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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

לזכות רפואה שלמה
יוכבד בת חסי' רחל רבקה
בתוך שער חולי ישראל

CHIZUK
FROM THE
PARSHA

BATTLING HABIT

כִּי תֵצֵא לִמְלַחְמָה עַל אִיבֶיךָ וַיִּתֶּנּוּ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּיָדְךָ וְשָׁבִיתָ שְׁבִי

When you will go to war against your enemy,

Hashem will deliver him into your hands and you will capture his captives.

In today's political climate, it can seem as though the world is a battleground. With sharply divided camps, aggressive behavior on each end, and the all-consuming desire to emerge victorious, one can never know what tomorrow will bring. In a spiritual sense, the entire world actually **is** a battleground – the conflict of good versus evil, of holiness versus impurity. It's a war that every person fights every minute of his life.

This week's *parsha* begins as follows: **כִּי תֵצֵא** – when a person goes out into the world, **לִמְלַחְמָה עַל אִיבֶיךָ** – immediately, the battle with his enemy begins. Fighting the *yetzer hara* is our lifelong mission, a holy war. We must always remain aware of the battle that is raging, because just like in an actual war, when a person knows that he is on the front-lines and in danger of being captured by the enemy every moment, he remains alert and on guard. Armed, armored and ready to fight at a moment's notice, he has a possibility of defeating his enemy. The same is true of our battle with the *yetzer hara*. We are up against a shrewd enemy who uses many different tactics to defeat us, and in order to have a chance at victory, we must remain vigilant and be prepared to combat him at his every line of attack.

One of the *yetzer hara's* battle strategies is called "habit." At times, we become so accustomed to bad behavior – addicted, even – that we mistakenly believe that we can no longer control our actions. However, this is only an illusion; **in reality, a person always has free will**. The Rebbe says (*Likutei Moharan* 2:110), ואם אינו רוצה עושה, אם רוצה עושה – If a person wants to commit a particular act he will do it, and if he does not want to, he will not do it. The seeming loss of control is just a ploy of the *yetzer hara*; we must not be fooled by his attempts to lure us away from Hashem. **וַיִּתֶּנּוּ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּיָדְךָ** – Hashem has placed the *yetzer hara* in **our** hands; if we really want to, we can fight him and win.

The only way to overcome the *yetzer hara* is with *tefilla*. If we will continuously turn to Hashem and beseech Him for help, we will emerge victorious. However, the *yetzer hara* knows that *tefilla* is the beginning of his defeat, so he places many deterrents in our path (both actual and imagined) that hold us back from talking to Hashem. Yet we must fight back! The *passuk* continues, **וְשָׁבִיתָ שְׁבִי** – we must fight the *yetzer hara* in the very area which he wants to conquer us, as the Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan* 1:26), a person must be persistent especially in the area which is challenging for him, because therein lies his success.

Let's strengthen ourselves to talk to Hashem constantly so that ultimately, we will win not just the battle, but also the war.

Zos Hatorah Ki Seitzei 2, Sichos Mohorosh Parshas Ki Seitzei



MOHOROSH
SPEAKS

עולם התווה

Tickets are booked, travel plans are arranged, and suitcases will soon be packed up as thousands of men will head to Uman for Rosh Hashana. The trip isn't easy and the cost is quite high, but still they go, in order to fulfill the Rebbe's command of over two hundred years ago (*Chayei Moharan* 126): "Everyone must be with me for Rosh Hashana – nobody may be absent!"

The Rebbe said many things about the greatness of spending Rosh Hashana with him, one of them being that all those who come to him three times a year – Rosh Hashana, Shabbos Chanukah and Shavuot – will be spared the suffering of "*Olam HaTohu*."

What is *Olam HaTohu*? Why is it so terrible? How does the Rebbe save us from this punishment?

Alive or Not?

Olam HaTohu is the gaping chasm between *Olam Hazei* and *Olam Haba*. When the soul of a deceased person isn't granted immediate entry into *Gan Eden*, he is left dangling in a no-man's-land between the two worlds, living through imaginary experiences that are no more than an illusion. This is incredibly confusing and painful to the *niftar*, and even more tormenting for his *neshama*. The greatest favor that can

(Continued on page 2)

A LETTER FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA

RETURN

Dear ...

I received your letter.

How fortunate are you that you truly want to do *teshuva* and return to Hashem. The Rambam teaches (*Hilchos Teshuva* 1:1) that if a person transgresses any *mitzvah*, whether intentionally or unintentionally, he must confess his misdeeds to Hashem, as the *passuk* says (*Bamidbar* 5:7, "וְהִתְנִידוּ אֶת חַטֹּאתֵם אִשָּׁר עָשִׂוּ"). The person should say, "Hashem, I have sinned before You and have done the following *aveiros* (and he should list them all). I am so ashamed of my behavior and I deeply regret having sinned. I take it upon myself never to commit these *aveiros* again." This is *vidui* – confession. The Rambam concludes that one who engages in lengthy and detailed confessions is praised.

