

# SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER  
BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLEV ZT"L  
GIVEN OVER BY MOHOROSH ZT"L AND THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT"A

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ISSUE #56

## CHIZUK from the PARSHA

## THE ONLY WAY OUT

וַיִּשָּׁבּוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׁטִּים... וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לֵאלֹהֵיהֶן

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

Forty years. Thousands of days. Millions of minutes made up the time that *Klal Yisrael* spent in the *midbar*, when they experienced countless *nissim* each moment, lived under the shelter of the *shechina*, and even heard the Voice of Hashem at *Har Sinai*. Yet despite their elevated level, in this week's *parsha* we see that they nonetheless traded their belief in Hashem for belief in the gods of Moav, lifeless idols of wood and stone. How is this possible? How could they, a holy and exalted nation, have stooped so low?

There is only one way to drag a Jew away from Hashem: by enticing him 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 *Klal Yisrael's* subsequent sin of *avoda zara*.

The Zohar says (*Parshas Vayechi* 219) that the *aveira* of *p'gam habris* is so terrible that it has no possibility of *teshuva*. However, the Rebbe teaches that there still is a path of 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, this gives him the ability to overcome his sinful desires (*Likutei Moharan* 1:36).

This can be seen in this week's *parsha*, in the way Pinchas reacted to Zimri's brazen deed. The *passuk* says, "וַיִּקַּח רִמְח בִּידוֹ" – he seized a spear and slayed the sinners. The word *רמח* is written without a *ו*, signifying the *ח* – 248 words in *krias shema*; Pinchas fought the *tuma'ah* with a declaration of *emunah*.

Succumbing to *aveiros* is only possible when one's *emunah* is lacking. Therefore, strengthening one's belief in Hashem is the solution to overcome *ta'avos ni'uf*. The moment a person realizes that Hashem is with him every moment, sees his every act and perceives his every thought, he is no longer compelled to sin. Thus, *krias shema* – a declaration of *emunah* – is the way one can triumph over his *yetzer hara*.

But it isn't always so simple. 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. The *passuk* says, "וְהָמָּה בּוֹכִים פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד," which *Targum Yonasan* explains to mean that they cried as they said *shema*. "Tears during *krias shema*," concludes the Rebbe, "have the power to rescue one from the depths of impurity."

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 can also mean to **cry out to Hashem to acquire *emunah***, which is the essence of *krias shema*. Since *emunah* doesn't sprout on its own, we must plead with Hashem to help us attain it. We have to implore Him, "***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 believe in You; help me remember that You love me. I know I am not acting as I should, but Hashem, I want to have *emunah*!***"

Every bit of effort we invest in our *emunah* empowers us to conquer our negative desires. By davening for help in strengthening our belief in Hashem, we will be *zoche* to acquire a pure *emunah* and be freed from the clutches of the *yetzer hara*.

Asher Hayah El Yoel, Balak 5782

## MOHOROSH SPEAKS

## THE THREE WEEKS



*Shiva Asar B'Tammuz* marks the beginning of the time period called the "*bein hametzarim*". This term's literal meaning is "between the walls" and refers to the three weeks between the seventeenth day of *Tammuz* and the ninth day of *Av*, that have specific *halachos* to help us focus on the loss of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

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 zt"l became a chassid, he was troubled by the way chassidim are always happy in spite of the halachic requirement to constantly mourn the churban Beis Hamik-*



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Dear ...

I received your letter.

When a person gets angry easily, it is a sign that his *emunah* is lacking. One who truly believes that everything is from Hashem doesn't get upset when things don't go his way. Chazal teach us (*Eiruvin 65a*) that we can easily identify a person as an *erliche Yid* by looking at three areas of his behavior – *בכוסו בכיסו ובכעסו*. Rashi explains *בכעסו* to mean that the person does not insist that everything must run exactly the way he expected, and he does not get angry when things don't turn out as planned. This is an indication that his *emunah* is strong and he truly knows that Hashem orchestrates every detail of his life.

Try the advice that the Rebbe gave us: the *etza* of *hisbodedus*. Each day, daven to be saved from the destructive *middah* of anger. A person who includes Hashem in his life and talks to Him at every opportunity will find that even in times of frustration, he will also remember that Hashem runs the show. He won't get angry when things don't go his way because he has internalized that everything is merely a test from Hashem. Such a person will never use foul language or destroy things when something upsetting occurs.

A person who curses when something doesn't go his way demonstrates how distant he is from Hashem. The Rebbe teaches (*Sefer Hamiddos, Os Klalah*), "One who is accustomed to cursing is from *Olam HaTohu*," meaning that he lives without *emunah* and his life is vacant and meaningless. The Rebbe also states the opposite, "One who is accustomed to blessing others is from *Olam HaTikkun*." This person knows that no one can harm him if it is not Hashem's will, and no one can take anything that is rightfully his. His life is complete; his life is blessed.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #3, page 160



dash. He traveled to the Chozeh of Lublin zt"l, 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 (*Yoma 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 outwardly 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 *מסייעין אותו לטהר* 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.

### A Time to Connect

To many, the Three Weeks may feel like a depressing time, when it seems that we are distant from Hashem. However, this couldn't be further from the truth, since this is a time that is especially potent for rekindling our connection with Hashem.

