the level of a *malach*. Then there are other stories that can be emulated. For example, the story of R' Abishel Frankforter, who *davened* and cried to Hashem until he was able to learn and understand the holy Torah. Additionally, there are stories of *tzaddikim* who were very careful with another's feelings.

I would appreciate if the Rosh Yeshivah would be able to clarify exactly what kind of stories should be told.

Thank you.

#### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ג׳ פרשת קרח, ב׳ דראש חודש תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

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Dear ...

When you tell your *talmidim* stories of *tzaddikim*, you must know how to recount them. You must tell the children that *tzaddikim* were also born with a *yetzer hora*, and when they were young, they also struggled. As the Rebbe says, "I heard from true *tzaddikim* that they also had difficult and challenging *nisyonos*. They felt rejected, and that no one was interested in them, and they had to fight mighty battles with their *yetzer hora*."<sup>11</sup>

Stories about *tzaddikim* are crucial for *avodas Hashem*, especially for children. There is a well-known story about the Sanzer Rav, who once asked his son's *melamed* if he learns *mussar* with him, to which he answered in the affirmative. When the Sanzer Rav asked which *mussar sefer* he learns, he answered, "*Chovos HaLevavos.*" The Sanzer Rav replied, "This is not what I meant by *mussar*; I want to know if you tell them stories of the holy *tzaddik* Rebbi Elimelech from Lizensk and his brother the holy R' Zusha." Stories of *tzaddikim* awaken a child's heart, stories awaken a yearning in them to also be *ehrlich* and holy.

11. Likutei Moharan 2:48.

The point is not if they can imitate the *tzaddik's* actions. We can't always imitate the things *tzaddikim* do. The following story about the holy R' Elimelech from Lizhensk is a good example. Once one of his daughters was visiting, and she was holding her baby, who was crying and banging his little fists against her. When R' Elimelech saw this, he was appalled. He cried out, "*Oh vey! Oh vey iz mir!* How can one hit his mother?!" The Rebbe's elderly mother was there at the time, and she remarked to him: "When you were a baby of that age, you also hit me...."

As soon as R' Elimelech heard her words, he ran over to the oven, cried, and said: "Hands that hit one's parents deserve to be burned." He stuck his hands into the oven until his hands were completely charred.

The following day, he wanted to daven and lay *tefillin* but he was unable to, because his hands were so badly burned. Therefore, he turned to Hashem, and said, *"Heiliger Bashefer*! Meilech wants to lay *tefillin*, but Meilech has no hands." Hashem performed a miracle and his hands were healed.

Children can learn a lesson from such a story, too. They must know that under no circumstances may they lift their hands against their parents. And this story also demonstrates the greatness of a *tzaddik*; he repents for the *aveiros* he committed even when he was a baby without *seichel*. Lastly, this story teaches us that when a person *davens* to Hashem, Hashem fulfills his *tefillos*. Tell them how the holy R' Elimelech would fast from one week to the next for twenty-one years! Seven years were for his own *aveiros*, seven years for the *aveiros* of his children and grandchildren, and seven years for *Yiddishe kinder* to merit heavenly blessing. This is not something we can imitate, and we shouldn't even try. However, this gives us a glimpse into the greatness of *tzaddikim* and teaches us that if we will connect ourselves to a *tzaddik* and listen to their guidance, then we will also merit to be *tzaddikim*. As Chazal teach us, "One who is connected to a pure source is also pure."<sup>12</sup>

Tell your *talmidim* as many stories of *tzaddikim* you can. It makes no difference if they can imitate the *tzaddik's* actions. We must know we are still very far from reaching the levels of *tzaddikim*, but if we connect to a *tzaddik* and listen to everything he advises, then we also have a chance to be *tzaddikim*.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

## 12. *Keilim* 12:2.

## HOW CAN I RESPECT MY WIFE?

#### 🥺 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

I listen to many *shiurim*, and I also read through the letters that address the importance of having *sholom bayis* and cherishing one's wife. However, I grew up in an environment in which we were always taught that the less contact one has with his wife, the holier he is. I recently read a letter where the Rosh Yeshivah writes that the whole notion of distancing oneself from his wife originates from non–Jewish sources, where they believe that having no relations makes them more holy.