Teshuva has tremendous power. **No matter how low a person has fallen, if he confesses and promises not to continue with his sinful behavior, Hashem forgives him completely.** *Chazal* teach us (*Tanna D'vei Eliyahu Rabba* 22) that Hashem says, "Even if a person has committed more than one hundred *aveiros*, if he will do *teshuva*, I will conduct myself with mercy and forgive him completely." There is a way back for everyone, even for one who has strayed so far that he made statements against Hashem *R'l* – if he'll repent, Hashem will forgive him and enfold him with love.

Chazal teach us (*Yoma* 86b) that when a person does *teshuva* out of love, all his *aveiros* are transformed to *zechusim*. After doing an *aveira*, one has the opportunity to become even closer to Hashem than before! Knowing this, the *yetzer hara* tries his hardest to cause us to give up hope in ourselves; each time he convinces us to sin, his objective is not the *aveira* itself but rather the resulting feeling of despair, which will prevent us from doing *teshuva*. If a person does not give up, however, and even after sinning he returns to Hashem, all his sins become great *zechusim*.

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas. *Kesiva v'chasima tova*.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #1, page 204

MOHOROSH SPEAKS

continued From page 1

be done for such an unfortunate soul is to let him know that he is dead!

To illustrate the agony of *Olam HaTohu*, the Rebbe shared the following story:

A Promise

A rav of a town in Europe had a close relationship with one of the people in the town. The two friends made a pact that the one who would be nifter first would come to the other in a dream to relate all the happenings in *shamayim*.

Some time passed and the friends grew old, and soon the elderly rav passed away. The friend waited for the rav to appear to him... and waited and waited and waited. Days, weeks, and even years passed and the rav still did not come.

Ten years went by and the friend felt that his own passing was imminent. On his deathbed, he told his son about the pact he had made, in the hope that the rav would appear to his son to fulfill his promise. The son, too, waited and waited but did not get a visit from the rav. After ten years of waiting, the son felt that his time to leave the world was drawing near. Like his father, he gave over the pact to his son, in the hope that the rav would eventually come to fulfill his promise.

It wasn't until eight years later – twenty-eight years after the rav's passing – that he finally appeared to his friend's grandson in a dream and told his story.

The Rav's Story

The rav related that after his death, his body was prepared for burial and then placed in his *kever*, but he didn't realize that he had died; he thought he was healthy and well and was filled with fury at being buried alive.

In his state of illusion, he dug himself out of his *kever*, brushed off all the dirt and left the *beis hachaim* for home. Recognizing his town from afar, he was about to make his way toward his house but realized that he had a problem: he was wearing *tachrichim*! There was no way he could walk through the town in that state, and there was no way he could frighten his family wearing such garments!

He decided to wait until nightfall to be able to walk home under the cover of darkness. As he waited for the sun to set, the no-longer-living rav "saw" a peddler selling clothes, including garments appropriate for someone of his stature. He approached the peddler and offered a barter: he would give over the white garments in exchange for a set of normal clothes. The seller agreed.

Finally decently clothed and excited to reunite with his family, the rav entered the city, but to his disappointment, he found that he did not recognize a single home. "I must have wandered into the wrong town," he thought with growing alarm. "Where on Earth will I sleep tonight?"

Night fell. One by one, the lights went out in all the homes and soon the city was shrouded in darkness. One house, though, remained well-lit, and the rav went over to investigate.

When he walked through the door, he saw that it was actually an inn which provided food and lodgings for those traveling through the town. Suddenly realizing how long it was since he had last eaten, the rav asked for a portion of food, but was told that he must pay in order to eat. Since he had no money, he left the inn and headed back into the night, frustrated and hungry.

Morning dawned and he was still wandering through the town,

(Continued on page 3)



with nowhere to go and nothing to eat. Soon he passed two people who were in the midst of a heated argument over a monetary arrangement that had fallen through. As the volume of the argument escalated and it seemed as if the two people would come to blows, the rav decided to intervene.

"I can make a din Torah for you," he said. Just as he had done countless times during his life, the rav sat down with the two of them, heard each side of the story, and gave a psak which satisfied both parties. In appreciation, the two men paid the rav two gulden, and he immediately headed to the inn he had visited the night before. Now with some money to his name, he ordered some whiskey from the innkeeper, but before he even had a chance to drink or even pay, two people entered the inn looking for him.

"We were sent to summon you to beis din!" They shouted, pulling him to his feet.

Weary, hungry, and more than a bit confused, the rav arrived to the beis din, where he was welcomed with a full-blown tongue lashing. "Who do you think you are? How dare you, a stranger, take the place of beis din and make a din Torah on your own?!"

Thinking that perhaps he had accepted a bribe, they ordered a full search of the rav, which turned up the two gulden! As a punishment, they ordered that the rav's clothes be confiscated.

The rav left in shame. With no place to go, he began to regret ever leaving his kever, but he was unable to return since he no longer had his tachrichim.

As this was going on, the malachim that were created by the good deeds the rav had done through his lifetime began to argue in his defense. They begged the Heavenly Court to allow the rav to leave the Olam HaTohu. However, before being judged by the Beis Din Shel Maalah, the rav was told that he needed to fulfill the promise he had made to his friend. That was when he finally appeared to his friend's grandson and told his story.

