



# *THE LIGHT* *Of* **EMUNAH**

Questions and answers that address many pressing challenges today's generation face. Beautifully entwined with emunah, chizuk, and guidance that can be applied in one's daily life.

Written by:  
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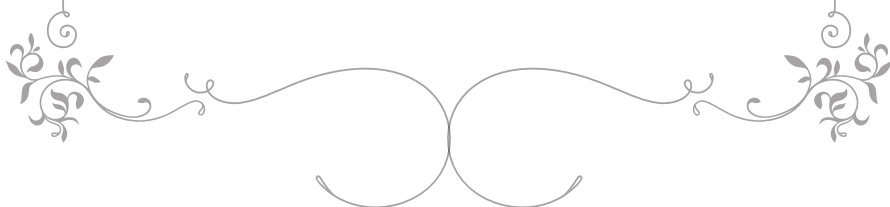
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THE LIGHT OF  
**EMUNAH**

## HOW CAN I PERSUADE MY MOTHER TO LET ME HAVE A PHONE?

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### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

I must begin with expressing my appreciation for all the *shiurim*; they give me so much *chizuk* and guidance at all times.

I'm an eighteen-year-old girl in the twelfth grade. In the school I attend, twelfth graders can have their own phones, and all my classmates have one. My mother does not allow me to have a phone, because immediately after getting married my older sister bought herself a smartphone, and my mother is afraid I will want to do the same. I tried to explain numerous times that all I want is a simple telephone, but she claims that's how everyone starts out.

On one hand, I understand her opposition, because I have several siblings who don't conduct themselves as they should, and she doesn't want me to imitate them. However, on the other hand, all my classmates have phones, and I don't want to be left out. I would appreciate the Rosh Yeshivah's guidance in this situation.

Thank you.

### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום א' פרשת בהר בחקות;  
ט"ז אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Miss ...

Your mother is right, you don't need a telephone, and you won't accomplish more with a telephone. If you have spare time, help your mother with the housework, and if you still have time left, say *Tehillim*. Daven to Hashem to merit to find a devoted husband and establish an *ehrlische* home together. Utilize the time now to daven for your future; you are mature enough to already know what is truly important, and be *mispallel* for your generations to come.

Friends don't bring a person fulfillment or true happiness. Say *Tehillim*; it will sustain your soul and bring you happiness. The Rebbe says, "Fortunate is one who drinks *kapitlach Tehillim* every day."<sup>1</sup> Chazal ask:

.....  
1. *Sichos Haran* 23.

"Why was Rus called Rus? Because Rus is an expression of satiating. David HaMelech was Rus's grandchild, and he satiated Hashem with his *Sefer Tehillim*, singing and praising Him from morning until night."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, when one says *Tehillim*, it is as if he is satiating his *neshamah*.

Have compassion on your mother, who is waiting and yearning for some *nachas*. You cannot imagine the pain parents endure when their children don't conduct themselves as they should. Therefore, if your mother doesn't want you to have a telephone, listen to her, and in the *zechus* of *kibbud av v'eim* you will merit a blessed life.

Friends are an illusion; all those who disregard their parents in favor of their friends are heading down a treacherous path. Years later, they will come to their senses and beat themselves up with guilt for all the years they chose their friends instead of their parents.

If you will accept my words and heed what I have written, you will benefit both in this world and in the World to Come.



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2. *Berachos* 7b.

## WILL I EVER MERIT TO BE AN EHRliche YID?

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### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

I am a sixteen-year-old *bachur*, and I listen to your *shiurim* on a regular basis. I discovered the hotline approximately half a year ago, and I connected to the concepts of *hisboidedes* and *derech halimud*. However, I could never understand why the Rosh Yeshivah discusses the concept of *shemiras einayim* so often, and I always looked at people who are vigilant to guard their eyes on the street as simply wanting some extra attention.

Until one day, when I had access to a telephone without a filter. I started watching inappropriate material, and my decline was swift in coming. Since being exposed, I am hungry and always searching for more. I started hanging out in parks, where I met *goyim* who were also interested in *aveiros*, and I am sinking lower and lower.

I have ups and downs, and I want to find a way out. I don't want to grow up to be a *menival* who chases after immorality all day. I still want a chance at life. I am begging the Rosh Yeshivah, with tears in my eyes, please give me an *eitzah*! I have already gotten *eitzahs* from others — for example, to learn *chassidus* for forty days — however, so far nothing has helped. I need guidance and a guarantee that I can be helped.

Thank you.



