



SPARKS OF EMUNAH

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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

לעלוי נשמת
מרים חנה בת ר' דוד צבי הלוי
יוכבד בת ר' אליהו נתן

CHIZUK
FROM THE
PARSHA

PERFECTLY IMPERFECT

Who is more spiritual – people or *malachim*? Who is more holy – people or *malachim*? Who fulfills Hashem's will better – people or *malachim*?

The celestial worlds are full of thousands of *malachim*, and their entire existence is spirituality. Their only desire is holiness. They live only to fulfill Hashem's will.

In stark contrast to this is our world, a world of physicality, of *ta'avos*, and of many impediments to *avodas Hashem*. And yet Hashem said, "וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם" – Make a *midkash* for Me and I will dwell among you.

Hashem wanted us – physical beings – to make a home for Him to dwell among us, in our physical world. Although there is no *mishkan* today, this *passuk* still holds true. Every person can make a place for Hashem in his world, in his life.

Flawed is Good

The Torah begins by describing the *aron* – the *keili* which held the *luchos* – teaching us that Torah learning must be our first priority.

The exact size of the *aron* is clearly specified: וְאִמְתִּים וְחָצִי אֶרְכּוֹ, וְאִמְתָּה וְחָצִי רָחְבוֹ וְאִמְתָּה וְחָצִי קִמְתּוֹ. Every one of its dimensions includes a "broken" measurement, inferring that brokenness is crucial for acquiring Torah (*Baal Haturim, Shemos 24:10*). The *luchos* cannot be contained by a person who thinks he is perfect. Torah can only take hold in one who is humble, one who knows he has a long way to go to reach *shleimus*.

When it comes to Torah learning, one can often feel broken. "I don't have enough time to learn..." "I don't have enough patience to learn..." "My mind is in so many other places; I just can't focus..." "I always say that I'm finally going to set a steady *shiur* in learning, but I can't keep up my motivation..." "I want to accomplish so much in Torah, but no matter how hard I try, I can't seem to reach my goals..."



The Torah tells you – look at the *aron*! It's also incomplete from all sides, but when the *luchos* go inside it becomes the *aron hakodesh*! The same is with every person. **No matter how flawed you may be, if you will bring the Torah inside yourself, you will reach the holiest of places.**

A Way for All

The Rebbe teaches us an easy and pleasurable way to learn Torah (*Sichos Haran 76*): A person should have a steady *shiur* and learn Torah consistently, without a strong focus on understanding. *Chumash, Mishnayos, Gemara, halacha...* **The main thing is to learn each day and say the words of Torah – even with limited comprehension.** The benefits this brings are immeasurable! Torah learning has the power to elevate even the lowliest person and turn him into a *talmid chacham* and a *tzaddik*.

You don't need any special abilities to be able to learn. All you need is one thing: *seichel* to listen to the Rebbe. No matter who you may be, you can learn Torah. You can become a vessel to hold the *luchos*. You can arrive at the *kodesh hakadashim*.

Asher Hayah El Yoel, Teruma 5782

MOHOROSH
SPEAKS

משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה

Purim is fast approaching!

The light and joy associated with Purim are palpable from the beginning of the month of Adar. The Gemara says (*Yerushalmi, Megilla*) that *Megillas Esther* can be read all through the month of Adar. Consequently, if a person goes on a long journey and will be away for Purim without a *megilla*, he can be *yotzei* the *mitzvah* of *mikrah megilla* from *Rosh Chodesh Adar*. The entire month is somewhat like Purim itself.

משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה!

These words are said, sung and hung on signs all over. Joy is such an essential part of Purim and all of Adar. Yes, it is a *mitzvah* to be happy all year (*Likutei Moharan 2:24*), but in the month of Adar, **מרבין בשמחה** – we must **increase** our *simcha*, doing everything in our power to be happy. We hang up signs as a reminder to do whatever possible to remain happy, no matter what. By being happy in *Chodesh Adar*, we

(Continued on page 2)





SHOULD I MOVE TO FLORIDA?

Dear ...

I received your letter asking whether or not you should join the new settlement in Florida.

I can't answer that question without knowing all the pertinent details, but what I can tell you is that it depends on who else will be there. Will the people there be *erliche Yidden* who live their lives according to the Torah? Will they have an *erliche rav*? Will there be *erliche* schools for your children? If so, you can consider going. But if it will be made up of people who want to run away from their families and from themselves, **you should certainly not go no matter how tempting it may seem.** Even if the climate is pleasant, taxes are low, and tuition is free, it's still not worth it; even if they give you a house for free, it's not worthwhile.

