

Monthly Rays

Adar 5780
Breslov
Inspiration



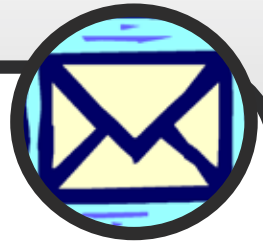
Dear Readers,

With Purim in the air, everyone's spirits are sky high. The kids' excitement with trying out their graggers, preparing their costumes, and tasting their mishloach manos goodies to make sure it's suitable for their friends, is infectious, spreading good cheer all around. But how do we keep those spirits from plummeting in a freefall? How can we get the simchah to last all year long?

It's not the sugar overdose which makes us happy, and we all know it. It's the consciously making a point of being happy. Simchah is not just something to enjoy when it pays us a visit, but we need to actively chase it, pursue it, and not let it out of our grasp. And if it does slip away, run after it again! It is absolutely not something we can do without! Be it with pulling silly faces at the clown in the mirror, tickling your kids until they're screaming with laughter, or blasting the music until you think you're a teenager again, just grab a foothold onto it!



Even if it seems repetitive or cliché, let the Rebbe's words ring in your head. "We need to force ourselves to be happy, no matter what!" With determination and desire, and not despairing



no matter how many times we fall into the yetzer hora's lethal, depressive trap, we'll bezras Hashem get there! After all, we want and try to come close to the heilige Rebbe, who will surely bring us to our complete tikkun. If so, there is surely reason to rejoice! So be happy, and rejoice with every time you manage to rejoice! Keep smiling!

Faigy Kahane

I just received your magazine and opened it for a quick glance (because I didn't really have time) and I just couldn't put it down! It's so inviting! So interesting! So strong! So informative! So colorful!

I was especially warmed by the poem of A. Hoffman on the love Hashem has towards us "no matter where our loyalties lie," and how strong Mrs. B. brought out how the reason for our stumbling words while talking and convincing Hashem is because we see a picture of that busy boss... All those messages are really, really strong! Thank you, Rays team, for your hard work, and thank you to our Breslov family around the world for sharing your personal views.

R.E. Beck, Beis Shemesh

Hi,

I would like to extend my immense appreciation for your monthly newsletter.

It is so, so well done! It's a pleasure to read and extremely inspirational and down to earth! Most of all, I really get chizuk from it.

I was just reading the shvat issue and the women's views on Tefillah and I literally starting dancing! And yes, I would really like to give a little something toward your expenses.

Also, if I can get the emails about the monthly topics, I would really appreciate it.

All the best,

Sura Sheindy Rapaport



Battling Bad Moods

Most people feel that moodiness is an unwelcome, yet uncontrollable disease. “Just hide until it passes and hope that you won’t do too much damage...” is the general consensus.

But the Rebbe says differently. He calls it depression. And if you think he prescribes magical antidepressant pills for the chemical imbalance in your body which is absolutely not in your control, think again. To make you feel better, he reassures us that everyone is struck with it – even tzaddikim – so we aren’t alone in the struggle. But more than just reassure us, he gives us sacks full of practical tips on how to overcome it. Here’s a sampling of his take on it, a sprinkling of his quotes, literally translated into English.

Enjoy, and remember to smile!

There was a story of a Tzaddik, who was overcome with depression and heaviness. When depression and gloominess come over the Tzaddik, it is extremely hard for him, since it comes down much stronger on him (than on a regular person.) Until he was so overcome with laziness and heaviness that he literally couldn’t move from his place, due to the great heaviness and depression

which reigned over him.

He wanted to make himself happy and uplift himself, but he couldn’t find any way to do so, because in everything he wanted to use to make himself happy, the Yetzer Hora found depression inside that too. Until it was impossible for him to make himself happy in any way, because he found depression inside everything he wanted to make

himself happy with.

So he started making himself happy with the simcha that 'I was not created a goy.'

This is surely a great simcha without bounds, for there is no limit to the thousand-fold difference that there is between the holiness of the lowest Yid to the vulgar profanity of the goyim. And when a person remembers Hashem's kindness to him in not creating him a goy, it is surely worthy that his happiness should greatly increase. This is a happiness that cannot include depression, for when a person makes himself happy with something that he himself did, he can always find depression inside it; he'll find all kinds of failures in everything so that it won't let him uplift himself and make himself happy. But in the fact that 'I was not created a goy,' which is only from Hashem - Hashem did this, He had mercy on him and didn't make him a goy - how is it possible to find a failure or lack in such simcha, which is only Hashem's deeds? And surely whatever will happen, at least there is the inestimable great difference between him and the goyim.

So the Tzaddik started making himself happy with this, and he started rejoicing and uplifting

himself bit by bit, steadily more, until he came to great happiness, until he reached the simcha that Moshe Rabbeinu had when he rose up to receive the luchos. And while he was rejoicing and uplifting himself, he flew several thousand pars'a'os in the heavenly worlds. Meanwhile, he glanced at himself, and behold, he was very far from the place he had been in the beginning. He had much anguish, for he reasoned that he would descend to some different place, and everyone would wonder where he had suddenly disappeared to, and the Tzaddik always wants to be out of the limelight.

His happiness started subsiding, for happiness has a limit that starts and finishes. When the happiness began to stop, it decreased little by little. And when he returned and descended and was lowered from the place he had flown to during his happiness, he didn't return to the place he had started flying from, he just descended straight down from where he had flown to. Therefore, he was greatly surprised to find himself, after descending, in his first place; he returned to the same place he had been in the beginning. He examined himself and saw that he was in the exact same place as before; he hadn't moved from his place at all, just maybe by a

hairsbreadth that is impossible to distinguish by flesh and blood, only by Hashem.

This was a great wonder in the eyes of the Tzaddik; he had flown so far in the upper worlds and down here he didn't even move at all! He was shown how precious a small move that a person makes in this world - even less than a hairsbreadth, is to Hashem. So much, that even several thousand parsá'os in the upper worlds aren't worthy enough for it.

To explain this: it is known that this physical world is just the center point within the galaxies; and against the higher worlds, this world is surely not considered more than a small dot. It is known that all lines which are drawn from a center point are close to each other next to the center point. But the further they travel from the center, the more the distance between the lines increases. And so on, when the lines are very far from the center point, they are also very far from each other, even though they are close at the starting point. Like this:



So if a person has his head lines stretching from this lower world until even only the galaxies, he'll

find that even if he doesn't move from his place but a hairsbreadth, in the galaxies he has moved several thousand parsá'os from the place where he was, according to the size of the galaxy compared to earth; for there are countless stars, and each star is about the size of this world or larger.

All the more so when a person imagines lines extending until the upper worlds, against which all the galaxies aren't considered anything at all. There is no estimation for the distance traveled in the upper worlds through any move - even less than a hairsbreadth - that a person makes from their place. For even if down here in this low world, he hasn't progressed, he just moved less than a hairsbreadth which seems like nothing in his eyes, for it is something that only Hashem can see, but there in the upper worlds he has traveled a distance of several thousand worlds and parsá'os. And even more so when a person travels a parsá'ah or several in avodas Hashem...

(שיחות שלאחר סיפורי מעשיות)

Benefit of Bad Moods

A person who still has a Yetzer Hora (i.e. is afflicted with moodiness) is very fortunate, because then he can

serve Hashem specifically with the Yetzer Hora. That means to strengthen himself within the heat of the Yetzer Hora to draw himself to some service of Hashem. If a person wouldn't have a Yetzer Hora, his service wouldn't count at all. Therefore, Hashem made the Yetzer Hora extend itself so much on a person, especially someone who truly wants to come close to Hashem. Even though its extending itself over the person brings him to what it brings him - great sins and wrongdoings, but despite this it is all worth it for Hashem just for the sake of one good move that the person makes while under the influence of the Yetzer Hora; he overpowers it with some action and escapes its clutches, and this is more precious to Hashem than if he would serve Him for a thousand years without the Yetzer Hora. Because all the worlds were only created for man, whose whole importance and significance is that he has a Yetzer Hora and he subdues it. Therefore, the more it intensifies, so too is every little move that a person makes to overpower it precious to Hashem.