🌀 The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום ב' פרשת בהר בחקות;  
 י"ז אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

I can only assume that you don't know the consequences of your actions and what happens when you transgress on פגם הברית. I'm sure if you would even be slightly aware how severe this *aveirah* is, you wouldn't be hanging out in the park looking for *goyim* with whom to do *aveiros*.

The more one transgresses on פגם הברית, the weaker he grows. This *aveirah* causes a person to become feeble and old, his eyesight diminishes, and a foul smell starts emanating from his mouth. His hair starts falling out, and it brings much suffering upon a person. As the *Shulchan Aruch* writes<sup>3</sup> "והרבה כאבים חוץ מאלו באים עליו".

The *aveirah* of פגם הברית kills a person, as Chazal say:<sup>4</sup> "כל המוציא שכבת זרע לבטלה חייב מיתה" - one who engages in פגם הברית deserves to be killed." And Chazal state further that when a person sins with פגם הברית, he also transgresses on murder and bloodshed, and it is as if he would worship *avodah zorah*.

When one is פוגם בברית, he loses everything valuable to him. One loses his *shidduch*, and if one is already

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 3. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, siman 240:14.*

4. *Niddah 13b.*

married, he loses his *shalom bayis*.<sup>5</sup> Why would you want to lose your *shidduch*? Why would you choose to destroy your life?

Don't think you will be able to hide your actions from people by hanging out in the park; the Rebbe at an occasion, ridiculed those who engage in such despicable acts, and said that in the end they will be humiliated before all. The Rebbe remarked "*Uder a nisayon, uder a bizoyan* – either a test or else a disgrace;"<sup>6</sup> every person has *nisyonos*, and he must work to overcome them. However, if he submits to them and people find out, they then cause him immense embarrassment.

I reread your question multiple times, and I cannot comprehend, how a *Yid*, who is holy and pure, would seek out a relationship with a *goy*! It is clear to me what Chazal state: A person doesn't sin, unless a foolish spirit enters him.<sup>7</sup> Your actions make no logical sense; a foolish spirit has entered you, *Hashem yishmereinu*.

The *eitzah* you must adopt is that which the Rebbe teaches in *Likutei Moharan*. "The most powerful method to overcome the Yetzer Hora is through learning Torah. The Torah corresponds to the *os Vav*, because the *Luchos* were six cubits long by six cubits wide. The *vav* has the shape of a stick, whereas the Torah corresponds to a stick that can subdue the Yetzer Hora, which wants to drive a person insane. Just as the insane don't understand or

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5. *Likutei Moharan* 2:87.

6. *Sichos Haran* 304.

7. *Sotah* 3a.

acquiesce until they are struck, likewise a person who sins – who is also in a sense insane — must be struck with the holy Torah. Only when he learns Torah will he be able to subdue his Yetzer Hora and cease engaging in sin."<sup>8</sup>

Someone who is insane doesn't listen to words; only when he sees the stick will he respond to what is being said. The same applies to you; if the Yetzer Hora has trapped you in his net, you must get hold of a stick to strike him back. Open a Mishnayos and start learning one *perek* after another. At first, you won't comprehend what you are learning, because after succumbing to פגם הברית so often one loses his power of concentration. However, be persistent and continue learning; by doing so you will be saved and cleansed from your terrible *aveiros*. The Rebbe states "Even a person who is very far from all things holy, he has already fallen into the Yetzer Hora's clasp, and he has sunk so low that he is lying in שאול תחתית, if he establishes a *shiur* and learns a certain amount of Torah every day, he will eventually emerge from the depths. The power of Torah is so great, it can extricate a person from all his *aveiros*."<sup>9</sup>

When the Rebbe taught the abovementioned *sichah*, R' Nosson interrupted and asked, "Is this also applicable for someone who commits the *aveirah* of פגם הברית? "הוצאת זרע לבטלה רחמנא לצלך" and the Rebbe replied, "Do you know how great Torah is? Torah transcends

8. *Likutei Moharan* 1:1.

9. *Sichos Haran* 19.

everything else. Even if a person was completely submerged in this *aveirah*, the Torah has the power to extricate him and lead him on the right path."<sup>10</sup>



## MAZEL TOV ON THE BIRTH OF YOUR FIRST GRANDCHILD.

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### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

Although I live in Eretz Yisrael, I consider myself a talmid of the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*, and the *chizuk* and *shiurim* guide me at all times.

