



# SPARKS OF EMUNAH

HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY PUBLICATION

PARSHAS PINCHAS  
19 TAMMUZ, 5786  
ISSUE #98

BASED ON THE SEFARIM OF REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLEV ZT"L  
AS TAUGHT BY MOHOROSH ZT"L AND THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT"A

נתנדב על ידי  
הרוצה בעילום שמו  
לזכות זרע של קיימא

CHIZUK  
FROM THE  
PARSHA

## THE ART OF LEADERSHIP

After more than forty years of leading *Klal Yisrael*, Moshe Rabbeinu's life was drawing to an end. Ever-dedicated to his people, he beseeched Hashem to appoint a qualified leader to take over in guiding the nation.

What makes a good leader?

Leadership is all about being a motivator. A good leader influences every one of his followers to attain greater heights. The challenge with this task is that every individual is different — there is no single approach that works for every person. 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 — therefore, a leader must intimately know each of his followers to speak the right language to each one.

### Ever Upward

The words of Moshe Rabbeinu's plea teach us the key component of effective leadership.

פָּקֹד ה' אֱלֹהֵי הַרוּחַת לְכָל בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל הָעֵדָה

Rashi explains that Moshe Rabbeinu was asking Hashem to choose a leader with a deep understanding of the way different minds work, so that he would know how to guide every individual in *Klal Yisrael*.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:68*) that this is the key quality of a *tzaddik* — he knows just the right approach for each individual. To a person who considers himself a *ba'al madreiga*, the *tzaddik* comes with 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." This message has the power to shake the person out of his complacency and urge him forward.



However, these same words can be tremendously destructive when said to the wrong person. *Mussar* can be crushing to a person who has already lost hope in himself — 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 one step in the right direction."

This is the kind of *manhig* Moshe Rabbeinu requested. The *passuk* continues as follows: **וְאִשְׁרֵי יוֹצִיאֵם וְאִשְׁרֵי בָנֵיהֶם** — Who will take them out and bring them in. A leader must urge the compliant ones onward by "taking them out" — i.e. showing how distant they still are from proper *avodas Hashem*. However, he must "bring in" the downtrodden ones — by giving continuous encouragement and support.

### But Can We Do That?

A *tzaddik* can differentiate between those who need rebuke and those who need encouragement, but how can 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 or despair and do irreparable damage. Our task is to look for the good qualities in those around us, because by encouraging and praising others, we can affect real change and inspire them to become truly *erliche Yidden*.

Toch Hanachal, Pinchas 5765

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," referring to the three weeks between the seventeenth day of *Tammuz* and the ninth day of *Av*. These three weeks 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 sadness and yearning is supposed to be internal — we still have the obligation to greet those around us with a smile.

### Paradox in Practice

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* were always happy in spite of the *halachic* requirement to constantly mourn the *churban* *Beis Hamikdash*. He traveled to the *Chozeh of Lublin* zt"l, in the hope that the *tzaddik*

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## YOU CAN SET YOURSELF FREE!

Dear ...,

We must focus on bringing Mashiach closer — everything we do to improve ourselves hastens his arrival.

If you want to bring the *geula* nearer, start learning *Mishnayos*. Chazal teach us (*Vayikra Raba* 7:3) that Mashiach will come only in the merit of learning *Mishnayos*. The Bnei Yissaschar explains (*Ma'amarei Chodshei Tammuz-Av, Ma'amar* 2) that there are 528 hours in the Three Weeks, corresponding to the 528 *perakim* in *Shisha Sidrei Mishna*. The word מפתח (key) also has the *gematria* of 528, implying that *Mishnayos* is the key to being redeemed from *galus*. **If you dedicate yourself to learning *Mishnayos*, you'll have a share in the *geula*.**

### Redeemed — While in Galus

Even in *galus*, you can live with the lesson that Mashiach will teach the world: the lesson of *hisbodedus*. The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan* 1:2) that Mashiach's weapon is *tefilla* — every battle he'll wage and win will be solely through *tefilla*. By revealing the light of Hashem to every one of us, he'll help us feel Hashem's loving embrace all the time. We'll talk to Hashem continuously and ask Him for whatever we need, as the Navi said (*Tzefaniya* 3:9), "At that time... all nations will call out in the name of Hashem."

The teachings of the Rebbe and the teachings of Mashiach are one and the same. The Rebbe once remarked (*Chayei Moharan* 266), "The only difference between me and Mashiach is that now, people have a choice whether to listen or not, but when Mashiach comes, there will no longer be *bechira*." **We don't have to wait until the *geula* to feel Hashem's Presence** — the Rebbe teaches how to experience that even in *galus*. When a person realizes that Hashem is with him all the time, he automatically call out to Him.

