

# SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER  
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GIVEN OVER BY MOHOROSH ZT"L AND THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT"A

PARSHAS KORACH  
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## CHIZUK from the PARSHA

## LIVING SIMPLY

A leader, a genius, a charismatic personality. Respected and beloved by all of *klal Yisrael*. Korach. The one who instigated the infamous *machlokes* that tore the nation apart, the one who was destroyed along with hundreds of his ardent supporters.

When contemplating the events of this week's *parsha*, we arrive at a puzzling question: the details of the *machlokes* don't seem to make sense. Korach, of all people?!? "מִכֹּרֶךְ שֶׁפָּקַח הָיָה, מִה רָאָה לִשְׁטוּת זֶה," asks Rashi. How did the wise and esteemed Korach fall into such foolishness?

Is intellect a good thing? Thinkers will answer with a very enthusiastic "yes!" because their mission is to analyze every matter to the point of complete comprehension. Philosophizing is their ultimate joy and the purpose of their lives. However, the Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan* 2:19) that our goal is to serve Hashem and do His *mitzvos* with *temimus* – simplicity – without having to understand every last thing that lies behind them. He quotes the *passuk* (*Koheles* 12:13), "סוּף דְּבַר הַכֹּל נִשְׁמַע אֶת הָאֱלֹקִים יִרָא וְאֵת" – The purpose of our existence in this world is to fear Hashem and to do His *mitzvos*. The end. Analyzing, theorizing and philosophizing are unnecessary; we must serve Hashem with pure, simple faith. *כִּי זֶה הוּא הָאֱמֶת* – this is something that every person can do.

Korach's downfall was not **despite** his sheer brilliance, but rather **because** of it. The letters of קֶרַח are the same as חֶקֶר, because he was always making calculations: *If an entire garment can fulfill the requirements of tzitzis with one little thread of techeles, surely a garment made completely of techeles is exempt from the mitzva... If an entire house can fulfill the requirements of mezuzah with one little scroll on a doorpost, surely a house that is full of sefarim is exempt from the mitzvah...*

Delving too deeply into matters is dangerous and destructive. Look where Korach's mind took him – deep under the ground! Instead of thinking, pondering or considering, we need to do the *mitzvos* **only because Hashem commanded us to do so**.

Philosophy is not so prevalent anymore, and overthinking to the extent that the Rebbe warns us against is quite uncommon. Yet we fall into this trap in other areas, instead, most commonly with our performance of *mitzvos*. We wonder, "Did I do it right? Was I really *yotzei* the *mitzva*?"

It's a mistake to think that these thoughts bring us to more spirituality, because in truth, they are unproductive and even detrimental. By constantly second-guessing ourselves, we create such internal pressure that *Yiddishkeit* becomes a burden and all enthusiasm for *mitzvos* quickly dissipates. We must not fall into this trap! Let us listen to the Rebbe and put our *chochmos* aside, focusing on doing each *mitzva* with *temimus* instead. By finding joy in every *mitzva* we are able to do, we will be *zoche* to a happy, fulfilling life in *Olam Hazei* and *Olam Haba*.



Toch Hanachal, Korach 5761

## MOHOROSH SPEAKS

## ANYONE LISTENING?

“ Every person wants to be heard. People spend thousands of dollars in order to be able to sit on an armchair and unburden themselves to another. Starving for empathy, desperate for validation, humanity goes through great pains just to access a listening ear.

There is no need to pay a fortune for this privilege. The Rebbe gave us a gift, the secret called "*hisbodedus*." It is more than just *tefilla*; *hisbodedus* means talking to Hashem and telling Him everything that is on one's mind, the way he would speak to a close friend. It works, it's free, and it's the most liberating experience imaginable. The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan* 2:25) that *hisbodedus* is the ultimate *avodas Hashem* and is more valuable than anything else.

It sounds almost too simple. Speak to Hashem and you've reached the climax of *Yiddishkeit*? The truth is, though, that it is not simple at all. Because of its tremendous power, the *yetzer hara* invests much effort to dissuade us from doing *hisbodedus*. His primary weapon to accomplish this is the sense of futility that

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Dear ...

I received your letter.

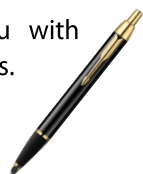
Playing music in your home is not a problem at all. On the contrary, listening to cheerful music helps a person overcome his *yetzer hara*. *Tzaddikim* say that Napoleon, the famous ruler of France, was so successful in conquering many countries because he used to bring his military band to play music at the war front. The soldiers marched as the band played, and this is what gave the mighty army the encouragement they needed to fight against many powerful countries.