I wanted to take the opportunity to wish the Rosh Yeshivah Mazel Tov on the birth of his first grandchild, may Hashem grant you much *nachas* from this grandchild, and from the rest of your children. In the merit of all you do for *Klal Yisrael*, may Hashem repay you with blessing and abundance with all your children.

From a talmid, who delights with every single *shiur*.

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10. *Chai Moharan* 573.

🌸 The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום ב' פרשת בהר בחקות;  
 י"ז אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

I accept all your *brachos*, והמברך יתברך – may you too be *zocheh* to merit *nachas* from your children and grandchildren.

If you consider yourself a Breslever chassid, I would like to encourage you to listen to what the Rebbe requested from us and engage in *hafutza*. R' Nossou writes, "On numerous occasion the Rebbe spoke to us, and directed us to engage in bringing *Yidden* closer to Hashem; many times the Rebbe would rebuke us and say 'עצים יבשים' — you are lifeless trees,' because we did not bear new fruit — meaning that we did not encourage more *Yidden* to return to Hashem. On one Motza'ei Shabbos the Rebbe gave us *mussar* for a few hours, reproaching us that we do not engage enough with *hafutza*."<sup>11</sup>

We cannot grasp the greatness of bringing *Yidden* closer to Hashem. Chazal relate<sup>12</sup> that Reish Lakish fasted for three hundred days in order to merit to see R' Chiya. However, he was still not *zocheh*. This caused him much anguish, and he cried out, "Why am I not *zocheh* to see

.....  
 11. Ibid. 543

12. Yerushalmi *Kesubos* 66a.

R' Chiya? I learned Torah so diligently; has R' Chiya learned more than I?!" He was answered, "It is true that you have learned more Torah than R' Chiya; however, R' Chiya taught Torah to others, and not only that, he went into exile in order to learn Torah, and settled in Eretz Yisrael." Reish Lakish understood that this is R' Chiya's greatness: that he went into exile to learn Torah, so he countered: "Ribbono Shel Olam, I also went into exile to learn Torah!" Yet he was answered, "You went into exile so that *you* can learn Torah, whereas R' Chiya went into exile so he can teach *others* Torah." This is what the *meifitzim* do; they go into exile every day so they can strengthen another *Yid* with Torah and *emunah*.

We must listen to what the Rebbe demands from us, as R' Nosson once remarked to his talmid R' Nachman Toltchiner, "Why do you come to a Rebbe if you don't listen to him?"

R' Nosson was once on the way to the Rebbe's *Tzion* and R' Nachman Toltchiner's coat ripped. R' Nosson told him to go mend it immediately because the Rebbe says that one must be very vigilant not to wear torn clothing.<sup>13</sup> However, R' Nachman Toltchiner very badly wanted to accompany R' Nosson to the *Tzion*, so he disregarded what R' Nosson had told him. It was then that R' Nosson remarked "Why do you come to a Rebbe if you don't listen to him?"

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

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13. *Likutei Moharan* 1:128.

## HOW CAN I MAKE MY DAUGHTER BE SATISFIED WITH A MODEST WEDDING?

### ❧ Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

I am marrying off my daughter soon after *Shevuos*, and with all the COVID regulations still in place, it looks like it will be a small affair in my home, with a limited number of guests. I have no problem with such a celebration; however, my daughter is heartbroken. She was getting ready to have a grand affair with all the trappings, and she cannot bring herself to settle for so much less. How can I give her *chizuk*?

Thank you.

### ❧ The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום א' פרשת במדבר, כ"ג אי"ה, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

Give her *chizuk* to thank Hashem for all the blessings she does have. How much gratitude she should have that she is healthy and her *chassan* is healthy! Instead of crying over the aspects she is lacking, encourage her to praise and thank Hashem for everything with which she is blessed.

The Rebbe gave us an incredible *eitzah* — a way of thinking that will ease our suffering while undergoing difficulties. A person should seek out the blessing and focus on the miracles Hashem grants him. As the Rebbe states,<sup>14</sup> despite his suffering David HaMelech always sought out the blessings that Hashem gave him, and thanked Him accordingly. And even when Hashem brought misfortune upon him, he would seek out the blessing amidst the suffering. David HaMelech would praise Hashem,<sup>15</sup> "בצר הרחבת לי" — I thank You, Hashem, that even in my distress, you have relieved me."

When a person lives with this guidance, to constantly seek out the blessings in his life, then everything is easier to endure. Such a person will always be happy and content.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.



## THE GREATNESS OF A MEIFITZ.

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### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

I am a woman from Eretz Yisrael who immensely enjoys the

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14. *Likutei Moharan* 1:195.

