



SPARKS OF EMUNAH

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BASED ON THE SEFARIM OF REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLEV 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 FOR YOM TOV

THE MESSAGE OF MILCHIGS

Cheesecake, chocolate, milk, cheese, yogurt, coffee, ice cream... Whatever *milchig* food ends up on your menu, it is because of the universal *minhag* of eating *milchigs* on Shavuos, dating back to the times of *matan Torah* when *Klal Yisrael* ate only dairy foods until their *treif* pots could be *kashered*. But there is more to this delicious *minhag* — timeless lessons that can be a source of tremendous *chizuk* to every one of us.

Like a Newborn Baby

The Rebbe says (*Sichos Haran* 26), "The world views forgetfulness as a flaw, but I consider it a virtue." Forgetfulness is the greatest gift, for if we would constantly be bombarded with memories of our past failures, *avodas Hashem* would be impossible. However, since Hashem has wired our brains to forget the past, we can remain confident and idealistic, and we can constantly forge forward in our quest for spirituality.

This is the message of the *milchigs*. Dairy food is symbolic of a newborn baby, who is dependent on milk for sustenance. Eating milk-based products is a reminder to view ourselves as newborns, filled with the endless possibilities of new life, and constantly start anew in our *avodas Hashem*.

Spoiled? Not Quite.

The Chozeh of Lublin points out another poignant connection: Of all perishable food, milk is the only one for which spoiling can be a productive process. In fact, an essential part of the cheese-making process is to ferment milk, causing it to become sour.

Do you also feel like your essence has "soured"? Have your sins caused you to feel like your *neshama* is spoiled, damaged, at the point of no return? **You are not hopeless!** Just as spoiled milk is used to create all sorts of dairy delicacies, great things can come of **you**.

Never Despair — You Can Always Repair!

This was the Rebbe's motto and a fundamental concept in Breslev. No situation is ever hopeless! Every *aveira* has a *tikkun*; every person can do *teshuva*. When the Rebbe taught this fundamental concept, he turned to R' Nossan and cried out with passion, "אין שום יאוש" — **There. Is. No. Despair. EVER!**

The *yetzer hara's* primary objective is for us to give up. The *aveiros* he convinces us to commit are not his end goal, as long as we get the message of, "You're a lost case. Why keep trying?" The Rebbe taught us (*Likutei Moharan* 2:112) that the exact opposite is true: "אם אתה מאמין שיכולים לקלקל, תאמין שיכולים לתקן" — **If you believe that you have the power to destroy, you must believe that you also have the power to repair.**

As we enjoy eating *milchigs* this Shavuos, let us remember its message of dedication, renewal, and the eternal, unending possibility of return.

Atzaso Emunah, Bamidbar 5778

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

חג השבועות

Shavuos is here! In comparison to Sukkos and Pesach, Shavuos is so short — give a blink and it's over. How can we make the most of each minute and feel like we "did" Shavuos properly?

Tikkun Leil Shavuos

Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai and his *talmidim* used to spend Shavuos night immersed in learning. They went through the entire *Tanach*, reciting the first and last *passuk* of each *parsha/sefer*, and then learned the *taryag mitzvos*. After a full night of learning, Rabi Shimon *bentched* them to be *zoche* to true *kabbalas haTorah*.

The first thing to do on Shavuos is to stay up all night and learn. The *minhag* by *chassidim* is to say *Tikkun Leil Shavuos* — it isn't as difficult as people make it out to be. Most important is to say the first and last *passuk* of each *parsha/sefer* and the *taryag mitzvos*. All the other *pesukim* included in the *Tikkun* are additions. If you feel like giving up after saying just some of it, thinking that you'll never get to the end — just keep

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going, focusing only on saying the main *pesukim*.

Shavuot night is such a holy and special time — we need to be careful not to ruin its potency by wasting time on foolishness. You can daven, learn and talk to Hashem, but spending the night schmoozing, smoking and drinking coffee is a waste of the night.

Shavuot is a time for *yeshuos* — don't squander the opportunity! On this night, when the gates of Heaven are open, daven for a more meaningful connection with Hashem. Plead with Hashem to give you the ability to learn Torah and fulfill all the *mitzvos* therein.

Mikvah

The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:56*) that by immersing in a *mikvah* before *alos hashachar* on Shavuot morning, one can attain the highest levels of understanding and merit great *yeshuos* in his personal life as well.

