

SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF MOHOROSH ZT”L
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CHIZUK from the PARSHA

THE ONLY WAY OUT

וישב ישראל בשטים... וישתחו לאלהיהן

Bnei Yisrael settled in Shittim... and they bowed to their gods.

Bnei Yisrael were a nation so holy and so elevated, yet they stooped so low and traded their belief in Hashem for belief in lifeless, helpless gods made of wood and stone. How is this possible? There is only one way to drag *klal Yisrael* away from Hashem: by enticing them to sin with immorality. Immorality muddles the mind and causes one to lose his *emunah*; therefore, sinning with the *bnos Moav* was the cause for their subsequent sin of *avoda zara*.

The Zohar says (*Parshas Vayechi 219*) that the *aveira of pgam habris* is so terrible that it has no possibility of *teshuva*. However, the Rebbe teaches that there **is** one way to return – *krias shema* is the way out. When a person proclaims, “Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One!” and declares his belief in Hashem, he succeeds in overcoming his *yetzer hara* (*Likutei Moharan 1:36*).

This can be seen in this week’s *parsha*, in the way Pinchas reacted to Zimri’s brazen deed. ויקח רמח בידו – he seized a spear and slayed the sinners. The word רמח is written without a ך, signifying the רמ”ח – 248 words in *krias shema*; Pinchas fought the *tuma’ah* with a declaration of *emunah*.



But it isn’t always so simple. For when a person is so overtaken by desire and his mind is constantly consumed by thoughts of sin, *krias shema* alone is not enough. At that point, in order to be saved from the *yetzer hara*, the Rebbe teaches that he must cry as he says *shema*. We see this in the way *klal Yisrael* reacted to the plague of immorality that was raging amongst them. והמה בוכים פתח אהל מועד, *Targum Yonasan* explains that they cried as they said *shema*. “Tears during *krias shema*,” concludes the Rebbe, “have the power to rescue one from the depths of his impurity.”

Practically speaking, this advice poses a challenge, because it’s hard to demand an emotion at a specific time. How can we force ourselves to cry while saying *shema*? Mohorosh explains that it means to **cry out to Hashem to acquire *emunah***, which is the essence of *krias shema*. *Emunah* paves a path for us to return to Hashem, because the moment we realize that Hashem loves us and is always with us, all our *taavos* fall away.

Emunah doesn’t sprout on its own; we must plead with Hashem to help us attain it. Daven, implore and cry, “**Ribono shel Olam, help me remember that you are the One running the world and that You see all that I do. I so badly want to have *emunah*; help me remember that I am beloved by You. I know I am not acting as I should, but Hashem, I want to believe in You!**”

Every bit of effort we invest in our *emunah* empowers us to conquer our negative desires. May we be *zoche* to attain true and pure *emunah* and be freed from the clutches of the *yetzer hara*.

Asher Hayah El Yoel, Balak 5782

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

SHIDDUCHIM



Mazel tov! It’s a boy! Thinking *shidduchim* yet? Don’t worry. Hashem has already prepared a *shidduch* for the new baby.

Chazal teach us (*Sotah 2a*) that each *neshama* is paired with its match forty days before it descends to this world. Why, then, do we see so many singles getting older, with no *shidduch* in sight? Where are their preordained *zivugim*, and why is it taking so long for them to find each other?

“We must solve the *shidduch* crisis!” *Shadchanim*, *askanim* and heartbroken parents cry. Yet in order to solve the problem, we must understand what the problem truly is. Mohorosh teaches that the crisis is not so much in reality as it is in the mind, where unrealistic expectations, inflated egos and misplaced priorities play center stage.

In search for perfection, young adults entering “the *parsha*” subconsciously draw up a checklist of qualities that are



(Continued on page 2)

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Dear ...

I received your letter.

Shlomo Hamelech says (*Koheles 9:12*), "Man does not know when will be his time; just like fish are suddenly caught in a trap, so too, are people taken by surprise when a disaster suddenly occurs." Chazal explain (*Sanhedrin 81b*) that this trap is not referring to a large fishing net, but rather a flimsy hook that is difficult to detect and can thereby haul in a big catch. The same is with us: we are like unassuming fish swimming in the ocean – i.e. this world. Fish keep being "caught"; people are suddenly taken from us, day after day. We don't realize that we must take a lesson from tragedy and understand that we are not invincible. The same can happen to us, too.