15. *Tehillim* 4:2.



*shiurim* and *chizuk*; they give me so much guidance in my daily life.

Yesterday a *meifitz* knocked on our door and gave us the *kunteres* in *Lashon HaKodesh*, 'היפי שבטוב'; my husband welcomed him in and gave him a drink and a nice donation.

I would appreciate if the Rosh Yeshivah could give more *shiurim* on the topic of *shalom bayis*, which are so beneficial, especially now when we are under lockdown and together at home most of the time.

Thank you.

### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום א' פרשת במדבר, כ"ג אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Mrs. ...

We cannot grasp the greatness of those who engage in *hafutzah* and distribute the *sefarim* and guidance of the holy Rebbe to others. They are generous enough to let others know about the treasure that they discovered. A *meifitz* says to himself, "If I merited such a blessed life through the *eitzahs* and *sefarim* Mohorosh wrote, I will be kind and spread the light and *chizuk* to others who are not yet aware of the Rebbe."

If you discovered the light — *eitzahs* and guidance how to merit *shalom bayis* — don't be selfish and keep the secret to yourself. If you extract so much *chizuk* from the *shiurim*, do a favor with another, and think of

ways you can introduce the *shiurim* to your family and friends, so that they too can merit peace and happiness.

How fortunate is the person whose thoughts are constantly occupied with "How can I help another *Yid*? How can I reveal the beauty of *Yiddishkeit* to another? What can I do so that more people will be aware of the significance of *teshuvah* and the importance of living with the holy Torah?" Such a person is *zocheh* to sit together with Hashem. As the Rebbe states, "One who returns other *Yidden* to Hashem is *zocheh* up in heaven to sit in the yeshivah of Hashem, and it is in his merit that Hashem annuls harsh decrees."<sup>16</sup>

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.



## HOW CAN I FIND MY PLACE IN BRESLEV WITHOUT BEING DRAWN INTO *MACHLOKES*?

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### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,  
I grew up in a Breslever family in Yerushalayim, but it took me many years until I was *zocheh* to forge a personal connection

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16. *Sefer HaMiddos, Teshuvah 24.*

to Breslev. After witnessing *machlokes*, I stopped associating with Breslev for many years, until now when I found your *shiurim* and they showed me that there is a different approach. *Baruch Hashem*, I gain so much encouragement from them.

I wanted to once again begin mingling among Breslever chassidim. What can I do to prevent myself from being drawn into *machlokes*?

I also wanted to know, regarding the *Seder Derech HaLimud*; to what extent does one not need to comprehend the words he is saying and which is more important to learn every day, halachah and Gemara, or the Rebbe's *sefarim*?

Thank you.

### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום ב' פרשת במדבר,  
כ"ד אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

Flee from *machlokes* as one flees from fire. Chazal teach us: "The *beis din shel matah* would not punish a child who was not yet thirteen years of age, and the *beis din shel maalah* would punish only people age twenty years and older. However, *machlokes* is so severe that even young children are torn away from the world as punishment for *machlokes*, as we learn regarding the *machlokes* of Korach that even children of only one day old died."<sup>17</sup>

.....  
17. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:4

Cease looking at others, and start looking out for your benefit only. If you have found a niche in Breslev that gives you fulfillment, embrace the *chizuk* and use it to grow. If others have a different place that gives them satisfaction, it shouldn't bother you, on the contrary — everyone should take *chizuk* from the place that caters to his needs. As the Rebbe once remarked,<sup>18</sup> "אני אעשה" "מכם כתוח כתוח".

It shouldn't even interest you what others say or do; life is too short to be occupied with others. As Chazal say, "A person's life is like a shadow that passes by, not like a shadow that appears on the wall, that takes time until it diminishes; or at least like the shadow of a tree; but instead, a person's life is like the shadow of a bird, that passes by briefly while flying overhead."<sup>19</sup>

Be part of *anshei shlomeinu* who strengthen each other with *dibburei emunah* and *chizuk* of the Rebbe. The Rebbe is in a place where his *eitzahs* and *dibburim* are spoken. A place where you strengthen each other in *avodas Hashem* is a place where Hashem dwells. However, when the discussion is derogatory towards others, others are canceled, that is a place where the *Satan* dwells. Even if the *chaburah* outwardly appear to be *ovdei Hashem* and describe themselves with prominent titles, if they speak out against others, it is all deceit.

Be especially wary of those who talk about lofty ideals

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18. *Chai Moharan* 319.

