

Message from the Founder

אשר מרבים אדר משכנס are the venerable words that are on our minds now.

Now, it doesn't say אשר מרבים בשמחה - that when Adar comes in **there is** Simcha, rather it says מרבים - we increase Simcha. The reason is that no matter what trials or tribulations we may be going through, we must recognize that it is for a reason. True, we can be in pain, but we should never be sad and depressed! As Rav Hunter so wisely once quipped: "People think that Hashem gave us tefillah for when we are in trouble. But in truth, Hashem put us in trouble so we should get into tefillah." He wants a connection.

Chazal say regarding tzedakah on Purim, כל הפושט יד נותנים לו - whoever stretches out his hand, give him. The seforim tell us that the same applies to tefillah - if we stretch out our hand to Hashem in Tefillah, He will answer us on that special day. We have a tremendous opportunity coming up this month. Let us take advantage of the auspicious day of Purim.

And let us not forget to daven for the ultimate solution to all our troubles - the arrival of Mashiach במהרה בימינו אמן!

Yossi Hecht

Personal request:

Could I please trouble you to accept upon yourself bl'n to say Asher Yatzar at least once a day for the next week from a card or poster as a zechus for a refuah sheleimah for my daughter Esther bas Sara Miriam? Thank you so much! E.M.N.

Easy Way To Simcha

It is hard to believe that five long months have gone by since the massacre on Simchas Torah. We are davening for the safety of all of Klal Yisroel, and specifically for the spiritual and physical well-being of the captives and soldiers. But at the same time, since we are in the month of Adar, we are obligated to increase our simcha. Whether or not we used the first month of Adar to attain this life-changing *midah*, now, as we enter the second month of simcha, is the perfect time to get down to work. This is easier than you think, as the very fabric of daily life is inter-woven with thousands of opportunities for simcha. All we need to do is open our eyes and we will see them. For example, do you know how much joy you can have from drinking one cup of water? (See a dose of *chizuk* for an elaboration on that.) Did you ever experience the joy of strolling painlessly down the street, taking in all the beautiful flowers and colors, hearing the music of birds chirping, feeling the breeze caress your cheeks, all while taking deep breaths of crisp air?

You may say, are you serious? Appreciating such daily occurrences, such as the ability to use the facilities, will make me a happier person?! The answer lies in Parshas Shekalim where we find a mitzva to give one small coin - a half shekel. Doesn't sound like that can do much, does it? But, when we add up all the coins of every person in Klal Yisroel, we end up with a small fortune. The same is true when working on acquiring simcha. At first, when you think about one of these pleasures, the effect may wear off quickly. But if you keep placing a half shekel of happiness into your simcha bank, it will quickly fill up and begin to overflow with joy! And of course, success breeds success. Soon you will notice and enjoy small and previously insignificant matters such as the comfortable chair you are sitting on or the efficient light fixture above your head. If we do this for the next thirty days, we will have drastically improved our outlook on the world!

I would like to end off with an encouraging piece of news. As you know, we started this monthly leaflet almost a year ago as a *zechus* for a *refuah sheleimah* for my daughter (**Esther bas Sara Miriam**), a young mother undergoing treatment for the *machalah*. Baruch Hashem, the most recent test showed that there has been some small improvement! She still needs much שמנים that she should continue to get better and be completely healed. However, this news should give a boost to our *tefillos*. The Gra explains (*Siddur Ishei Yisroel* on the words (משען ומבטח לצדיקים) that sometimes, the time for the

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ישועה has not yet arrived, but Hashem doesn't want us to lose hope. Therefore, He gives us a משען - a support for us to lean on and continue having בטחון in Him. He explains that this is why Mordechai was led around the city by Haman with great honor. It was not yet the time for the ישועה, but Hashem wanted to give Mordechai and Klal Yisroel *chizuk* in their *bitachon*, so He showed them that the redemption was just around the corner. So please, continue to daven



Stories that Inspire

A few years ago, Rabbi Y. A. shlit"א started giving a daily 2-minute audio shiur by phone about the wonders of the human body. The reason was that his grandfather, Mr. Nathan Appelbaum zt"l, had always spoken about how Hashem created our bodies with such wisdom, and was so full of gratitude to Him for his good health. When he was *niftar* at the ripe old age of 98, after a life of unbelievable good health, his grandson wanted to continue his legacy. Here is his story, based on an interview by Rabbi

Yoel Gold (as printed in the *Vechol Maaminim* leaflet, issue 340). Mr. Appelbaum related: "I was drafted into the United States Army during World War II and was sent to serve on the island of Guadalcanal, in the Pacific Ocean. One evening, Japanese bombers suddenly appeared on the horizon. It was brief and brutal: they showered their bombs onto the base where I was serving, and then disappeared. Six American soldiers died in that attack; dozens were injured, myself among them. I lay in the ruins of the building I had been in, seriously injured and only partially conscious. The world around me was burning, and I felt like I was losing the sensation in my hands and legs. It's hard for me to describe what I felt like when I looked in horror at my hands, which were hanging at my sides like two burnt pieces of flesh. It was a sense of mounting dread, a fear for my existence. I nearly choked on the dust that I inhaled, and coughed incessantly in



and be *meschazek* in Asher Yatzar as a *zechus* for a *refuah sheleimah* for my daughter, for R' Yossi Hecht (**Yosef Chaim ben Devorah Leah**) founder of *ashertotheyatzar.com*, and for all our brothers and sisters who have been wounded during these difficult times.

