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A WELLSPRING OF CHIZUK

שליט"א
Rav of Pardes HaTorah
Shiurim of Rabbi Yissocher Yehuda Berko



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פרשת שלך

The Hidden Power we Possess: THE MISSION WE WERE SENT ON

A MESSENGER CARRIES THE INFLUENCE OF THE ONE WHO SENT HIM

The *Ribbono Shel Olam* assigned each of us a unique mission, hand-picking us specifically for our task. The sefer *Amaros Tehoros* (by the Rachmistrivka Rebbe, זצ"ל) records a story of Rebbe Itzik'l of Skver, זצ"ל, that illustrates this truth.

While living in Russia, Rebbe Itzik'l was marrying off one of his children and asked his chassid, Reb Naftali Dayan (a renowned *talmid chacham* and the city's *dayan*) to collect funds for the wedding. The Rebbe knew that if a man of Reb Naftali's stature collected the funds, people would contribute more generously.

Reb Naftali visited various homes where everyone assisted with donations. At one point, he arrived at the estate of a wealthy man. Upon arrival, the servants informed

him that their master was taking a nap. Reb Naftali decided to wait and began learning Chumash, Parshas Shelach. The Ohr HaChaim raises a profound question: how could the *Meraglim*, who were initially *tzaddikim* (as Rashi notes from the *Midrash*), fail so drastically?

The Ohr HaChaim explains that a messenger carries the power and influence of the one who sends them. He clarifies that the Yidden who pressured Moshe to send the *Meraglim* had incorrect motives. Because the *Meraglim* acted as messengers for those with wrong intentions, that negativity influenced the messengers themselves.

Reflecting on this, Reb Naftali thought of the Gemara in Sotah, which notes: "*Middah tovah merubah mimiddah pur'anus*" - the good side is greater than the harsh side. He reasoned that if a negative influence can transfer to a messenger, then surely a positive influence is even more potent. Reb Naftali realized he was on a sacred mission of *tzedakah* commissioned by Rebbe Itzik'l, and according to the *Ohr HaChaim*, he currently possessed the Rebbe's spiritual strength.

He told himself, "I could overlook my own honor and wait for this man to wake up, but if the Rebbe is with me, I cannot let this opportunity pass. If the Rebbe himself were here, would I let this man sleep?" He began knocking loudly, shouting, "Wake up! The Rebbe is here!" The wealthy man woke up and donated a significant sum. Returning home, Reb Naftali presented the list to the Rebbe. When he reached the name of the wealthy donor, Rebbe Itzik'l, through *Ruach Hakodesh*, asked, "And what does the *Ohr HaChaim* say in *Parshas Shlach*?" The Rebbe had sensed Reb Naftali's entire thought process.

Just as Reb Naftali internalized this truth to succeed in his mission, the Sfas Emes teaches us how to apply this to our daily service of Hashem.

OUR SIYATA D'SHMAYA AND THE RESULTS OF OUR MISSION DEPENDS ON OUR MINDSET

How does this apply to our daily *Avodas Hashem*? The Sfas Emes throughout *Parshas Shelach* explores the difference between *Calev* and *Pinchas* - who succeeded as *Meraglim* - and the other *Meraglim* in the *Midbar*. The *Midrash* explains that *Calev* and *Pinchas* "*נותרו נפשם בשליחותם*" - they gave their lives for their mission, meaning they wholeheartedly embraced that they were sent by the *Ribbono shel Olam*.

The Sfas Emes quotes his grandfather, the *Chiddushei HaRim*, explaining that the outcome of a task depends on the mindset of the person performing it. The *Ohr HaChaim* explained that the original *Meraglim* were influenced by the flawed people who initiated the request. Conversely, *Calev* and *Pinchas* focused solely on the fact that Hashem sent them. This focus brought them their *Siyata Dishmaya* and their eventual success.

HASHEM SENT ME ON A MISSION!

The *Chiddushei HaRim* demonstrates that every person in this world is a direct messenger of the *Ribbono Shel Olam*. If you constantly focus on the reality that Hashem Himself sent you, you will experience extraordinary help from *Shamyaim*.

