



SPARKS OF EMUNAH

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BASED ON THE SEFARIM OF REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLOV ZT"L
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

KEY TO SUCCESS

וַיִּשָּׁר אֶדְ נֹחַ וְאַשֵּׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתֵּיבָה

Only Noach survived, and those who were with him in the teiva.

The rains had finally stopped. The water had finally dried up. All vegetation, all animal life, and all of civilization were completely wiped out. The world was empty, desolate — only those who had been in the teiva remained.

The word נֹחַ teaches us that Noach was somewhat diminished from his time in the teiva — he had entered the teiva a healthy man, but was injured by the lion when he brought it food a little too late (*Medrash Tanchuma, Noach 9*).

Food and Peace

Food is a basic need for every living thing. Without food, it's impossible to survive. *Chazal* teach us (*Bava Metzia 59a*) that one must be sure to bring home food for his family, because all conflict in the home begins when there is not enough to eat.

Every man has an obligation to support his family. If he neglects to do so, his shalom bayis will suffer.

Chazal say (*Brachos 61a*), "אחורי ארי, ולא אחורי אשה" — metaphorically, this teaches us that it's better to delay bringing food to a lion than delay providing *parnassa* to one's family. A hungry beast threatens the body, but conflict in the home presents a deeper, more lasting danger. When there is no *shalom bayis*, the mind cannot settle and the spirit cannot rest. Without that inner peace, a person cannot think clearly, live joyfully, or succeed in anything.

A lion endangers life, but conflict destroys the very essence of life — the peace, joy, and wholeness that make life worth living.

In Whose Merit?

We all wish to be successful. The most far-fetched "Get rich quick!" schemes can grab the attention of even intelligent people, all in the hope of easy money. However, we must remember what *Chazal* say (*Bava Metzia 59a*): "אין ברכה מצויה בתוך ביתו של אדם אלא בשביל" — A person's entire livelihood is in the merit of his wife. **One who wants to be successful must treat his wife well, and this will cause the heavenly storehouses to open and shower brachos upon their home.**

This is true of success in *gashmiyus*, and it applies even more to spiritual matters. *Chazal* instruct us (*Kiddushin 29b*), "נושא אשה ואחר כך ילמד תורה" — One should get married and only after that learn Torah. *Chazal* also say (*Pesachim 112a*), "מצוה וגוף טהור נושא אשה ולו בנים" — A person can only live in purity if he is married.

Marriage — a holy, peaceful, loving marriage — is a prerequisite to *avodas Hashem*. Only by being married and living in harmony with one's wife can a person be truly successful, both in *gashmiyus* and in *ruchniyus*.

Toch Hanachal, Noach 5775

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

THE POWER IN YOU

A terminally ill man once came to the Chazon Ish, crying that his doctor had only given him four days to live. Terribly afraid, he begged the Chazon Ish to help him.

To the man's surprise, the tzaddik took out a Chumash Bereishis and began to read aloud:

"On the first day, Hashem created light and darkness. On the second day, Hashem separated the upper waters and the lower waters. On the third day, Hashem created dry land and all things that grow. On the fourth day, Hashem created the sun, moon and stars."

The Chazon Ish looked up to meet the sick man's fearful eyes and exclaimed, "Look at all that Hashem created in only four days! Vast oceans, countless varieties of plants, the sun, moon and galaxies full of stars... and you are thrown off by a prognosis of four days left to live? Look at how much Hashem can change in that time!"

He advised the man to turn to the Healer of all healers and beg for a complete recovery. Then the tzaddik gave his heartfelt blessing for a *refuah sheleima*.

(Continued on page 2)



SEEING THE GOOD

Dear ...,

I received your letter.

Look for the good in your father. Every person has positive qualities, and your job is to do whatever you can to find the positive qualities that he surely possesses.

Hashem commanded us to view our parents positively. Looking down on or ridiculing them, even in a concealed way, is a grave *aveira*. When a person humiliates his parents or speaks to them with *chutzpah*, he transgresses the Torah's command of (Devarim 27:16), "ארור מקלה" — "אביו ואמו" — Accursed is the one who degrades his father or his mother. The Rambam explains (Hilchos Mamrim 5:15) that even if a person only humiliates his parents verbally, or merely hints at degradation, he is cursed by Hashem. Additionally, our *tzaddikim* teach us (Sefer Chareidim 9:35), that even if a person scorns his parents in his **thoughts**, he is still cursed by Hashem.

Don't get involved in any conflict between your parents!