Twenty-eight years after his passing, the rav's neshama was finally ready to begin proceedings to enter Gan Eden.

Our Rescue

The Rebbe ended the story, turned to his *talmidim* and said, "Those who will be by me for Rosh Hashana, Shabbos Chanukah and Shavuos will not have to endure the punishment of Olam HaTohu."

Mohorosh taught us that now, after the Rebbe's passing, we are not required to be in Uman all three times. For Rosh Hashana, Uman is non-negotiable, but for Shabbos Chanukah and Shavuos, we must daven with a *minyán* of the Rebbe's *talmidim*.

What is so significant about these three occasions?

There is a special message in each of these times, lessons that save us from the confusion of Olam HaTohu. On Rosh Hashana, the Rebbe reawakens our awareness of Hashem, and this encourages us to begin talking to him. On Shabbos Chanukah, the Rebbe teaches us to constantly thank Hashem and be grateful for the good that we have. On Shavuos, the Rebbe shows us that even the most unlearned Jew can master the Torah by learning with the *seder derech halimud*.

One who takes this three-pronged approach: talking to Hashem, thanking Hashem and learning Torah, will have nothing to fear when it is time for him to leave this world. All gates will be open for him and he will be *zoche* to go straight into Gan Eden.



For Your Child's Sake -5-

*Translated from לב אבות על בנים,
a kuntres written by Mohorosh zt"l*

PART 2: EXCUSES, EXCUSES CONTINUED

EXCUSE #3:

"Marrying off a child costs an exorbitant amount of money. I simply cannot afford it right now."

Now, this is a very good question: "From where will I get the money to marry off a child?"

There are, however, many better questions: Who said you must marry off your child in the most expensive manner possible? Who said that a wedding can only be made in a costly hall? Who said you must invite your entire city? Who said you must bury yourself under a mountain of debt in order to show the world what kind of wedding you can pull off? Who said you must buy expensive gifts for a *chassan* or *kallah*? Who said that so much money must be spent on extraneous things, only because your friends/family/colleagues will respect you more? **Who said that marrying off a child must cost so much?**

Believe it or not – it is actually possible to make a modest wedding that is within a limited budget. With a bit of good sense, one can save huge amounts of money by cutting out the completely unnecessary expenses that have become part and parcel of marrying off a child. In this way, parents can marry off their children with peace of mind, without the calculations of, "Well, can we afford a wedding right now?"

Even for a person who **does** have the money for an extravagant wedding, it is rather absurd to waste such a fortune on foolishness. It would be so much more worthwhile to celebrate the marriage of one's children in a simple manner, and the money that was saved can be better spent – by giving it to the new couple who would then be able to begin their married life with financial stability and peace of mind.

No, marrying off a child does not have to cost an exorbitant amount of money. There are better, more sensible ways to do it.

To be continued next week, be'ezras Hashem.

Q & A

DO I HAVE TO GET RID OF MY SMARTPHONE?



QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

I often hear the Rosh Yeshiva speaking about the dangers of having a smartphone, and I started thinking about giving up mine. On the other hand, however, it's hard for me to understand what is really so bad about it.

In my case, I don't need my phone for business, but I have a good filter on it and I don't use it for anything bad, chas v'shalom. It's just so convenient – I can get all the information I need, communicate easily, and have access to all kinds of kosher entertainment. I play games on my phone, listen to music, watch videos, etc. Many times, I also use it to learn.

I don't use my phone for anything that is not allowed– do I still have to get rid of it or can I continue using it in this manner?

I will do as the Rosh Yeshiva advises me to do.

Thank you.

Don't be smarter than all the *tzaddikim* who have warned us against the dangers of technology. If you would realize how destructive the internet is, you would not want to keep your smartphone for another second. You think it's so convenient? The "convenience" of the internet is a misfortune that has cost us a very steep price – so many families have been destroyed as a result.

The yetzer hara has found an easy way to capture our youth and entice them to sin. Instead of working hard to convince them to go to places that are spiritually damaging, he only needs to put a smartphone or tablet into a child/teenager's hand and he then has them in his net. The worst of the world is then readily available to them, wherever they may be.

At first, owning a smartphone seems tempting, but in truth, **it robs a person of his entire life.** R' Avraham ben R' Nachman once remarked, "The yetzer hara isn't satisfied with depriving a person only of his *ruchniyus*; he wants to take away his *gashmiyus*, too. His goal is to kill him completely." When a person watches *aveiros*, he loses control of his mind and can no longer make rational decisions. He is then truly lacking the most vital thing in life.

You ask if you can keep your smartphone; I ask you, **"Is it worth it? Do you want to lose everything?"** You say that you don't even need it for *parnassah* – if so, **there is no reason at all for you to keep it.**

I hope you will accept my advice and throw away your device.

May Hashem bless you with success in all areas.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah #2, page 277

THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

I received your letter.

The internet is a terrible affliction that has already destroyed countless *neshamos* and wreaked havoc on so many families. So many people have abandoned Torah and *Yiddishkeit* because of the internet, and many *Yiddishe* homes have crumbled due to this *tzara*.

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