Imagine if the *Rambam*, the *Ramak*, the *Baal Shem Tov*, or the *Vilna Gaon* appeared in a dream and asked you to say *brachos* with *kavanah*, guard your eyes, avoid *lashon hara*, or *daven* with devotion. We would rush to shul the next morning to *daven* with unprecedented passion. If someone asked why you were so focused, you would think, "How can you even ask? The *Vilna Gaon* himself asked me specifically to do this!" You would be so overwhelmed by the significance of the mission that you would simply carry on in your incredible *avodah*.

The Sfas Emes, quoting the *Chiddushei HaRim*, teaches that the *Ribbono Shel Olam* sent every *Yiddishe* child into this world with a specific mission. That mission is simply whatever we do each day. We must visualize ourselves as messengers of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. When we internalize this awareness, we receive the *Siyata Dishmaya* to succeed in our mission.





BOOST OF INSPIRATION

Something Special About You

BOOST #1

Every morning, we say "מודה אני לפניך מלך חיי" ו"גלויים," expressing our gratitude to Hashem for returning our *Neshamos* with the phrase, "שהחזרת בי נשמתו" – You have restored my *Neshama* to me.

This *Tefillah* highlights two core aspects. First, we thank Hashem for returning our *Neshamah*, rejoicing in the opportunity to serve Him. Second, we acknowledge that the *Ribbano Shel Olam* chose us, specifically, to be His servants and children who provide Him with great *nachas*.

However, a deeper reflection on these words reveals a profound detail: the phrase, "*Shehechezarta Bi Nishmasi*." By saying, "*Ribbano Shel Olam, You returned my Neshama 'Bi,' within me,*" we are prompted to consider the significance of that word- within me.

The famous Reb Yankele Galinsky once shared an incredible story. While enduring the freezing, sub-zero temperatures of a Siberian labor camp, he would return to his barracks with only four hours to rest. Despite the exhaustion,

he used that precious time to sit and learn with great diligence.

He noticed that every night, a fellow prisoner would retrieve a uniform from his bag, performing rehearsals and exercises as if he were an army general. Witnessing this night after night, Reb Yankele eventually asked, "What are you doing?"

The man replied, "I was a French army officer taken into captivity. I brought my uniforms with me. The Russians force us to work so hard because they want us to lose our identity. What keeps me going? Every night, I wear this uniform and remind myself, 'I am a general in the French army'. This gives me strength, builds my self-esteem, and allows me to endure the bitter cold of the following day."

Reb Yankele Galinsky explained that we, too, must realize we are soldiers in Hashem's army. Having a *Neshama* provides the fortitude to overcome any obstacle or trial. When we say

Modeh Ani each morning, we thank Hashem for our role as His servants, which provides us with the spiritual energy needed for the day ahead.

When we say *Modeh Ani* each morning, we thank Hashem for our role as His servants, which provides us with energy for the entire day.

Furthermore, I am not just any soldier in Hashem's army; I am unique. Every *Yiddishe* child possesses a distinct quality. Some always arrive early to minyan, while others specialize in chesed. Some are gifted at organizing family

events, others in chinuch, and some invest effort into maintaining a happy home. Everyone has a unique contribution.

When we say, "*Shehechezarta Bi Nishmasi*," we recognize that the Ribbono shel Olam returned the *Neshamah* specifically within you. There is something truly special about you.

Thus, we thank Hashem for two things: first, that we are generals in His army, giving us the courage to face the freezing or burning trials of the day; and second, that He chose us personally because of our unique value.



Life

BOOST #2

We all aspire to live a happy, prosperous, and long life. We hope to see our children, grandchildren, and future generations remain ehrlich, serving as *Yiddishe* doros. Naturally, no one wishes for even a single second of their life to be shortened.

However, one may not realize that the years allotted to them can be shortened, *chalila*, by their own hand. When a person allows worry, anxiety, and stress to dominate their mind

whether walking the street, shopping, or trying to sleep - they let distress become a permanent fixture. Some may even find a strange, habitual comfort in this state, unaware that such persistent worry actually takes a physical and spiritual toll on their lifespan.

The Bnei Yissaschar, in *Derech Pikudecha*, explores the prohibition against killing a fellow *Yid*. He explains that by allowing anxiety to

consume the mind, a person effectively diminishes their own life force, which touches upon the prohibition of "Lo Sirtzach" — do not murder.

