

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 VAYECHI
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CHIZUK from the PARSHA NO MATTER WHERE, NO MATTER WHEN

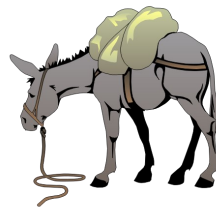
יששכר חמר גרם בין המשפתיים

Yissachar is a like strong-boned donkey; he rests between the boundaries.

In a ramshackle hut at the edge of town, a saintly man sways over his Gemara. Eyes alight, face aglow, he murmurs “Tanu Rabanan...” in a sweet sing-song, oblivious to the world around him. Night falls, then dawn breaks. For him, time stands still.

The phrase “ben Torah” may conjure up images of one who is solely dedicated to Torah, unhindered by any worldly matters. For the majority of us, however, life doesn’t allow for that level of devotion. Myriad obligations and various other factors cause the average person to find himself with little time, energy and focus for learning.

Nonetheless, the Rebbe gave us a way to learn Torah in all circumstances (*Sichos Haran 76*), no matter how busy life may be. With the *sefer derech halimud* (learning consistently, without a strong focus on comprehension), one can maximize every moment for Torah. Time constraints are no problem, nor is limited mental energy or capacity. Only have a few minutes? Learn for as long as you can. Can’t focus? Just say the words! Don’t understand? Keep moving forward and eventually you will grasp it. With time, the bits of Torah add up to more and more, and the joy it brings is indescribable.



One of the first questions we will be asked by the *beis din shel maalah* is, “קבעת עתים לתורה – did you set aside time each day to learn Torah?” The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:284*) that the word קבע can mean to steal; they will ask, “Did you ‘steal’ time for Torah? In middle of your hectic day-to-day life, did you nonetheless make Torah a priority, grabbing a few minutes here and there to learn?”

Yissachar, the paradigm of a *ben Torah*, exemplified this lesson. He merited to carry the *ol Torah* like a חמר גרם – a donkey who has the extraordinary ability to carry heavy burdens. Rashi explains that when a donkey wants to rest, he doesn’t wait until he gets to his destination or until he removes his load. Wherever he is, even בין המשפתיים – between the boundaries – he settles onto the ground and sleeps.

This is the key to greatness in Torah. Don’t wait until you “get to your destination” and can stop to dedicate a considerable chunk of time to learn. Don’t wait until your mind is clear enough to settle down with a *sefer*. Snatch a few moments between the “boundaries” of all the tasks you need to complete. In middle of it all, open a Chumash, Tehillim, Mishnayos or Gemara, and learn.

The words בין המשפתיים also allude to the שפתיים – lips (*Noam Elimelech, Vayechi*). Yissachar attained his great levels in Torah by using his lips (actually saying the words) while learning. The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:11*) that by saying the words of Torah, even when one’s comprehension is limited, he will advance from one level to the next and eventually come to understand Torah on the deepest level.

May we be *zoche* to experience that which the Rebbe said (*Sichos Haran 17*): “Once the Torah reveals her face to a person, he will no longer need anything else.”

Toch Hanachal Vayechi 5775 and Atzaso Emunah Terumah 5778

MOHOROSH SPEAKS A FIRE IN BRESLEV



This Friday, *asara b’teves*, marks the 180th *yahrtzeit* of R’ Nossan of Breslev, and it is an apt time to speak of him, his greatness and his legacy.

Born in the town of Nemerov in 5540 to R’ Naftali and Lania Herz a”h, young Nossan was raised in a home steeped in Torah and *yiras Shamayim*. At the tender age of 13, R’ Nossan already was an exceptional *talmid chacham* with great potential. It was no surprise when only months after his *bar mitzvah* (!), he was chosen as a son-in-law by R’ Dovid Tzvi Auerbach zt”l, one of the greatest *tzaddikim* of the time.

R’ Dovid Tzvi was the *rav* of three prominent cities: Shadigrad, Mohlov and Kremnitz, as well as in many smaller towns and villages. He was an exceptional *talmid chacham* and tremendous *gadol hador*, about whom R’ Baruch of Mezhibuzh said, “Eliyahu Hanavi is constantly at his side.” R’ Nossan was held in high regard by his eminent father-in-law, who hoped that when the time would come, R’ Nossan would take over



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Dear ...

I received your letter.

Try with all your strength to remain happy despite your circumstances. *Simcha* is the key to making it through your challenges, as the Rebbe says (*Sefer Hamiddos Simcha 2:1*), מי שהוא שמח – תמיד, על ידי זה הוא מצליח – **he who is always happy will be successful.**

Strengthen your *emunah* and remember that Hashem makes no mistakes; He is in charge, and He orchestrates the minutest details with extreme precision. All that occurs to you is for your benefit, even when you cannot see and cannot understand why or how.