Turn on upbeat music in your home and dance with your children! Rejoice with the fact that you were born into the Jewish Nation and that you can serve Hashem. The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan* 2:24), "מצוה גדולה להיות בשמחה" – it is a great *mitzvah* to always be happy. Additionally, the Rebbe attests that all illnesses that afflict mankind come only from depression and despair; even doctors acknowledge this fact, and that *simcha* is a cure for everything. By focusing on always remaining happy, a person can free himself from all suffering, whether it is physical or emotional.

Regarding your question about playing music outdoors: if you don't have any neighbors in your immediate vicinity and there is no one to be bothered by it, of course you can turn on music in your backyard. There is no problem with playing it out loud in order to lift everyone's spirits. However, be careful to play only songs that are sung by *erliche* singers. The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan* 1:3) that when a person listens to the singing of a *rasha*, it is very detrimental to his *avodas Hashem*. However, when one listens to the singing of an *erliche* person, it is beneficial for his *avodas Hashem*.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #3, page 183



he fills us with, the feeling that no one is listening and nobody cares about our pain.

The Rebbe relates (*Shivchei Haran* 10, 12) that he, too, had this struggle. In his younger years, he spent much time talking to Hashem in Yiddish (his mother tongue). Each day, he poured out his heart to Hashem, describing the ups and downs of his spiritual life as well as enumerating all his physical needs. Still, he often felt that Hashem didn't seem to be listening at all, because as much as he davened, asked, described, explained and pleaded, he didn't see any results. No magical solutions materialized; no bursts of inspiration suddenly lit up in his mind. After doing so much *hisbodedus* and not seeing results, the Rebbe lost his drive for it. He soon stopped talking to Hashem as often, stopped asking his personal requests constantly, stopped describing his challenges and victories as much; after all, if no one is listening, it's a waste of time and energy.

After a few days of near-silence, the Rebbe thought it over and realized that it's impossible that Hashem doesn't care about him and doesn't listen to him. With renewed energy, he started doing *hisbodedus* again. This cycle repeated itself numerous times.

We all can derive much *chizuk* from this. Do you feel like your *hisbodedus* is "wasted," as if no one is listening anyway? As great as he was, the Rebbe felt this way, too. He also felt as if nobody was listening and that nobody even cared, yet he persisted. So can you.

The Rebbe later testified that the only way he attained all his incredible spiritual achievements was because of those personal conversations with Hashem. "If I would have known how much *hisbodedus* can accomplish," he said, "and how everything can be attained just by constantly speaking to Hashem, I would never have busied myself with fasting and tormenting my body to purify myself. Rather, I would have invested all my energy in talking to Hashem. I would have spent as much time speaking to Him in one day as I did over the course of an entire year, because now I see that *hisbodedus* is what ultimately brings results."

### Round the Clock

Ideally, *hisbodedus* should be done all day long (*Likutei Moharan* 2:96). Yet most people cannot talk to Hashem for twenty-four hours straight; therefore, the Rebbe advises us to talk to Hashem for a minimum of an hour each day.

Now, imagine this:

*Zelig Kryman, an aspiring real estate agent, is facing a dilemma: he has just gotten an offer that promises to be a turning point in his career, but there are some details of the job description that he is unsure about. Eager to talk it through with a like-minded individual, he dials the number of a good friend of his. "Chaim, I haven't had a chance to talk to you in a while. When can you give me an hour of your time?"*

What are the chances that Chaim will be able to stop, drop and stay on the phone with his friend for an hour? How many of us can commit to a conversation for a set amount of time, especially for a full sixty minutes, in middle of a busy day? Usually, there are



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too many reasons which preclude the possibility of a long discussion.

Contrast this with an impromptu meeting:

*Zelig Kryman, an aspiring real estate agent, was just offered a job that seems to be very promising. He is excited about the opportunity, but there are some things that are making him feel uneasy. One evening, he happens to bump into an old friend of his. Eager to talk through the proposition with a like-minded individual, he exclaims, "Chaim, my old friend! We haven't spoken in ages! Time to catch up." And despite busy schedules, the spontaneous schmooze stretches to be two hours long.*

The same is with *hisbodedus*:

*Velvel had a lot on his mind and a burning desire to talk to Hashem, so he cleared an hour in his schedule for focused hisbodedus in a quiet room. The first two minutes were spent trying to decide where to start. In the following three minutes, Velvel went off-topic six times and found his mind wandering*



*nineteen times. Looking at his watch, he saw that he had a long fifty-five minutes ahead... so he just quit.*

Often, it is the commitment to a chunk of time that makes us give up. Don't feel the pressure to "set an hour-long appointment"; instead, make an "impromptu meeting" and start talking to Hashem without planning or looking at your watch. With this relaxed mindset, you'll find yourself going... and going... and going.

Don't get disheartened even if you find yourself faltering after a few minutes. Every single word that you say to Hashem has tremendous value; every minute of *hisbodedus* is cherished by Hashem and brings you enormous benefit.