ליקוטי עצות, התחזקות ל"ז))

Warning

A person must steel themselves with all their strength to push away

depression and gloominess, and constantly be only happy. It is a cure for all kinds of illnesses, because all kinds of diseases come from depression and gloominess. A person must make themselves happy with all kinds of ways, and mostly through milsa d'shtusa specifically.

(לקוטי מוהרן כ"ד)

Advice

My beloved, cherished son.

I received your letter... and it gave me much nachas... There isn't time now to rejuvenate you with words of truth, and you have already heard a lot which contains plenty to enliven your soul and make it rejoice at all times, whatever happens. For all the many things we spoke about, that we need to enliven ourselves with every single good point, and even more that we were saved from being opponents on such truth and so on, aren't just empty words chas veshalom; the main thing is to go with them and fulfil them.

And mainly when a person is in a bad mood due to his wrongdoings and so on, that's when it's extra necessary for him to enliven himself with this, and turn the anguish and sighing into happiness. The more the sadness overwhelms him and wants

to pull him into depression because of what he's done, he should turn it all into happiness. He should say to himself, on the contrary; with all this, I merited and I am not a misnaged, and even if I am blackened with my deeds, I am pretty with the deeds of the awesome Rebbe ztz"l, and within my deeds too there are some pretty ones...

We've already spoken a lot about this... Please, my beloved son, go in this way to rejuvenate your soul and make it rejoice at all times, and turn the sadness specifically into simcha. Through this you'll be able to strengthen yourself to engage in Torah and tefillah happily. Hashem should help that it should all turn to good, and all the sins should turn to merits; all in his great, awesome merit and strength, as I heard from his holy mouth explicitly. That's enough for now,

The words of your father who hopes to enliven you and make you happy with Hashem's help, that we merited drawing such 'live waters from the spring of salvation',

Nosson of Breslov.

(עלים לתרופה ק"ג)

...You should know, my beloved brothers and friends, that according

to what I see in the sefarim of the Rebbe and his holy talmid, the only eitzah for us in this world is good desires, yearning, longing, and thirsting for Hashem, and to be only happy all the time, and to distance ourselves greatly from depression and laziness, and enliven ourselves with good points; specifically points, for a good point with the merit of the Rebbe is no simple matter, and how we need to enliven ourselves with the fact that we have merited calling ourselves with the name of the Rebbe and his holy talmid. The Yetzer Hora can try to prevail over us by saying that we aren't called by his name since we don't heed his words. Therefore, the Rebbe left us the Torah of 'Azamra', which tells us that even just a point that is good is very precious. But at least we aren't opponents of such a new light, a light that shines in all the worlds, that can shine into us too if we merit to be happy with them.

For heaven's sake, my brothers and friends, do not worry. Worries come from the Other Side, and Hashem hates them. Even that which my friend Reb Eizik wrote, about him being very sleepy due to his depression. He should learn Torah 60 and all the explanations on it, and he should also read the sippurei maasios through which the Rebbe

says he rouses us from our sleep. And he should beg Hashem that in the merit of the stories, Hashem should rouse him from his sleep...

The general rule is that all the words of the Rebbe and Reb Nosson are only in order to enliven yiddishe souls and not the opposite chas veshalom. Even when the Rebbe talks about remembering the next world, it says that the main thing is happiness... and to look for our good points. Don't go around with worries and depression, be happy and start preparing for Purim and davening to receive the happiness of Purim...

I don't have the merit of having whom to talk to about the Rebbe and his holy talmid, I just talk to myself and with my family and sometimes I steal in some words with others, but only anonymously. You, Baruch Hashem, have whom to talk with openly...

To Reb Yochanan: We surely need to daven plenty to Hashem for children, but with happiness and joy, and trust in Him that there will surely be an auspicious time, with the strength of the Rebbe and his holy talmid, to help you with everything in its right time, with a complete salvation. But not by demanding it instantly. Depression and worrying don't help at all. Hashem isn't scared of your depression, on the contrary, He hates it... Therefore, my friends, we must be very happy that we merited at least from the distance to know that such a true Tzaddik exists

in the world, such a chiddush, a river that cleanses from all stains. His waters flow all over through his holy talmid, to rejuvenate us at all times with a different cure; hot baths that heal the body and soul. We just need to busy ourselves with them. There is no need for us to travel far away to search for hot baths to heal us; we have it literally at home, without any expenses. We just need to extend our ears, eyes and hearts to these holy sefarim and we will surely reach all good...

(נתיב הצדיק קכ"ג)

Cure

The main arrows that the Yetzer Hora shoots at the Yiddishe soul is through depression and laziness, through which all lusts strengthen themselves over a person... Therefore, the main cure for the soul is through simcha. But we need to receive the main cure from the True Tzaddik, who is the trustworthy specialist, and only he knows the ails and regressions of every person, because he is the 'person who has the spirit in him', who knows how to go against the spirits of every person, for he knows and recognizes all the failures and sicknesses that there are in the 'ruach chaim - spirit of life' of every person. And through this, he knows how to engage in their complete cure, through simcha.

(ליקוטי הלכות תולעים ה"ד אות ב)



A Loving Letter

עלים לתרופה שעט

My beloved son, the joy of my heart, the illustrious Reb Yitzchak, together with all his precious children, especially my wondrous grandson Dovid Tzvi.

Until now, there was no time to write to you due to several obligations, and I didn't have a messenger too... But today, your good yearning pushed me to prepare this letter just in case Hashem will send a guest with whom this letter can arrive to you before the coming holy Purim, in order to cheer your weary soul, because I know your pain from afar.

But nevertheless, however it is, no matter how it is, the words of the nachal noveia mekor chochmah have the power to awaken, enliven, and cheer you too, and also those who are tens of thousands of times worse off than you. Because the great power of the holy elder in whom we take shelter is without bounds! It is impossible for you to imagine at all! Especially since within the curtain of troubles and distress which surrounds us physically, spiritually, and financially at present, we still see a great deal of wondrous, awesome relief. And even within our spiritual ails for which we alone are blameworthy, and those are most bitter of all, nevertheless, we see in these too salvation and relief, miracles and many wonders every single day, for which we say three times daily: "We thank You... for Your miracles with us every day, and for Your wonders and Your favors at all times, evening,

morning, and afternoon...” Because chazal already told us that every day, a person’s yetzer hora renews itself over him and if not for Hashem’s help, a person would fall into its hands.

Every person must really and truly take these words to heart every day, because they contain many wonders and deep variations between each person, and within every person each day, for not all the times are the same, nor are all people equal. Whoever pays more attention to this and hopes for Hashem’s salvation, all the more so when they follow, to a greater or lesser extent the ways of the Rebbe to pour out their words to Hashem every day, is saved even more and sees Hashem’s help and wonders even more. But however it is, whoever relies more on the koach of the tzaddik that he has a true power, according to his true reliance, that’s how the tzaddik supports him even more. Because surely there are many differences between people in the matter of heavenly assistance - in how Hashem saves him from his yetzer hora which renews itself over him. Because if Hashem would save everyone equally, it would make sense that everyone should be either tzaddikim, or intermediates...

It is impossible to talk much about this, because it will bring back and strengthen the discouragement as you understand yourself. But the little which I’m talking about it is because with Hashem’s mercy, His chessed intensified over us that we take shelter in such a true, strong, and mighty power which is unfathomable and without limits! Therefore, I hinted to you above that the more we strengthen ourselves to take shelter in him and to be mechazek ourselves through this, no matter what happens, through this alone, we’ll receive the heavenly assistance more and more. Even if sometimes it seems the exact opposite, for “whoever is greater than his friend (his yetzer hora is greater too).” Especially whoever wants to escape to such a true fortress is provoked even more chas veshalom, as my soul well knows. But nevertheless, whoever isn’t foolish and strengthens himself with the truth, especially with all the true matters which we’ve increased to speak about with Hashem’s mercy, which flow from the spring of salvation, the Rebbe’s holy chiddushei torah, through all this, they can always encourage themselves to take shelter in his strength and make themselves happy at all times through all his holy eitzos, because THE MAIN THING IS SIMCHA.

