

SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
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PARSHAS KORACH
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CHIZUK from the PARSHA

LIVING SIMPLY

A leader, a genius, a charismatic personality. Respected, admired and beloved by all of *klal Yisrael*. Korach. The one who instigated the infamous *machlokes* that tore the nation apart, the one who was destroyed with hundreds of ardent supporters.

When contemplating the events of this week's *parsha*, we arrive at a puzzling question: the details of the *machlokes* don't seem to make sense. Korach?!? How is it that the wise and esteemed Korach fell into such foolishness? *מה יקרה שפקח היה, ראה לשטות זה*, asks Rashi.

Is intellect a good thing? Great thinkers will answer with a very enthusiastic "yes!" because their mission is to analyze every matter to the point of complete comprehension; that is their ultimate enjoyment and the purpose of their lives. However, the Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:19*) that the goal is to serve Hashem and do His *mitzvos* with *temimus* – simplicity, without having to understand the reasons behind them. He quotes the *passuk* (*Koheles 12:13*): *סוף דבר הכל נשמע את האלקים ירא ואת* – *מצותיו שמור כי זה כל האדם* – The purpose of life is to fear Hashem and to do *mitzvos*. The end. Reasoning and philosophizing are unnecessary; we must serve Hashem with pure, simple faith. *כי זה כל האדם* – this is something that every person can do.

Korach's downfall was not **despite** his sheer brilliance, but **because** of it. The letters of *קרח* are the same as *חקר*, because he was always making calculations: *If an entire garment can fulfill the requirements of tzitzis with one little thread of techeles, surely a garment made completely of techeles is exempt from the mitzva... If an entire house can fulfill the requirements of mezuzah with one little scroll on a doorpost, surely a house that is full of sefarim is exempt from the mitzvah...*



Delving too deeply into matters is dangerous and destructive. Look at where Korach's mind took him – underground! Instead of thinking, pondering or considering, we need to just do the *mitzvos* because Hashem commanded us to do so.

Philosophy is not so prevalent anymore, and overthinking to the extent that the Rebbe warns us against is quite uncommon. Yet we fall into this trap in other areas, instead, most commonly with our performance of *mitzvos*. We wonder, "Did I do it right? Was I really *yotzei* the *mitzva*?"

It's a mistake to think that these thoughts bring us to more spirituality; actually, they are unproductive and even detrimental. Analyzing, reconsidering and second-guessing create such pressure inside us that *Yiddishkeit* becomes a burden and we lose all enthusiasm for *mitzvos*. Let's listen to the Rebbe and put our *chochmos* aside. Let's do *mitzvos* to the best of our ability with *temimus* and find joy in every *mitzva* we are *zoche* to fulfill.

Toch Hanachal, Korach 5761

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

ANYONE LISTENING?



Every person wants to be heard. Thousands of dollars are spent just to be able to sit on an arm-chair and unburden oneself. People are starving for empathy, for validation, and even only for a listening ear.

There is no need to pay a fortune per session. The Rebbe gave us a gift, the secret called "*hisbodedus*." It's more than just *tefilla*; *hisbodedus* means talking to Hashem and telling Him everything that is on our minds, the way one speaks to a close friend. It works, it's free, and it's the most liberating experience imaginable. The Rebbe says that *hisbodedus* is the ultimate *avodas Hashem* and is more valuable than anything else.

It sounds almost too simple. Speak to Hashem and you've reached the climax of *Yiddishkeit*? The truth is, though, that it is not simple at all. Because of its tremendous power, the *yetzer hara* invests much effort to dissuade us from doing *hisbodedus*, mainly by making us feel like no one is listening and nobody even cares.



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Dear ...

The Rebbe says (*Sefer Hamiddos, Os Pachad*) that he who flees from problems is truly a wise person. Take these words as your guiding light and do your utmost to avoid becoming entangled in others' problems.

If your family and your wife's family are in conflict with each other, why must you be part of it? In the end, you'll suffer the most because they will all blame you. *Chazal* relate (*Brachos 56a*) that Rava once tried to break up a fight between two blind men, and both began attacking him in response – when you see two people fighting, keep far away so that you don't become embroiled in the *machlokes*, too.

