

# SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER  
BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLEV ZT"l  
GIVEN OVER BY MOHOROSH ZT"l AND THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT"l

PARSHAS BESHALACH  
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ISSUE #37

## CHIZUK from the PARSHA

## NEVER FORGOTTEN

ה'ש' ה' בקרבנו אם אין? ויבא עמלק וילחם עם ישראל

*Is Hashem among us or not? And Amalek came to war with the Jewish People.*

Father and son trekked for days, traversing long miles together. When Little Boy got tired, Father lifted him high onto his shoulders and continued the journey. When Little Boy got hungry, Father immediately bought food for him from a nearby vendor. When Little Boy got thirsty, Father searched for and found a flask of water for him. After all these displays of his father's love, Little Boy saw a stranger approaching and asked, from his vantage point high above, "Have you seen my father? I don't know where he is!" Father heard this and cast Little Boy off his shoulders, and a dog came and bit him.

Chazal relate this *mashal* (Rashi, Shemos 17:8) to illustrate what occurred in this week's *parsha*. When Klal Yisrael left Mitzrayim, Hashem did great miracles for them. He brought a series of *makkos* to punish their oppressors, took them out of a land from which no slave ever escaped, split the sea, sustained them with *manna* from heaven and brought water forth from a rock. After all these incredible displays of Hashem's love and care, the Jews complained, "ה'ש' ה' בקרבנו אם אין? – is Hashem here with us? Has He forsaken us?" Immediately thereafter, ויבא עמלק – Amalek attacked.



Do you think Hashem has forgotten about you? *Chas v'shalom!* Can you breathe, see, talk? Can your legs carry you? Do your hands obey your bidding? All this is only by Hashem's explicit command! How can you even think He has forsaken you? Hashem remembers the needs of every individual and runs His world with a precise *cheshbon*. **Whatever occurs – for better or for worse – is coming from Hashem and is for our ultimate good.**

The Rebbe teaches (*Sichos Haran 279*) that the way a person can navigate life's hardships is with *bitul* – by submitting himself to Hashem, surrendering his will completely. When R' Nosson asked how one can reach this level, the Rebbe responded, "By closing one's mouth and one's eyes, that is *bitul*." When a person does not question Hashem's ways – 'closing' his mouth – and does not try to see or understand Hashem's calculations – 'closing' his eyes – instead places his complete trust in Hashem, he has attained this exalted plane. *Emunah peshuta* grants the person a deep sense of serenity despite the arduous challenges he is experiencing, and it is in this *zechus* that Hashem ultimately sends him his salvation.

Do not despair; strengthen your *emunah* and you will see great miracles.

*Adapted from the Light of Emunah Volume 2, page 258*

## MOHOROSH SPEAKS

## ט"ו בשבט



While the winds howl outside and the trees stand bare, Klal Yisrael pauses to reflect and celebrate the upcoming Tu B'shvat. It is an exclusive Rosh Hashana for the trees, reminding us that the barren branches we see all around will soon blossom and bear fruit once again. *ה'ש' ה' – כי האדם עץ השדה* – each person is compared to a tree. There is much inspiration that we can glean from this humble creation as we see it weathering the seasons and enduring the harshest that the climate has to offer.

The tree stands in stoic silence throughout the bone-chilling winters, as snow, sleet, and beating rains attack her entire being. Leaves are mercilessly torn from her branches as fierce winds fight to viciously uproot the tree and send her crashing to the ground. In these harsh conditions, her future is murky. Will she make it through? Despite the uncertainty, the tree comforts herself with the knowledge that soon, very soon, summer will arrive and the sun will shine for her once again, comforting her with its



*(Continued on page 2)*

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Dear ...

I received your letter.

It's such a pity that you did not follow the Rebbe's guidance with *temimus*. Had you done so, you would have abandoned your wrongful behavior long ago. The Rebbe teaches (*Sichos Haran 19*) that even a person who has fallen into the clutches of the *yetzer hara* can return to Hashem, just by establishing a consistent shiur in Torah and learning any set amount each day. The power of Torah is so great that it can extricate a person from the depths of impurity.

Start learning Mishnayos and you will slowly start rising from the mire of sin. The letters of the word מִשְׁנָה correspond to the *passuk* (*Tehillim 30:4*) **מִן הַעֲלִית מֶן שְׂאוֹר נִפְשִׁי** – You have raised me up from the depths, because Mishnayos can pull a person out of the darkest places. Now, during the weeks of *Shovavim*, is an especially good time to start.

The Rebbe gives us such an easy and pleasant way to be able to complete the entire Torah (*Sichos Haran 76*). Even if a person has a hard time understanding what he is learning, he should nonetheless continue to say the words of Torah and his mind will eventually be able to grasp it.