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

R' Nosson explains that during *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 the simplest people can come close to Hashem even without an "appointment" or "special connections."

We see this in the words of *Megillas Eich*a. The *passuk* says (*Eicha 1:3*), *"כָּל רֹדְפֶיהָ הִשְׁגִּיגוּהָ בֵּין הַמְּצָרִים"* – all her pursuers



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overtook her between the walls. The Maggid of Mezritch shares a profound inspiration on this *passuk* (*Avodas Yisrael, Mas'ei*): “כָּל רוֹדֵף זֶה” – all who pursue closeness to Hashem, “הַשִּׁיגוּהָ” – can accomplish this in the time known as “*bein hametzarim*.”

These Three Weeks are 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 symbolizes the possibility of letting go of the past – no matter how badly one 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 guarded. Since this time of year 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 his trap! Let us 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 impending *churban*, he compared it to the sprouting of an al-

mond 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, there were twenty one days from the time the walls of Yerushalayim were broken until the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

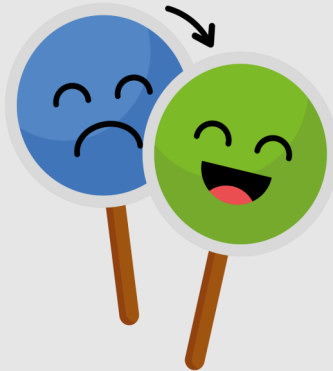
*Chazal* tell us (*Maasros 1:4*) that almonds have a bitter taste as they grow but turn sweet once they ripen. The days of *bein hametzarim* (which are compared to almonds) seem to be bitter, but we can make this time sweet by using its opportunities properly. On the same note, each person has times 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. Hashem provides us all with unique struggles in order to draw us close to Him. We must channel each challenging moment to be a time of connection by unburdening ourselves to Hashem. He is listening to every word and He will certainly bring the *yeshuos* we need.

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

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

*Sichos Mohorosh 15, Erech Bein Hametzarim*



### **Q&A**

(Continued from page 4)



This is a fundamental concept in *chinuch*. There are two ways to go about raising one’s children; one way seems longer, but is really easier and more rewarding in the long run, while the other seems shorter but only brings pain and heartache.

The longer way refers to the proper manner of being *mechanech* children. When they are still young, it is crucial to spend time with them and teach them the right way to behave. True, it’s hard and it takes an enormous amount of time and patience; however, the results will ultimately be extremely rewarding, since these children will later bring much *nachas* to their parents.

However, when one chooses the short, lazy route instead

and lets his children do as they please, say whatever they please, and get whatever they please, the way will end up being very long and painful, since these children will end up bringing their parents much heartache.

A person must daven and beseech Hashem to merit righteous children. Mohorosh used to relate that a man once came to the Chofetz Chaim *zt”l* and asked for *bracha* for righteous children. The Chofetz Chaim picked up a Tehillim that was swollen from moisture and said, “This is my mother’s Tehillim. Each day, she davened and cried that her children should be *erlich* – this is the way to be *zoche* to righteous children.”

May Hashem bless you with *nachas* from all your children.

*Adapted from The Light of Emunah #3, page 41*



## HOW CAN I TEACH MY CHILD TO TELL THE TRUTH?

### Question:

*To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,*

*Thank you for all that you do for Klal Yisrael. It is impossible to comprehend the far-reaching impact of all the shiurim and chizuk*

*that you give on a daily basis.*

*I need advice on how to deal with my four-year-old son. He tells lies constantly – whenever he is confronted about anything he has done wrong, he concocts all kinds of stories to shift the blame off of himself. How can I teach him to tell the truth?*

*Thank you, and may Hashem give you the strength to continue with your holy work.*



### The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

Children are often afraid to tell the truth out of fear of being punished. Instead, they make up stories to try to extricate themselves from the situation. What usually works is to say, "You won't be punished if you tell the truth, but if you don't tell the truth, you will be punished for lying." The child will almost always then own up to his actions.

Take the example of a child stealing – or, to put it nicely, you find another's belongings in your child's pocket. If you will confront him and ask where he got them from, he will make up a story instead of owning up and being humiliated. It's much more constructive to say something like, "If you admit to having done something wrong, I will let it go this time. If you lie, you will have to get a consequence." Next, help the child tell the truth. Ask, "Where did you get it from? Did you take it without permission?" until the truth will emerge. Once your child confesses, explain to him the gravity of taking what doesn't belong to him. You can tell him a story that demonstrates how bad it is to steal, and then help him return what he took in a way that won't bring

him shame.

Keep in mind that *chinuch* is a long journey, and that change doesn't happen from one day to the next. *Chazal* cite R' Yehoshua ben Chananya, who relates (*Eiruv* 53b):

*I once came to the outskirts of a city and was looking for the path that would lead me inside. I encountered a child and asked him to show me the way. He replied that there are two ways that lead into the city, a long but short way and a short but long way. Puzzled at his words, I asked him to explain, and his explanation was so profound that I declared, "This child has triumphed over me."*

*He said, "One path is long in distance; if you take that path, it will take you some time until you reach the city. I call it short is because it is easy to follow, the terrain is smooth and it leads you right to the city's walls. The other is a short path; it is shorter in distance but the terrain is rugged and the trek arduous. What should be a shorter way will only end up taking you longer."*

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