19. *Bereishis Rabbah* 96:2.

and matters that do not relate to us simple people. The Rebbe instructed us, "Take my advice; the world tries to fool you, do not allow yourself to be fooled."<sup>20</sup> One must be careful not to be entranced by those who speak the language of mysticism — about rectifying souls; usually such people are fantasists living in an alternate reality, and it's a great pity on those who chase after them, thinking they can help them.

Mohorosh would relate that one such person in Breslev claimed that the holy Steipler Gaon once came to him asking for a *tikkun*. Mohorosh exclaimed, "What an imposter! How does one have the audacity to say such a thing about such a *Gadol b'Yisrael*, a *tzaddik emes* — who sacrificed his entire life for Torah — that he came to him asking for a *tikkun*?" This demonstrates that this person is not completely well, and it's a shame on those who chase after him.

When Mohorosh's levaya was delayed, the same person remarked that it was only because he was still occupied with rectifying Mohorosh's neshuma. It's a pity on him, and on all his followers. Even a fool wouldn't dare say such a thing; he must have many fools as followers since he can allow himself to talk that way.

Therefore, be wary of people who are out of touch with reality, and instead focus on your own personal gains. It makes no difference if people allege that a particular *manhig* has *ruach hakodesh* and is witness to

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20. *Sichos Haran* 51.

heavenly proceedings; if, at the end of the day, he can't get you to learn and daven then, it is all in vain. If time goes by and you still have not completed Mishnayos even once, then you have been fooled, and such a *manhig* is a deceiver.

The Rebbe states,<sup>21</sup> "The *Yetzer Hora* is comparable to a prankster who runs through a crowd showing a tightly closed hand. He goes up to people and asks them, 'What do you suppose I have in my hand?' Each one imagines that the closed hand contains what he desires most. They all hurry and run after him. Then, when he has tricked them all into following him, he opens his hand. It is completely empty. The same is with the *Yetzer Hora*. He fools the world, tricking it into following him. All men think that his hand contains what they desire. Yet, when a person's time comes and he must leave the world, the *Yetzer Hora* shows him an empty hand; think how the person must feel after realizing what he pursued his entire life was falsehood and lies."

Mohorosh would say that this *sichah* applies to all *taavos* in general, yet specifically to the concept of chasing after a *manhig* or a Rebbe, etc. The Rebbe runs around with a closed fist, and his chassidim chase after him blindly, thinking he has something for them. However, when the person leaves this world, he sees through the illusion and realizes that it was just a deception all along. When a person goes to a Rebbe, he must not let himself be fooled; he must always focus

.....  
21. Ibid. 6.

on his personal gains. If days go by and he sees no personal growth, then he is being deceived. Even if the *manhig* is truly a *tzaddik* or a hidden *tzaddik*, and he has *ruach hakodesh*; if he can't initiate that you begin being *maavir sedra* every week, that you start learning a *daf* of Gemara every day, then it is a waste of time. If you don't receive guidance on how to conduct yourself with your wife and children, and he doesn't bring you closer to Hashem, then it is all for naught.

Sadly, today people are misled by leaders who speak the language of kabbalah, and they chase after *manhigim* who are blind, crippled, and mute. As the Rebbe relates, "Some said the main purpose is honor, so they went in search of such a person. They went and saw how an old beggar — a gypsy — was being carried and five hundred gypsies were following. The beggar was blind, crippled, and mute."<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately, people are lured by a *manhig* who is blind — he doesn't have the slightest idea of the challenges and suffering that his followers are undergoing. He is mute — he talks about lofty ideals, but forgets to talk about Hashem.

Another fantasist in Breslev stated that Mohorosh appeared to him in a dream, saying that he has no peace up in heaven. This is in addition to the fact that this *mashpiah* has advised hundreds of people not to travel to Uman for Rosh Hashanah because he dreamed that the Rebbe is no longer in Uman. It is a great pity on *bachurim* and *yungeleit* who believe these fantasies, as

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22. *Sippurei Maasios* Story 12.

the Rebbe clearly said, "My Rosh Hashanah is greater than everything; it baffles me why my talmidim, who believe in me, don't encourage others to come to me for Rosh Hashanah. No one should forgo the opportunity! My entire essence is Rosh Hashanah."<sup>23</sup> The Rebbe said further, "Hashem gave me a gift — Rosh Hashanah. I did not receive it as an inheritance from my saintly parents and grandparents, it is from Hashem Himself; and not only are you dependent on my Rosh Hashanah, the entire world is dependent on my Rosh Hashanah."<sup>24</sup> And the Rebbe concluded, "On Rosh Hashanah I have the power and capabilities to give everyone a *tikkun*; even those I cannot help throughout the year."<sup>25</sup>

