

SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
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CHIZUK from the PARSHA

A GOOD LEADER

Moshe Rabbeinu’s life was drawing to an end, after forty years of leading *klal Yisrael* with unsurpassed devotion. Ever-dedicated to his people, he beseeched Hashem not to leave them like sheep without a shepherd, but to appoint a qualified leader in his stead.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:18*) that being a leader is a risky undertaking, because along with its potential to accomplish, it has the power to destroy, too. The danger of an unqualified leader is that he might give improper guidance, which can do so much damage that it is likened to murder.

What makes a good leader? To be a leader is to be a motivator, one who influences every single one of his followers to attain greater heights. The challenge with this task is that all people are different – what inspires one person to grow may be the cause for another’s despair. There is no single approach that works for every person.

The words of Moshe Rabbeinu’s plea teach us the key component of effective leadership. He said, “יפקד ה’ אלקי הרוחות לכל בשר איש על העדה” – Hashem, You know the workings of each person’s mind; appoint a person to lead the nation.” Rashi explains that he asked Hashem to choose a leader with a deep understanding of the way different **minds** work, so that he would know how to guide each member of *klal Yisrael*.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:68*) that this is the greatness of a *tzaddik* – he knows just the right approach for each individual. Those on the top rungs of the spiritual ladder and those at the very bottom need to hear completely different messages in order to grow, yet a *tzaddik* understands how to speak to each one. To a person who considers himself a *ba’al madreiga*, the *tzaddik* comes with a passionate rebuke. “Don’t think you’ve reached perfection yet,” he says. “Take hold of yourself! There is so much you still have to improve.” These words have the power to shake the person out of his complacency and urge him forward. However, they can be tremendously destructive when said to the wrong individual. *Mussar* can completely crush one who has already lost hope in himself. He is so dispirited already – he needs to hear encouragement that can lift him out of the quagmire of self-deprecation and guilt. “You are so beloved by Hashem,” the *tzaddik* tells him. “Hashem is right here with you; you are so close to Him! He is just waiting for you to take a step in the right direction.”

This is the kind of *manhig* Moshe Rabbeinu requested. The *passuk* continues as follows: “אשר יוצאם ואשר יבאם” – a good leader urges the complacent ones onward by “sending them out”, i.e. showing how distant they still are from Hashem. However, he still “brings in” the downtrodden ones by giving endless encouragement and support.

A *tzaddik* can differentiate between those who need rebuke and those who need encouragement, but how dare we, simple people, give *mussar* to others? Do we even begin to understand the workings of their minds? By criticizing others, we are liable to cause anger and despair and thereby do irreparable damage. Instead, let’s only look for the good qualities in those around us. By encouraging and praising others, we can affect real change and inspire them to become truly *erliche Yidden*.

Toch Hanachal, Pinchas 5765



MOHOROSH SPEAKS

THREE WEEKS

“ Shabbos *parshas Pinchas* marks the beginning of “*bein hametzarim*”. This term’s literal meaning is “between the walls” and refers to the three weeks between *Shiva Asar B’tammuz* and *Tisha B’av*, which have explicit *halachos* that help us focus on the loss of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

To many, the Three Weeks is a depressing time, when it seems that we are at a collective spiritual low and distant from Hashem. However, this couldn’t be further from the truth. This is actually an especially opportune time to solidify our connection with Hashem, our loving Father and King.

There was once a land that was ruled by a powerful and wealthy king, with whom it was impossible to secure an appointment. There was just one way to gain an audience with the king: by meeting with him outside the palace, during his once-yearly sojourn through the kingdom.

R’ Nossou explains that during

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Dear ...

I received your letter.

Your wife is not callous or cruel; she screams at your children because that's what she saw when **she** was a child. Growing up, all she heard was degradation and insults, and she therefore thinks it's the proper approach to *chinuch*. She isn't trying to be bad – she just doesn't realize how harmful such behavior is.

Set aside time each day to learn the principles of proper *chinuch* together. In the *kuntreisim* "Parenting with Pride" and "Successful Parenting," Mohorosh teaches how to raise children with patience, as well as the severity of shaming children and the heavy price one pays for such behavior. If your wife would just learn the right way to be *mechanech* children and realize how her behavior is damaging to everyone dear to her, she would surely stop using such disparaging language.

Judge her favorably and try to view her in a positive light. Realize that she isn't at fault – all she ever heard was condemnation and criticism. If you would have had to undergo all that she endured as a child, you would have been doing a lot worse. View your wife with compassion and notice her good qualities, and you will see that everything will change for the better.

