

# SPARKS OF EMUNAH



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

PARSHAS BAMIDBAR/  
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## CHIZUK from the PARSHA

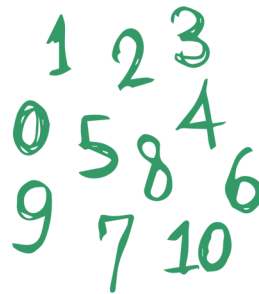
## ONE IN A MILLION

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַר בְּאֵהָל מוֹעֵד... שָׂאוּ אֶת רֹאשׁ כָּל עַדְת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
And Hashem commanded Moshe... "Count Bnei Yisrael."

The world is full of people – over eight billion, in fact. Yet each one is unique. The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:34*) that every Yid has specific strengths unlike any other; each person has distinctive qualities that set him apart and make him special.

Time and time again, Hashem counted *klal Yisrael* in the *midbar*. First when we left Mitzrayim, later after *chet ha'egel*, and again in this week's *parsha* after the *mishkan* was assembled. Rashi says that this was because of Hashem's great love for us. We are all especially valuable to Hashem; each of us is one in a million (or rather, one in eight billion) and is worthy of being counted again and again and again.

We often have dealings with people who seem to be "better" than us – more capable, more successful, more respected, etc. Instead of being overcome by jealousy or developing an inferiority complex, we must remember the lesson of this week's *parsha*: **each one of us has a unique quality that nobody else in the entire world has.** You, too, are "better." With this in mind, we can remain confident and keep going.



*Parshas Bamidbar* – the *parsha* of counting – is always read before Shavuos because in order to accept the Torah with joy, we must internalize the lesson that each one of us is unique, important and necessary. There are 600,000 letters in the Torah, which correspond to the 600,000 *nishmos Yisrael*. Just as every letter in the Torah is crucial (even one damaged makes the entire Torah *passul*), so too, every one of us is crucial to the existence of *klal Yisrael*.

The Rebbe teaches (*Sichos Haran 91*) that a *segula* for acquiring *hasmada* – diligence in learning Torah – is to avoid speaking negatively about others. A person who speaks *lashon hara* and "invalidates" even one Jew renders the entire *sefer Torah* "unfit for use," and he therefore loses his enthusiasm for learning Torah.

Chazal say (*Vayikra Rabba 26:2*) that *lashon hara* kills three: he who speaks, he who listens and he who is spoken about – it is poisonous for all. Don't get enmeshed in *lashon hara*; remember that those who speak badly of others also speak badly of you. Run away from mockers, flee from negative speech.

In preparation for *kabbalas haTorah*, let's internalize the lesson of this week's *parsha*. Remember the value of each Yid and the danger of belittling anyone – including yourself!

May we be *zoche* to acquire true *hasmada* and the joy of learning Torah.

Zos Hatorah Bamidbar 1, Atzaso Emunah Terumah 5782

## MOHOROSH SPEAKS

## SHAVUOS



Preparations for Shavuos are in full swing. Are you set with your *chavrusos* for the night? Planned what you will learn, what you will accomplish?

What about the *seudos* – are you going to have a mega-*milchig* meal? Or just a display of delectable dairy delights for *kiddush*? Everyone eats *milchigs* on Shavuos. What is the significance of this *minhag*?

The most basic answer dates back to the times of the *midbar*. After *klal Yisrael* accepted the yoke of Torah and *mitzvos*, there was a problem: they were unable to eat meat because their pots were all *treif* and unusable. Until their pots could be properly *kasher*d, they ate only dairy food (which could be consumed raw). To remember their dedication, we continue to eat *milchigs* on Shavuos to this very day.

Yet it really runs much deeper than that. Mohorosh teaches a beautiful concept in connection to this *minhag*, quoting the Rebbe (*Sichos Haran 26*). "The world views forgetfulness as a flaw, but I consider it a virtue." Forgetfulness



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**The yom tov of Shavuot is the *yahrzeit* of the holy Baal Shem Tov. The Rebbe says (Likutei Moharan 1:248) that re-counting stories of tzaddikim set a person's heart aflame and awaken a desire to serve Hashem.**

The holy Baal Shem Tov zt"l was born to elderly parents. His mother died during childbirth, and his father, R' Eliezer (who was one hundred years old) was left to raise him.

When the Baal Shem Tov – then called “Srulik” – was just five years old, R' Eliezer knew that his time was up. He drew his young son close and told him the following, “Srulik! My time has come to leave this world, as everyone must. Remember you are never alone! Hashem is always at your side; He accompanies you every minute of your life. Remember this well, and fear no one in the world.” At the conclusion of his words, R' Eliezer returned his *neshama* to his Maker.