At present there is no time to elaborate anymore, especially since I trust in Hashem that now you will surely be happy there and we will be here with the happiness of the coming holy Purim. Let us rejoice and exult in His salvation!

Baruch Hashem, today we fulfilled the mitzvah of milah properly with Hashem's help, Ashreinu! How lucky we are that we are Yidden, and we are all stamped with the seal of Avraham Avinu, which sustains this whole world and all the worlds which are dependent on it. For this we are all referred to as tzaddikim, as I heard from his holy mouth, and it sweetens all kinds of bitterness in the world which would be unbearable if not for salt... as is explained in Likutei Moharan 23, and mainly through the koach of the tzaddik who is truly the 'bris melach olam' – the eternal covenant of salt in all aspects.

And indeed, be only happy, especially since Purim is coming, Purim is coming. Also, I forgot the main thing, that you have with what to rejoice and encourage yourself greatly with what you yourself wrote, that you merited receiving the letter which is needed for our business (of printing the Rebbe's sefarim). You enlivened me tremendously with this. This is fitting for you, for it is no empty matter. Im Yirtzeh Hashem, after Purim we will deal with it to respond to him appropriately, and Hashem will conclude on our behalf to conclude the Rebbe's holy matters as he wanted to.

The letter from Reb Abele, if you read it, ought to be a great source of encouragement for you too. How great are Hashem's deeds and the wonders of His mercy in every generation! I also received the money – two rubles, and the flour. If you would know how these letters and the money and flour came with Hashem's wonders at the right time and how they enlivened my soul then, you would surely be happy and sure with His wondrous chessed that never ends...

The time for minchah has arrived, and we need to prepare ourselves for the leining of the holy megillah and to make the seudas bris milah in the evening. Hashem in His mercy should help us that it should all go as it should, in accordance with His holy desire. We should be zoiche to feel the depth of the neis of Purim with us too in this generation, with every single person individually, to rejoice with the happiness of Purim...

The words of your father who hopes for salvation and simchah.

Nosson of Breslov



A Touching Tefillah

ליקוטי תפילות ח"ב: לז

Ribbono Shel Olam, You alone know the depth of the ness which transpired in the times of Mordechai and Esther; that they merited winning the war over Haman and Amalek, to wipe out their name and memory from the world, and how they were zoiche through this to draw down a wondrous light and awesome salvation in every generation. And how now, all our chiyus and hope to leave this galus in body and soul is only through the depth of this ness. Because we are standing and anticipating Your salvation just like You helped them then to subdue and smash the kipah of Haman Amalek, to uproot, nullify and subjugate its great זהמה and to reveal the faith in Your hashgacha in the world, and to return, fulfil, and receive the holiness of Your heilige Torah anew; so too, You should always stand at our assistance in every single generation, until we'll win the war completely to wipe out the memory of Amalek completely and to remove the spirit of tuma from the world; and bring us back to You with truth, and speedily take us out of our bitter galus.

Therefore, I come to You, Master of Wonders, that You should pay attention to the great troubles of our souls, and look at our pain and troubles and not at our deeds. Perform with us wondrous awesome nissim, nissim of Purim... so that we should be zoiche to return to You while we're alive, quickly, easily and very soon, and we shouldn't return to our foolishness.



יש ענין שנתהפך הכל לטובה...

(ליקוטי מוהר"ן ב:מט)

Czipora B.

Yes!

*Precisely when it all seems like a mess;
when there's nothing but stress
and each moment's a guess...
know— it's all His caress.*

*Sing and dance your way through;
remember how sweet and perfect is the three-
cornered shoe.*

*You're aware that Hashem does what's best for
you;
being happy depends on believing it, too.*



The Pinnacle of Success

Aviva Gross

Emotionally wrought and confused, my close friend Avigail presented me with her dilemma over the telephone. *(Although I sometimes bring stories as mashalim, the following one that I am about to share with you is completely true.)*

“You know that I had a difficult childhood,” she began. “You’re familiar with my story...” I nodded although she couldn’t see it, recalling that both of her parents came from broken homes and each of her siblings grew up with their own personal stories of pain and triggers.

“So now my sister Gila discovered this life-changing seminar. She

attended the course, tested it, and is completely crazy over it! It’s massive! It opened her eyes, and she had a rebirth! She’s like a new person! She understood her childhood pain, forgave all those who are to blame, smoothed her old, painful relationships, and settled all the shards of her life that crippled her productiveness. It’s awesome! Fabulous! Whenever I speak to her, she says one thing: ‘If you want to do anything good in your life, go to Rabbi Mordechai Triboke’s seminar.’

So my brother Dovi booked a slot and the same miracle unfolded – he was reborn! He stopped his smoking, developed exceptional relationship

skills, and got rid of all his childhood blockages and triggers, so much that his business started booming, and he's gone from being 'comfortable' to a millionaire!"

"Beautiful!" I replied. "How wonderful! I'm so happy for them! But then why are you in such a state?" I couldn't help but interrupt her flow.

"Because they offered to cover the astronomical costs of this awesome, healing seminar for me so that I, too, can benefit from it and start living despite my damaged childhood years. I got so excited; I felt that it was the answer to my years of davening. I never told you the full details, but I had a horribly abusive childhood. Even today, as a married and settled adult, I still have frightening nightmares of my abused years. Besides for that, I'm suffering from chronic depression which doesn't let me live. Sometimes I cry for hours on end, without knowing the reason why! I've tried with all my might to cheer myself up or at least pinpoint the cause of these crying bouts, but nothing's helped. So if anyone in my family needs to be healed, it's me!"

"So..." I prompted.

"But the problem is that before signing up, my husband checked with our mashpia about it. The mashpia

explained how important it is to live a clean, productive, healed life, and that indeed, there is life. True good life. But he gave us a strong warning. He told us that Reb Nachman says in Likutei Moharan 8 that in order for a person to live a healed, happy, full life without any lacks, he needs a ruach chaim. That ruach chaim has two ממונים, two managers, who sit over this precious treasure called 'life.' One is the "tzaddik", and the other is "Haman - Amalek - Eisav." They both have power over granting their people life. The only difference is that the Tzaddik gives his 'life' at a very slow, gradual pace, while Eisav's life is called a "רוח סערה גדול" – a storm wind which is dramatically strong. It is big, life-changing, enormously powerful, but... בשעתו. Only in its designated time frame. It expires. And then when that short time frame of storm passes, it becomes completely destroyed and invalidated, even harming the recipient physically, emotionally, בגשמיות, and ברוחניות. But even more so, "גְּבִי דְּיָלִיָּה" – It demands a steep price from the beneficiary. And all this is despite the fact that at the beginning it seemed as if it gave the person humongous satisfaction and vitality.

To bring the point home, he gave the example of someone who would

give you the most favorable, fancy piece of chocolate, but five minutes after eating it, you feel like dying and you don't know why. All you did was eat a piece of chocolate. But there was a pill of bleach concealed within that chocolate...

Therefore, he strongly advised that we should check out the source of that ruach chaim, whether it comes from רב דקליפה – עשו המן עמלק, or if it's from the tzaddikim / torah רב-דקדושה.

I didn't see the need to check at all, I said that it's surely from the torah because the Rabbi is such a frum guy with a beard and peyos, and he even has his method based on the Zohar... But the mashpia said that we should still find out from where he originally adopted his method. Is it indeed from the Zohar, or did he take a completely secular theory and dress it up with a shtreimel and bekeshes, so that it should be accepted by the heimishe people?

I did my homework, contacted Rabbi Mordechai Triboke himself, and he admitted that he takes his method from the world renowned gentile counselor Esther Hicks.

And that's why I'm so stuck," Avigail finished off. "If I wouldn't have seen the dramatic positive changes in my brother and sister, I would easily give

it up for my emunah in the Rebbe. But you don't know what's going on – they really became good people, truly healed! And I so badly need it!"

Other than sympathizing with her nisayon, I couldn't really help her, and that was how it ended. I totally forgot about the phone call.