When calamity strikes, we must be awakened from our indifference and ask ourselves, "What will I take along with me when I leave this world?"

The pleasures of *Olam Hazeh* are only temporary, as it says (*Avos 6:9*), "When a person dies, he must leave behind his gold, silver and valuables. The only things he can take along are Torah, *tefilla*, and *ma'asim tovim*." Mohorosh used to remind us repeatedly that when a person constantly talks to Hashem, his *tefillos* will accompany him even after his passing (*Tana D'Bai Eliyahu Rabbah 15*).

Fortunate is he who lives with this awareness and reminds himself each day, "My time on this world is fleeting. Soon I will have to leave everything behind and return to Hashem; all I will be able to take along with me is the Torah I learn and the mitzvos that I fulfill."

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah #2*, page 121



"absolutely necessary" to have in a spouse. Personality, intelligence, money, looks, *yichus*... flawless perfection down to the last detail. A suggestion that is slightly lacking in any area is nixed without a backward glance. Days slip by; weeks, months and years pass with the "perfect" *shidduch* still as elusive as ever. How can we stop this self-destructive trend?

Whose Idea?

Part of what makes the *shidduch* process so challenging is that there is so much uncertainty. There is so much information and so many resumes to filter through with no idea of which might be "The One." Wouldn't it be nice if, along with each suggestion, we would get a message from *shamayim* telling us if it's even worth pursuing?

Here's the secret: every *shadchan* (and even layman) who suggests a *shidduch* is a messenger sent from the One Above. All interactions and conversations are part of Hashem's intricate orchestrations – how can we dismiss a direct message from Hashem with a flippant, "oh, it's not for me"? How dare we turn down His suggestions without even giving it proper thought?

Mohorosh teaches us that the proper course of action in *shidduchim* is to let Hashem lead you. As long as the prospective match is physically and emotionally healthy, don't be the one to say no! Have no fear – if you agree to the *shidduch* and it isn't meant to be, Hashem will not allow it to proceed. However, if it is the right one and you turn it down, it will ultimately happen anyway, regardless of how vehemently you reject it. The question is only how long it will take and how painful your journey will be.

Ridiculous Requirements

Getting married is a *mitzva* – the very first one in the Torah – and is a prerequisite for *avodas Hashem*. In his effort to stop us from living a life of purity and holiness, the *yetzer hara* provides us with many foolish reasons to turn down possible *shidduchim*.

Background

Where are they from? What type are they? Which *shul* do they daven? Are they from "in-town"? From out of town? From another continent? It makes no difference. All Jews are one; all *neshamos* are hewn from the same pure source. Differences in background or "type" should not have any bearing on a *shidduch*.

Financial status

Will they support the couple? For how long? How about providing a down payment for a house? Money comes and money goes; finances should not play a decisive role in *shidduchim*. The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:69*) that *parnassa* comes solely in the *zechus* of one's wife. Even if the *mechutanim* won't contribute a penny, follow Hashem's command and get married; *parnassah* will naturally follow.

Yichus

A single man in his mid-thirties came to Mohorosh for guidance regarding a particular *shidduch*. Hundreds of possibilities



(Continued on page 3)



had already been suggested to him before, yet he always turned them down for trivialities.

Mohorosh urged him to go through with it, but he was not receptive at all. Finally, the bachur admitted that he wanted a girl with great *yichus*, as he was a grandson of the Turei Zahav. Mohorosh exclaimed, "Great! The girl is just the right one for you; she is a granddaughter of the Magen Avraham."

From one moment to the next, the bachur's entire demeanor changed and he left the room with a bounce in his step and a sparkle in his eyes. Mohorosh smiled at those present and said, "Didn't Hashem promise Avraham Avinu 'ואנכי מנגן לך' (Bereishis 15:1) That's what I meant when I said she's a granddaughter of the Magen Avraham."

Are you looking for *yichus* in a *shidduch*? Are you looking for prestige? What can be more prestigious than being a direct descendant of the *avos hakedoshim*?



A Rung Up, A Rung Down

Chazal tell us (Yevamos 63a), "Lower your standards and get married." As long as one arrogantly refuses to consider certain *shidduchim* because "that's not what we're looking for," he will just prolong the process and the difficulties involved. Conversely, when a person can step off his high horse and consider *shidduchim* even of lower standards than himself, he will merit finding his *zivug* easily.

Aryeh was a man of means who rubbed shoulders with the upper echelons of society. When Zundel's son was suggested for his daughter, Aryeh was highly insulted. "Zundel? He's a simple, low-class guy. That shadchan has some nerve!"

