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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

LIVING SIMPLY

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

The events of this week's *parsha* bring us to a puzzling question: Korach, of all people!?! It doesn't seem to make sense. "וקרח שפקח היה, מה ראה לשטות זה", Rashi asks. How did the wise and esteemed Korach fall into such foolishness?

Simple or Sharp — What's Better?

Is intellect a good thing? Some people will answer with a very "yes!" because for them, analyzing matters gives them a sense of purpose; philosophizing is their ultimate joy.

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), "סוף דבר הכל נשמע את האלקים ירא ואת מצותיו", "שמור כי זה כל האדם" — **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. **כי זה כל האדם** — this is something that every person can do.

The Trap of Brilliance

Korach's downfall was not **despite** his sheer brilliance, but rather **because** of it. The letters of קרח are the same as חקר, alluding to the fact that he was always making calculations: *If an entire garment can fulfill the requirements of tzitzis with one little thread of t'cheiles, surely a garment made completely of t'cheiles 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 mitzva...*

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.**

Stop Overthinking!

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*?"

These thoughts don't bring us to more spirituality. They are unproductive and even detrimental! When we constantly second-guess ourselves, we create such internal pressure that *Yiddishkeit* becomes a burden and we lose all our enthusiasm for *mitzvos*.

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 Hazeh* and *Olam Haba*.

Toch Hanachal, Korach 5761

MOHOROSH
SPEAKS

YES, YOU CAN!

Two-year-old Moishy stands on his porch, playing with a little rubber ball. After bouncing it a little too enthusiastically, the ball flies right over the fence and lands in the bushes just beyond the porch.

Determined to get his ball back, Moishy reaches through the slats of the porch fence and tries to grab his ball. He sticks his little hand just a bit further, reaches out... reaches down... and... oh no! His arm is stuck! Moishy begins to howl in panic, thinking that he will be stuck in the fence forever.

At times we feel like little Moishy, facing a quandary that seems to have no way out. Before long, we begin to despair, thinking that we'll be stuck in that state forever.

Proper perspective is all it takes to help us persevere. *Chazal* teach us (*Avoda Zara* 3a) that Hashem only gives challenges in proportion to a person's abilities — if you're facing a problem, you evidently have the power to overcome it. Staying stuck is not the only option — **just as there was a way into the crisis, there is a way out.**

Not a Mistake

Life was never supposed to be easy. Hashem puts hardships in our way intentionally to see

(Continued on page 2)



DON'T TURN IT DOWN

Dear ...,

Over and over again, Mohorosh urged *bachurim* and girls in *shidduchim* to beware of the enemy called “time.” The hands of the clock keep moving, days and weeks keep rushing by... If a person turns down *shidduch* after *shidduch* because none of them are “good enough” for him, he’ll soon find himself many years older, still single... and then it’s too late to turn back the clock.

When it comes to *shidduchim*, one must remember what *Chazal* teach us (*Yevamos 63a*), **“Step down a level to take a wife.”** A person’s nature is to be egotistic, vetoing all suggestions because he thinks he’s better than all the girls who are *redt*. And so a *bachur* meanders through the *shidduch* scene, waiting for perfection itself. He expect his *kallah* to materialize on a galloping white horse laden with gold... but the *shidduch* of his dreams never existed and never will exist. While he waits for this figment of his imagination to come into being, he is blind to the fact that time is passing, until he suddenly realizes that he was left behind, an older single...

**He expects
his kallah to
materialize,
riding on a
white horse
laden with
gold...**

Do Whatever You Can to Get Married!

If a *shidduch* is suggested for you, don’t turn it down. Don’t be the one to stop a *shidduch* in its tracks! Allow it to move forward so that you should be able to fulfill *ratzon Hashem* — the first *halacha* in *Shulchan Aruch*, *Chelek Even Ha’ezer* reads, “Every single Jew is obligated to get married in order to be able to bear children. A person who doesn’t do so is likened to a murderer, and he causes *Shechina* to depart from *Klal Yisrael*.”

This is besides all the benefits he forfeits by not getting married, as the *Rema* writes:

וכל מי שאין לו אשה שרוי בלא ברכה בלא תורה כו', ולא נקרא אדם, וכיון שנשא אשה עונותיו מפקקים, שנאמר מצא אשה מצא טוב ויפק רצון מאת ה'.

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah #1 page 282

what we’ll make of them. Challenges are what make our lives worth living — **after all, what’s**

the greatness of an achievement that didn’t come along with struggle?