My question is, how do I change my way of thinking that is already so deeply ingrained? In the *sefarim* from previous *tzaddikim* that are taught in our *yeshivos*, the value and significance of a woman is never mentioned. Just the opposite; we are taught how bad *taavos* are and what effort a person must make to stay away from them. Therefore, how do I respect my wife, when all my life I was taught the contrary?

Thank you.

#### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ג׳ פרשת קרח, ב׳ דראש חודש תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

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Dear ...

Either you are not explaining yourself well, or you are very confused. What do respecting a wife and *taavos* have in common? One's wife is *taavos*? Do you think that in Breslev we have a different Torah? One must stay away from *taavos*, yet at the same time respect and cherish his wife. It is no contradiction.

The holy Rebbe once expressed himself, "The *taavos* that destroy man do not really exist. One must eat and drink in order to have strength to serve Hashem. One must sleep so he can then daven and learn. One must likewise be married and have children, also to fulfill the *ratzon* of Hashem. This is all necessity and not desire."<sup>13</sup>

Establish *shiurim* in the holy Rebbe's *sefarim* and new horizons will open for you. You will start eating with Hashem, sleeping with Hashem, and feeling His Presence in your home. This is what the Rebbe teaches us, and what Mohorosh would always emphasize. A person does not have to abstain from all earthly pleasures in order to be considered an *ehrliche Yid*.

13. Sichos Haran 51.

People are mistaken when they think that to be an ehrliche Yid they must abstain from earthly conduct and behave in a strange manner. When the Rebbe met the tzaddikim HaRav HaKodosh Rabbi Avraham Kalisker, Rabbi Yaakov Shimshon of Shepetovka, and Rabbi Zev Wolf of Charni Austria in Eretz Yisroel, they told him that they were never able to envision Eretz Yisroel as part of the world. The sefarim speak about its unparalleled holiness and greatness, so they thought is must be part of a world that exists only in heaven. However, once they traveled to Eretz Yisroel and walked on its holy soil, they realized that there is no difference between Eretz Yisroel and other lands; it's the core, the heart of the land that is unrivaled in its holiness.<sup>14</sup> R' Nosson would say that the Rebbe related the above to clarify this subject you are writing about. People think that it is possible to see a physical difference between a *tzaddik* and a simple person. However, a tzaddik's externals look exactly like a simple person's do. The Rebbe said, "It may appear that he has hands and feet and a body like everyone else, but he is really something more." Just as the case with Eretz Yisroel; she looks like any other land, but really, she is something more. The holy Zohar<sup>15</sup> states that a different sky hovers over Eretz Yisroel. We simple people can't see it, yet the Rebbe savs that one who believes in the holiness can notice

15. Veyakhel 209.

<sup>•••••••••••••••</sup> 

<sup>14.</sup> Likutei Moharan 2:116.

small differences between Eretz Yisroel and other countries.<sup>16</sup> <sup>17</sup>

One may not express himself the way you do. How can you say a wife is taavos and one must distance himself from her? Let's see what Chazal has to say regarding this topic. The holy R' Chiya had a wife with a difficult personality; as it is written, "R' Chiya's wife would cause him much suffering."18 Yet, despite her behavior, whenever R' Chiya would see something his wife liked, he would bring it home for her to bring her happiness. Rav once asked R' Chiya, "Rebbe, I don't understand! Why do you make the effort when she causes you so much pain?" R' Chiya replied, "She protects me from sin and raises our children; for me that is enough." The holy R' Chiya was so great that even the Malach HaMaves had no authority over him, yet he knew the importance of his wife, and he cherished her because she protected him from aveiros and raised his children. This teaches us an important lesson.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

16. Ibid.

17. Sichos Haran 14.

18. Yevamos 63.

## WHICH *SEFARIM* DID THE REBBE ADVISE AGAINST LEARNING?

## 🥹 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

Thank you for all the *chizuk* and *shiurim* that propel me in my *avodas Hashem*.