Don't be the one to relay messages that can cause hurt between others. When your father sends you with messages to your father-in-law, just listen to what he has to say and don't pass it on. *Kibbud av* does not necessarily mean fulfilling every request that your father asks of you. At your stage, *kibbud av* means establishing an *erliche* home, respecting your wife and being *mechanech* your children.

The greatest respect one can accord his parents is by conducting himself righteously and bringing them *nachas*. *Chazal* say (*Yuma 86a*) that we have the obligation to sanctify Hashem's Name and cause His Name to be beloved. When a person behaves righteously, those around him say, "Look at him – he behaves so beautifully because he learns Torah. Praised be his parents who taught him Torah, praised be his teachers who taught him Torah and woe to the people who do not learn the holy Torah." In this way, Hashem's Name is glorified.

May Hashem give you the wisdom to stay far away from *machlokes*.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #2, page 88



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The Rebbe relates (*Sichos Haran 10:12*) that he, too, had this struggle. In his younger years, he spent much time talking to Hashem in Yiddish (his mother tongue). Each day, he poured out his heart to Hashem, describing the ups and downs of his spiritual life, as well as his physical needs. However, he often felt like Hashem wasn't listening. He davened, asked, described, explained and pleaded but didn't see results; no magical solutions materialized; no bursts of inspiration suddenly lit up in his mind. It came to the point that he just stopped – stopped talking to Hashem in his own words, stopped asking his personal requests, stopped describing his challenges and victories; after all, if no one is listening, it's a waste of time and energy.

After a few days of silence, the Rebbe thought it over and realized that it's impossible that Hashem doesn't care about him and doesn't listen to him. With renewed energy, he started doing *hisbodedus* again. This cycle repeated itself numerous times.

Every person can derive much *chizuk* from this. Do you feel like your *hisbodedus* is "wasted," as if no one is listening anyway? As great as he was, the Rebbe felt this way, too. He also felt as if nobody was listening and that nobody even cared, yet he persisted. So can you.

The Rebbe later testified that the only way he attained all his incredible spiritual achievements was because of those personal conversations with Hashem. "If I would have known how much *hisbodedus* can accomplish," he said, "and how everything can be attained by speaking to Hashem, I would never have busied myself with fasting and tormenting my body to purify myself; rather, I would have invested all my energy in talking to Hashem. I would have spent as much time speaking to Him in one day as I did in an entire year, because *hisbodedus* is what ultimately brings results."



All Day Long

Ideally, *hisbodedus* should be done all day long (*Likutei Moharan 2:96*). Yet most people cannot talk to Hashem for twenty-four hours straight; therefore, the Rebbe advises us to talk to Hashem for at least an hour each day.

"Chaim, I haven't had a chance to talk to you in a while. When can you give me an hour of your time?" How many of us can commit to an hour-long conversation with an old friend? When trying to set a time to talk, it usually doesn't work. There are many excuses which preclude the possibility of a long discussion. Versus an impromptu meeting: "Chaim, my old friend! We haven't spoken in ages! Time to catch up." Despite busy schedules, a spontaneous schmooze can easily stretch to be hours long.

The same is with *hisbodedus*: *Velvel* had a lot on his mind and a burning desire to talk to Hashem, so he cleared

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an hour in his schedule for focused *hisbodedus* in a quiet room. The first two minutes were spent trying to decide where to start. In the following three minutes, Velvel went off-topic seven times and found his mind wandering nineteen times. Looking at his watch, he saw that he still had a long fifty-five minutes ahead... so he just quit.

Often, it is the commitment to a chunk of time that makes us give up faster. Don't feel the pressure to "set an hour-long appointment;" instead, make an "impromptu meeting" and start talking to Hashem without looking at your watch. With this relaxed mindset, you'll have the stamina to keep going for a longer amount of time.

Don't get disheartened even if you find yourself faltering after a few minutes. Every single word that you say to Hashem has tremendous value; every minute of *hisbodedus* is cherished by Hashem and brings you enormous benefit.

If you speak to Hashem throughout the day, you'll find that all your two-minute "*hisbodedus* sessions" add up to significantly more than an hour. You can even accomplish the Rebbe's ideal of doing *hisbodedus* all day long. No, there is no need to cut yourself off from the world and spend your days in solitude. Do whatever you need to do: learn, daven, eat, sleep, work and spend time with your family... **with Hashem**, by talking to Him throughout.