The sadness you feel is from the *yetzer hara* and is the cause of so much evil. The Rebbe says (*Sefer Hamiddos, Atzvus 1:12*) that sadness and depression cause a person to feel like Hashem has forsaken him, *chas v'shalom*. As a result, he can very quickly fall to the depths of impurity and commit all sorts of terrible *aveiros* (*ibid. 1:15*). Eventually, he is humiliated before all (*ibid. 1:18*).

On the flip side, the Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:24*), מצוה גדולה להיות – בשמחה תמיד – **Joy is essential for avodas Hashem.** When a person is happy and serves Hashem with *simcha*, he is protected from all sin and all harm. Dovid Hamelech teaches this (*Tehillim 104:34-35*), אנכי אשמח בה' יתמו – when a person rejoices with Hashem, there will be no more sin in the land.

Don't let melancholy overtake you. Keep your spirits up and you will be *zoche* to a *yeshuah*.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

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



his rabbinical position and continue leading all his *kehillos*. Like many great men of the time, R' Dovid Tzvi had a deep-seated *hisnagdus* toward the new ways of the Baal Shem Tov and his *derech* of *chassidus*. He used to constantly warn his sons and sons-in-law (R' Nosson amongst them) to stay far away from *chassidim* and not get "entrapped" in their ways. Nonetheless, when R' Nosson sat in *beis medrash* and learned, some *chassidim* argued this mindset and claimed the opposite; that the *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov are true *tzaddikim* and that *chassidus* has the power to bring a person to great heights in *avodas Hashem*.

After many such conversations, R' Nosson was finally persuaded – at least to check out the veracity of their claims – and he began traveling to the *chassidishe gedolim* in the surrounding cities. They all saw R' Nosson's greatness – he was well-versed in all parts of the Torah; he knew the entire *Shas* with *poskim* and could review all of *Tosfos* by heart – and his great potential, and they drew him close. One of them, R' Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, even called him "My Nosson'le," as a term of endearment.

Indeed, R' Nosson was deeply inspired by these *tzaddikim* and began burning with a passionate desire to truly serve Hashem properly, but he was still unsure about which path was the correct one for him. *Chassidus* or not? One thing that disturbed him was the way *chassidim* spent so much time *fabrenging* when they could have been learning instead; this seemed to be outright *bitul zman* and *bitul Torah*. While he recognized the greatness and the very real *avodas Hashem* of the *gedolim*, R' Nosson was confused about how to apply it to his own life and achieve that greatness for himself.

A Holy Fire

It was *leil selichos*. R' Nosson stood in *shul* in Nemerov, saying the soul-stirring words of the *tefillos*. One of the townspeople, R' Lipa, was davening with such intensity and awe-inspiring passion that it awakened the curiosity of the rest of the *mispallelim*. At the conclusion of *selichos*, they asked R' Lipa what had been the cause for his newfound fervor. He explained that he had just been to a tremendous *tzaddik* in Breslev, a grandson of the Baal Shem Tov, who had ignited his heart and sparked a flame of connection to Hashem.

R' Nosson was intrigued. *Perhaps this is the tzaddik who will be able to guide me and answer all my questions!* He immediately set out for Breslev, and the few days he spent with R' Nachman of Breslev shook his entire worldview.

On the Shabbos before Rosh Hashana, he ate the Friday night *seuda* with the Rebbe and was awestruck by the profound *divrei Torah* and the *hischazkus* the Rebbe shared. At the end of the meal, after the crowd disbanded to retire for the night, R' Nosson could not fall asleep. His heart did not let him rest. Instead, he walked along the outskirts of the city, crying all night, "Ribono Shel Olam, there is a holy fire burning in Breslev! Please ignite that fire in my heart!"

The first time R' Nosson spoke to the Rebbe privately was a few days later, during the *aseres yemei teshuva*. On a walk together, R' Nosson poured out his troubled heart and shared his doubts about the proper way to serve Hashem. The Rebbe listened and encouraged him never to give up, always stay strong and keep going.



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The Rebbe then gently laid a hand on R' Nosson's shoulder and said, "Furthermore, it is good to pour out one's heart to Hashem, just like to a close friend." It was the first time the Rebbe taught about the gift of *hisbodedus*, that there is no way to persevere through challenges other than running to the One Who caused them in the first place.

These words hit R' Nosson like a lightning bolt. After so much searching and struggle, he realized that this was the way to become a *tzaddik*. No matter what challenges he would continue to face, he knew that he could discuss them with Hashem, Who would certainly help him.

This was the beginning of R' Nosson's life-long relationship with the Rebbe. He became the Rebbe's closest *talmid*, absorbing an incredible amount in the following eight years (until the Rebbe's passing). R' Nosson later said about himself, "When I came to the Rebbe, I threw away all my own wisdom completely. Consequently, every word I heard from the Rebbe was a new bit of knowledge. Whatever the Rebbe said – that was fact!"