Perhaps the Rosh Yeshivah can clarify what the Rebbe meant by saying one should not learn *sifrei chakirah*. Is the introduction the Rambam wrote on Mishnayos included? And likewise, what about the *Sefer HaKuzari*?

Thank you.

## The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ג׳ פרשת קרח, ב׳ דראש חודש תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

The holy Rebbe did not allow his *talmidim* to learn *sifrei chakira*.<sup>19</sup> The Rebbe even warned us not to learn *sefarim* that *gedolei Yisroel* wrote and published that ask questions — questions that are easy for us to understand; but the answers to which are complex

19. Chayai Moharan 407.

and difficult to grasp. What happens is that the person remains with the question niggling in his head. When a person grapples with even one question counter to our *emunah*, it is a flaw held against him.

Therefore, a person must be careful not to learn sefarim that delve into these aspects. The Rebbe didn't want us to learn the sefer Moreh Nevuchim, written by the Rambam, and likewise, if one who is learning a sefer comes across a piece that discusses chakirah, he should skip over it. The Rebbe states, "When a person follows his own seichel and wisdom he will be at risk of making mistakes, which will lead him to big problems. The *ikar* of Yiddishkeit is to listen to the holy Torah with המימות וכשיטות, and before he does anything, he takes a moment to consider if this is ratzon Hashem."<sup>20</sup>

Sefer HaKuzari is not a sefer chakira, and one is permitted to learn it.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

20. Likutei Moharan 2:1.

## CAN I DERIVE HASHKAFAH FROM OTHER SOURCES?

#### 🥹 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

I am very thankful to the Rosh Yeshivah for taking the time to answer my questions. Since we adopted the Rosh Yeshivah as our *daas Torah*, our lives have transformed. We listen to the *shiurim*, learn the *sefarim*, and we try to heed all the *eitzos* and guidance.

The question I pose today has been bothering me for some time already. What is the correct way to approach *hashkafos* and practices from other sources? My *hashkafah* and way of conduct are derived from the Rosh Yeshivah. Yet is it possible for someone to have a Rebbe who will guide him, and at the same time also nosh from other Rebbes and *mashpiim*? Does this contradict the notion of having one person as *daas Torah* to whom he always listens?

I know that R' Nosson expressed himself that when he came to the Rebbe, he first emptied his mind of everything he ever knew or heard. However, there are people who thirst for more, and curiosity drives them to shop around for knowledge. Perhaps what R' Nosson meant was that he completely submitted to the Rebbe on how to conduct himself, not that he dismissed the knowledge that he had beforehand. Thank you.

#### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ג׳ פרשת קרח, ב׳ דראש חודש תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

How fortunate are you that you have adopted the Rebbe as your guide, as your lighthouse, who will show you the way. When a person listens to the Rebbe and heeds his *eitzos*, then he will not be misled; rather, he will be *zocheh* to a life with Hashem.

I will begin by reviewing what Mohorosh writes in his will:<sup>21</sup>

"My dear children and *talmidim* who learn my *sefarim*, always remember that your main focus should be to have *emunas chachomim* — to believe in *tzaddikim*. As the holy Rebbe revealed, "When a person has *emunas chachomim*, he gains clarity on how to conduct himself."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, one should be firm and unwavering with his *emunas chachomim*, believe in the Rebbe's words, and carry out everything he advises us, because this is the crux of *emunas chachomim*.

When you will have true *emunas chachomim*, the Rebbe's words will guide you through every situation.

21. Ibid. 15.22. Ibid. 1:123.

You will know exactly how to conduct yourself at every opportunity.

The holy Rebbe is our Rebbe both on this world and in the next. You must be very wary of phony leaders who mislead people. They can't even help themselves; therefore, how can they help others? The holy Baal Shem Tov revealed that in the generation before Moshiach's arrival, there will be many imposters, as many as the leaves on a tree. Therefore, a person must be vigilant to have no connection to these false manhigim, even to those that are part of our own chaburah. Yet how can a person know the truth of who is an imposter, and who is a true tzaddik? The Rebbe gives us a sign;<sup>23</sup> when a person comes to a true *tzaddik*, he starts to feel insignificant, and his ego disappears. On the other hand, if he starts feeling arrogant and superior to others, then it is an indication that he has found a fraud and he must flee from such a person.