After a couple of years, Zundel's fortune started to look up while Aryeh's business took a nosedive. A few investments gone sour and the man of means was no more – Aryeh was reduced to a "simple, low-class guy" who could barely make ends meet. The once-unlikely *shidduch* was suggested again, and *mazel tov!* This time, there were no egos at play and the soon-to-be *mechutanim* happily drank *l'chaim*.

The *Midrash* says (Bereishis Rabba 68) that Hashem busies himself with building ladders, so to speak. In order to arrange for a match to be made, the Master Shadchan sometimes brings one person a few rungs up and sends another a few rungs down, just so that they should view each other as "a man of my standards." The reason for painful life experiences, such as losing money, fame or honor, may be only in order for a *shidduch* to happen. Wouldn't it be worthwhile to avoid this by stopping to reject those whom we think are "of lower quality" than us?

It's time to solve the *shidduch* crisis! Are you at fault for making the problem worse? In your search for "just the right one", are you turning down suggestions just because they are less than ideal? It's time for a good look in the mirror – you, too, are imperfect! Swallow your pride and allow Hashem to lead you, and you will *be'ezras Hashem* find your *zivug* quickly and easily.

Sichos Mohorosh 3, Erech Zivugim



Now is the time for you to strengthen yourself and continue serving Hashem with the abilities you have now. Don't forego *shacharis*, *minchah* or *ma'ariv* and commit to learning Torah each day. Learn *Chumash* with *Rashi* and *Targum*, as well as *Mishnayos* and *Gemara* each day, whether you understand or not. Just say the words of the holy Torah – even if you can't focus – and you will give Hashem immense pleasure and joy. As R' Nosson said to his *talmid*, "You will give me *nachas* when I'll see you remain strong even in the face of difficulties."

You write about the intense pressure you feel before and on *yamim tovim* – do as the Rebbe did. You will find his advice to be encouraging and empowering. The Rebbe said (*Sichos Haran 2*), "Each morning, I give over the entire day to Hashem – every moment, every occurrence, and every one of my actions and those of my children – and I trust that Hashem will guide me to do as He sees fit. Before Shabbos or *yom tov*, too, I place myself completely in His hands. Then, no matter what happens, I can be calm and joyful; I don't have to ponder or worry as to whether I did right or not."

My dear brother, stay strong! Don't abandon yourself; don't neglect your *neshama*. Try your best to serve Hashem with the abilities you have **now**, without comparing yourself to the way you've been in the past.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah Pamphlet 33, page 34

HOW CAN I RENEW MY PASSION FOR YIDDISHKEIT?



Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

You cannot imagine the far-reaching impact of your letters and *shiurim*. May Hashem give you the strength to continue with your holy work.



Not too long ago, I was enthusiastic and passionate about Yiddishkeit. I woke up early, hurried to *mikvah*, davened well and learned diligently. I'm not sure what happened to me now – I think I'm just burnt out. I have no patience to sit and learn, I get a headache when I try to concentrate, and I lost all my passion for *avodas Hashem*. All this is besides the struggles that I have as a *bachur* and other difficulties my family is going through.

Another burden of mine is *yom tov* and the stress that comes along with it. This past *Shavuot*, I had enormous pressure about staying up the whole night learning, and now I'm dreading the upcoming *yamim noraim* – I can't imagine how I'll manage to be in shul for so many hours.

I hope the Rosh Yeshiva will be able to help me. Thank you.

The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

I received your letter.

R' Nosson had a talmid called R' Shaul from Teplik zt"l, who served Hashem with immense passion and joy – just like you used to; he awoke early, immersed in a mikvah and davened and learned diligently all day. On a visit to Teplik, R' Nosson observed his talmid's conduct up close and saw the tremendous fervor that R' Shaul displayed. R' Nosson remarked, "Shaul, Shaul, I don't have pleasure from your avodas yet. My nachas will be when I see that you can continue with your avodas

Hashem even after you fall."

Avodas Hashem includes both successes and failures. The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:6*) that if one wants to return to Hashem, he must know the right way to go about it. It isn't always an upward path – rather, it's a journey full of roadblocks and setbacks. In order for a person to accomplish his goal, he must know how to move forward **and** he must know how to "retreat," too. Otherwise, his inevitable regressions will cause him to fall apart and give up entirely.

(Continued on page 3)

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