If you look for the good in your father, you'll be able to create positive change. The Rebbe teaches (Likutei Maharan 1:282) that by viewing a person positively — even if he is a complete *rasha!* — one can cause a total transformation. The Rebbe quotes the *passuk* (Tehillim 37:10), "ועוד מעט ואין רשע והתבוננת על מקומו" — "ואינו", and explains it as follows: ועוד מעט — if you find one small area רשע — in which he is not totally wicked, then והתבוננת על מקומו — when you look at the level where he was originally, ואינו — he will no longer be there. He will have become a better person. **Just by finding the tiniest sliver of good in a person, one can cause him to become a tzaddik.**

Don't get involved in any conflict between your parents. Remain on the sidelines and continue respecting them both equally. By doing so, you will be *zoche* to receive all heavenly blessings.

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah #3, page 175

The sick man immediately followed the Chazon Ish's advice. He found an empty shul and stood before the aron kodesh for hours, crying and beseeching Hashem to heal him from his illness.

Four days passed, then five, then six. The man recovered completely and lived another ten years in perfect health.

Can I Really?

We all believe that *tefilla* helps. Yet when we actually find ourselves in a *tzara*, that belief can begin to wane. We do plenty of *hishtadlus* — phone calls, appointments, consultations, meetings... but we forget to put at least half as much effort into our prayers.

Why is that?

Usually, it isn't our *emunah* in Hashem that is lacking, but rather our *emunah* in **ourselves**. The *yetzer hara* is very good at breaking our morale by making us feel small and insignificant. *I'm no more than a simple person — how will my little tefilla help?* Or, *Why should Hashem listen to me now, after I did so many aveiros?*

The truth is, however, that even the most simple Jew wields a tremendous power...

The Final Blow

The *tzaddik* R' Uri of Strelisk was known as the *Saraf* — the burning one — because of his intense passion in *avodas Hashem*. Every *mitzvah*, every *tefilla*, every part of his *avoda* was with a fiery devotion for Hashem.

A *poritz* once passed the *shul* where R' Uri was davening. Hearing the tremendous fervor in his *tefilla*, the *poritz* remained rooted to his spot, listening in awe until R' Uri had completed his *avoda*. He then approached the *tzaddik* and said, "Listen here, Rabbi, if the Jewish people weren't taken out of exile even with the power of your prayer, they can't possibly be redeemed!"

R' Uri responded with a well-known *marshal*:

A wise and powerful king had a beautiful palace with magnificent gardens all around. Right in the center of the property was a terrible eyesore — a huge, gnarled tree that had been standing there for as long as anyone could remember.

The king wished for a garden to be planted in that exact place, and he desperately wanted the tree uprooted. Knowing that it wouldn't be simple, he came up with a brilliant plan. He sent a team of criers across his entire empire, who made the grand announcement in the name of the king: "Hear ye, hear ye! He who will succeed in removing the tree from the royal courtyard shall receive a great reward from the king's treasury!"

At this, every able-bodied man in the kingdom rushed to the royal gardens, convinced that he'd be the one to get rid of the tree and take home the prize. Over the next few weeks, the palace grounds were mobbed with people, both those who came to try their luck with the tree, as well as those who came to watch the show.

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Oh, how the people tried to uproot the tree. For days and weeks they kept at it, employing all sorts of sophisticated machinery and poisons to get rid of it. But the stubborn tree would not budge! One by one, they all raised their hands in defeat and advised the king to accept the fact that the tree was there to stay.

Suddenly, a teenaged boy weaved his way through the crowd, walked up to the king and confidently announced, "I will get rid of the tree in honor of my beloved king."

All of the assembled burst into loud laughter, mocking what they called "misplaced idealism." After all, what could a thin, lanky teenager accomplish in place of all the brawny, muscular men?

Undeterred, the boy strode over to the tree with a simple axe, gave a few vigorous blows, and...

The impossibly thick trunk crashed to the ground!

An awed hush fell over the crowd. What was this boy — a superman? A magician?

With an easy smile on his face, the boy explained, "This accomplishment wasn't really my doing. You see, people have been trying to knock down this tree for weeks. They thought they failed, while in truth, their efforts had weakened the tree to the point of near-collapse. But right then, so close to success, the exhausted men conceded defeat.

**"I believed
I could give
the final
touches on
the job they
had almost
completed..."**

"I tried to get the tree down — not because I think I'm stronger than they are, but because I believed I could give the final touches on the job they had almost completed."

"The same is with us Jews in exile," Reb Uri concluded. We all try to 'take the tree down.' Each *mitzvah* is another blow at the thick trunk, another step out of *galus*. Although our *tzaddikim* have already hit the tree countless times with their awesome might, it has never been the right time for Mashiach... yet. But since they have invested so much of their awesome power in shattering our *galus*, when the right moment comes, even a 'simple' Jew doing an 'ordinary' *mitzvah* will be able to bring Mashiach.

Who, Me?