How can someone declare that it is no longer necessary to travel to Uman when the Rebbe clearly demanded that we come?! On the last Rosh Hashanah before the Rebbe was *niftar*, R' Ahron zt"l, who was Rav in Breslev, remarked to the Rebbe that it is extremely difficult for him to come, especially since that he has an entire *kehillah* that he leaves behind. The Rebbe replied, "What should I say, there is nothing greater than my Rosh Hashanah. And if others don't agree? It's just another question people have about me."<sup>26</sup>

Establish *shiurim* in *kol haTorah kulah* following the Rebbe's *Seder Derech HaLimud*.<sup>27</sup> Start learning

.....  
23. *Chai Moharan* 403.

24. *Ibid.* 405.

25. *Ibid.* 406.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Sichos Haran* 76.



Mishnayos and Gemara, and also establish a *shiur* in halachah and the Rebbe's *sefarim*.

Mohorosh writes in his will, "When you arrive before the Heavenly Court, you will ultimately realize the significance of the *heiliger* Rebbe's '*Seder Derech HaLimud*'; therefore, don't argue with anyone, accustom yourself to learn Torah through the *Seder Derech HaLimud*, and you will start sensing the immense pleasure Torah learning brings. The Torah is our life and sustenance in this world and in the next, and the Torah keeps us alive both *b'ruchniyus* and *b'gashmiyus*. Fortunate is the person who doesn't allow himself to be fooled, and who internalizes that the *ikar* of *limud haTorah* is to do *ratzon Hashem*."<sup>28</sup>

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.



## WHERE IN THE TORAH CAN I FIND THE SEVERITY OF פגם הברית

### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

The Rosh Yeshivah often discusses the severity of פגם הברית,

.....  
28. Tzavoas Mohorosh 13.

and I was wondering where the actual source is in the Torah. I struggle greatly in this aspect. Perhaps the Rosh Yeshivah can note where the *Shulchan Aruch* writes that it is the most severe *aveirah*?

Thank you.

### The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום ב' פרשת במדבר,  
כ"ד אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

The *Mechaber paskens*, "אסור להוציא שכבת זרע לבטלה" — It is *assur* to commit the *aveirah* of הברית, "פגם הברית," and "ועון זה חמור מכל עברות שבתורה" — this *aveirah* is more severe than all the other *aveiros* in the Torah."<sup>29</sup> Chazal also state<sup>30</sup> that one who sins with this *aveirah* deserves to die. Chazal state further, that when a person sins with הברית, פגם, he also transgresses on murder and bloodshed, and it is as if he would worship *avodah zorah*. Likewise, this was the same sin that Er and Onan transgressed until Hashem killed both of them. As it states in *Bereishis*,<sup>31</sup> "זימת ער ואונן בארץ כנען".

I would advise you to reconsider your actions, because the end result of this *aveirah* is that a person completely loses his mind. The *heiliger* Rebbe states<sup>32</sup> that insanity

29. *Shulchan Aruch, Even HaEzer* 23:1.

30. *Niddah* 13b.

31. *Bereishis* 46:12.

32. *Likutei Moharan* 1:36.

comes from being פוגם בברית. All the suffering that befalls a person comes from a lack of vigilance in מוציא זרע לבטלה, and a person ends up losing everything that is dear to him.

Establish a *shiur* in Gemara, because Gemara protects a person from the *aveirah* of פגם הברית. As the Rebbe states,<sup>33</sup> "תלמוד בגימטריא אותיות של שמה 'לילית' על כן יש כח" — the value of the letters in the word 'Talmud' equals the same value as the name of the *kelipah* that causes a person to sin with פגם הברית, and when he learns Gemara, he destroys the קליפה that lurks over him.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.



## HOW CAN YOU SPEAK OUT AGAINST OUR *BATEI* *CHINUCH*?

### Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

For many years I have been the *menahel* in an *ehrliche*

.....  
33. Ibid. 1:214.

upstanding girls school, which teaches the girls to continue in the ways of our parents and grandparents. We have already had thousands of graduates leave our doors and have gone on to pass down what they have learned to their children.

I have already heard about you, yet never had the opportunity to listen to one of your *shiurim*. However, last week someone turned on a recording of one of your *shiurim*, in which you come out harshly against the *chinuch* the girls receive nowadays, claiming that the girls don't want to get married now during COVID, because they cannot celebrate as usual with a lavish *simchah*. You state that this is a result of the poor *chinuch* the girls receive.

