

SPARKS OF EMUNAH



HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
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PARSHAS PEKUDEI
SHABBOS HACHODESH
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CHIZUK from the PARSHA

KEEP GOING

כִּי עֲנֹה ה' עַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן יוֹמָם וְאֵשׁ תִּהְיֶה לַיְלָה בּוֹ לְעֵינֵי כָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל מִסְעֵיהֶם
The cloud of Hashem will be on the mishkan by day and a fire will be on it at night, before the eyes of all the Jews in all their journeys.

We live in a very physical world. Although we know that *avodas Hashem* is what's important, it's very easy to lose focus when *gashmiyus* needs abound and there is so much that must get done each day. Against our will and without even realizing it, we slowly drift further and further away from Hashem.

The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:115*) that when one is roused to return to Hashem after being steeped in *gashmiyus* all his life, the *middas hadin* brings a tremendous *kitrug* on the person. "What happened until this point?" It asks. "Why does he think he can do whatever he wants and then have it easy the moment he wants to do *teshuva*?" Consequently, numerous obstacles are placed in the person's path as he tries to come close to Hashem, and they thwart his efforts again and again.

Nonetheless, Hashem's love for us is greater than the *middas hadin*, and He deeply desires closeness with His beloved children. Therefore, He conceals Himself within the difficulties, so that anyone with insight will be able to find Hashem **within** the very obstacles that seem to be drawing him away! These critical moments determine the person's ultimate success or failure. Will he be too disheartened by his difficulties and give up? Or will he have the wisdom to look more deeply, see Hashem there and persevere?



וַיַּעֲמֹד הָעָם מֵרָחֵק וּמִשָּׁה נִגַּשׁ אֶל הָעַרְפָּל אֲשֶׁר שָׁם הָאֱלֹקִים (*Shemos 20:17*)

The Rebbe explains the *passuk* as follows: When *Klal Yisrael* saw the cloud and the fog obscuring *Har Sinai*, **הָעָם מֵרָחֵק** – the simple Jews stood from afar, afraid to come close. When faced with hardship, most people just give up. But **וּמִשָּׁה** – a person who follows the *da'as* of a *tzaddik*, **נִגַּשׁ אֶל הָעַרְפָּל** – goes straight to the fog and murkiness, because he knows **שָׁם אֲשֶׁר שָׁם הָאֱלֹקִים** – that is precisely where Hashem is!

This is the incredible secret that the Rebbe revealed to us. No matter how far a person has strayed, no matter what sins he has committed, he can always do *teshuva* and return to Hashem. Yes, the beginning will be hard – oh, how hard! – but one must remember that Hashem is there **within** the fog, **within** the darkness. He who stays strong will overcome the difficulties and become an *erliche Yid*.

This week's *parsha* teaches us the same thing. The *mishkan* was the place where the *shechina* rested and spread Hashem's light all over the world, but **עַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן** – there was a cloud above it. That's the way of the world: before achieving holiness, you will first have to contend with clouds and darkness. Getting discouraged? Remember that **וְאֵשׁ תִּהְיֶה לַיְלָה בּוֹ** – even when it's dark, the fire of Hashem burns within; **יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל** – for **you**, and for every single Jew! **בְּכָל מִסְעֵיהֶם** – No matter where you find yourself and no matter what you've done until now, there's always a way for you to return to Hashem.

Toch Hanachal, Pikudei 5765

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

REFRESH. RENEW.



Trees are blossoming, flowers are blooming, the

grass is slowly peeking out of the ground. The early spring breeze carries the sound of birds chirping, announcing their return after a long and harsh winter. The pleasant weather seems to nod in agreement – spring is finally here! Surrounded by so much renewal, we too, want to join the world in its rebirth and start serving Hashem afresh.

It's not by chance that this time of year coincides with *Chodesh Nissan*, the month of **הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֵם רֵאשׁ חֹדֶשִׁים, רֵאשׁוֹן הוּא לָכֵם לַחֹדֶשִׁי הַשָּׁנָה.** Mohorosh explains that the multiple usage of the root word *חדש* implies that this is an opportune time for *his-chadshus* (renewal) in *avodas Hashem*.

The Rebbe: A Chiddush

The Rebbe was born on *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*, hinting at this concept of self-renewal which was fundamental to the Rebbe's *avodas*



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Hashem (Shivchei Haran 6). In his youth, the Rebbe burned with passion and a fierce desire to come close to Hashem. Sometimes he succeeded in reaching his spiritual goals right away and other times he didn't, yet he never gave up on himself. Even when the Rebbe tried to scale another lofty level but fell through, he said, "I'll pretend I never made any attempt before and I'll start again as if it's the first time."

This happened numerous times each day, but still the Rebbe lifted himself up and started yet again. His arduous toil resulted in his becoming a towering spiritual giant, a *tzaddik hador* who left a stunning legacy of *sefarim* filled with *chizuk* for every one of us.

Renewing by Forgetting

"I forgot to do my homework." "I forgot my umbrella in shul..." "I completely forgot about that appointment!"