Immediately upon awakening, start the conversation! Say *Modeh Ani* and ask Hashem to make the day a successful one. On your way to work? Continue the conversation! Ask that you should find favor in the eyes of those you interact with. Heading home? Don't stop the conversation! Ask for patience and calm to be able to get along with your wife and children. And finally, before going to sleep, ask Hashem to give you a restful night so that you can wake up energized and refreshed.

With *hisbodedus*, you can elevate your entire life to become a completely spiritual existence. By discussing even the most mundane matters with Hashem, even physicality becomes holy!

A person who talks to Hashem constantly will never feel lonely. Yes, Someone **IS** listening – the only One who can actually help you. He is listening to every word.



wise woman builds her home, and the foolish one tears it down with her own hands."

The biggest tragedy is the destruction of a home, especially when it's still possible to salvage it. You're right that your husband should come home earlier, but you must use *chochmah*, too. Instead of getting stuck in the details of who is right and who is wrong, see what **you** can do to change the situation for the better.

No one enjoys listening to criticism, especially not from a spouse. Every man has an ego and wants to feel respected; when his wife tries to order him around, it will only backfire. Yelling at your husband will not accomplish anything besides a full-fledged screaming match. Instead, speak to him with respect, as Shlomo Hamelech teaches (*Mishlei 15:1*), "A gentle reply diffuses anger."

Human interactions are like a mirror. Shlomo Hamelech says (*Mishlei 27:19*), "As water reflects the expression on a person's face, so too are the emotions in one's heart reflected back to him by another." Whether you look into water with a smile or frown, your reflection will show you the same expression. The same is true regarding your behavior – the way you treat others is the way they will treat you. If you will work to increase positive feelings and interactions, you'll succeed in changing your situation entirely.

Changing your behavior will be very difficult at first, especially since you already feel so resentful; however, **if you will greet your husband happily and speak positively to him, you will see that things will change between you.** First your mindset will shift. You will greet him without feeling resentful and you'll appreciate the few hours he does spend with you. As a result, he'll enjoy coming home and won't want to waste an hour sitting around after work. (You must, however, be patient until the transformation occurs and not abandon your mission too soon.)

You write that you have tried with positivity, but it is hard for me to believe so. With positivity one can create whatever change he wants. Perhaps you tried talking nicely but with an underlying displeasure; **when one speaks kindly and has patience, he can transform even the most difficult person in the world.**

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

HOW CAN I CHANGE MY HUSBAND'S BEHAVIOR?



Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

Thank you for all that you do for *klal Yisrael*.

I am a mother of four children under four, *ka"h*, and one of them has special needs. My husband works nearby, about a fifteen minute walk from our home. Instead of

walking home when he ends his workday, he stays at his office to get a ride with a coworker who finishes work an hour later. This arrangement frustrates me to no end, because all I want is for him to come home and help me out after a long day of running from one child to the next, from one tantrum to the next. But the same thing happens again and again – each day, he breezes in an hour late with the excuse that he “had to wait for his ride.”

I have some neighbors who try to help me out, but the bulk of the work falls on my shoulders. It really hurts me that my husband doesn't seem to care about how hard I work. I've tried everything already - positivity, negativity... but nothing has helped. Perhaps the Rosh Yeshiva has advice for me.

Thank you.



The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

I received your letter.

A woman once came to a Rav to ask for a get. When the Rav asked her why, she said, "My husband comes home very late every day. I can't continue taking care of the children by myself for the rest of my life!"

The Rav replied, "A get won't solve your problems; if you get divorced, your husband won't start coming home earlier – he won't come home at all!"

It may sound like a joke, but in reality, these words convey an important message. When a person is so desperate to escape from his problems, he sometimes runs headfirst into

worse problems. True, it's very hard that your husband comes home late every day, but just think how difficult it will be without him in the picture at all. As hard as it is now, it will only be worse if there is no husband for you and no father for your children.

If you truly want advice on how to create positive change, listen to the guidance of Mohorosh, who constantly reminded us, “Be smart, not right.” This is the secret to a successful marriage; instead of trying to prove just how right you are, be smart. **Think: “Is it worth destroying my marriage for this?”** Shlomo Hamelech says (*Mishlei 14:1*), “The

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