Three and a half years later, I bumped into Avigail again. After exchanging pleasantries, I couldn't contain my curiosity and asked her what happened with that seminar in the end. She let out a deep sigh, and gave me the latest reports. "Gila has become a sophisticated expert with a fancy diploma, but she never really healed at all. She hasn't forgiven anyone; she just got stuck in an endless cycle of 'triggers,' 'pain,' 'growth,' and 'healing processes'. She's long given up on Rabbi Triboke, she claims that he has a totally twisted theory and his method is just an addiction therapy. She's up to her tenth healing technique since then, and she's already taken her kids out of the regular schools and dresses them in all kinds of odd clothes (to let out her inner need of expression) which are terribly untznius. It's impossible to have a straight conversation with her! Everything is just 'Whyyyy? Why are you saying and thinking these words and thoughts? From what

part of you does it come? Oh, you have to understand yourself! What makes you feel that way?' In short, she's a lunatic with a diploma."

"But your brother Dovi! I heard he became really successful – he built a mansion of a house, and he's a millionaire, no?" I knew that for a fact.

"Don't even ask." She groaned. "After his rebirthing period, he started acting very peculiar. One minute he spoke like a two-year-old, and the next like an adult. (Obviously, all this was considered part of the healing process.) Later, he turned to drugs. And he's a heimishe, chassidish yungerman, completely removed from these things! Baruch Hashem, today he's weaned himself off it, but his business is nebech... He fought with his partner and all his millions have gone to pay for heavy court cases which they still don't know who is going to win. He has no nights and no days, and he, too, has continued trying countless other kinds of therapeutic methods. He's already thrown out all the books of the Christian professor 'Eckhart Tolle...' because he's simply crazy, and he's started with another, chasing his tail in pursuit of happiness and satisfaction."

Now I asked her the question that was burning on the tip of my tongue. "And what about you?" I dared ask.

She smiled a mysterious smile. "Sorry, that's private. But what I can tell you is that I had a very long journey. I had dramatic ups and downs of yearning and seeking and very slow progress. But I went strictly and completely only according to the Torah with a lot of ambition, and tons of the Rebbe's chizuk and teachings. Now I've reached a place where my odd crying spells are a thing of the past. I discovered the cause of them. I also can't recall the last nightmare I had about the abuse. I've reached a point where I can't say I'm looking out for a relationship with my abuser, but I totally and completely forgive. I feel bad and sorry for such a suffering soul, and I am thankful to Hashem for the level of growth I gained from the abuse. I feel I'm healed," she concluded, her face shining with a hidden glow.

* * *

There was once a world-renowned personality whose goal was to spread his method of living, growing, and succeeding to the world. He was the ultimate sample of success, riches, power and

wisdom, a vision of perfection. He even reached a point where he considered himself to be granted with absolute G-dly power. His name was Haman Ha'agagi.

Reb Nosson says in Likutei Halachos that he was the רב דקליפה, and he was appointed over the ruach chaim. He was the example of successful living, and he had a mission to grant his sort of life to everyone, including (mainly) the Yidden. And indeed, everyone bowed down to him!

But he had a competition. The tzaddik Mordechai, who was also granted the keys over the most wanted thing in the world – ruach chaim, life. Although his method has very slow results, it is real and has a kiyum. It is truly satisfying.

Mordechai knew that Haman's ideas and methods of life is seductive. It has quick and instant results, it's productive, and it works immediately, but in reality, it is כולו חסרון! Utterly flawed! Mordechai knew that this hero cannot fill any lack, but he fools the person temporarily, as he himself admits while boasting of his grandeur to his friends and family. He describes his wealth and success, which was indeed tremendous, since he lived on the highest standard possible

for a person. But at the same time that he shows his success, he admits that it's all hollow, a blown-up balloon. וְכָל זֶה אֵינוֹ שׂוֹה לִי – 'and all this is worth nothing to me!' Even during his greatness, he is full of anger and suffering.

So open up your local weekly advertiser and hear Haman yelling from every second page: "Enhanced conversation with yourself!" "Revolutionary program which works!" "Transforming the difficult, healing the body, healing the pain!" The רב דקליפה is promising growth, complete healing, value in life, salvation for all emotional anxieties and traumas. But wait a second before buying into this ruach chaim, this 'life worth living.' Where is it coming from? Is it Haman offering it, or Mordechai?

If chances are that even part of these tools are coming from the secular world, then it is probably indeed BIG, instant change and relief with dramatic results. But the Rebbe warns us that it might be a great big storm wind, but only in its time...

In contrast, if you are willing to sacrifice on instant growth, healing and change, and choose to buy life from the tzaddik, then you need to wait. You need lots and

lots of arichas apayim... Every step is another drop of healing, a little noticed growth. Another piece of life, another piece of healing. But it's TRUE LIFE. It doesn't hit you in the face a while later, demanding a steep price from yourself!

Avigail, after choosing to believe without seeing or understanding, is a rare, fortunate individual who merited to see with her own eyes and doesn't need to rely only on her emunah. The Rebbe says that we can't understand everything immediately. First we need to have blind emunah - we can't understand the Torah, we just need to believe. And if we do so – Hashem opens our brain and we merit to “see” and clearly “understand” the Torah.

I gathered my guts and had a talk with Avigail's sister Gila. I asked her upfront, “Don't you see how you're running from one promised life to another, only to find out a while later how it fooled you, and how damaging it was? Have you ever remained with one method which you swore was the greatest, for more than two years?”

“You're right,” she admitted. “But that's the process we need to go through. It's torture, literally gehinom, but it's worth all the effort for the results.”

She's correct. Growing is a process of trial and failure. She has every right to do it the hard way. But the Rebbe said, “I want my people to do first what the world (after exhausting all other options) does last.”

So why go through all those superficial methods of successful living, and only after they backfire one by one, go the tzaddik? Let's use a shortcut!

However, although we might think, “Okay, I'll only choose ruach chaim from the רב דקדושה and not let myself be fooled”, Reb Nosson tells us that it's not a decision you can make by yourself. Each person, according to how much he purifies himself from the klipah of Haman Amalek, that's how he merits to save himself from the ruach chaim of Haman. It's extremely deceiving; it's a Makkah - a plague that is widespread in the world, as Reb Nosson calls it.

So then what can I do?

There is one eitza. Instead of travelling the long way around, we'll cry and plead:

“הצילנו מקליפת המן עמלק,”

Save us from the great storm wind which is big in its time,

“וזכינו לקדושת מרדכי ואסתר,”

And grant us the ruach chaim of the tzaddik, the true, eternal, everlasting shefa.



The Secret - Revealed

Purim, the happy, freilicher day. The candy streams endlessly, the wine and emotions flow freely. In the heat of the commotion, we feel a quiet, yet insistent, inner surge of ...something. After all our frenzied preparations, the day is flying past at top speed. What are we supposed to get out of it? How do we even connect to it? What does it have with us, and how do we get that elusive something?

This following anecdote which describes the Breslover Chassidim when they're good and drunk gives us an idea of what the day is really about. The words which escape their usually sealed mouths, the true ambitions, the intense aspirations, and the sincere desires, teach us what to want, and how to get it.

Once on Purim, Reb Yonah Lebel turned to Reb Avraham Sternhartz with tears streaming from his eyes, begging him, "Oy Reb Avraham! Today is Purim, 'when the wine goes in, the secrets go out.' Reveal the secret to us, how do we become erliche Yidden? How do we truly serve Hashem? Oy Reb Avraham!

How do we get a pure mind, a pure heart for Hashem? Oy Reb Avraham!" He continued in this vein until he became choked by his tears and couldn't talk anymore.

Reb Avraham answered him with a slightly raised voice, "Yonah! The Rebbe already revealed this secret to us long ago, through his

heilige sefarim and precious eitzos which are full of hischazkus and hisorerus, especially the Likutei Halachos which is filled with chiyus and feelings to avodas Hashem. Through pouring out your heart with the Likutei Tefillo,s which gives you a way to have hisbodedus with Hashem.