### A Stroll with Hashem

The Rebbe gave us the gift of *hisbodedus* and taught us to find a quiet place and pour out our hearts to Hashem, as we would do to a close friend. A person who follows the Rebbe's advice with *temimus* will be *zoche* to fulfill what Rashi says (*Vayikra* 26:12), "אטייל עמכם בגן עדן כאחד מכם" — **He will take a stroll with Hashem, so to speak** (by talking to Hashem as he walks) **and he'll experience Gan Eden on this world.**

The greatest pleasure a person can experience is feeling that Hashem is with him. There is nothing more blissful than being able to speak freely to Hashem as if it's a face-to-face conversation. Lucky is a person who experiences this constantly — fortunate is he in This World and in *Olam Haba*.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #1, page 78

would clarify this puzzle.

While traveling, 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 not written in singular form as one would think (since it is referring to Hashem) but rather in plural form, because You send *tzaddikim* to help a person, too. Please Hashem, let the *tzaddik* resolve all my doubts."

As soon as he entered the Chozeh's room, 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. While the friend was deeply pained to see the king in captivity, he 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."

And then the Chozeh concluded, "I didn't really have to tell this to you — it's just that Chazal say *הבא לטהר מסייעין אותו* in plural form, because the *tzaddikim* in every generation are there to help 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 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

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palace, during his once-yearly travels through the kingdom.

R' Nossan 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 Eicha*. The *passuk* says (*Eicha 1:3*), “כָּל רוֹדְפֶיהָ הִשְׁיגוּהָ בֵּין הַמְּצָרִים” — All her pursuers overtook her between the walls. The Maggid of Mezritch shares a profound inspiration on this *passuk* (*Avodas Yisrael, Mas’ei*): “כָּל רוֹדֵף גֵּ-ה” — Every person who pursues closeness to Hashem, “הִשְׁיגוּהָ בֵּין הַמְּצָרִים” — 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.

### Guarded Like a Treasure

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 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, 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.

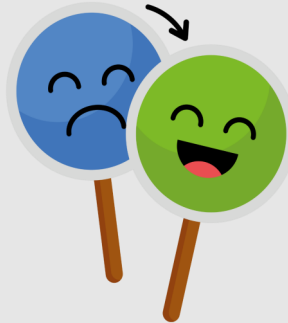
On the same note, each person has times when life seems to be bitter and shrouded in darkness. The *Zohar* teaches (*Hakdamas Bereishis 4a*) that our life’s mission is to take these bitter, dark times and transform them into sweetness and light.

The only way to bring out the sweetness of the hard times 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*.

*Sichos Mohorosh 15, Erech Bein Hametzarim*



## Q & A

*continued From page 4*

This is the way of the Torah — go out of your way to make your wife happy. Even if she’s 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.

### Who’s Right?

Mohorosh used to constantly tell us, “Your wife is always right!” Whether or not she’s actually right is irrelevant — never argue with her or try to prove that your opinion is correct.

Even if it’s high noon and your wife insists that it’s the middle of the night, don’t argue! Even in the case that it’s important for her to know the truth, don’t insist that she’s wrong — rather, offer to go on a walk with her and she’ll realize her mistake on her own. While this advice may seem to be strange, one who does so lives a much happier life.

Listen to my plea! Don’t let this destroy your *shalom bayis*. 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. I hope you’ll accept my advice and make a good life for yourself in This World and in the World to Come.

*Adapted from Atzaso Emunah #10, Letter #1053*

# Q & A

## DOING RENOVATIONS WHEN WE CAN'T AFFORD IT?



### QUESTION:

*To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,*

*Thank you for everything you do for Klal Yisrael.*

*I don't know what to do. My wife keeps making important decisions without my consent or even asking for my input. I try not to make a big deal out of it — but sometimes, it really goes too far.*

*For example, she recently decided that our house needs a facelift and began making plans to do large-scale improvements in our home. The problem is that we can't afford it — not by any stretch of the imagination! 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 once did she ask me for my opinion on the matter. She didn't even inform me of her plans — I found out about this project when a construction crew showed up at our house. I tried speaking to my wife pleasantly and explained that we can't spend money that we don't have, — but my words fell on deaf ears. Meanwhile, renovations are in full swing.*

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

finances do not allow for extra expenses, you'll be more than happy to do renovations when you have the money for it. If this doesn't work and your wife insists on continuing construction, you must shift to Plan B: to do everything in your power to hold your marriage together and not allow this to destroy your family.

### **Beware of Bad Advice**

I'm sure you have "very helpful" friends and family members who are advising you to get divorced — but these friends are only useful until you give a *get*. After the dust settles, you'll be all alone with no place to call home. You'll drift from place to place, from home to home, and your life will be empty and bitter.

Don't be fooled into thinking that therapy is the solution, either. Unfortunately, there are many therapists out there who use people's *tzaros* to make money. When a couple comes for counseling, the therapist drags out the therapy process and squeezes them dry, and in the end advise the couple to get divorced. An incompetent therapist causes so much heartache for the entire family. Woe unto those who stumble into this snare.

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

### **A Husband's Job**

The Torah teaches us that a husband's job is 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 simple clothes, but he did whatever he could to please his wife. Even when money was scarce, he bought her beautiful clothes and things that made her happy.

*(Continued on page 3)*

### THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear...,

Do everything in your power to keep the peace. Try speaking nicely again — explain that although your current

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