Hear this story from Chazal (*Avos* 6:9):

Rabbi Yosi ben Kisma recounted, "When I was once traveling, I met a man who asked me which city I come from, and I replied that I live in a city of Torah scholars. He said to me, 'Rebbi, can you come to live in my city and in return I will give you lots of money and precious stones?'

"I answered, 'No matter how much money you are ready to pay me – even if you will give me all the money in the world – I will only live in a place of Torah.' For when a person departs from this world, the only thing he takes along is his Torah learning and his mitzvos. At that time, money, gold and silver are worthless."

When looking for a place to live, don't focus on where you can find cheap housing or low taxes. Look for one thing: **"Where is a place with *erliche Yidden*? Where will I be able to raise my children to be *erlich*?"**

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

tap into all the spiritual benefits of these special days.

The Gemara says (*Beitzah* 15b) "הרוצה שיתקיימו נכסיו יטע בהן אדר" – one who wishes to yield a good crop should grow the plant called "Adar."

What is this Adar plant? Why will it make a person be successful? The Rebbe teaches (*Sefer Hamiddos, Simcha* 2:1) that he who is happy will always be successful. This is what the Gemara is teaching us: הרוצה שיתקיימו נכסיו – if you would like to be successful both in *ruchniyus* and in *gashmiyus*, יטע בהן אדר – instill in yourself the *simcha* of *Chodesh Adar*. Your happiness will bring with it tremendous *hatzlacha*.

Am I Really Happy?

How can a person know if he is really happy?

The nature of joy is that it spreads. Real, internal happiness is contagious – it spills forth and expands to include others, making them happy as well.

Adar, the month of joy, personifies this. It's a month full of *chessed*: first is *Shabbos Shekalim*, which teaches us to give *tzedakah*, followed by the *minhag* to give *tzedakah* on *erev Purim*. Then *Purim* itself is full of *tzedakah* and *chessed*: we give *mishloach manos* and *matanos l'evyonim*, we invite family and friends for the *seuda*, and we even begin collecting money for *kimcha d'pische!* We do so much *chessed* this month because when we are truly happy, we want to give to others so that they should taste the joy as well.

Okay, But How?

"Be happy" is very easy to say but hard to actually achieve. Every person has hardships that can break his spirit to the point that he can't even put a smile on his face. The truth is, however, that being happy when everything goes well is nothing special – **true greatness is to remain happy despite the difficulties.** If you can strengthen yourself to be *b'simcha* even when times are tough, that is a sign that you are truly great.

Such emotional fortitude is only possible with *emunah*. Remind yourself of the basics: Hashem is always with you. Everything He does is with tremendous *rachmanus*. Absolutely nothing happens by chance. Taking this to heart will keep you strong in the face of life's difficulties, and you will be able to stay happy in all circumstances.

Here's another way to bring yourself joy: think into the *mitzvos* you do each day, most of which come so naturally. They are all part of the Torah that we have the special privilege to keep – this is a reason for unending celebration! How long are we in this world for? Just a few short years... How happy must we be that we can fill our days with *mitzvos* that'll carry us forevermore!

Do you keep *Shabbos*? Do you eat kosher food? Do you have a *mezuzah* on your door? Dance and sing! You are following a commandment given by Hashem Himself – to little you! How much luckier can a person be?



When a person rejoices with each *mitzvah*, he demonstrates his belief in the Master of the world and in His Torah.

In Part One of Haman's wicked plot to annihilate all of *Klal Yisrael*, he said the following (*Esther 3:8*): "ודתיהם שונות מכל עם" – their religion is different from every nation." R' Nosson explains (*Likutei Halachos, Nefilas Apayim 4*) that Haman informed Achashveirosh that keeping the Torah makes *Klal Yisrael* different from all other nations. Not because they have *mitzvos* – every nation has a set of laws that they must follow – but rather because of the **way** they follow *halacha*. The laws that governments put into place are always played around with; the people come up with many ways to sidestep them. There's definitely no joy there. The Jews, on the other hand, rejoice in doing the *mitzvos* – to the fullest extent! That's what bothered Haman so much. In his wickedness, he couldn't handle that we do *mitzvos* happily and we are connected to Something Higher.

Mitzvos should be a source of joy for every Jew.

Today is Not Forever

Hardships come up. We all have days when life drags us down and it's hard to be happy. Remember, though, that this day will soon be history and this challenge will be just a memory. Don't let it get you down! Don't waste your time on this world moping.