Today is Purim; 'all those who stretch out their hand are given.' The Rebbe says that a 'hand' is tefillah, so throw yourself onto Hashem and pour all your words out before Him; all these things you asked me about. After all, He listens to everyone's tefillos and He'll surely answer you and give you mishloach manos and matanos l'evyonim. You can daven for this all year long; this is what the Rebbe taught us and this is where the secret of Yiddishkeit lies. This is what the Rebbe said that 'My whole thing is tefillah.' And he said that even if you fall into the mud, cry and cry and cry. The main thing is 'from the depths of gehinnom, I cried....' Such sweet words flowed forth from Reb Avraham, and Yonah stood there, crying and laughing and begging Reb Avraham that nevertheless, he should reveal the secret of how to become an erliche Yid to him,

because the Rebbe himself asked, "How are we zoiche to be a Yid?"

Reb Avraham answered him, "Today we read in the megillah that Mordechai Hatzaddik cried out a great bitter cry to Hashem, until there was a Purim for the Yidden, and there was light, rejoicing, happiness... and they accepted the Torah anew. Reb Nosson writes in Likutei Halachos that what the Rebbe says about "ועכשיו" – and now, refers to Purim. Reb Nosson understood from the Rebbe that nowadays, the beginning is from Purim. So Yonah, you have a golden opportunity from today on to start crying to Hashem every day, 'Ribbono Shel Olam, have rachmanus on me already! From now on, I want to become an erliche Yid like You want! You Yourself taught us that we should beg You that You should give us Yiras shamayim, so I'm begging You that with Your mercy, You should give me a life of Yiras shamayim...' Beg, insist, and plead every day, until Hashem will have mercy and you'll be zoiche to a true mishloach manos to become truly erlich. If we're zoiche, we receive the mishloach manos on Purim itself, and if not, we get it later, so long as we cry and beg..."



Rabbi E.M. Doron

CHINUCH

the Rebbe's Way

Curing Ourselves of the Need to Overprotect

The One Who Created Our Children

Also Looks After Them

In the parashah of Bereishis, we read of how the serpent tempts Chava to eat from the Tree of Knowledge: "You will be like Hashem." Here we find the very root of the evil inclination: the desire to be like Hashem. But how could such a lie have crept into Chava's heart, and into the hearts of her progeny, to this day? It must be that this statement contains a grain of truth. As Chazal stated, "A lie that

doesn't contain, from its inception, an element of truth cannot endure." Even this terrible falsehood must have some element of truth, however slight. What is that point of truth that leads us astray?

Being "like Hashem," on the side of holiness, refers to the mitzvah of "And you shall go in His ways" (Devarim 28:9), an injunction to

change our natures, to condition ourselves to do good, and to break our negative traits by emulating Hashem: “As He is compassionate, you too be compassionate.”

The Rambam elaborates further:

This mitzvah teaches us that just as He is called merciful, you too be merciful; as He is called compassionate, you too be compassionate; as he is holy, you too be holy. The neviyim accordingly described Hashem with all the Thirteen Middos ... in order to declare that these are the ways in which a person must conduct himself and to emulate Hashem as much as he is able (Hilchos Dei'os 1:6).

The yetzer hora takes this point of truth and twists it, bringing it to a different place altogether. Here, “You will be like Hashem” is about control. Rashi explains this to mean: “creators of worlds.” Thus, the person leads himself to believe that he bears sole responsibility. When it comes to raising his children, he feels the need to constantly be in control; after all, he’s “creating his children’s worlds.” In truth however, the need to dominate and to exert control stems from the fear of loss of control; and this, in turn, implies

a fundamental lack of faith. Such a person, when raising his children, fails to put Hashem in the picture.

Our children belong to Hashem. We didn’t have any control over them before they came to us, and similarly, we won’t have any control over their destiny after they take leave of us. Hashem took care of them and guided their journey before they came down to this world, and He will do so after they depart from it. Even during the very short time span in which Hashem has chosen to place them in our care, it is still Hashem Who cares for them and Who guides their destiny — as only the One Who knows their individual essence and the nature of their unique mission in this world can do.

Being overprotective and trying to take control of our children’s lives is the flipside of lack of faith.

From a purely intellectual point of view, it’s dangerous, even cruel, to bring children into the world; however, we don’t do this for our own pleasure or benefit but to fulfill Hashem’s will. “Be fruitful and multiply” is a mitzvah, just like donning tefillin, observing Shabbos, or keeping the laws of kashrus. In the case of having children,

however, we're worried about the results of our efforts. How will our children turn out? What will they go through?

Who appointed us to take responsibility for this?

When a poor man shows up at our doorstep and describes his suffering, we feel empathy for him and give him whatever donation we can. But no matter how much we feel his distress, we then continue on with our lives. None of us runs to empty out his bank account and sells all his possessions to save the poor man from ruin — nor is anyone required to do so.

The same is true regarding our children. Like poor people who need charity, our children need our help, and certainly “the needy of our own household come before all others.” But like the poor man who knocks on our door, they too will eventually go on their way. It's incumbent upon us as parents to help them to the best of our ability, but not to give up our whole lives for their sakes. Just as we teach our children that, at the dinner table, the first portion goes to the parents and only afterward can they take a portion, it should

be the same with everything else that we give them — whether our time, love, attention, prayers, or thoughts.

It's wrong to put our children in the center. If we fulfill Hashem's command to look after our own physical and spiritual needs, we will then have the strength to look after those who are dependent on us. The feeling that “everything is for the children” and the drive to place them in the center at the expense of everything else makes our children egocentric and fosters in them feelings of entitlement and a lack of humble submissiveness that could eventually lead to a similar lack of humility and submission to Hashem.

The learned Breslever chassid, Rabbi Yechezkel Mandeliel, said that regarding the correct measure of compassion a man should have on his family, in the event of financial duress: “He must recall that these are only his children. He should feel with them in their distress, due to the mitzvah of loving every Yid, but the distress should not divert him from serving Hashem. He must certainly try to help them to the best of his ability, but whatever he is unable

to accomplish, he should pray for. The same goes for all needs, not only financial ones.”

* * *

Of course, the above applies only to parents who are responsible and caring. Nor is this meant to detract from the supreme importance of providing children with all their physical and emotional needs, to the best of our abilities. That said, as with every holy endeavor, there must be boundaries. Our intellect must reign over our emotions so that we don't spread about our compassion without limits and beyond reason, until in the end, this will itself become the source of destruction.

It's up to us as parents to make it possible for our children to come to the world, and to try to the best of our ability (and no more than that) to educate them according to the Torah. The results, what will become of them, what they'll go through, etc., are not in our control, and not our responsibility.

It's natural for us to worry about them, and indeed, we must pray for them. But beyond that is just overprotection — which has in it more than a pinch of lack of faith.

The Gemara teaches:

Rabbi Yehoshua says: “If a man married a woman in his youth [and she died], let him marry a woman in his old age. If he had children in his youth, let him have children in his old age. As it states (Koheles 11:6): ‘In the morning, sow your seed. And in the evening, do not be idle. For you cannot know which will succeed — this or that — or whether both are equally good.’ ”

We are commanded to “plant.” What will sprout forth from that is not our concern. Overprotection, worry about our children's ultimate fate, sometimes comes not from the side of holiness and is nothing but a lack of belief in Hashem's Providence, leading to profound uneasiness. We are no longer capable of thinking clearly about what our children truly need and what we are truly capable of giving them, because the pressure and excessive worry for their futures throws us off balance.

We find an extreme example of the above in the story of Chizkiyahu Hamelech. When the king was ill, the navi Yeshayahu came to him and prophesied that he was about to die since he failed to carry out the commandment of having

children. Chizkiyahu explained that he didn't have children because he had foreseen with ruach hakodesh that his children would be evil. To which the navi replied, "Who are you to involve yourself in matters that Hashem hides from man, such as how your children will turn out? Do what you are obligated to do [in this case, to have children], and Hashem will do what is good in His eyes."

This is faith. We are not in control — not of our circumstances and not of our children. We were given children only as a deposit, as a means to perform kind deeds and to perfect ourselves. What will become of them is not up to us, and should therefore not be a consideration when fulfilling the mitzvah of having children.

Isn't there any way to guarantee that our children won't leave the Torah path?