There is no greater gift you can give your children than a loving and harmonious relationship with your wife. Children are very perceptive; they can feel when their parents are on good terms and when they are upset with each other. Even sensing discord hurts them deeply, how much more so when they actually witness conflict between their parents. This causes them to develop anxiety and a deep-seated insecurity which they suffer from all their lives.

Most of all, remember that the most critical component of raising healthy and *erliche* children is with *tefilla*. It doesn't matter if your children are still young – it's never too early to daven. We live in a dangerous era when children from the most beautiful families abandon *Yiddishkeit*, *R"l*. The only solution is to daven and cry to Hashem to merit *erliche* children.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #1, page 145



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bein hametzarim, Hashem is in exile, so to speak. He is "out of the palace" and so much more accessible than He is all year. This is a time when even the simplest people can come close to him even without an "appointment" or "special connections."

We see this in the words of *Megillas Eicha*. The *passuk* says (*Eicha* 1:3), *כל רדפיה השיגה בין המצרים* – all her pursuers overtook her between the walls. The *Mezritcher Maggid* shares a profound inspiration on this *passuk* (*Avodas Yisrael, Mas'ei*): *כל רודף קה* – all those who pursue closeness to Hashem, *בין המצרים* – can accomplish it in the time known as "*bein hametzarim*".

This is a time when we can return to Hashem, despite any wrongs we may have committed in the past. The *shem Hashem* of *אהיה*, which has the *gematria* of twenty one, corresponds to the twenty one days of *bein hametzarim*. The *Rebbe* explains (*Likutei Moharan* 1:6) that this name of Hashem symbolizes the possibility of letting go of the past – no matter how badly you may have sinned! – and starting anew.

So why do many of us feel dread at the mere mention of this time of year? Why is it so hard for us to think beyond our negative associations? Mohorosh explains that the more valuable an item is, the more vigilantly it is watched and held under tight security. Since the Three Weeks has such enormous potential for greatness, the *yetzer hara* "locks it up" in our minds by causing us to perceive this time as sad and depressing. We must not fall into this foolish trap! Let's realize what an opportunity we have and use this time to reconnect. By taking a few minutes each day to pour out our hearts to Hashem, we will be *zoche* to reach great heights.

Bitter or Sweet?

When *Yirmiyahu Hanavi* warned *klal Yisrael* about the upcoming *churban*, he compared it to the sprouting of an almond tree (*Yirmiyahu* 1:11). *Rashi* explains that this refers to the twenty one days of *bein hametzarim*. Just as there are twenty one days between the sprouting of the buds to the actual growing of the almonds, so too, were there twenty one days from the time the walls of *Yerushalayim* were broken until the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

Chazal tell us (*Maasros* 1:4) that almonds are initially bitter but turn sweet once they ripen. The days of *bein hametzarim* (which are compared to almonds) seem to be bitter, but we can make this time sweet by using its opportunities properly. So too, each person has times when life seems to be bitter and shrouded in darkness. The *Zohar* teaches (*Hakdamas Bereishis* 4a) that our life's mission is to take these bitter, dark times and transform them into sweetness and light.

The only way to do so is by remembering the One Who is standing behind the hardships. Ha-

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shem provides us all with unique struggles in order to draw us close to Him. Channel each challenging moment to be a time of connection by unburdening yourself to Hashem. He is listening to every word and He will certainly help you.

By using our challenges as a springboard for growth, we transform that which is bitter to the sweetness of קרבת אלקים.

Sad or Happy?

The *halachos* of *aveilus* in the Three Weeks do not include being morose and depressed; depression is not productive and therefore is never the right state of mind. The yearning we must have for the *geula* is supposed to be solely internal— we still have the obligation to greet those around us with a smile. This is the way of our *tzaddikim*: they constantly mourn the *churban* yet always show a smiling countenance.

Before the Yismach Moshe זת"ל became a *chassid*, he was troubled by the way *chassidim* are happy all the time, in spite of the halachic requirement to constantly mourn the *churban Beis Hamikdash*. He traveled to the Chozeh of Lublin, in the hope that the *tzaddik* would clarify this paradox.

En route, the Yismach Moshe pleaded with Hashem, "Hashem, You know that I'm not looking to question the ways of *tzaddikim*; I'm truly looking for guidance and clarity. *Chazal* say (*Yuma 38b*), הבא לטהר מסייעין אותו – when a person wants to purify himself, he is assisted from Heaven. The word מסייעין is written in plural form, because Hashem sends *tzaddikim* to help, too. Please Hashem, let the *tzaddik* resolve all my doubts."