Another indication of a true *tzaddik* is that he gives his *talmidim* an ambition to learn the holy Torah; as opposed to a fraud who will not speak about the holy Torah. Therefore, this should be your sign to differentiate between a *tzaddik* and an imposter. If you have a Rebbe who imbues in you a desire to learn the holy Torah, and by listening to him your ego disappears, then it is a sign you are in a place of truth. The above applies to the holy Rebbe, who

23. Likutei Moharan 2:72.

is the true *tzaddik* and will rectify all that still needs rectification. Therefore, be strong to remain close to the Rebbe, travel to Uman every year for Rosh Hashanah, and maintain a strong bond of *achdus* with *anshei shlomeinu*."

A person can derive *chizuk* from other sources, and a person can listen to Torah thoughts or *shiurim* from other *tzaddikim*. It is no contradiction. The Rebbe explicitly told us that we should learn through the *sefarim* of all *tzaddikim*. The Rebbe says in *Sichos Haran*, "Attempt to learn through all the holy *sefarim* in the course of your lifetime."<sup>24</sup>

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

## HOW CAN WE SHELTER OUR CHILDREN FROM FOREIGN INFLUENCES?

## 🤏 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

Thank you for all the *eitzos* and *chizuk* we receive.

24. 28.

Baruch Hashem, our eldest daughter is about to start school. Until now, she was at home, and we were her primary source of *chinuch*. However, now that she is starting school, she will start to be influenced by a wide range of people: friends, neighbors, teachers, and principals. How do I handle this? How can I remain strong with my *chinuch* when she is being influenced by so many other *hashkafos*?

Thank you.

## The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ד׳ פרשת קרח, ב תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

Mrs. ...

It is a parent's responsibility to interest oneself as to who their child's friends are. In general, children usually repeat everything that happened to them in school, and a parent can perceive who the good children are and encourage their children to form friendships with those classmates who are respectful and have good *middos*.

A parent can't spy on his child twenty-four hours a day and listen in on every discussion he has with every classmate. However, a parent must be in touch with his child's teachers and Rebbes, and show interest in who their children's friends are, and in how their child is succeeding. Mohorosh would explain what the Rebbe says in Sefer HaMiddos, "By lighting the Shabbos licht and the chanukah licht, one will merit righteous children."<sup>25</sup> Chazal say,<sup>26</sup> – וחפוש מנרות, ונרות מנר – When one wants to find something, he must use a candle. Mohorosh interprets the Rebbe's words: To be zocheh to children talmidei chachomim, one must use a candle. He must look out for the wellbeing of his children. He must take interest in who his friends are.

.....

However, most importantly, to be *zocheh* to righteous children, one must constantly be *mispallel* for their wellbeing. Parents should spare no tears, and they should beseech Hashem that their children grow up to be righteous. Mohorosh would relate that a *Yid* once came to the holy Chofetz Chaim *zt*"l and requested a *brochah* to merit righteous children. The Chofetz Chaim picked up a *Tehillim* that was swollen from dampness, and he proclaimed, "This is my mother's *Tehillim*; she would cry and daven every day that she merit children who should be *ehrlich*; this is how one is *zocheh* to righteous children."

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

25. *Banim* 54. 26. *Pesachim* 7b.

## SHOULD I SPEAK UP WHEN I FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE?

#### 🤍 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

I am a woman who enjoys the *shiurim* immensely. Thank you. One of my neighbors' children often comes over to play at my house. He is a 13-year-old boy who has just turned bar mitzvah, but he is active and very immature. He often behaves in a manner that's inappropriate for a child his age, and sometimes he'll physically touch me, which makes me feel very uncomfortable. His parents are wonderful people, and we have a very good relationship with them. What am I to do in this situation?

Thank you.

## The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ד׳ פרשת קרח, ב תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

Mrs. ...