I was very surprised to hear you speak that way, especially as our schools were established to teach our children how to live by the guidance of the holy Torah. We imbue the girls with *tznius*, and we teach them to stay away from the foreign influences the secular world tries to send our way. Therefore, how can you come out against it and say that it is a wrong approach to *chinuch*?

Personally, I wouldn't bother writing; everyone has their way of doing things, and it's not my place to tell others what to say. However, many of our students and teachers listen to your *shiurim*, and I think that if they hear such things it can negatively influence their view of our *chinuch* — and that can be detrimental. Therefore, I would like to hear your take on it.

Thank you.

## 🌀 The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום ב' פרשת במדבר,  
כ"ד אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

Now during COVID, when the government has put restrictions on large gatherings, those who are affected most are the people who had weddings scheduled for these dates. The only way to marry off one's child now is on a much smaller scale, very similar to the way our grandparents and great-grandparents married off their children throughout the ages.

However, this has brought a new problem for many families, as the girls are refusing to get engaged. They don't want to forfeit a *l'chaim*, a lavish *tenoyim*, and, most importantly, an extravagant and expensive wedding. Another problem the new regulations of COVID has brought is that girls whose weddings were planned for these days are now sitting at home, crying and refusing to marry, because they can't have the elaborate wedding that was originally planned. They are willing to rather push it off for a later date, just so they can celebrate in an expensive ballroom with all the trappings that come along with it.

I think it is very telling how empty and hollow the *chinuch* is if this is the result of sitting in school for all these years. It is now revealed that the girls graduate not knowing the first thing about real life. The excitement of

marriage isn't the actual wedding night, the expensive hall, the flowers, or the gown, and if a girl doesn't realize this, then she has not the first idea why she is even getting married. This is certainly not a *chinuch* that teaches the girls to stay away from the secular world and its influences.

If it would be as you write; that the girls receive a *Torahdige chinuch* based on the conduct of our grandparents and great-grandparents, then the girls would say to their parents. "We want nothing, and we expect nothing; we merely want to do what Hashem wants us to, and we won't insist that you waste thousands of dollars so we should be able to impress our friends." So many people fall ill from the pressure of marrying off their children, and so many people end up with thousands of dollars in debt — for a wedding of merely a few hours. From the *l'chaim* until after the *tenoyim*, they already find themselves in the red. Every day throughout the engagement, costs parents several thousands of dollars. Why are you spending all that money? Who are you trying to impress? The girls should have received *chinuch* to stay away from the secular influences, and know to value their parents' hard-earned money. Why spend thousands of dollars on a gown that will be worn for only a few hours, or buy expensive clothing simply because it has a brand name attached? The girls should graduate school with pride to live for themselves, do what is right, and not be bothered with what others will say or think. This is a *Torahdige chinuch*, and this is the meaning of staying away from the secular world and its influences.

Let me ask you: Who is at fault that the standards of weddings have become so outlandish? Who is at fault that *yungeleit* bleed dry when it comes to marrying off their children? Instead of sharing the excitement and rejoicing in the happiness of marrying off a child, they are desperately seeking ways to cover the astronomical expenses. They then are forced to borrow money, which ultimately affects their health. Who is at fault? The schools! The girls are not taught lessons that apply to real life; they learn difficult subjects, which have absolutely no use for them later in life. Is this a *chinuch* that follows the guidance of the holy Torah? Is this what you mean by staying away from foreign influences?

Furthermore, who is at fault that *yungeleit* can't make ends meet? There are so many outstanding *kollel yungeleit* — *talmidei chachomim* — who want to sit and learn after they are married; they want to lead a simple life, yet they are dragged into debt by their wives who spend disproportionate amounts of money on expensive clothing for themselves and their children, only to impress their friends from school. Is this a *Torahdige chinuch*?

How about the *yungeleit* who work hard to earn a living, yet can't cover their wives' excessive spending habits? The girl's entire life revolves around what her friends will say. Who is responsible for this? What does a girl learn all these years in school? What lessons are girls taught in school that they can take and apply once life really begins?

If we are already on the topic of schools, who is at

fault that so many girls and young women are currently in therapy to heal their childhood traumas? The schools place a terrible burden on the girls; they are required to perform despite their academic abilities, and the girls can't take the pressure. If they fail their tests and can't keep up with the class, they are humiliated, and feel worthless. You tell me, is this a *Torahdige chinuch*? Is this the way to stay far from the secular world and its influences?

