



# SPARKS OF EMUNAH

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AS TAUGHT BY MOHOROSH ZT"l AND THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT"l

לעלוי נשמת  
מרים חנה בת ר' דוד צבי הלוי  
יוכבד בת ר' אליהו נתן

CHIZUK  
FROM THE  
PARSHA

## SHABBOS AND JOY

לא תבערו אש בכל משבתיכם ביום השבת

You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on Shabbos.

Shabbos. We call it a day of rest, a "day off," a day of growth, a day of spirituality. Any Jew who has truly experienced Shabbos knows that although there are so many things that are not allowed on this day, Shabbos is so much more than a list of *do's* and *don't's*.

### Bondage and Freedom

Shabbos is a day of freedom. The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:17*) that during the week, our minds are in a state of *galus*. Occupied as we are by the pressures of day-to-day living, it is easy to lose our focus and forget that Hashem is in control. We wrongly attribute power to the people around us, thinking that they can help us and/or harm us. When Shabbos comes, we have the opportunity to free ourselves from shackles of mistaken thinking.

The Rebbe teaches that when we spend Shabbos in a state of joy, our minds are liberated from the confusion we experience all week, as the *passuk* says (*Yeshaya 55:12*), "כי בשמחה תצאו" — With happiness you will be freed. With *simcha*, we can realize that Hashem is the One running the show. With *simcha*, we can shake off the mistaken belief that people have power. With *simcha*, we can come to the realization that *אדם לי אדם, לא אירא מה יעשה לי אדם* (*Tehillim 117:6*) — Hashem is with me and I do not fear, for man cannot affect me. **With *simcha*, we can acquire true *emunah* in Hashem.**

### Shabbos First

*Parshas Vayakhel* is almost exclusively devoted to the building of the *mishkan*. *Chazal* teach us (*Tanchuma Teruma*) that *ה' שיהיה הקב"ה נתארה הקב"ה* — Hashem desired a dwelling place in this world, and He therefore commanded us to build a *mishkan*. Thus, the purpose of the *mishkan* was to bring the *Shechina* into this world — to cause Hashem to be a tangible presence in our lives.



Before Moshe Rabbeinu gave over all the details of building the *mishkan*, he digressed and taught a bit about Shabbos. Why? Because by keeping Shabbos and being joyful on this day, our *emunah* is strengthened, and then the *Shechina* can truly rest among us.

### Fire!

There are many acts that are forbidden Shabbos, but "לא תבערו אש בכל משבתיכם ביום השבת" is the most fundamental and was most important to be taught about in this week's *parsha*. *Chazal* explain (*Tikunei Zohar 125*) that this refers to the fire of anger — a *middah* that is the antithesis of *emunah*, because **anger can exist only when a person forgets about Hashem.**

If a person loses himself and gets angry on Shabbos, he brings poverty and suffering upon himself in the coming week. Hence, anger on Shabbos is more dangerous than fire! **It's crucial to avoid any fighting on *erev* Shabbos and certainly on Shabbos itself. One must be smart and do everything in his power to help his home be a happy place.**

Let's be joyful on Shabbos and thereby strengthen our *emunah* in Hashem. Let's make a place for the *Shechina* in our homes, and we will then be *zoche* to all the *yeshuos* that will inevitably come along.

Toch Hanachal, Vayakhel 5760

MOHOROSH  
SPEAKS

## REFRESH. RENEW.

Spring is on its way!

In the next few weeks, the world will begin to awaken from its winter slumber. Soon the trees will begin to blossom, the flowers will begin to bloom, and the grass will slowly begin peeking out of the ground. The breeze carries the sound of birds chirping, announcing their return after a long and harsh winter. As the weather becomes more pleasant, nature itself seems to nod in agreement — spring is almost here!

It's not by chance that this time of year coincides with *Chodesh Nissan*, the month of *החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים*, ראשון החדש. הוא לכם לחדשי השנה. Mohorosh explains that the multiple usage of the word *חדש* implies that this is an opportune time for *hischadshus* (renewal) in *avodas Hashem*.

### The Rebbe: A Chiddush

The Breslevar Rebbe, Rabbeinu Nachman ben Faiga zt"l, was born on *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*, hinting at this concept of self-renewal which was fundamental to the Rebbe's *avodas Hashem* (*Shivchei Haran 6*). In his youth, the Rebbe burned with

(Continued on page 2)



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 attain another lofty level but fell through, he did not give up but rather said to himself, *"I'll pretend I never made any attempt before and I'll start again as if it's the first time."*

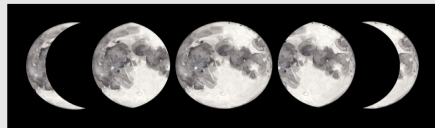
This happened numerous times each day, but still the Rebbe lifted himself up and started yet again. His arduous toil was what resulted in his becoming a towering spiritual giant, a *tzaddik hador* who left a stunning legacy of *sefarim* filled with *chizuk* for every one of us.

**Forgetfulness and Renewal**

*"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, for without it, serving Hashem would be impossible. 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, and let yourself 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 to every Jew. Many times, it seems that we are falling, failing, fading away, and 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 hearing *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 your life.

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 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 wonder 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 life as the new opportunity that it is, and you'll be *zoche* to a life of joy and fulfillment.