Esti wants a treat. Yehuda, her teenaged uncle (who loves to tease — what else are uncles for?) holds out a colorful, wrapped lollipop. As she’s about to grab it, he abruptly pulls his hand back, sliding it into his pocket.

*The race is on. Now Esti **needs** the lollipop and will do anything to get it. She chases Uncle Yehuda around the room until she finally catches him and the longed-for treat. As she triumphantly unwraps it and takes her first lick, the lollipop tastes sweeter than ever.*

The same is true with us, says the *Rebbe (Likutei Moharan 1:66)*. All our lives we try to reach our spiritual goals, but Hashem blocks our path, hiding our “treat” from view. His intent is not to discourage us; quite the opposite — he wants us to become even more enthusiastic about reaching our goal. Then, when we finally succeed in breaking through the barriers, the *מניעות* — obstacles, become *נעימות* — sweetness, and the joy of accomplishment is so much sweeter.

This is the Place

*As Mohorosh was being *ma’avir sedra* one Friday afternoon, he was interrupted by a knock on his door. After a moment, a *talmid* burst in to the room and cried out, “*Rebbe, I can’t do this anymore! No matter how hard I try, I am still at Square One!*” He had been attempting to overcome a particular *nisayon* for a long time, but to no avail. “*I keep being met with challenges. Why is it so difficult? Should I even continue trying?*”*



*Mohorosh motioned for the *talmid* to look inside his *Chumash* and pointed at the *passuk* he was learning just moments before. The *passuk* read (*Bereishis 22:4*), “*וירא את המקום מרחוק*” — When Avraham Avinu took Yitzchok to the *akeida*, he recognized his destination from afar. *Rashi* explains that Avraham Avinu saw a thick cloud over the mountain, and that was how he knew that this was the right place to perform the *akeida*.*

“This is the answer to your question!” Mohorosh exclaimed. “When your destination seems cloudy and uncertain, you can be sure that you are on the right path.”

Don’t be deterred! Just keep going and you’ll ultimately overcome all your challenges.

No Excuses!

The path to Torah learning is strewn with obstacles. Many people who don’t even bother trying to learn because “*it’s too hard for me,*” “*it takes too much time and concentration,*” or “*it’s not working for me anyway, so why bother?*” In truth, however, one who truly wants to learn Torah will find a way to overcome all the hurdles in his path.

Chazal tell us (*Yoma 35b*) of three great *tzaddikim* who obligate every Jew to learn, no matter what his life circumstances are:

Hillel Hazakein lived in dire poverty and was unable to

(Continued on page 3)



pay the necessary entrance fee to the *beis medrash*, but that didn't deter him from learning. He quietly

climbed up to the roof, pressed his face to the window and listened intently to the Torah learning of the great *tzaddikim* of his time.

R' Elazar ben Charsum was a wealthy businessman with many responsibilities, yet his business dealings didn't stop him from taking time to learn, and eventually he became a great *talmid chacham*.

Yosef Hatzaddik learned Torah and stayed true to *Yiddishkeit*, despite being trapped in the filth of *Mitzrayim* and the enormous *nisyonos* he faced.

These *tzaddikim* are proof that everyone is capable of learning Torah. You are not exempt! You may be poor, but you **can** learn — just like Hillel Hazakein! You may be busy, but you **can** learn — just like R' Elazar ben Charsum! You may be tormented by your *yetzer hara*, but you **can** learn — just like Yosef Hatzaddik! **You, too, can learn Torah despite your personal challenges.**

If you don't learn Torah now, despite your difficulties, when will you find the time to do so?

Stealing Time

After leaving this world, one of the first questions we will be asked by the *Beis Din shel Ma'alah* is "קבעת עתים לתורה" — Did you set aside time each day to learn Torah? The Rebbe explains (*Likutei Moharan 1:286*) that the word קובע can also mean to steal. We will be asked, "Did you 'steal' some time out of your busy schedule to learn?"

Procrastination is man's worst enemy. There is always another excuse to push off learning:

When I'll get married, I'll be able to learn... When I'll have financial stability, I'll be able to learn... When I'll have good chavrusos, I'll be able to learn... After my children grow up, I'll be able to learn...

However, each stage of life comes with its own set of challenges. If you don't learn Torah now, despite your difficulties, when will you find the time to do so?

Steal a few minutes **today**. Don't wait for tomorrow, because before you know it, you'll be facing *beis din shel ma'alah* and their piercing question: "קבעת עתים לתורה?"

Starting Today!

It's always possible to regain control of your life. No matter what you've done, no matter what you're going through, you can put that all behind you and start anew.