The answer is no, but we must believe that Hashem knows what He's doing. Even the slightest distress that we have in raising our children (as with all types of suffering) is reckoned down to the nth degree, as atonement for our sins and rectification of our souls. Pray to believe this.

If we were blessed with children, we were also given everything necessary to raise them. This is also something that we're obligated to believe. It's not our job to make them perfect nor is it up to us to save them from all of life's trials; rather, we must equip them with whatever we can so that they can meet life's challenges.

Above all, everything depends on prayer, prayer, and prayer. Not prayers of fear or stress, but prayer that follows from our belief that Hashem knows what He's doing — at the same time, giving us permission to ask Him to change and improve our situation.

Reb Nosson writes:

A person must know that everything that happens to him each day of his life is tempered with justice and compassion, for Hashem's law is just. This is the essence of the freedom of choice granted to man. Hashem, in His great mercy, decides that one person's choice will come about, for example, specifically through being wealthy, while another person must be extremely poor. The same goes with all other circumstances in life, and it's all for the sake of freedom of choice. Most people make a mistake about this,

thinking, "If only I were wealthy, I would be able to serve Hashem." This implies a complaint against Hashem, as if Hashem were unjust in the rendering of His judgment toward that person, wanting him to serve Him, even though he can't do so, due to poverty. This is a major blemish, which leads to further errors.

A person who desires truth must take pity on himself and take great care not to speak in this way. Rather, he must know and believe that his freedom of choice depends specifically on the unique set of circumstances that Hashem has bestowed on him. He must believe that all is for the best, and accustom himself to always saying this, that certainly it is specifically through his poverty, suffering and confusion that he will draw closer to Hashem.

And if it is difficult for him to accept and to bear this suffering, he should cry out and pray to Hashem to deliver him. In this way, he will be drawing close to Hashem and serving Him. For Hashem desires every Yid's prayers.

There is no other solution for all the sorrows and grief that afflict a person at all times than to cry out

and beg Hashem, sobbing before Him like a child cries to his father for his needs. One who follows this path will gain great, eternal benefits. Most of the time, his prayer will be very effective, for Hashem heeds each one's prayer. Even if at times, chas veshalom, his prayer isn't accepted, for not always is it the right time, he has in any event gained from drawing close to Hashem. There is nothing that brings one closer and helps one cling to Hashem more than prayer.

Prayer is the main connection and clinging between Hashem and the Yidden. (Likutei Halachos, Eiruvei Techumin 6:11). But when people say, "If circumstances were such and such, I would serve Hashem," this does much damage. For each one needs to pray from the place where he is. As it says, "And you sought Hashem from there, and you found Him." (Specifically from the place where you are, from all that you're going through.)

** * **

This brings us to the emotional issue of guilt and the pangs of conscience that torment so many parents. We're all familiar with statements such as, "I destroyed

the child.” “It’s all my fault.” “If only I’d behaved differently, his life would have been better. ... ” But the truth is very different.

The majority of parents raise their children to the best of their ability and understanding. Even if the parent makes mistakes, his intentions weren’t bad, and therefore, he’s obligated to give himself the benefit of the doubt, and not wallow in guilt feelings, which brings no benefit.

Moreover, one of the secrets of how Hashem runs the world is man’s freedom of choice. When we’re faced with the choice to behave one way or another, we must use our judgment and exert ourselves to make the best choice, given the tools at our disposal. After the fact, if we discovered that we’ve erred, we must of course express regret and be sorry for our mistake. This is, after all, the mitzvah of teshuvah, repentance. But beyond expressing regret and making a reckoning of what we did, we have to know that, after the fact, even our mistaken choices are now included in Hashem’s plan. Therefore, even if we’ve made mistakes in raising our children, those mistakes are now part of the way Hashem is running their lives.

Hashem’s desire is that specifically under these circumstances — including all the mistakes that were made and specifically through them — the child will deal with his life’s tests and draw closer to his goal.

So we find that guilt is just another form of assuming undue responsibility for our children’s destiny and for the results of our mistakes when raising them. But the truth is that what was — was. We must let go of the past. After we’ve expressed regret to Hashem and to the person we’ve hurt, we must carry on without taking responsibility for the outcome. From now on, it’s up to Hashem. We can certainly pray for our children and for their success, but not from a place of guilt.

to be continued...

***This article was reprinted
with permission from the
book ‘Dust to Gold’.***

***Rabbi E.M. Doron can be
contacted at:***

Or Pnimi Breslov

tel: 086640064

orpnimi.breslev@gmail.com



A Taste of the Rebbe's Treasures

What's the original mitzvah of tefillah?

At first, people would daven with their own words, which later evolved into set tefillos. However, we shouldn't let it replace our own tefillos completely, only continue talking to Hashem in our own words too.

So says the Rebbe in Sichos Haran 229: "In the beginning, the main tefillah was that people said what was in their hearts to Hashem in their own language, as it says in the Rambam in the beginning of hilchos tefillah, where he elaborates that this was the main tefillah at first. But afterwards, the anshei knesses hagdolah saw... and they arranged the set tefillos..."

Therefore, now too, when we daven the seder of tefillah that the anshei knesses hagdolah arranged, it is very good for a person to also be accustomed to daven to Hashem with tefillos, techinos, and bakashos from his heart in the language he understands, that Hashem should bring him close to serving Him truly, since this is the main tefillah, as mentioned above."

How much of this should we be doing?

As much as we can!

Reb Nosson writes in Likutei Moharan 96 that "the Rebbe's way was to be very zealous in it, to be very accustomed with hisbodedus, to express his words before

Hashem every single day. And he said that even when a person can't speak at all, even if he only says just one word, it's also very good."

And even more, the Rebbe says in Likutei Moharan 101: "The main root and general foundation of all the eitzos to come close to Hashem is only through saying tehillim and other techinos, bakashos and hisbodedus; to express yourself before Hashem, and beg Him to bring you close to His service.

Only like this does a person merit winning the war; if he'll be very strong and persistent to always beg, plead, and daven to Hashem, no matter what happens, then he'll surely win the war, and fortunate is he."

Is there any point if I can only manage to say a few short words, and repeat the same ones every day?

Certainly! Keep up with it, even if it's only a few single words.

As the Rebbe says in Likutei Moharan 96: "Even when a person can't speak at all, when he says just one word it's also good. And he said that even when a person can't speak more than one word, he should be strong in his mind, and say that word over and over again, endless times, and even if he'll spend days saying just that word alone, it is also good. And he should be strong and firm, and increase saying that word again and again, until Hashem will have mercy on him and open his mouth, so that he should be able to express himself..."

And in Chayei Moharan 440, the Rebbe says: "Even if a person can't say anything in his hisbodedus besides for the word 'Ribbono Shel Olam,' it is also very good."

What if I set aside time to talk to Hashem and I still don't see any change or improvement?

Persist at it, and keep begging Hashem to bring you close to Him, until He will.

Like Reb Nossan writes in Sichos Haran 68: "The Rebbe cautioned (us) many times about the topic of talking to Hashem, that every person should talk and converse with Hashem. He should compose himself properly about what he's doing in this world, and have mercy on himself, and spread out his arms in pleading to beg Hashem that with His abundant mercy, He should give him the merit to come close to serving Him. He should try to find reasoning and justifications for it. And this talking should be in his spoken language – Yiddish.

This is already explained in the printed sefarim.

But he used to talk to us much more about this, because whoever accustoms himself to practice this every single day for at least an hour will surely be zoiche to truly come close to Hashem. And even if sometimes, a person sees that he fulfils this practice for days and years but he's still not zoiche to proper hiskarvus, nevertheless, he should strengthen himself more and more, because eventually, it will surely help him. And he said that Dovid Hamelech composed the sefer tehillim from this."

Reb Nosson also writes in Sichos Haran 117: "The Rebbe wanted to put into our hearts that every single person needs to cry out to Hashem and turn his heart to Him as if he is in the middle of the sea, hanging by a hairsbreadth, and the wind is raging until the sky, until he doesn't even know what to do and there is almost no time even to cry out. But really, there is surely no other solution and escape besides raising your eyes and heart to Hashem. And that's how we always need to make hisbodedus and cry out to Hashem, for a person is in great danger in this world, as every person well knows in his soul."