He writes: "המצער את עצמו" (one who causes himself distress), "ודואג" (and worries), "שלא במקום מצוה" (about matters unrelated to a *Mitzvah*), "הנה הוא ממעט" (is diminishing his own life force). In this sense, chronic, unnecessary worry is viewed as a form of self-destruction.

Recognizing that worry and pain actually

shorten our years can be a transformative realization. It empowers us to block out distress. When anxiety attempts to enter our minds, we can respond with strength: "No, I refuse to let you in; you are not a comfort, but a thief of my time and life."

By choosing faith over fear, we fulfill the posuk: "יראת ה' תוסף ימים" (the fear of Hashem adds days). One who trusts Hashem with *Emunah* will merit a long and meaningful life. May Hashem bless us all with a pleasant and *lechtige* life!



The Key to Success in Every Yiddishe Home

BOOST #3

The Rambam cites a well-known principle: (ספר המדע, הלכות דעות, פרק ו', הלכה א): דָּרַךְ בְּרֵיתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם לְהִיטֵב נִמְשָׁךְ בְּדַעוֹתָיו וּבִמְעָשָׂיו אַחַר רֵעֵיו וְחֻבְרָיו, וְנוֹהֵג כְּמִנְהַג אֲנָשֵׁי מְדִינָתוֹ. "A person, by nature, is drawn in his opinions and actions after his friends and acquaintances. People are inevitably influenced by their peers and those who surround them;

when one follows the habits and behavior of the people in his city, it leaves a lasting mark on him.

The Rambam continues by stating that even a Tzaddik will be influenced if he lives among reshaim. However, because "מִדַּה טוֹבָה" מִרְבּוּבָה — the power of good is even greater if

someone with poor *middos* lives among *Tzaddikim*, it can have a transformative, positive impact on him.

This concept offers an extraordinary key to recognizing the power we hold within our own homes. Often, when we study this Rambam, we view it through a global lens, focusing on general surroundings while failing to recognize the potential within our own four walls.

Every parent wishes to raise *Ehrliche*, *Yiddische kinderlach*. While we educate our children on specific do's and don'ts, we often overlook that a major component of *chinuch* is the

very principle quoted from the Rambam.

By creating an atmosphere filled with *Simchas Hachaim*, positivity, *Emunah*, and *Bitachon*, you profoundly impact your child. Even without direct commands, they will naturally be drawn toward growth and excellence.

The Shabbos seudah is a powerful example of this influence. By singing *zemiros*, sharing stories of *Tzaddikim*, and creating an uplifting environment, your children are transformed. Even without explicit instructions, the atmosphere of the Shabbos table itself will have an undeniable impact on them.



DEEPER INSIGHTS

Kind Words

RISING ABOVE PAIN: FINDING STRENGTH IN LIFE'S MOST DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

In *olam hazeh*, we all face our own struggles. When dealing with overwhelming heartache and stress, many often wonder: How can I cope? Is there a way to keep moving forward and regain happiness?

Many seek something tangible to hold onto. They yearn for happiness, for control over

their minds and hearts, and for a deeper closeness to Hashem.

Yet, these goals often seem out of reach. When trauma is heavy and emotions are intense, the internal effort to take charge of one's own happiness can feel unattainable.

“GAD’L, RUN!”

The following story took place during World War II, with the renowned *mashgiach*, Reb Gad’l Eisner. He served as the *mashgiach* in Yeshiva Sfas Emes. He withstood five years of war without his family or children. He survived one concentration camp after another from the start of the war until the end. He shared an incredible story about being tested *min hashamayim*.

Near the end of the war, while in one camp, he was told there was an escape route to another camp where liberation might come sooner. However, after arriving at the second camp, he discovered that the original camp he fled had already been liberated. He was now stuck in a camp still under the brutal control of the Nazis, where he faced unspeakable beatings. Yet, he remained joyful; nothing could break his spirit. However, there was one specific moment that tested even him.

During the final days of the war, prisoners were forced on a death march. Anyone who stopped to rest was immediately shot. Reb Gad’l walked until he finally collapsed, his strength completely spent.

For five years, throughout every camp, he had been vibrant and full of life, constantly encouraging those around him. But at that moment, he felt he could go no further.

As he stopped, dropping to the ground, a Nazi aimed a rifle at him. Reb Gad’l recalled having absolutely no strength left - not a single ounce of energy.