Yes, there will be challenges along the way, but remember that there is always a way out of every situation, and that you can accomplish whatever you set your mind to.

The most important thing is to bring Hashem into your life by constantly speaking to Him and asking Him for whatever you need. Then, in spite of your difficulties (or perhaps because of them), you will be *zoche* to a good life in This World and in the World to Come.



The Rebbe responded (*Likutei Moharan 2:110*), **"The concept of *bechira* is very simple to understand — if you want to do something, you do it, and if you don't want to, you don't."**

R' Nosson added that he recorded the Rebbe's response because many people are mistaken about this. They ask, "How can it be that I have free will if I am trapped in my bad habits and can't break free from behaviors I have become accustomed to?" And because of this, they believe that it's truly impossible to escape. But in truth, this is not the case — every person always has *bechira* and can stop doing anything whenever he chooses to do so.

Breaking Free with Tefilla

Plead with Hashem to help you get rid of this compulsion. *Tefilla* has enormous power — with *tefilla*, a person can extricate himself from any kind of situation. With *tefilla*, a person can escape even the most powerful addictions.

Here is a short *tefilla* for you — if you'll say it each day, you'll surely emerge from this state:

"Hashem, have mercy on me! I've fallen into a crazy obsession with gambling and I don't see a way out! I know that it's not good for me — I'm losing all my money and my home is falling apart. Every day I resolve that I won't buy any more lottery tickets, but then I fall right back into it. Hashem, please help me control myself! Please help me escape this senseless addiction.

"Hashem, I want to always remember that money comes only from You. Help me that I shouldn't delude myself into thinking for even one moment that I can become wealthy through this irrational obsession. Help me that I should never forget You. Help me use my time to learn a few *perakim* of *Mishnayos* each day, as this is all that will truly remain of me. Amen."

I hope you'll accept my words and you'll plead with Hashem every day for a way out of this quagmire. If you will do so, your mind will soon be set straight and you'll start behaving rationally again. You'll have the good sense to give those few dollars to your wife instead of squandering your money on foolishness, and it'll then be good for you in This World and in *Olam Haba*.

Q & A

I CAN'T STOP MYSELF FROM BUYING LOTTERY TICKETS



QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

I read the Q&A's on BreslevCenter.com almost every day and they give me a tremendous amount of chizuk — thank you!

I see that the Rosh Yeshiva gives practical advice in many areas of life. I was wondering if there is perhaps a solution for a pretty big problem I have.

Whenever I walk into a convenience store, I find myself drawn to the lottery display. I can't explain the tremendous urge I have to buy more and more lottery tickets, to the point that I spend a huge part of my income on this. Each time, I think, "This is it — now I'm finally going to win big and I won't have to work so hard to make a living anymore," and then when I don't win anything, I regret having wasted my money.

This cycle repeats itself many, many times. Does the Rosh Yeshiva have any advice for me?

Thank you.

sometimes makes a person strike it rich, causing everyone else to envy him and try to land big money, too. They spend days and years of their lives pursuing wealth, obsessed with the thought of, "Maybe now I'll get rich, too" — but they end up with nothing. This is a ploy of the yetzer hara to confuse us and make us waste our lives over an illusion. The Rebbe concluded with these words: "May Hashem protect us from being misled by this!"

Those who get caught into the gambling trap end up wretched and penniless. First they lose their money, and then they lose their wives and children as well.

Gambling is a terrifying, deadly game. In the beginning, a person feels like he's actually earning money, but before long he becomes a destitute pauper. It is a terrible sickness — once a person falls into it, it's very difficult to break free. This is because every time, he thinks, "Now I'm really going to win," or "This time I'll finally get rich," when in reality, gambling is a trap that pulls the person deeper and deeper each time.

Is it Possible to Escape an Addiction?

So you've come to a point where you're actually trying to stop. It feels like you can't control this urge — no matter how often you promise yourself that you won't buy lottery tickets anymore, you end up doing it again anyway. You're looking for advice on how to break free from this destructive cycle.

I can tell you this — every single person possesses free will. It's always possible to break any bad habit.

A man once came to the Rebbe and asked how it's possible for a person to really have *bechira*. "If someone is deeply attached to negative behaviors," he said, "how is it possible to tell them, 'You have free will'? After all, it's impossible to break free from a long-standing habit!"

(Continued on page 3)

THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

The entire lottery system is one big scam. By dropping small wins here and there, it plays with people's minds and lures them further in.

The Rebbe says (*Sichos Haran 284*) that the yetzer hara

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