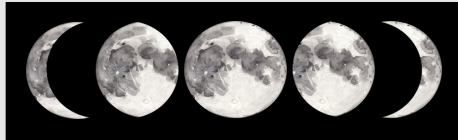
Forgetfulness is annoying and frustrating. We see it as a problem, but the Rebbe sees it differently (*Sichos Haran 26*), "The world views forgetfulness as a flaw, but I consider it a virtue." The ability to forget is crucial for success –

without it, it would be impossible for us to serve Hashem. If we would be constantly reminded of our past failures and hardships, we would be too beaten to try again. Thus, forgetting is what enables us to persist and not give up.

Let yourself forget, thereby allowing yourself to start anew. Every moment brings the opportunity of change, regardless of what has been and regardless of what will be. At this very moment, you can make a complete turnaround and become a new person. Focus on the present and make the most out of each day.

Parshas Hachodesh

The Jewish calendar is based on the lunar cycle as opposed to the solar cycle, hinting that *Klal Yisrael* is comparable to the moon. Just as the moon grows smaller as the month nears its end and then renews itself, growing bigger once more, the same occurs in our lives as Jews. Many times, it seems that we are falling, failing, fading away; we feel like we're drifting further from Hashem. Yet we can always renew



ourselves, we can always start again and grow bigger once more.

The *mitzvah* of *kiddush hachodesh* celebrates this cycle of waning and then waxing, starting anew no matter how low we have fallen. While you hear *Parshas Hachodesh* this Shabbos, take a few minutes to talk to Hashem in your own words and ask him to grant you the ability to renew yourself. **"Hashem, please help me acquire the *middah* of *hischadshus*. Help me not stay stuck in thoughts of the past or fears of the future. Help me focus on the present so that I can accomplish all that You want me to."**

Hischadshus and Hisbodedus

The grass and trees follow this cycle, too; they become completely bare in the winter and start blooming again in the spring. The Rebbe says (*Sichos Haran 247*) that this time of year is a golden opportunity for each person to join nature's journey and refresh himself spiritually, just like all the newly blossoming buds.

Spring is a time when the outdoors beckon. Go outside, surround yourself with nature and talk to Hashem. *Hisbodedus* is an essential concept in Breslev, and now is an opportune time to renew it in our lives.

Talking to Hashem in the fields brings great benefit to a person – the grass and trees actually "help" you do the talking. It's so much easier to pour your heart out to Hashem in the serene outdoors. Nonetheless, don't limit yourself to talking to Hashem only when you can seclude yourself somewhere among nature. The whole world is like one big field! Talk to Hashem whenever you can and wherever you are; He is listening intently to every word.

Like the First Time

A toddler gets up unsteadily and takes his first wobbly steps. Everyone shouts and applauds. The toddler beams.

A brand-new bar mitzva bachur puts on tefillin for the first time. Carefully, he wraps the straps on his arm, basking in this first mark of adulthood.

A young kallah strikes a match and lights



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the Shabbos candles for the first time. Tears well up in her eyes as she covers her face,

davening for shalom bayis and erliche children.

Fast forward a few years... or even a few weeks. Where's that excitement, the sense of purpose? Where's the enthusiasm that accompanied the first time?

Imagine how our *ruchniyus* would look if we would do each *mitzvah* as if it's the first time. Imagine how our lives would feel if we would always remain vibrant and new. We would embrace each *mitzvah* with so much joy!

Try it! Look at each *mitzvah* as a brand-new opportunity, one that has never happened before. On your way to daven *shacharis*? Imagine it's your first time. Sitting down with a *Gemara*? Pretend you've never done it before. Feel the joy of a beginner. Fill yourself with the wonderment of a first-timer. Life will be so much more fulfilling and your connection to Hashem will stay alive.

Refresh. Reset. Renew.

If we allow ourselves to grow jaded, the joy of life drains, leaving us bored and burnt out. *Parshas Hachodesh* teaches us the *middah* of *hischadshus*, which prevents our perception of *Yiddishkeit* from growing old. By starting anew and viewing each moment as a new opportunity, we can maximize every day and remain alive and energetic.

Strengthen yourself! Refresh yourself! Put a smile on your face and see each aspect of your life as the new opportunity that it is, and with Hashem's help, you will be *zoche* to a life of joy and fulfillment.

Sichos Mohorosh Erech
Parshas Hachodesh, Chodesh
Nissan



To My Dear *Talmidim*,

This week's *parsha*, *Parshas Pikudei*, contains powerful *chizuk* in the area of *emunah* and *hishtadlus*.

When all the parts of the *mishkan* were brought before Moshe Rabbeinu for assembling, he was stymied by the monumental task. Building a *mishkan* of such large proportions, with its cumbersome and heavy materials, was impossible for any person to achieve. Moshe Rabbeinu therefore turned to Hashem and asked (*Rashi Shemos 39:33*), "איך אפשר הקמתו על ידי אדם – How is it possible for the *mishkan* to be built by a mere human being?" To which Hashem responded, "עסק אתה בידך, והוא נוקף וקם מאליו – You pretend to build, and it will build itself through a *neis*."