Be proactive! When you finish saying *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*, don't waste time. Go straight to the *mikvah*. Whether or not you understand the meaning or significance of this *tevila*, just go through the motions with *temimus* — simplicity — and rely on the Rebbe's promise.

Are you a Jew? For that alone, you should sing and dance!

Simchas Yom Tov!

After all is said and done, perhaps the most important thing to remember to do on Shavuot is to focus on being happy. Are you a Jew? For that alone, you should sing and dance. *Chazal* tell us (*Midrash Pliah*) that when Hashem said "אנכי ה' אלקיך," Moshe Rabbeinu immediately cried out, "שלא עשני גוי!" Mohorosh explains that as soon as Hashem gave the Torah, Moshe Rabbeinu was filled with such joy that he began to sing and praise Hashem for making him be a part of the Jewish People.

It's a never-fail method. Feeling down? Think about the fact that **there are billions of non-Jews in the world, but you are a Jew!** No matter where you are and no matter what you've done, you have a *Yiddishe neshama*, and this alone gives you a direct connection to Hashem. What a *zechus* — what a source of joy!

May we be *zoche* to an uplifting *yom tov*.

Atzaso Emunah, Bamidbar 5778



אנכי ה' אלקיך

The Rebbe says (*Sichos Haran 33*) that in his eyes, the most important part of *Yiddishkeit* is *emunah*. And specifically *emunah peshuta* —

believing "just because."

No philosophizing. No overthinking. No delving deeply into the topic. Just believing, as is the manner of women and unlearned people — with simplicity.

How can we acquire this pure, simple faith?

By talking about Hashem, His greatness and His goodness. Over and over. (*Likutei Moharan 2:44*).

לא יהיה לך

Flee from sadness and depression! R' Mendele of Vitebsk says (*Sefer Pri Ha'aretz, Matos-Masei*),

Depression is worse than *avoda zara*!

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 2:24*):

— מצוה גדולה להיות בשמחה תמיד

It's a *mitzvah* to always be happy,

— ולהתגבר להרחיק העצבות והמרר שחורה בכל כחו

And to stay far away from depression.

Try with all your might to stay happy despite your difficulties.

Thank Hashem for all the good He has given you — there's always plenty to find! Looking for the good in life will help you stay happy in all circumstances.

לא תשא את שם ה'... לשוא

Nedarim and *shevuos* are serious business. *Chazal* teach us (*Eiruchin 16a*) that a person who makes a *shevuah* in vain brings illness and death upon himself.

The words, "*I promise!*" should never be used, whether it is about something true or false, something that did happen or could happen or will happen.

Making a promise should be avoided at all costs.

Parents must train their children not to use such terms, and to say "*bli neder*" when talking about what they plan to do.

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו

Shabbos is a time when a person can become very close to Hashem. The *yetzer hara* knows this, and he therefore tries with all his might to disturb our Shabbos.

He's the one behind the irritation, frustration, and overall tension that creeps its way in between our Shabbos preparations. By causing *machlokes* between husband and wife, he poisons the atmosphere for the entire Shabbos.

So instead of getting annoyed that the food isn't ready or that the house still looks like a tornado swept through it —

**You get things done! Clean up the house.
Prepare the Shabbos food. Set the table.**

Chazal describe how the *tanna'im* and *amora'im* prepared for Shabbos (*Shabbos 119a*) — if they did it, so can you!

כבד את אביך ואת אמך

See to call your parents every day.

Call them, speak to them, update them on what's going on in your life, and thank them for everything they do for you.

We sometimes push off doing the *mitzvah* of *kibud av v'eim* because we only want to do it on a large scale or with something special — but that's wrong. We must do *mitzvos* without *cheshbonos*.

Don't hold back from doing this *mitzvah*!

Call your parents — even just to wish them “Good morning” and to schmooze with them a bit. In the merit of this *mitzvah*, you will be *zoche* to many *brachos*.

לא תרצח

Beware of the *middah* of stinginess. Let your wife live; let her breathe! If she asks you for money for clothing, for cleaning help, or for anything else she needs, remember:

**Money is made to use! Don't be tightfisted —
give her what she needs with a smile!**

R' Chaim Vital *zt"l* writes (*Shaar Hamitzvos, Parshas Eikev*) that his Rebbe, the Ari Hakadosh, never spent much money on himself — he ate very little and wore only simple clothes.

For his wife, however, he bought beautiful clothing and things that she liked, even when money was scarce.