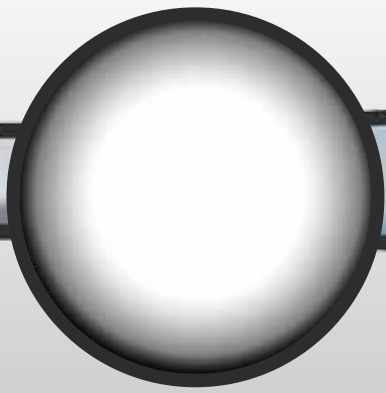
What should be our approach to saying tehillim?

Find yourself in the words!

So says the Rebbe in Likutei Moharan 101: "...a person should see to find themselves within all the kapitlech of tehillim, and within all the techinos, bakashos, selichos and so on. And with simplicity, without any chochmos, it is very easy to find yourself in all the techinos and bakashos, especially tehillim, which was said on behalf of all of Klal Yisrael, for every single person individually.

All the battles of the yetzer hora that a person faces and everything which transpires with him is all explained and expressed in tehillim. Because it mainly talks about the battles of the yetzer hora and his army, which are a person's main enemies. For they want to prevent him from going on the path of life, and want to pull him down into gehinom chas veshalom, if he doesn't guard himself from them. On this matter alone, the whole sefer tehillim was founded."

Reb Nosson also writes about the Rebbe in Likutei Moharan 101 that "he was sometimes accustomed to saying only those pesukim in tehillim which talk about techinos, bakashos and crying out to Hashem, and he would say only these pesukim and skip the rest."



The Light of our Lives: Reb Nachman of Breslov

Chapter Eight

A strong, unique desire burned in the heart of the little child. He was toiling in avodas Hashem with all his might, but he wanted Hashem to show him some kind of miracle, some special wonder which would strengthen his emunah. In his typical manner, he poured forth tefillos on this subject, begging Hashem to accede to his unusual request. Indeed, he was answered and shown three amazing wonders:

Rebbe Nachman had a certain spot in the forest where he would engage in hisbodedus, walking and talking to Hashem. However, in true village fashion, there was a large cross situated on the way to that very

space, which bothered the Rebbe to no end. Being immersed in his devotions, bursting with fervor and holy thoughts, he would come across the tzelem which would hit him in the face, like a pail of ice-cold water washing over his passion. It was like a dagger piercing his devotion, seeming to be the very Satan itself trying to confuse his holy thoughts. The Rebbe begged Hashem with all his heart, using all kinds of ways and words, pleading with Him to remove this stumbling block from his path.

His appeal didn't go unnoticed. Out of the blue, a strong gust of wind came and tore the cross out of its spot. The heavy iron symbol fell to

the ground, never to disturb the Rebbe again.

The second marvel occurred at the water. The Rebbe was walking along the path near the river, and he asked Hashem for a sign, in order to fortify his faith. Specifically, he wanted the fish to swim up to his hand, but without the help of a fishing net. He asked Hashem, and so transpired... Out of the rushing river, schools of fish suddenly came swimming up to the Rebbe.

After some time, the Rebbe once again desired that Hashem should show him some unnatural miracle. He was lying alone in his room in his father-in-law's house with the door locked. His thoughts were flying in the highest realms. Sunk in his devotions, he asked Hashem an original request. This time, he wanted to be shown a mes - a dead man, so that it should help him with his devotions. As soon as he finished his tefillah, a dead man appeared, dressed in white shrouds...

The Rebbe was still very young. It was the first time in his life that he was being shown such a vision, and it frightened him immensely. Out of great fear, he started screaming loudly. Hearing the cries, everyone in the house came running to see what was happening, unused to

hearing such fearful cries from the Rebbe. What could have set it off? However, the door to the Rebbe's room was locked from the inside. The Rebbe himself was lying on his bed powerless, petrified by the vision he had just seen.

Knowing that something extraordinary must have occurred, they decided to break into the room through the window. When the Rebbe was surrounded with people, he finally calmed down and came back to himself.

Years later, the Rebbe revealed that the great fear which befell him when he caught sight of his first niftar was due to the fact that the deceased man who appeared before him was a terrible sinner. As a matter of fact, following his first vision, the Rebbe became very accustomed to being shown the souls of the deceased, and obviously, he wasn't overcome with fear anymore. And in later years, it became the Rebbe's mission to rectify sinful souls. He became the 'Baal Hasadeh – Master of the Field' who is mesaken the wandering neshamos, and thousands of souls came to him for a tikkun.

to be continued...



The Chacham and the Tam

Sippurei Maasios 9

Once there were two householders in one city. They were very wealthy and had large houses. The two of them had sons; each of them had one son. Both of the children learnt in one school, and one of them was very bright, while the other was simple-minded (he wasn't foolish, only that his intellect was simple and not sophisticated). These two sons loved each other very much. Although one of them was very wise and the other was simple, nevertheless they still loved each other very much.

As time passed, the two householders began to lose their wealth. They sank further and further until they became destitute and were left with nothing except their houses. The sons began

to grow up, so the fathers said to their sons, "We don't have money for you; we can't support you. Do what you can do." The simple one went and learnt shoemaking.

The clever one, who had a sharp mind, didn't want to lower himself to such mundane work. He decided to go out into the world and look around for something to do. So he went and wandered through the market. There he saw a large carriage with four horses and their harnesses running past. He spoke up and said to the tradesmen, "Where are you from?" They answered him, "From Warsaw." "Where are you traveling to?" "To Warsaw."

He asked them, "Perhaps you need

a helper?" They saw that he was intelligent and energetic, and he found favor with them, so they accepted him. He traveled with them, serving them very well along the way.

When he arrived to Warsaw, since he was intelligent, he considered to himself, "Being that I am already in Warsaw, why should I be tied to these people? Maybe there is somewhere better than them. Let me go ask and see." So he went to the market and began to investigate about the people who had brought him, and if there is a better place than them. They answered him that these people are upright, and that it would be good to be with them, but that it is difficult to work with them because their dealings take them to great distances.

Meanwhile, he went and saw men in the clothing business who were passing through the market in their fashionable style, with their various adornments – their hats, and their pointy shoes, and their other refinements, in the way they walked and dressed. He had a sharp intellect, and this work appealed to him because it had grace, and also because it was done in one's own home. He returned to the people who had brought him and thanked them, and told them that it wasn't comfortable for him to stay with them. As for their having brought him here, he had served them along the way.

He went and started to work under one businessman. It is the way of hired servants to work for little pay in the beginning, and to do difficult work. Eventually they reach the level of established servants. His employer gave him hard work, sending him to customers bearing merchandise, as it is customary for servants. They need to hold their arms upraised, draping the garments along their arms' length. The work was very difficult for him to bear. Once he needed to climb up many flights of stairs with his merchandise, and the work was very hard for him. So he considered to himself, for he was a highly intelligent philosopher, "What do I need this work for? The main point of working is to achieve the goal of getting married and supporting oneself. I do not need to be concerned about this yet. I will have time to deal with it later. In the meantime, I prefer to wander the world, seeing different countries."

He went to the market and saw merchants travelling in a large carriage. He asked them, "Where are you traveling?" "To Lagorna." He asked them, "Would you take me there?" They answered him, "Yes." So they took him there, and from there he sailed to Italy, and from there he traveled further to Spain. In the course of this, several years passed and thus he became even wiser, for he had been in many countries.

Then he thought to himself, "Now I need to start concentrating on the goal." He started to consider with his philosophical analysis what he should do. He found it desirable to learn to work with gold, since it is a major and attractive business, it demands lots of wisdom, and it is also very profitable. Due to his high intelligence and philosophical ability, he did not need to learn several years. In only a quarter of a year, he completed his study and became a very major artisan. He had more expertise in the work than the one who had taught him. Then he considered to himself, "Even though I now have this skill to depend on, nevertheless, I don't want to suffice with this. Today this work is in demand, but perhaps in the future something else will take its place." So he went and apprenticed himself by a gem cutter, and because of his quick mind, he learned this also in a short time, a quarter of a year. Afterwards, he speculated philosophically, "Even though I am skilled in two trades, who knows if both of them might fall out of demand. Therefore, it's better for me to learn something that will always be important." He decided with his understanding and philosophy that he should learn to be a doctor, which is always needed and important. It is customary that before learning medicine, one must first learn Latin, to read and write it, and the wisdoms of philosophy. Because

of his understanding, he also learned this in a short time – a quarter of a year. And he became a great doctor and philosopher, and learned in all wisdoms.