Listen to the Rebbe and start reciting Mishnayos with determination. At first, you will not understand, because with a depressed state of mind, a person does not have the patience or power to concentrate. Additionally, one who is not vigilant and sins in the area of *kedusha* loses his ability to think clearly. Yet despite it all, persist in your efforts to continue learning Torah and Hashem will rescue you from the *yetzer hara's* clasp.

Start saying Tehillim each day, too. The Rebbe writes (*Likutei Moharan 2:73*) that a person who wishes to do *teshuva* should accustom himself to reciting *Tehillim*. The Rebbe then explains that there are three categories of people who wish to repent – all Jews strive to do *ratzon Hashem* but are stymied by different obstacles:

1. Those who want to do *teshuva* but don't have the ambition to carry through,
2. Those who want to do *teshuva*, have the ambition to carry through, but simply don't know how to go about it,
3. Those who want to do *teshuva*, have the ambition to carry through, know how to go about it, but then have to contend with the *yetzer hara* who tries to convince them that they can no longer return to Hashem.

The Rebbe concludes, "When a person says Tehillim, he will acquire the ambition to repent, he will know what is required of him to reach his goals and he will have the fortitude to battle the *yetzer hara*. He will be *zoche* to do true *teshuva* and Hashem will forgive him completely."

Make saying Tehillim a practice of yours and you, too, will merit genuine repentance. May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #1, page 199



warming rays. These encouraging thoughts are her anchor, enabling her to survive and pull through yet another day in freezing conditions.

When the summer finally does arrive, she realizes to her great consternation that her sigh of relief was a bit premature. The intense summer heat drains her of all energy and threatens to dry her out completely. Hot, parched and desperately yearning for some invigorating rainfall, she nonetheless perseveres.

The cycle repeats itself... and yet she stands there, year after year, strong and proud despite it all.

How much can we, from our own place of struggle, learn from the resilience of the unassuming tree? Life throws packages of pain at each of us. Snow, sleet and beating rains attack us, threatening to uproot us completely. From within our place of hardship, we may ask ourselves, "Will I ever survive this? How can I possibly pull through?" We comfort ourselves with the knowledge that better times are on their way, only to be bitterly disappointed when they bring along a whole new set of challenges.

Hot, parched and desperately yearning for reinvigoration, we feel like we are on the brink of despair. But we must hold on! We must not give up just yet. Like the tree, let us remain strong despite the challenges, for one who refuses to despair will see all the good that is to come.

### **Tit for Tat? Nope!**

The tree is subject to gross mistreatment by man. Passersby stop to lean on, kick, or spit on the tree and dirt and water are innocently tossed her way regularly. Now, human instinct is to retaliate good for good, bad for bad – *She screamed and threatened? I'll scream and threaten back! He hurt me, I'll hurt him right back!* – but the tree absorbs negativity in silence, continuing to provide of her goodness to man. Despite any 'unfair' treatment, the tree still gives sweet fruits to nourish the very ones who hurt her.

For us, it can be excruciatingly difficult to swallow the painful words or actions of others, yet it is possible. Not easy, but possible. Instead of retaliating, let us learn from the tree and train ourselves to bestow



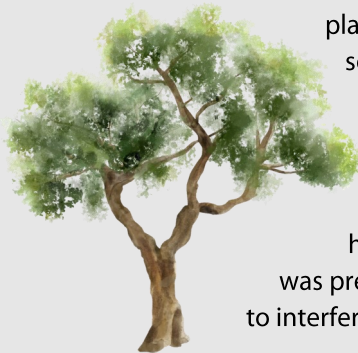
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kindness and joy upon all those around us, whether we have received kindness from them or not.

Who can be a better example of this *gadlus* than our *tzaddikim*? So many of our *gedolim* have been trampled on, ridiculed, embarrassed and degraded by countless people. Nonetheless, they continued being a source of inspiration, endlessly giving to the very ones who caused them pain. They encouraged, wrote and taught, putting themselves and their feelings aside so that others would benefit. It is only to their credit that we have so many *sefarim* filled with *chizuk* that is available for us in our times of need.

**Don't Compare**



In His infinite wisdom, Hashem arranged for each plant to be nourished from its individual source: its roots. A tree cannot seize rain that is meant for his neighbor; a bush cannot get a double dose of nutrition by snatching sunlight that was intended for a different one. How tall or short, how fruitful or barren each plant will be was predestined by Hashem, and there is no way to interfere with His design for each one.

Each and every person was created with a plan, custom-made to suit his individual needs. Why waste time and energy looking at others and comparing our lives to theirs? Why obsess over others' actions and how they affect us when in truth, it has nothing to do with us? Instead of getting upset when we see others getting the very things we wish for, we should turn to the Source of it all and ask for what we need.