The Rebbe had many *talmidim* who were tremendous talmidei *chachamim*, but R' Nosson topped them all. With his deep foresight, R' Nosson understood that the Rebbe's *divrei Torah* and *chizuk* were not just for that

time, but for generations, and he spent hours copiously writing each Torah thought, each *schmooze* and each *hanhaga* he saw by the Rebbe.

The Maggid of Tirhovitza, another *talmid* (who was actually forty five years older than the Rebbe), aptly expressed the following:

"If I would tell you that I saw fire coming from the mouth of the

Rebbe, it would be no exaggeration – the revelation of such deep Torah secrets was like a burning fire, but I could not imagine any way to take this fire and reveal it to the world.

"What can I tell you? Along came a young man named R' Nosson, who recorded it all in writing. I was awed! I saw fire; I heard fire; everything was fire – how was it possible for him to write fire onto paper?" This was R' Nosson; this was his life's mission.

R' Nosson's colossal compilations of the Rebbe's teachings include *Likutei Moharan*, *Sipurei Maasios*, *Sefer Hamiddos*, *Sichos Haran*, and *Chayei Moharan*. Later on, he wrote more *sefarim* based on the Rebbe's teachings, including *Likutei Halachos*, *Likutei Tefillos*, *Likutei Eitzos* and *Kitzur Likutei Moharan* and so much more. Everything we know of the Rebbe is thanks to R' Nosson – without him, where would we be today? It is no wonder that the Rebbe said, "If not for this young man, nothing would have remained of me – not even one page of *sheimos*."

Moments before his passing, R' Nosson said, "Ezra Hasofer is leaving this world. Blasphemous books are spread in the world each day, yet I hope that one page of the Rebbe's teachings will rectify it all."

May he be a *meilitz yosher* for us all.



could to please his wife, buying her beautiful clothing and things that she liked, even when money was scarce.

This is the way of the Torah: go out of your way to make your wife happy. Even if she is wrong and disregards what you say, you must do everything in the world to keep your marriage intact. This is what Mohorosh taught us, and this is the message I try to convey again and again: do everything in your power to preserve your home.

Mohorosh taught us another important lesson that makes life so much easier and more pleasant. He used to always say, "Your wife is always right." Don't argue with your wife and don't try to prove that your opinion is correct. To illustrate this point, Mohorosh gave an extreme example: even if your wife insists that it's night when the sun is high in the sky, don't argue! If it is important that she should know the truth, agree with her and offer to go on a walk in the moonlight. Don't insist that she is mistaken; let her realize it on her own. It seems awfully strange, but a person who follows this advice lives a much happier life.

I'm sure you have "very helpful" friends and family members who are advising you to get divorced; know, however, that they are only useful until you give a *get*. After the dust settles, you will be all alone without a place to call home. You'll drift from place to place, from home to home, and your life will be empty and bitter.

At this point, you must remain strong and **make sure your children don't lose their home because of their house.**

I hope you will accept my advice; in this way you will benefit both in This World and in the World to Come.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

RENOVATIONS WHEN WE CAN'T AFFORD IT

Q & A

???

Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

I am reaching out to ask for advice on an important matter: My wife keeps making large-scale decisions without my consent, even when I disagree completely. This is in regard to matters big and small, yet when it's about things that concern me, it becomes a really big problem. For example, she recently decided to do renovations in our house. Slight problem: we are broke. My business is struggling, and besides for the fact that I hardly make enough money to cover our regular expenses, I also owe large sums of money to various people.



Never did she ask me for my opinion on the matter. I found out about this project when a construction crew showed up at our house. I tried speaking to her amicably and explained that we cannot spend money that we don't have and that this should wait for a better time, but my words fell on deaf ears. Meanwhile, renovations are in full swing.

What should I do? How can I keep my cool?

Thank you.

The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...

Do everything in your power to keep the peace and not allow your marriage to crumble.

Try speaking nicely again – explain that although your current finances do not allow for such an expense, you will be more than happy to do renovations when you have the money for it. If it doesn't work and she remains adamant about continuing construction, then you must do everything in your power to hold your marriage together and not allow this to destroy your family.

Don't rush into therapy, either. Unfortunately, there are many therapists who use people's troubles to make money. When a couple comes to this kind of therapist for counsel-

ing, he/she will drag out the therapy process and squeeze them dry, afterwards advising the couple to divorce. An incompetent therapist causes so much heartache for the entire family; woe unto those who stumble into this snare.

I plead with you, listen to what I am telling you. I have no agenda here – I don't know you and I don't know your wife. I just want to save your family from being torn apart.

The Torah teaches us that a husband should do everything in the world to gladden his wife. The *tzaddik* R' Chaim Vital *zt"l* writes (*Shaar Hamitzvos, Parshas Eikev*) that his Rebbe, the Arizal, never spent much money on himself; he ate little and wore only simple clothes. However, he did whatever he

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