Suddenly, he heard someone scream, "Gad’l, run!" Instantly, he felt a surge of new power, like atomic energy flowing through him. He stood up and began to run.

He was eventually liberated and became the famous *mashgiach* of Gur, guiding thousands of *talmidim*. His influence extended worldwide because he was not just a teacher of words, but a living example of Torah values.

Reb Gad’l frequently recounted this story to emphasize that when his own strength had failed, it was the *chizzuk* of another person that filled him with energy he did not have.

POSITIVE WORDS: PLANTED SEEDS THAT GROW INTO BEAUTIFUL FRUITS

This story teaches us a profound concept that can be applied practically to our lives.

When Reb Gad’l was marching, he had no energy left; he was completely depleted. The new burst of life he received didn’t come from some hidden stocks of strength. Rather, it was the call of encouragement from a voice not his own.

Why did hearing "Gad’l, run" cause new energy to flow into him? What was the secret? The person who shouted those words wasn’t necessarily a hidden *tzaddik* or a *talmid chacham*; he was simply an ordinary person in the camp.

How could an ordinary individual, through just two words, spark the energy that saved Reb Gad’l’s life — and by extension, the lives of thousands of *talmidim*? How is it possible that all of *Klal Yisroel* gained so much from two simple words?

The conclusion is that positive words – from a friend, a neighbor, or even a stranger - have an immense impact.

This is the inherent power Hashem instilled in the world. Words are like seeds. Just as a seed planted in the ground grows to nourish others, so does the power of speech. Positive, kind words — regardless of whether they come from a close confidant or a total stranger — possess a profound impact. They take root in the heart and generate new energy, capable of uplifting even those on a much higher spiritual level.

What a lesson about the importance of surrounding ourselves with positivity. Anyone facing challenges or those still suffering from past trauma and anxiety should seek out supportive and positive voices.

What kind of words offer this encouragement?

Words of understanding, empathy, and recognition. Speaking of a person's incredible strength and endurance can provide the unbelievable power needed to move forward.

Moreover, the person offering these words doesn't need to be on your level; they could be far beneath your status. Yet, as we explained, words are seeds. Positive words are seeds that grow into beautiful trees, providing spiritual nourishment and energy to those far greater than the "poor farmer" who planted them.

One can even ask a friend, "I'm looking for some *chizzuk*; please share something encouraging with me today." Even when requested, these words retain their profound effect.

Do not think that encouragement loses its efficacy just because it was solicited. Words are so powerful that they allow a person to re-energize and blossom regardless of how they were offered.

THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE BECOME EVEN HAPPIER WHEN HEARING A COMPLIMENT

The *Gemara* (*Berachos 6b*) states, "אגרא דבי" היולוי מילי" — the reward for attending a wedding is the words spoken there. The Ben Ish Chai explains that when attending a wedding, one must praise the *chosson* and *kallah*.

Another *Gemara* (*Kesubos 16b*) states that one must praise the *kallah*. There's even a *machlokes* between *Beis Shammai* and *Beis Hillel* regarding the extent and nature of this praise.

The question arises: the *chosson* and *kallah* are already the happiest people on earth; what can we possibly add to their joy?

Chazal reveal a secret: by offering a compliment, you genuinely increase their happiness. Even the most joyful individuals need to hear words of praise.

Interestingly, we learn that even the happiest people fundamentally need to hear a compliment; it's the most essential thing you can do for them.

Conversely, the *Gemara* in *Bava Metzia* states that publicly embarrassing someone is akin to murder. It explains that as blood leaves the face and it turns white, it is a physical sign of "killing" the person's spirit.

If harsh words can destroy, then kind words can build. Every time we speak kindly to others — or even to ourselves — we are building a *Neshamah*. Kind words are a form of rebirth.

It's important to surround yourself with good friends and share this concept with them. When you share this thought, you will find that as you ask for the positive words you need to heal from pain or trauma, they will likely ask for the same in return.



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GRATIFIED WITH A NEW,
FAITH-FILLED PERSPECTIVE
ON LIFE, DRAWN FROM THE

WELLSPRINGS OF TORAH

TWO MINUTE
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1

EMUNAH &
BITACHON

2

BUILDING ONE'S
INNER WORLD

3

OVERCOMING
NISOYANOS &
CHALLENGES IN
LIFE

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LEARNING FROM
OUR TZADIKIM ON
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