Rarely are comparisons beneficial. When our observations lead us to believe that other people are better than us, it damages our self-image and breeds negative self-talk, because *"I have nothing good to offer – everyone else does things so much better than me."* This belief is fundamentally false. Every person, no matter how small, can contribute to the world in a way no one else can.

On the flip side, when we begin to believe that we are so much better than others, our behavior soon becomes aloof and haughty, and we come to expect honor, fame and attention – which is often not forthcoming. The obsessive thoughts of *"Why isn't everybody recognizing my greatness and according me the honor I deserve?"* cause much unnecessary heartache.

We must stop comparing! Let us 'look at our own plates' and use the unique abilities we were given to grow in *avodas Hashem*.

כי האדם עץ השדה – by remembering the life lessons learned from the tree and living our lives accordingly, we will merit tremendous good both in *Olam Hazeih* and in *Olam Haba*.

Kuntres Tu B'Shvat



ing to Hashem, I was able to survive my many tribulations.

My dear talmidim, learn from this approach to life. Never have any objections to Hashem's ways and never have complaints about Him. Remember what Chazal teach (*Tanchuma, Ki Seitzei*), *"One must thank Hashem for his suffering because this is what draws him closer to Hashem."* Chazal also say (*Sifri, Va'eschanan*), *"A person must rejoice with pain more than with good... because suffering atones for his sins."*

These words, when taken to heart, will cause a drastic attitude shift. Mohorosh went through so much pain in his lifetime, yet he always remained strong and was even *mechazek* others. Through it all, he infused us with life and encouraged us to do the same to others. Mohorosh used to say that he was able to persevere only because he followed the Rebbe's guidance with *temimus*, making *hisbodedus* an integral part of his life.

If you want to ease your suffering, listen to the *eitzos* of the Rebbe. Accustom yourself to talking to Hashem about everything that is on your mind and heart.

Find the blessings in your life and start thanking Hashem for everything you do have. Turn to Hashem and plead with Him to ease your pain. When you include Hashem in your life, your challenges will become more bearable.

The Sanzer Rav zt"l remarked, after the untimely passing of his son, Harav Hatzaddik R' Meir zt"l, that when a person feels a slap on his back and turns around to see his good friend standing there, it will not be painful; quite the opposite – he considers the slap to be a friendly greeting. The Sanzer Rav said, "I received a blow – my son was *niftar* at such a young age – however, Who is behind this? Hashem Himself! When I internalize this, it doesn't hurt anymore."

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #1, page 51

## I AM IN DESPERATE NEED OF CHIZUK

# Q & A



### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

There are no words to convey my appreciation. There is no money in the world that can repay you for all you do for *Klal Yisroel*.

I come from a very dysfunctional home and live a miserable life. My family is struggling financially, I have special needs siblings and my parents have no *shalom bayis* at all. My mother is not well and there is no one to take care of basic housework; the house is dirty and there is nothing to eat unless I buy/ make food. My father has a terrible temper and often humiliates me in public, and my brothers beat me to the point that I sometimes have to leave home to protect myself. My home is so unstable but I don't have anywhere else to live.

A friend of mine told me that Hashem doesn't punish a person twice and gave me *chizuk* that if I'm suffering so much now, at least after I am married I'll have a good life. However, I'm not convinced – everyone suffers, so why should anything change for me then?

I am weak from despair and in desperate need of *chizuk*.



### The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

The Rebbe says (*Sichos Haran 194*) that although a person must undergo suffering in this world, Hashem also grants him many blessings, too. The problem is that the person refuses to ease his own pain by seeking the good in his life. If a person utilizes his hardships to become closer to Hashem, then his difficulties become mere trivialities because they have strengthened his connection with Hashem. Suffering causes a person to start contemplating, "Who brought about all this grief? Who is afflicting me with this pain?" Hardships make one realize that Hashem is the source of everything and gives the person the opportunity to become closer to Him."

You will surely gain *chizuk* from Mohorosh, who suffered

tremendously throughout his life, yet he always accepted his difficulties with love. I have included an excerpt of his *tzava'a*; read his words and you will begin to view life differently.

**צוואת מוהרא"ש אות יד:**

*My dear children and talmidim, what can I tell you? You cannot imagine the pain and suffering I endured throughout my lifetime. I literally did not have a single day in my life, no exaggeration. Each day, I cried from all that I had to put up with, both from inside and outside the kehilla. My only comfort was my belief in Hashem and my trust that everything which occurs has an exact accounting. By escap-*

*(Continued on page 3)*

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