If you speak to Hashem throughout the day, you'll find that all your two-minute "*hisbodedus* sessions" add up to significantly more than an hour. You can even accomplish the Rebbe's ideal of doing *hisbodedus* all day long. No, there is no need to cut yourself off from the world and spend your days in solitude. Do whatever you need to do: learn, daven, eat, sleep, work and spend quality family time... **with Hashem**, by talking to Him throughout.

Immediately upon awakening, start the conversation! Say *Modeh Ani* and ask Hashem to make the day a successful one. On your way to work? Continue the conversation! Ask that you should find favor in the eyes of those you interact with. Heading home? Don't stop the conversation! Ask for patience and calm to be able to get along with your wife and children. And finally, before going to sleep, ask Hashem to give you a restful night so that you can wake up energized and refreshed.

With *hisbodedus*, you can elevate your entire life to become a completely spiritual existence. By discussing even the most mundane matters with Hashem, even physicality becomes holy!

A person who talks to Hashem constantly will never feel lonely. Yes, Someone **IS** listening – the only One who can actually help you. He is listening to every word.

*Sichos Mohorosh 2 and 4, Erech Hisbodedus*



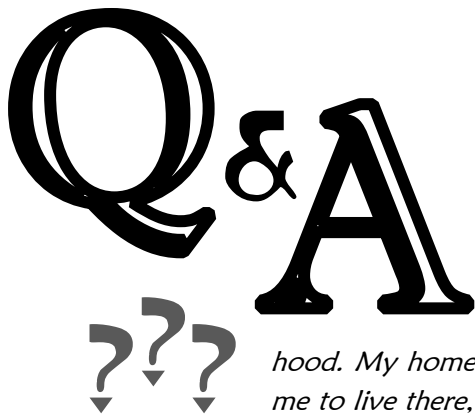
how terribly you are suffering. This is not a "quick fix"; talking to Hashem just once is not enough. Do this every day – talk to Him whenever you feel broken, anxious or depressed, until He will ultimately have compassion on you and you'll be *zoche* to rid yourself of your pain.

Just imagine if you would have taken all those hours of speaking to therapists and instead spoken to Hashem – you would certainly have been healed already! Not only that, but you would also have accumulated infinite treasures to take along with you to the Next World. *Chazal* teach us (*Tanna D'vei Eliyahu 15*) that when a person constantly davens to Hashem and talks to Him all the time, his *tefillos* will accompany him after his passing.

Listen to the Rebbe; find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed and pour out your broken heart to Hashem. It won't be easy at first; the *yetzer hara* despises *tefilla v'hisbodedus* and he will therefore give you the feeling that no one is listening to you. The Rebbe says (*Sippurei Ma'asios, Story 10*) that the murderer said to the princess, "As soon as you scream, I will strangle you to death." Like the murderer, the *yetzer hara's* greatest fear is our scream – the scream that a person emits when he cries out to Hashem. The *yetzer hara* knows that when one talks to Hashem, all his problems are solved, and he therefore does everything in his power to stop us from talking to Him.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

*Adapted from The Light of Emunah #3, page 199*



## SHOULD I CONTINUE GOING FOR THERAPY?

### Question:

*To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,*

*I went through a very difficult and tumultuous childhood. My home was dysfunctional to the point that it was unsafe for me to live there, and for many years I bounced around from one family to another. When I was seventeen, I finally landed in the home of a*



*goodhearted family who took care of me until I was zoche to get married, b'chasdei Hashem.*

*Although I have been blessed with a wonderful wife, beautiful children and a good parnassa, my childhood traumas still haunt me. Even now, twenty years after my marriage, I continue to suffer. I have been diagnosed with anxiety, depression and PTSD, and these emotional difficulties affect me every single day.*

*I have already visited many doctors and therapists. Over the last few years, I have taken various medications and have spent hundreds of hours (and thousands of dollars) speaking to therapists, but I still feel like I'm at square one. I don't know where to go from here. I know the Rosh Yeshiva doesn't believe in therapy, but doesn't it say in the Torah that doctors were given permission to heal? Doesn't this refer to the emotional and mental areas as well?*

*Perhaps the Rosh Yeshiva can advise me on how to proceed. If I quit therapy, I am surely doomed, but does it make sense to continue if I'm not seeing any results?*

*Thank you.*

### The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

I received your letter.

Don't confuse the two. A doctor falls into one category and a therapist into another. When a person is unwell, either physically or mentally, he must go to a doctor to be treated. Therapy, though, is another story altogether.

Just reread your own words; you write that you have

spoken to therapists for hundreds of hours, and are still at square one – isn't that a sure indication that it is not helping? Instead of spending hours talking to a human being (who can't even help himself; certainly he can't help others) take the advice of the Rebbe, the *aitza* of *hisbodedus*. Instead of talking to yet another therapist, **talk to Hashem** – describe everything you have been through and tell Him

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