## WHEN IT DOESN'T ADD UP...

To My Dear Talmidim,

This week's *parsha*, *Parshas Pikudei*, contains powerful *chizuk* in the area of *bitachon* 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?* To which Hashem's response was: "עסק אתה בידך ונראה" — *You pretend to build and it will build itself.*

What powerful *chizuk* this is for every one of us, in whatever 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* — oftentimes, no matter how many times a person calculates and recalculates his monthly income and expenses, the numbers just don't seem to add up. Just 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. In despair, he cried out, "It's impossible for me to continue this way!"

This is the same conundrum of Moshe Rabbeinu: "איך אפשר הקמתו על ידי אדם" — *How is it possible for me to continue supporting my family?* Yet Hashem's answer to us is, "**Don't make cheshbonos. You do yours — pretend to bring in parnassa and I will do the rest.**"

### No Logic

*Chazal* teach us (*Bava Basra 99a*), "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.

A *Yiddishe* home is like a miniature *mishkan*, and 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 whatever other challenges a person may face. We can accomplish nothing on our own — we just need to do our *hishtadlus* and והוא נוקף וקם מאלי — 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*

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*Tov.* One year, he decided to make wine for his *Rebbe* for *Pesach*. How he toiled over the wine... He was busy with *kavanos*, *inyanim* and *chumros*, all so that the *Baal Shem Tov* should have extra-mehudar wine for *Pesach*.

*R' Dovid* guarded his precious barrel carefully as he began his trip home. When he got to the border, to his great dismay, a soldier flippantly flicked the barrel open and stuck a finger inside, rendering all the wine *yayin nesech* and unusable.

Empty-handed and broken-hearted, *R' Dovid* returned to his *Rebbe* and told him the entire story. The *Baal Shem Tov* gently asked, "Did you remember to ask Hashem for it to work out well?"

The *Baal Shem Tov* was right. He had forgotten to daven for success, and that was why his efforts didn't bear fruit.

Without *tefilla*, everything else is a waste of time. Take a few moments each day to ask Hashem to grant you a joyful *yom tov* and protect you from the sin of eating *chametz*, and this is how you will be *zoche* to a beautiful *yom tov*.

Below is a *tefilla* you can say every day:

**"Hashem, please help me be mekabel the yom tov of Pesach with joy and protect me from consuming even the tiniest bit of chametz.**

**"What should I do if yamim tovim fill me with so much tension? Every time yom tov nears, I become stressed and anxious. Help me not get upset at my wife or children and make me love spending time with them.**

**"Hashem, please give me the gift of living with emunah and help me remember that You are always with me."**

The *Rebbe* says (*Sefer Hamiddos, Os Simcha*) that when a person does a *mitzvah* happily, it is a sign that he is an *erliche Yid*.

May you be *zoche* to do all the *mitzvos* of *Pesach* with joy.

*Atzaso Emunah Volume 3, page 311*

# Q & A

## HOW CAN I AVOID THE PRE-PESACH TENSION?



### QUESTION:

*To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,*

*First of all, I wanted to thank the Rosh Yeshiva for changing my life. Thank you for awakening my neshama and helping me taste the sweetness of Yiddishkeit.*

*As Pesach nears, I am once again filled with the stress that accompanies me each year in the weeks and months before yom tov. For weeks I've been working on getting the house chametz-free, and I am getting more and more anxious as time passes.*

*I would appreciate if the Rosh Yeshiva can give me some perspective on this matter and help me see the beauty of Pesach.*

*Thank you.*

### THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

I received your letter.

A person who lives with the guidance of a *tzaddik* lives a beautiful and meaningful life. *Yamim tovim* become enjoyable and uplifting for him, as the Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:135*), "He who has a connection to a *tzaddik* can feel the holiness of *yom tov*." Anyone who is truly *mekurav* to the Rebbe can tell you that once he started learning the Rebbe's *sefarim* and implementing his *eitzos*, *yom tov* was transformed from a stressful time to a joyful time.

The *yetzer hara* works overtime to make *yom tov* full of tension and fighting, because these sacred times put his entire "career" at risk. All year, we are so busy with our everyday struggles that we lose our focus and forget what's

really important. *Yom tov* is a time when we can disconnect from the world and reconnect with Hashem — this is what the *yetzer hara* is afraid of. When we prepare for the *yamim tovim* with joy and use the holy days to spend time with our families and with Hashem, all his work from the entire year goes to waste. Therefore, he ensures that *yom tov* will come with so much negativity that we won't be able to maximize these precious days.

The Tzanzer Rav *zt"l* told the following story:

*Velvel was very disorganized. Mornings were a disaster for him — it took him hours to find his clothing and things and get his day started. One day, a helpful friend advised him to take a few minutes each night to write a list of all his belongings and where they are, and he would then find everything easily the next morning.*

*Excited with the idea, Velvel did exactly as he was told. He wrote everything on the list: My shirt is in the closet, my hat is on the couch, my jacket is hanging over the back of the chair...*

*The next morning was a breeze. Velvel went through the list and actually found all his clothes right away. But soon he began to scream, "Oh no! I know where all my things are, but where am I?"*

Foolish man. Yet we sometimes look the same way. When *yom tov* nears, we get very busy with all the "props" — cleaning, cooking, shopping, etc. But what is all of it worth if we are stressed and short-tempered, if we ourselves are "not there"?

You ask how you can be *zoche* to feel the beauty of Pesach — know that unless your preparations include lots of *tefilla*, you'll have nothing. No matter how much effort you put in, if you don't bring Hashem into the picture, you will taste only bitterness. **The more you ask Hashem to give you a joyful Pesach, the more enjoyable and uplifting your *yom tov* will be.**

Every Pesach, Mohorosh used to tell the following story:

*R' Dovid of Mikolev zt"l was a close talmid of the holy Baal Shem*

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