As we work to improve ourselves and come close to Hashem, the yetzer hara tries to convince us that we are thoroughly incapable, and that we will never reach our goals. "After all," he says, "there are so many people who are greater than you who didn't manage to accomplish what you're trying to do. Why do you think **YOU** will succeed? Just let go of your dreams. Be realistic and accept reality — your bad middos are here to stay."

We need to say **NO!** to that voice. It isn't true! Yes, you can succeed even if others haven't. Yes, you can succeed even if **YOU** haven't... yet. Keep banging, keep trying even when you think you're not accomplishing anything.

This is especially true with *tefilla*. Are you davening and davening for something specific but are not seeing results? Tried everything already? Don't give up! Keep davening! Every *tefilla* brings your salvation closer.

Hang in there. You never know which small deed will finally uproot the tree and bring about the *yeshuah*.



the oven, thrust his hands directly into the fire and cried, "Hands that hit a mother must be burned!"

The next day, his hands were so badly blistered that he couldn't put on his tefillin. The *tzaddik* then turned to Hashem, and said, "Heiliger Bashefer! Meilech wants to put on tefillin, but Meilech has no hands!" and the *tzaddik's* hands were miraculously healed.

Stories like this must be told to children, because although they can never do as R' Elimelech of Lizhensk did, they **can** learn that one may never lift a hand against a parent. This story also demonstrates the greatness of a *tzaddik*, that he does *teshuvah* for *aveiros* he committed even when he was too young to be held responsible. Lastly, this story shows that when a person davens, Hashem helps him.

Tell your children and *talmidim* about how R' Elimelech fasted all week long for twenty-one years straight — seven years to atone for his own sins, seven years to atone for the sins of his children and grandchildren, and seven years so that *Klal Yisrael* should merit heavenly blessing. This is something that's impossible for children to emulate, but it gives them a glimpse into the greatness of our *tzaddikim*.

The Purpose of Stories

It is important to share as many stories of *tzaddikim* as possible. **Whether or not your students can imitate the *tzaddik's* actions is irrelevant.** We are light years away from the levels of *tzaddikim*, and we're far from being the people we should be, but if we listen to our *gedolim* and attach ourselves to them, we'll become *tzaddikim*. This is as Chazal teach us (*Keilim* 12:2), "That which is connected to something pure is also pure."

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

Thank you for all the shiurim and chizuk — specifically for those on chinuch. As a melamed and a father, these shiurim give me much insight on how to be mechanech my children and my talmidim.

The Rosh Yeshiva often talks about the importance of telling stories of tzaddikim, and I try to incorporate this in my classroom by telling at least one story each day. What I noticed is that there are two types of stories that can be told:

1) Stories about the incredibly lofty levels that the tzaddikim attained or the extraordinary things they have done. Such stories are totally out of the realm of reality for the children, since they have no practical application for them, and

2) Stories which teach a lesson that the children can apply in their own lives. For example, the story of R' Abishel Frankfurter, who cried to Hashem until he was able to understand Torah, or stories which show how careful the tzaddikim were with others' feelings, and so forth.

Which kind of stories are worth telling?

hara, and that they also struggled when they were young. The Rebbe once said (*Likutei Moharan 2:48*), "I heard from great tzaddikim that they also had difficult *nisyonos*, that they felt rejected by Hashem and that they had to fight mighty battles with the yetzer hara."

Hearing stories of tzaddikim is essential for *avodas Hashem* — for everyone, but specifically for children.

How to Teach Mussar?

The Sanzer Rav zt"l once asked his children's melamed if he learns mussar with them. At his affirmative response, the Sanzer Rav pressed him further, "Which mussar sefarim do you teach them?"

"Sefer Chovos Halevavos," the melamed replied.

"That is not what I mean by mussar," was the Sanzer Rav's rejoinder. "I wanted to know if you tell them stories of the tzaddik Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk and his brother, the tzaddik R' Zusha. Stories about tzaddikim will awaken a yearning in them to also grow up to be *erlich*."

Inimitable, but Necessary to Hear

The point isn't whether or not the children can imitate the tzaddik's actions, since it isn't always possible. The following story about R' Elimelech of Lizhensk zt"l illustrates this point:

R' Elimelech once saw his grandson, a baby of a few months old, crying in his mother's lap and hitting her with his little fists. Appalled, R' Elimelech cried out, "Oh no! How can one hit his mother?!"

The Rebbe's elderly mother was there at the time, and she remarked, "When you were that age, you also hit me...."

As soon as R' Elimelech heard these words, he ran over to

(Continued on page 3)

THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

I received your letter.

When telling your students stories of tzaddikim, you must know how to recount them. **It's important for the children to know that tzaddikim were also born with a yetzer**

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