Young Srulik was left alone to fend for himself, yet he never forgot his father's parting words. The knowledge that a Yid is never alone kept him alive – literally. He turned only to Hashem for whatever he needed – food, clothing, shelter, etc. – and Hashem took very good care of him.

As he wandered through the fields one day, singing to Hashem, an elderly man appeared before him and asked, “What is a little boy doing alone in the fields?”

Little Srulik responded, “I'm not alone! Hashem is here with me!”

“Do you really think so?” The man challenged. “Hashem is in heaven; He has abandoned the world,” and he quoted *pesukim* from *Tanach* to prove his point (actually misinterpreting them completely). He blasphemed Hashem and spoke against those who believe in Him until Srulik could no longer bear it. The little boy grabbed a branch and began beating the old man with it, again and again, crying out (*Tehillim* 92) “יתפרדו כל פעלי און!”

Suddenly, the old man disappeared. Srulik realized that it had just been an illusion, a vision of the *yetzer hara*. He realized that the *yetzer hara's* goal was just to weaken his faith; instead, this incident gave him immense encouragement and strengthened his *emunah* even more.

The holy Rebbe (a grandson of the Baal Shem Tov) heard this story for the first time at a very young age, and it awakened in him a strong desire to be a *tzaddik*, too. He went to the *tzion* of the Baal Shem Tov and began crying to Hashem, “*Ribbono Shel Olam*, I so badly want to be a *tzaddik*, my only desire is to serve You and be *erlich!*” All his life, he worked to implement the Baal Shem Tov's practice of speaking to Hashem, and this is how he was *zoche* to attain his lofty levels in *avodas Hashem*.

Excerpt from *Atzaso Emunah*, Sivan 5780

“ is the greatest gift, for if we would constantly be bombarded with memories of our past failures, *avodas Hashem* would be impossible. However, when we can forget all that has happened previously, we can remain enthusiastic and idealistic and constantly forge forward in our quest for spirituality.

This is the message of *milchigs*: it is symbolic of a newborn baby, who is dependent on milk for sustenance. We eat dairy foods as a reminder to view ourselves as newborns, filled with the endless possibilities of new life, and constantly start anew in our *avodas Hashem*.

### Never too Late

The Chozeh of Lublin teaches another reason for eating dairy foods on Shavuot. Of all perishable food, milk is the only one that is usable even after it spoils. In fact, an essential stage in the cheese-making process is fermenting milk and causing it to become sour.

This is a great encouragement to us. Do you feel like your *neshama* has soured? Have your past sins caused you to feel spoiled and unusable, to the point of no return? Remember that **you are not a hopeless case**. Just as sour milk is used to create all sorts of dairy delights, know that great things can come out of you, too.

This was the Rebbe's motto and a fundamental concept in Breslev teachings. No situation is ever hopeless! Every person can do *teshuvah*; every *aveira* has a *tikkun*. Think you're an exception? The Rebbe says that even **you** can do *teshuvah* and return to Hashem. When he taught this *Torah*, the Rebbe turned to R' Nossan and cried out with passion, “אין שום יאוש בעולם כלל” – There! Is! No! Despair! EVER!

The truth of the matter is that the *yetzer hara* just wants us to give up. The *aveiros* he convinces us to commit are not what's important to him, as long as we get the message of, “You're a lost case. Why keep trying?” Causing us to sin is only his means to an end: getting us to despair. To counter this, the Rebbe taught (*Likutei Moharan* 2:112) אם אתה מאמין לקלקל, תאמין שיכולים לתקן – if you believe that you have the power to destroy, you must believe that you have the power to repair.

We eat *milchigs* on Shavuot as a message to ourselves. Feeling soured? All is not over. You can still become a *tzaddik*.

Chazal tell us (*Yerushalmi Rosh Hashana* 4:8), that as soon as *klal Yisrael* accepted the Torah, Ha-

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shem considered it as if they had never sinned before. The same is true today – when we take it upon ourselves to learn Torah and do *mitzvos*, Hashem erases our past completely. As we near the *yom tov* of *kabbalas hatorah*, commit to learning Torah and you will be “reborn” – it will be as if you have never sinned.

**Shavuos Night**

Shavuos is so special... and so short. How can we make the most of each minute and feel like we “did” Shavuos properly?

Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai and his *talmidim* used to spend Shavuos night immersed in learning. They went through the entire *Tanach* by reciting the first and last *passuk* of each *parsha/sefer* and then learned the *taryag mitzvos*. After a full night of learning, Rabi Shimon *bentched* them to be *zoche* to true *kabbalas hatorah*.

The first thing to do on Shavuos is to stay up all night and learn. *Tikkun Leil Shavuos* need not be as difficult as people make it out to be. Most important is to say the first and last *passuk* of each *parsha/sefer* and the *taryag mitzvos* – all the other *pesukim* are merely additions. Instead of just going to sleep, thinking that you don’t have energy to say everything, just focus on the main *pesukim*.

The night of Shavuos is such a holy time; we need to be careful not to ruin its potency by wasting time on foolishness. You can daven, learn and talk to Hashem, but spending the night schmoozing, smoking and drinking coffee is a waste of time. Shavuos is a time for *yeshuos*; don’t squander the opportunity. On this night, when the gates of Heaven are open,



daven for a more meaningful connection with Hashem. Plead with Hashem to give you the ability to learn the entire Torah and fulfill all of His commandments.

**Mikvah on Shavuos**

The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:56*) that by going to *mikvah* before *alos hashachar* on Shavuos morning, one can merit the highest levels of understanding, as well as great *yeshuos* in his personal life.

Be proactive! When you finish saying Tikkun Leil Shavuos, don’t waste time. Go straight to the *mikvah*. Whether or not you understand the meaning or significance of this *tevila*, just go through the motions with *temimus* – simplicity – and rely on the Rebbe’s promise.

**Just Joy**

After all is said and done, perhaps the most important thing to remember on Shavuos is to be *b’simcha*. Are you Jewish? For that alone, you should sing and dance. *Chazal* tell us (*Midrash Pliah*) that when Hashem said ‘אנכי ה' אלקיך , Moshe Rabbeinu immediately cried

out, שלא עשני גוי, Mohorosh explains that as soon as Hashem gave the Torah, Moshe Rabbeinu was filled with such joy that he began to sing and praise Hashem for creating him a Jew.

It’s a never-fail method. Feeling down? Contemplate the fact that there are billions of non-Jews in the world, but you are a Yid! No matter where you are and no matter what you’ve done, you have a *yiddishe neshama*. This alone gives you a direct connection to Hashem. What a *zechus*; what a source of joy!

May we all be *zoche* to an uplifting and inspiring *yom tov*.

*Atzaso Emunah, Bamidbar 5778*



**THE ROSH YESHIVA SAYS:**

*The Torah begins with the word בראשית – see how the ב is almost completely closed? The only side that is open is the one that faces forward. This is the key to being able to learn Torah and serve Hashem: face forward. Don’t get stuck in thoughts of the past. Keep forging onward.*

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## WHAT IF I WON'T HAVE SHALOM BAYIS?



### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

Thank you for all the shiurim, songs and *chizuk* that guide me through each day.



I am grateful to share that I became a *chassan* recently, *baruch Hashem*. Yet as my wedding day approaches, I'm becoming anxious and stressed, and I am plagued by worries and fears. What if my *kallah* is not my true *bashert*? What if we won't have *shalom bayis*? What if despite being married, I will continue to struggle with my *nisyonos* and difficulties with *shemiras einayim*? What if...

There are so many fears and doubts distracting me all the time. Can the Rosh Yeshiva give me guidance and somehow calm my nerves so I should be able to approach my wedding with peace of mind?

Thank you.

### The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear ...,

I received your letter.

Thank and praise Hashem that you have found your *shidduch*. Stop entertaining thoughts of whether she is truly your *bashert* or not; these doubts are a tactic of the *yetzer hara*, who cannot bear the fact that you are getting married and will be protected from *aveiros*.

The quality of your relationship is solely dependent on **your** behavior. Respecting your wife's opinion and making her feel valued are key components to a good marriage. Giving in doesn't make you any less of a man – if you will be *mevater* and not insist on doing things your way, you will be *zoche* to *shalom bayis*.

Always be on the giving end. Don't be stingy with mon-

ey or with compliments; give her money for whatever she needs and compliment her often.

Regarding your concerns about *shemiras einayim*, know that a person's *nisyonos* don't automatically disappear after he gets married; it is simply easier for him to overcome them once he has a wife. Even a married man must work to have pure thoughts and holy eyes.

All through life, we must continue to beg Hashem for this. **העבר עיני מראות שוא – Hashem, please help me have pure eyes. Protect me from sin so that I shouldn't lose everything dear to me in this world and the World to Come.**

May you be successful in all your endeavors.

*Adapted from the Light of Emunah #2, page 65*

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