How apt is this *chizuk* for every one of us, no matter the situation we may find ourselves in. We must begin, we must simply try, and Hashem does the rest. This is especially applicable in the area of *parnassa*; no matter how many times a person may calculate and recalculate his monthly income and expenses, the numbers just don't seem to add up. It is the same conundrum of Moshe Rabbeinu: "איך אפשר הקמתו על ידי אדם – How is it humanly possible for me to continue supporting my family?" Yet Hashem's answer to us is, "Don't make *cheshbonos*. You do yours – go pretend to bring *parnassa* and I will do the rest."

Yesterday, a *yungerman* came to me and poured out his angst: his monthly expenses are such-and-such, and his monthly income is such-and such, a few hundred dollars short. Overwhelmed and frustrated, he said that it is impossible for him to continue this way.

This situation exists with every other person – no matter how many calculations one makes, the numbers just don't add up. However, we must remember that a *Yiddishe* home is like a miniature *mishkan*. *Chazal* teach us (*Bava Basra 99*), "מקום הארון אינו מן המדה – the *aron* did not take up any space. When the *aron* was brought into the *kodesh hakadashim*, the calculations did not add up; according to the measurements, the *aron* did not take up any space at all! They measured, they counted, they calculated... it didn't make any logical sense. Nonetheless, the *aron* was in the *kodesh hakadashim* – illogically, impossibly – day after day, week after week, year after year, for hundreds of years! It didn't add up. Pen and paper showed that it couldn't be, but reality showed that the *aron* was there.

This is the way we must live. **Don't make calculations, don't try to add things up on paper.** Scratching our heads and trying to calculate our income and expenses won't help us acquire the financial stability we seek. We need to make a different sort of *cheshbon*: Hashem is running the world and when we ask, He gives. We must plead with Him for help; **"Hashem, I just can't continue anymore. I am under so much pressure from all my expenses, my debts are piling up and I don't see any way out. Please help me bring home money so my wife and children will have what they need. Hashem, I know that I am at fault; my many sins have caused me to fall into this precarious state. Please forgive me and bless me with abundant *parnassa*."**

This idea can be applied to all areas of life – *shalom bayis*, *chinuch* and any other challenge a person may face. We can accomplish nothing on our own; we need to do what Hashem says and "הוא נוקף וקם מאליו – Hashem will make it get done.

Another lesson here is "עסק אתה בידך – Lift your hands to Hashem with *tefilla*.

Gut Shabbos.

Adapted from *Atzaso Emunah, Pikudei 5784*



WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO FIND MY SHIDDUCH?



Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

I must express my appreciation for all the shiurim and chizuk that helps me so much in my daily life. I have completed Mishnayos eight times already, and last Simchas Torah, I finished the entire Chamisha Chumshei Torah for the first time in my life. It is in the merit of the Rosh Yeshiva and Mohorosh that I am where I am today; without all the chizuk, I would have chosen a very different path in life.



I am currently learning in a yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael for older bachurim. Many of my friends have smartphones without filters and the temptation for me to get one is very strong. How can I overcome the desire?

I constantly daven that I should find my shidduch already, and I say korbonos hanesi'im and the tefillos from Mohorosh each day. Despite all this, I have only had three or four shidduchim suggested in the past two years. I am very discouraged – is there anything else I can do to find my shidduch?

Thank you.

The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

It's so painful for me to hear what you are going through. The loneliness and anguish a *bachur* endures while waiting for his *shidduch* are impossible to comprehend. **There is no greater suffering than that of a *bachur* who is waiting and yearning for his *shidduch*;** his only desire is to be *erlich* and conduct himself with holiness but the *yetzer hara* makes it impossible.

Despite your pain, do not become resentful or question Hashem's ways. Continue davening for your *shidduch* because Hashem is the Master *Shadchan*. A person can never know who he will marry or when the right time will be – *shidduchim* are solely in Hashem's hands.

Chazal teach us (*Bereishis Rabbah 68:3*) that we see in Torah, *Nevi'im* and *Kesuvim* that a *shidduch* is in Hashem's control:

ויען לבן ובתואל, ויאמרו מה יצא הדבר (*Bereishis 24:50*);

ואביו ואמו לא ידעו כי מה' היא (*Shoftim 14:4*);

בית והון נחלת אבות ומה' אשה משכלת (*Mishlei 19:14*).

Be smart and don't allow yourself to be influenced by your friends and their self-destructive behavior. Control yourself from buying a smartphone or any device that can be used for *aveiros*. The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:87*) that when a person sins with *p'gam habris*, he forfeits his *shidduch*, and if he is already married he loses his *shalom bayis*. However, when a person does *teshuva*, he will be *zoche* to find his *shidduch* and merit a blessed life.

If you will remain strong and not have any *treif* devices, you will be *zoche* to all the *brachos* you seek: finding a *shidduch* speedily, building a beautiful home and meriting righteous generations.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah #2, page 131

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