Chazal say (*Tanchumah Shemini*) אין השמחה ממתנת לאדם, לא כל מי ששמה היום שמח למחר – don't wait to become happy because happiness is fleeting; it isn't sustainable unless you work on **making yourself** happy, no matter what you are going through. Don't push off happiness for tomorrow – you don't know what tomorrow will bring! Work on being happy **today!**

Your happiness is not dependent on your circumstances.

The choice of how to live life is in **your** hands. The *passuk* says (*Devarim 11:26*), ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה – Hashem gives you **the day itself**; you choose what to do with it; will you make it a ברכה or a קללה? By choosing to focus either on the positive or on the negative, you make it a happy day or a sad one. ובחרת בחיים – choose the good life, the happy life. The successful life.

Getting There

Working on yourself? Don't do it alone!

A fundamental concept in Breslev is *hisbodedus* – talking to Hashem in your own words. Tell him all that is on your mind: all that you are grateful for, all that bothers you and all that you are struggling with. We sometimes think that self-improvement is "on us" and is our responsibility, but the truth is that we could and should ask Hashem for help in **all** areas of our lives, including self-improvement.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:52*) that when a person asks Hashem for help in his *avodas hamiddos*, the proper way to go about this is by focusing on one area at a time. He should ask and plead and beg for help with one specific *middah*, only moving on to the next after he succeeds in conquering the first one. The obvious question arises: which *middah* should be first? When we are full of negative character traits, where should we begin?

Mohorosh says that the first area to work on is *simcha*. All other bad *middos* stem from sadness and depression; through happiness, we will improve in all areas.

Fortunate is he who is happy in the month of *Adar* – and all year long. *A freilichen tamid!*

We must internalize this story well and firmly believe that *parnassa* comes only from Hashem. A person must not let himself think for even one moment that his source of livelihood is his boss or his business. One may not delude himself into thinking that if he loses his job or his business goes sour, he won't have any money to live on.

One must not allow the thoughts of, "But what will be?" "Where will we have money from?" take over his mind. Instead, he must rely on Hashem, for Hashem has many ways of providing a person with sustenance. *Chazal* teach us (*Taanis 2a*) that the key to *parnassa* is only in Hashem's hands.

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.



Q & A

HOW MUCH HISHTADLUS MUST I DO FOR PARNASSA?



QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

I wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Rosh Yeshiva for the shiurim that are full of chizuk for every person in every situation.

My question is as follows: How much effort is required when it comes to parnassa? At what point is a person supposed to stop his hishtadlus and let emunah and bitachon take over?

Thank you.

THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

I received your letter.

Emunah and bitachon are not only for when a person sees that his hishtadlus is not "working." A person must live with emunah and bitachon all the time – whether he is successful or not; whether life is going according to his plan or not.

One must internalize that Hashem is ממלא כל עלמין וסובב כל עלמין – He fills the entire world and encompasses the entire world, אין שום מציאות מבלעדיו יתברך כלל, – there is no reality other than Hashem, ובכל תנועה ותנועה שם אלופו של עולם – and He is the One behind every single thing. This clarity of emunah provides a person with the greatest delight that is possible to experience – the enormous pleasure that we will have in Gan Eden.

Work on your emunah. Remember that no person can give you parnassa and no person can take away your parnassa, because **Hashem is the only One Who provides a person with sustenance.** Chazal teach us (Yoma 38b) that it's impossible for a person to take anything that was destined for another – even as little as a hairsbreadth!

So you'll ask – why do we have to work? If everything is from Hashem, why can't we just stay at home and Hashem will provide us with everything we need?

The answer is that Hashem commanded us to do hishtadlus for parnassa. Chazal teach us (Sifri Devarim, 15:158) on the passuk (Devarim 15:18), "וּבְרַכְתִּיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה" – And I will bless you in all that you do. A person may not sit idle, but rather he must "do" – he has to work, and Hashem sends His bracha and the person is able to make money.

Mohorosh told the following story:

A man came to the Chofetz Chaim zy"ta and burst into tears. "Rebbe!" he cried. "My source of parnassa has died!" The man owned a cow which had always provided him with milk to sell. That morning, he had entered the barn and found his cow, dead. "We will all starve!" he moaned. "My wife, my children, and I... How will we survive without any income?"

"The cow was not your source of parnassa!" the Chofetz Chaim exclaimed. "Your Provider was and still is Hashem, and He will continue to provide for you. Chas v'shalom to believe that your sustenance came from a cow! The cow was just the means by which Hashem sent you parnassa until now, and now that your cow has died, Hashem will provide you with a livelihood some other way!"

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