As soon as he entered the Chozeh's chamber, the *tzaddik* asked him, "Why do you look so unhappy today? It's true that

we must mourn the *churban*, but this should be done only in our hearts. We *chassidim* also say *Tikkun Chatzos* each night and cry bitterly over the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, yet despite our inner mourning, we are still happy!"

The Chozeh explained this concept to the Yismach Moshe, with a *mashal* told by R' Shmelke of Nikolsburg:

A king was caught by his enemies and exiled to a foreign land. Roaming the streets without a destination, he appeared at the house of a friend who lived in that town. The friend was deeply pained to see the king in captivity, yet was also delighted at the opportunity to spend time with him.

"The same is with us," the Chozeh continued, "we are wandering in *galus* for so many years without our *Beis Hamikdash*, yet we can also be happy because Hashem is right here in exile with us."

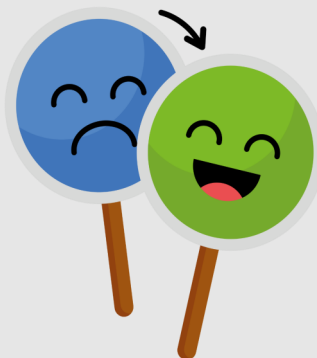
The Chozeh concluded, "I didn't really have to tell this to you; it's just that *Chazal* tell us הבא לטהר מסייעין אותו in plural form, because the *tzaddikim* in every generation are there to help all those who want to come close to Hashem."

The Yismach Moshe was absolutely stunned by the *ruach hakodesh* that the Chozeh displayed, and he became one of his greatest *talmidim*.

Hashem is with us even in *galus*, and in all of our personal challenges, as well. Even when we go through challenges, we cannot let them bring us down; rather, we must use them as a springboard for a deeper connection with Hashem.

May we be *zoche* to transform the Three Weeks into the sweetest time of all with the *geula sheleima*.

Sichos Mohorosh 15, Erech Bein Hametzarim



is child; tomorrow he will be a bachur; soon after, he'll be a youngerman, and before long, he will have to return his neshama to his Maker..."

On the same note, *Chazal* say (*Bava Kama 97b*) that Avraham Avinu had a coin which had a picture of a boy and a girl etched on one side and an elderly man and woman on the other side. Mohorosh explained that Avraham Avinu lived with this concept: "Now I am young, but I'll become old before I know it. I must seize each opportunity today."

The *passuk* says (*Yirmiyahu 17:7*), "Blessed is the one who trusts

in Hashem; Hashem will not forsake him. He will be like a tree planted near a flowing stream and whose roots are submerged in water. He is not affected by heat and his foliage remains fresh; he does not worry in a year of drought and will never stop producing fruit."

Spending time and energy into building our children's *emunah* is a very worthwhile investment, for he who does so will merit righteous children.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah #2, page 199

Q & A

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HOW DO I CALM MY CHILDREN WHEN ROCKETS ARE FLYING?

Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

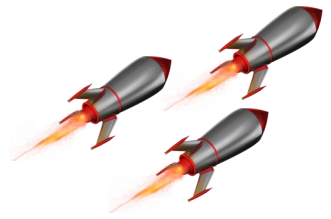
Thank you for all the beautiful and inspiring *shiurim*.

May Hashem give you the strength to continue with your holy work.

I live in northern Eretz Yisrael. My town is a frequent target for rockets sent by the neighboring Arabs and we often need to run for shelter. My children are not handling the situation well at all; each time the siren goes off, they panic and start asking questions that I'm not sure how to respond to, like, "Why is this happening? Why is Hashem doing this to us?"

How can we calm our children? How can we instill *emunah* in them to dispel their fears?

Thank you.



The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...

The time to have a conversation with your children is **before** the rockets start flying. Once the missiles are in flight, it's a little too late...

The way to instill *emunah* in yourself and your family is by constantly speaking about Hashem. When all is going smoothly and life is blessedly routine, take the time and effort to inculcate *emunah* in your children so that they will be prepared to endure the challenges they will later encounter.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Mohoran 2:44*) that *emunah* is contingent on a person's speech; one must speak words of *emunah* constantly in order to absorb it. Talk about Hashem and include Him in every conversation— say "*baruch Ha-*

shem," "*be'ezras Hashem*," "thank You, Hashem," at every opportunity. Slowly but surely, it will affect your mindset and that of your wife and children, and all anxiety and fears will gradually fade.

Do this now, while your children are still young. People mistakenly assume that young children cannot grasp these concepts. They think that *chinuch* begins with older children, but it is not so. Young children are innocent and impressionable – this is the time to implant *emunah* into their hearts.

R' Nosson was once seen in deep conversation with a child. When asked why he was spending so much time with someone so young, he replied with passion, "Now he

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