לא תנאף

When a person isn't careful with *shemiras einayim*, he ends up losing everything.

His mind becomes consumed by immorality, and then sinning with *p'gam habris* is inevitable. He then loses interest in the most meaningful parts of life, becomes depressed, and begins to struggle with the most basic parts of *Yiddishkeit*.

**Guard your eyes!
Protect yourself from the *yetzer hara*,
who wants to destroy your life.**

לא תגנוב

Be very careful not to fall into debt!

Debt is a serious danger which destroys a person completely. Debt robs a person of his peace of mind and his ability to do *teshuvah* (*Sefer Hamiddos, Os Teshuva*).

**If you borrowed money from
another, you must repay it —**
even if it means selling everything you own!
Do everything in your power not to fall
into the category of “thief.”

לא תענה ברעך עד שקר

Lying is a difficult habit to break. A child who is accustomed to lying is likely to lie all his life, whereas one who is accustomed to saying the truth will be honest all his life.

Train your children to always say the truth.

לא תחמד

It's foolish to be jealous of others

because it's impossible to know what's going on in another person's life. Even when it looks like a person has it all, in reality, his life may be falling apart.

What you see on the outside is just a façade.

The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan 1:34*) that each person has a unique quality that sets him apart from the rest. There's no place for envy, because you were created for a specific purpose, with a special way to bring *nachas* to Hashem.

Q & A

AM I ALLOWED TO LEARN WHILE I'M WORKING?



QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

Thank you very much for the life-giving shiurim which show me the right path in life.

I heard in one of the shiurim that a person should take a small Mishnayos or Gemara to work with him, and when he is waiting for customers he should use that time for learning.

Is this not called bitul Torah, since whenever a customer walks in and needs help, he needs to interrupt his learning?

Thank you.

THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

Utilizing one's time to learn Torah in middle of working is not *bitul Torah* — it is *kiyum haTorah* and the path to success. Chazal teach (*Avos 2:4*) that a person shouldn't say "When I won't be so busy and I'll have some time, I will learn," because maybe he'll never have free time. Many people are busy all the time, and always have a "valid" excuse as to why they can't learn. Therefore, **one must seize the opportunity to learn Torah whenever time allows.**

Breslev *chassidim* — and specifically *talmidei Heichal Hakodesh* — always have *sefarim* with them. A pocket-sized Chumash, Mishnayos, Tehillim, etc.... Whenever they have a spare moment, they grab a bit of spiritual goodness.

Chazal say (*Shabbos 31a*) that when a person passes away and is brought before the *Beis Din shel Maaleh*, one of the first questions he is asked is: "קבעת עתים לתורה? Did you set fixed times to learn Torah?" The Rebbe explains (*Likutei Moharan 2:284*)

that the word קבע also means to steal. The meaning of this question is: "Did you 'steal' time to learn Torah every day, despite all the difficulties and hardships?"

Learning between work responsibilities is not *bitul Torah* — ***bitul Torah* is when days, weeks, and months pass and a person doesn't open a single sefer.** On the outside, one may look like a *chashuve yungerman*, but on the inside, he is empty. The year passes without him having been *ma'avir sedra*, without him having completed *Mishnayos* even once, and without him having learned *Gemara* each day — **that is *bitul Torah*.**

Protecting Your Time

The reason why many people don't learn is because they think, "I'm a working guy — I can't learn. I'm not a *kollel yungerman*; I'm not one of the *rabbanim*," and they live out their lives without Torah. However, if they would only know about the Rebbe's *sefer derech halimud*, every person would learn *Mishnayos* and *Gemara* and complete them multiple times — they would have time for everything.

A *perek* of *Mishnayos* doesn't take long to learn — on average, it takes about three minutes to say the words of one *perek*. A person who learns a lot of *Mishnayos* — *perek* after *perek*, even if his understanding is limited — is being careful with his time. Whenever he has a spare minute — whether in the middle of work, while traveling, or while waiting for an appointment — he should learn as much *Mishnayos* as he could, and this is how he saves every minute.

Chazal say (*Tikunei Zohar Hakdama 5a*) that the first letters of the words זמן נקט spell out טו עזרעם, מועד, נשים, נזיקין, קדשים, טהרות (which literally translates as: *he took time*). I heard a beautiful interpretation from a Breslever *chassid*: A person who learns *Mishnayos* "holds time in his hands." Wherever he goes, he takes a *Mishnayos* with him, and this is how he always has plenty of time.

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

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