Children only know what they are told. For them to grow up *ehrlich*, children must be taught the right way to behave. It's apparent that this child was not taught to behave in an appropriate manner around other women and girls. Therefore, if such a situation crops up again, tell him calmly with a smile, "You are already a big boy, and you need to know that you can't touch other women. You can only touch your mother." Say it once, then twice, with a smile, and if he still doesn't understand, say it a third time with a stern expression, until he realizes that *tznius* is not a joke and you mean it seriously.

This is something a child should have already heard years ago, not when he turns bar mitzvah; now it's already a little too late. The earlier one starts being *mechanech* his child, the easier, both for the child and for his parents.

If only parents would know the power of *chinuch*. When parents invest in their children when they are still young, then it is a lifelong investment. Their children will grow up *ehrlich*, secure, and healthy. It's much easier to work with children when they are still supple and young. It is vital to teach young children to behave with *tznius*. Boys play with boys, and girls play with girls. A *Yid* must guard his eyes not to look at unholy images, and a *Yid* must behave in a modest manner. When taught young, children absorb and learn. When one invests in his children, he will later see *nachas* from them.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

## HOW CAN I SAVE MY MARRIAGE?

#### 🥺 Question:

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To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

My marriage is in shambles. I've been begging my husband for years already to come with me to speak to someone and get help. He refuses to come speak to you because he claims you always take the wife's side of the argument.

My husband is not bad; he is goodhearted and helps me a lot. I have a few beautiful children, *Baruch Hashem*. However, I can't take it anymore. By nature, I have a upbeat personality. But every time something happens and I'm sad or disappointed, my husband completely shuts down and just escapes the situation.

Yesterday was the last straw. Finally, finally, after years of *tefillos*, we started going for therapy. However, later that night I was feeling very down. While I cried, he sang. When I told him that if he can't show empathy, he should at least not sing, he started singing even louder than before. I just lost it. I started attacking him physically, and I called him a Nazi. He is so indifferent to my pain that I feel I can no longer live like this.

Please guide me because I don't want to end up divorcing.

Thank you.

#### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ה׳ פרשת קרח, ג תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

\_\_\_\_\_

Mrs. ...

Please forgive me, but there is no excuse for a Jewish woman to behave in such a way. I understand your pain; you feel like a fool when he ignores you, but behaving in such a manner — physically attacking him, and shouting Nazi at him — is very foolish on your part.

Shlomo HaMelech famously said in *Mishlei*,<sup>27</sup> "הְקְרְמָנוּ, The wise woman נְשָׁים בְּנְתָה בִיתָה, וְאוּלָת בְיָרֵיהָ תָהָרְסְנוּ builds her home, but the foolish one tears it down with her own hands." From your words, it seems like your husband is a good person. He assists you and fulfills your needs; he simply does not know how to react when you cry. There are many men who are like that. They lack the tools and understanding what to do in such a situation. The reason he sings or ignores you is precisely because he doesn't know how to react. He comes home after a hard day at work and he finds you crying. Simple, he doesn't know what to do, so he escapes.

Therefore, if you want your husband to listen to your woes, then you must also speak nicely to him.

27. 14:1.

You also have to smile at him. As we learn in *Mishlei*,<sup>28</sup> "As water reflects a face back to a face, so one's heart is reflected back to him by another." When you look into water with a happy expression, your reflection will show the same, and if you frown, the water will reflect it back to you. The same is with human interactions, life is like a mirror. The way you behave is the kind of behavior you will receive in return.

First, you must ask your husband for forgiveness. Speak to him kindly and apologize for calling him such nasty names. If you initiate peace, then he will forgive you.

Likewise, you must explain to him in a kind manner how you want him to react when you are sad. Tell him that you await a show of empathy, and you want him to simply listen to you. I'm sure when he knows what you want, he won't continue singing.

What you write, that in Heichel Hakodesh the women are always right, is not correct. In Heichel Hakodesh we emphasize the notion that it's just not worthwhile to fight. Instead have patience, be *mevater*, be wise, don't always be the one to prove just how right you are. It's such a pity on young couples who, instead of spending their time to enjoy each other's company, bicker and argue over pettiness.