Instead of encouraging the girls to help out at home and teaching them how to lead a household, they are swamped with homework that keeps them busy for hours. Was this the goal the *tzaddikim* had in mind when they established schools for our children?

Who knows, perhaps the reason the schools have been shuttered is because of all the tears mothers have shed at how badly their daughters are being treated in school. Girls must be taught one thing: They are worthy. They are priceless. Hashem loves them, and that is all that matters. Instead, they are taught complex subjects that will never benefit them later in life. Their self-worth is then stolen when they don't succeed.

A *Torahdige chinuch* means teaching our children not to spend money on wasteful endeavors. Staying away from foreign influences means not buying clothing whose only novelty is the brand name it carries. However, if the teachers do not believe therein, how is it possible for them to influence their students? If only it would be true what you write — that our children are taught to stay away from the secular world with its foreign influences.



## HOW SHOULD I GIVE TZEDAKAH TO MY FATHER?

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### ❧ Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

I will never be able to adequately thank the Rosh Yeshivah for infusing me with life, just as a lifeless person will never be able to adequately thank someone who brought him back to life. I'm already in my twenties, but since I started listening to the *shiurim* I feel as if I have been reborn.

My father is a *chashuve Yid* who sits and learns all day, and nothing interests him in life besides Torah. In order to support him, I deposit my *maaser* and *chomesh* into his bank account on a monthly basis. However, someone recently advised me that this is not the right way of handling it, because it can cause him embarrassment to receive handouts from his son every month. Instead, he said that I should give the money to a *tzedakah* fund, and they should be the ones to give it to my father, so it shouldn't come directly from me.

However, if I suddenly stop giving him the money, I'm sure he will be very hurt. It will probably bother him more than the fact that I give him money every month. How should I conduct myself?

Thank you.

 **The Rosh Yeshivah's response:**

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום ג' פרשת במדבר,  
כ"ה אייר, שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

The question is, why do you have to share your personal details with others? Why does another person need to know that you give your father your *tzedakah* every month, along with all the details how you deposit it into his bank account? If you give your father *tzedakah*, there is no reason to share it with others. It is between you and Hashem, and no one should be privy to the details.

In general, it is worthwhile to internalize what Mohorosh would advise the *yungeliet*: If they open a business, they should never share with others how much they earn and how much they have saved. A person's finances should never be public knowledge, as it brings him no benefit. Chazal state,<sup>34</sup> "אין הברכה מצויה" — אלא בדבר הסמוי מן העין" "One is blessed when no one is privy to his earnings."

Continue giving your father *tzedakah* *exactly* as you have until now, and in this merit may you never need to be reliant on people, as the Rebbe states, "One who

.....  
34. *Taanis* 8b.

gives *tzedakah* is blessed that he will never need to rely on a person's salvation."<sup>35</sup>

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.



## IS ONE PERMITTED TO OWN ANIMALS AS PETS?

### ❧ Question:

To the Rosh Yeshivah *shlita*,

Thank you for all the *shiurim*; may Hashem give you the strength to continue. I would like to know the Rebbe's position regarding owning animals as pets.

Thank you.

### ❧ The Rosh Yeshivah's response:

בעזרת ה' יתברך - יום ג' פרשת במדבה, כ"ה אי"ה שנת תש"פ לפרט קטן

Dear ...

Mohorosh was asked in "שאלות ותשובות ברסלב" <sup>36</sup> if

35. *Sefer HaMiddos, Yeshuah* 13.

36. *Chelek* 6:751.

one may own animals as pets, and Mohorosh answers, "One must be very wary when owning animals as pets, because they bring a person much suffering both *b'ruchniyus* and *b'gashmiyus*. Especially if a person forgets to feed them in time, he will receive a harsh punishment." Therefore, asks Mohorosh, "Is it worth it to place oneself in such a situation?"

Mohorosh also relates an incident that took place during the times of the Arizal; a couple came to him for a blessing for children. The Arizal told them, "You raise chickens. One day you took the ladder the chickens use to enter the coop and used it for some other household purpose. When you were done, you forgot to return it to the coop. Therefore, you were punished and have not yet been blessed with children."

Mohorosh concludes that one should learn from this incident the gravity of raising animals, and one should abstain from owning them even as pets. Especially with raising a dog, Chazal state, "One who raises a dog, withholds *chesed* from his household."<sup>37</sup>

It is not worthwhile to own any kind of animal as a pet.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.



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