Afterwards, the world began to seem insignificant in his eyes. He held that nobody had any intelligence, because due to his wisdom, being so skilled and professional, so wise and such a doctor, all the people in the world seemed insignificant to him. He began to think about fulfilling his goal and getting married. He thought to himself, "If I marry here, who will know what became of me? Let me better return home so that they will see what has become of me; I left as a young boy and now I have come to such greatness!" So he picked himself up and traveled home. On the way, he suffered intensely, because due to his sophistication, he couldn't find anyone to talk to, and he also couldn't find lodgings which suited his taste, so he suffered greatly.

Let us now leave the story of the clever one for the time being, and we will begin to tell the story of the simple one. The simple one learned the trade of shoemaking, and because he was simple, he needed to study the trade for a long time until he grasped it, and he didn't grasp it completely. He married and lived off his work. But because he was simple and he wasn't as skilled in the work as necessary, his

earnings were meager and very limited. He didn't even have time to eat, since he constantly needed to work because he wasn't so proficient in the trade. So while he worked, while making a hole with the awe, while inserting and drawing out the thick sewing thread in the manner of shoemakers, he would bite a piece of bread and eat.

And his custom was that he was always very happy, and he was always only filled with happiness. He had all the kinds of food, all the drinks, and all the clothing he wanted. He used to say to his wife, "My wife, give me to eat!" She would give him a piece of bread and he would eat. After this, he would say, "Give me soup with kasha." She would cut him another piece of bread and he would eat him. Then he would praise it and say: "What a good, delicious soup that was!" And so he would ask to be given meat, and she would give him bread again. He would eat it, and he would praise it greatly, saying, "What wonderful meat this is!" And so too with other fine foods that he would ask to be given. For each item that he asked for, she would give him a slice of bread, and he delighted from it very much. He would praise each food extravagantly, saying how well prepared and good it was, as if he was eating the actual food. In truth, he really tasted the taste of each food he wanted in the bread, because of his great simplicity and happiness. He tasted in the bread as if

he was eating all the foods.

Likewise, he would command: "My wife, give me beer to drink!" She would give him water, and he would praise the quality of the beer. Then he would say, "Give me mead!" She gave him water, he would also praise it as before, "What good mead this is! Give me wine or other beverages." She would keep giving him water, and he would enjoy it and praise the drink as if he were really drinking that beverage.

Similarly with clothing: He and his wife shared one fur coat together. When he needed to wear a fur coat, for example to go to the market, he would say, "My wife, give me the fur coat," and she would give it to him. When he needed to wear a suit in formal settings, he would say, "My wife, give me the suit!" She would give him the fur coat, and he would delight in it and praise it: "How fine this suit is!" When he needed a caftan, for example, to go to shul, he would say, "My wife, give me the caftan," and she would give him the fur coat. He would praise it as well, saying, "What a fine, beautiful caftan this is!" Similarly when he needed to wear a 'yupa', she would also give him the fur coat, and he would praise and delight in it: "What a fine, lovely yupa this is." And so on with everything. And he was always filled with joy, happiness and satisfaction.

to be continued...



Women's Views

*How can we practically achieve
the Rebbe's statement of
"מְצוּה גְדוֹלָה לְהִיּוֹת בְּשִׂמְחָה"
at all times?*

This is probably the most frequently asked and discussed question. We all want to be happy and there are so many ideas, techniques and methods out there. But I realized that there is a very simple rule # 1 to whatever we try: Stop a moment and tell yourself that you want to be happy and can choose to be so. When a bad mood strikes or whenever we're sad, even for the most legitimate reasons, we can sometimes forget what we really want to be. Reminding ourselves that we actually want to be happy makes

a very real difference.

And it's also good to know that studies proved that a smile doesn't only make the person who receives it happy, but also the one who gives it. The emotional feeling of giving a smile and the physical action of the muscles involved, releases hormones in the brain that make us feel good. So go ahead and smile to the world - and to yourself.

C.S., New York

To achieve true happiness a person

needs to internalize on a constant basis that “I” am only in control of “myself” and “my actions”. Most of the tension a person deals with on a daily basis they are not in control over. Once they “give up” this so called “control” they are liberated and free to go about their life serenely, especially in their service of Hashem.

Leah W., Brooklyn, NY

As I am sitting and sipping my morning coffee my to-do's starts flashing through my mind.

#1 My laundry is piling up and I don't know which load to throw into the machine first. #2 What should I cook for supper today?

#3 My dishes from yesterday are still in the sink.

#4 My shopping errands are waiting for me...

All of a sudden, my head starts pounding and I am feeling very overwhelmed. But then I look at my list again, and instead of groaning and moaning, I switch into simcha mode as follows:

#1 I B"H have clothing to wear, and even have a washing machine in my house. I don't need to go to the river to clean my clothes.

#2 I B"H have a healthy family that will relish the food I prepare.

#3 I B'H have two hands that will help me wash the dishes

#4 I B"H have two feet and enough money to purchase my errands.

As I am continuing to think how blessed I am, my jobs look far less complicated. I get up from my chair energetically, and before I start my list, I remember to thank Hashem for his endless good and for the privilege of being a Yid.

S.M.S., Brooklyn NY

When I feel sadness overtaking me, then I know it's time to stop and thank Hashem. I can do it alone, with any age child (we play taking turns – one thank-you each), or even with a friend. I keep thanking until I feel happiness washing over me and driving away the sadness. If I can, walking (and thanking) does me good too.

Miriam Frank, Beis Shemesh

Happiness is “peace” and “joy”. We get “peace” from doing hisbodedus, (and if you think you're not doing it 'good' yet, then the fact that you're begging and pleading to be able to do it is also peace providing). “Joy” comes from consciously remembering to be joyous and upbeat. It's actually my decision. I fumble around for the happy joy surge button inside me. Sometimes it comes easy, sometimes harder, there's always SO SO MUCH to be actually dancing from sheer exhilaration about. Our ugly spiteful

yetzer hora has his easy, stupid, little trick of painting everything in a thick, heavy, black, illusional paste to grab us down, that we should start complaining and seeing everything in a negative light, and then we bring down judgement on our very selves. What a stupid, painful move. WE need knowledge! Break through the gloom clouds when it comes, we can do it if we know it's simply our nasty enemy who wants our downfall! Knock him down, by locating your happiness surge button, which will make you break through the gloom clouds like a rocket shooting way, way up, and in this joyous state we will reach limitless heights in spirituality and closeness to Hashem and purity.

Malky Lebowitz, Monsey NY

My mother shared the following true story with me:

A young journalist starting his career on aiming to become a world-renowned reporter witnessed a rich and prominent professor about to jump off the ceiling of a building. He frantically waved to him to wait

a second, because he wants a short interview with him during the last few moments of his life. He asked him the reason for his dramatic decision: why such a successful professor should commit suicide. He was asking and writing and asking and writing some more. The professor explained to him, "You're still young and at the beginning of your career. What will happen already if you become the most successful writer in the world, wealthy and popular? What will you have from it?" And so, hand in hand, they jumped down together.

This illustrates what the Rebbe says that even if you don't have anything to make yourself happy with, just knowing that you're a Yid and you'll have eternity for every bit of good you manage to do is enough to make you sing and dance and feel that your life is worth living. So even if I won't reach success in any aspect in my life, I'm a Yid! It's enough! I have a reason to live, and to live happily!

R. E. Beck, Beis Shemesh

To subscribe to receive the Monthly Rays by email, to send us your feedback and questions, or to contribute towards the printing costs, please contact us at raysof148@gmail.com