I implore you, have pity on yourself and your children; a person cannot behave in such a manner.

28. 27:19.

If you want to have *sholom bayis*, you must first show your husband a smile. Don't bring him to me. If he doesn't want to come to me, then don't force him. First *you* must comply with what we teach here, and listen to the *eitzos* of the *heiliger* Rebbe.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.



## HOW CAN I RENEW MY INTEREST AND PASSION FOR TORAH AND TEFILLAH?

## 🤏 Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah shlita,

You cannot imagine the wide impact of your letters and *shiurim*; may Hashem give you the strength to continue with your holy work.

I am an eighteen-year-old bachur. As a young bachur in yeshivah ketanah, and a year or two later, I would learn very diligently. I really excelled in yeshivah. I woke up early, immersed in a *mikvah*, davened and learned; things were easy.

However, in the past two years things have become

much harder. I lost the patience to sit and learn, I get a headache when I try concentrating, and in general I just don't care. This is besides my personal struggles as a *bachur* and the struggles in my family. I have a sibling who has strayed from *Yiddishkeit* and is caught up in destructive behaviors. This makes the entire atmosphere at home tense, and I don't know how to behave around her.

Another burden of mine is Yom Tov. Just recently, on Shavuos, I had such pressure about staying up the whole night learning. Elul is coming, but I've just come to dread the Yomim Tovim; I can't imagine how I'll manage being in shul for so many hours, with the lengthy *davening*.

I hope the Rosh Yeshivah will be able to help me.

Thank you.

## ≫ The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה׳ יתברך - יום ג׳ פרשת פנחס, ט״ו תמוז, שנת תש״פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

The *heiliger* R' Nosson had a *talmid* called R' Shaul from Teplik *zt"l*. He was a G-d-fearing *Yid*, who served Hashem with immense passion and joy. Just as you write: waking up early, immersing in a *mikvah*, davening, and learning. Once, when R' Nosson was visiting Teplik, he was able to observe his *talmid's* conduct up close, and he saw the tremendous fervor R' Shaul displayed. R' Nosson then remarked to him, "Shaul, Shaul, I don't yet have pleasure from your *avodos*. When you will fall and pick yourself up and continue serving Hashem as before, then I will derive pleasure from you."

The holy Rebbe says,<sup>29</sup> "When a person wants to walk the pathways of repentance, he must have two kinds of expertise." The Rebbe refers to this as בָקי בְּשוּוּ , he must be an expert at running, and an expert at returning. A person must know that when it comes to *avodas Hashem*, it isn't only about rising higher and higher, a person must know that when things go backwards and he feels hindered, it is still part of *avodas Hashem*, and he shouldn't give up.

Therefore, now is the time to strengthen yourself in *avodas Hashem*. Continue serving Hashem with the *kochos* you have now. Be determined to daven *Shacharis*, *Minchah*, and *Maariv* every day, and establish a *shiur* to learn Torah. Learn *Chumash*, Rashi, and *targum*, and *Mishnayos* and Gemara daily. Take it as it comes, if you understand — excellent, but if you don't, continue with your *shiurim* regardless. You can't neglect yourself because of the difficulties you are currently going through. Say the words of the holy Torah, and I can guarantee that Hashem prides Himself with you. As R' Nosson said to his *talmid*, "When I will see you going

29. Likutei Moharan 1:6.

through difficulties yet continuing with your *avodas Hashem*, then I will derive pleasure from you."

You write that you have immense pressure before a Yom Tov. Listen to what the Rebbe teaches us in *Sichos Haran*. It can be very empowering when one internalizes the following: As each day begins, I place both my own and my children's every movement in Hashem's hands, asking that Hashem should guide me as He sees fit. Before Shabbos or Yom Tov, I also place myself in His hands, asking that it be according to His will. Then I can celebrate the Yom Tov without worrying that I am doing something wrong, for I am completely dependent on Hashem, and everything I do is in His hands.<sup>30</sup>

Remember, remain strong and don't neglect yourself. Serve Hashem in the situation you are now, with the *kochos* you have now, and don't compare yourself to your earlier self.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

## 30. Sichos Haran 2.



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