May we be *zoche* to the complete simcha of the גאולה שלימה בקרוב,
Eliezer M. Niehaus | Editor

an effort to gasp a bit of oxygen into my lungs. In the interim, I found myself talking to the *Ribono Shel Olam*, for the first time in my life, from the depths of my heart. I cried tearfully, soundlessly: "Please, Hashem! Give me back my hands! Please...I can't feel my hands, please restore the sensation to my hands!" From the depths of the pain I added, "I promise that after I get out of this inferno, I will dedicate my life to serving You as a loyal servant!" To this day, I have no logical explanation for the miracle that occurred a few seconds later; after I was sure that even if I would be spared, I'd remain crippled for the rest of my life, I suddenly got back the sensation in my hands and legs."

A while later, after extensive rehabilitation, Mr. Appelbaum was released to his parents' home. He did not forget

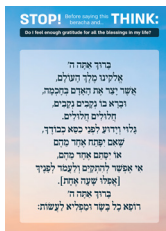
his promise... When he entered the shul in his area for the first time in his life, the first thing he encountered was the bulletin board, which had a sign posted with a list of Torah shiurim that were regularly given at the shul. Mr. Appelbaum decided at that moment to join one of the shiurim, and until his very last days, he did not stop learning.

Mr. Appelbaum's day began early in the morning, when he awakened with gratitude to Hashem for giving him life. He recited "Modeh Ani..." with a special niggun that he and his family used for many years. When Mr. Appelbaum was asked about the secret of the special brachah he had merited - such a long life with good health - he modestly pointed to a colorful placard

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hanging over the sink in his room. It had on it the words of Asher Yatzar in large letters, with beautiful illustrations that depict the remarkable miracles that accompany the proper function of the body, for which we thank Hashem in this brachah. He declared: **"In the last fifty years, I have never, even once, made the**

beracha of Asher Yatzar by heart – I say it only from the text! I recognize the tremendous miracles Hashem has done for me and my body and I try to thank Him for it at every opportunity, with utmost sincerity."



Wonders of Digestion

By: Rabbi Y. A.
Part 11: The Not So Small Intestine

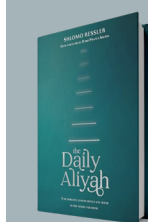
We saw in past issues that our stomach digests the food we eat through a double process that Hashem set up for us. The stomach physically moves, squeezes, and churns our food, while softening it, breaking it down, and mixing it with liquids. Additionally, our stomach breaks down the food chemically with strong acids and enzymes. Interestingly, at this point, our food has still not yet reached the main place of digestion.

If the food would remain in our stomach, our body would not get the nourishment it needs to live. Despite us being stuffed with food, we would literally starve. Every single part of our body receives its nourishment through the next section of our wonderful digestive system which is our small intestine.

Let us explain. Our body is really made of trillions of microscopic cells, and in order for them to be able to live and thrive they need nourishment. Their nourishment arrives in the form of tiny molecules which contain the nutrients Hashem placed in our food. Now, our minuscule cells would have nothing to do with a piece of apple or potato kugel. That would be like trying to feed an uncracked coconut to an ant! In its present format, it is totally useless and cannot even be defined as food.

The "food" that gets transported to our cells through our blood stream are items like glucose and amino acids. Phenomenally, through a chemical process, our small intestine breaks down our food into its smallest components. It then sends out all of the nutrient's molecules to every corner of the body. These molecules exit through the walls of the small intestines. So, it is really the small intestine that Hashem gifted each one of us that plays a major role in nourishing our body.

Thank You Hashem, for giving nourishment to the entire world!!



One day or day one? You decide...

Let today be day one of your enhanced journey through the Torah! The Daily Aliyah by **Rabbi Shlomo Ressler** presents a Torah insight for every aliyah, corresponding to the seven days of the week. Whether you're a seasoned learner or just starting on your journey, this unique book will empower you to reflect, introspect, and engage with the Torah by focusing on one aliyah a day.

A Dose of Chizuk

A Drink of Life

In my opening message I pointed out that with a little thought we can turn daily aspects of life into opportunities of simcha. Let us take for example the pleasure of drinking a cup of water. In days of old, if you wanted a cup of water in the middle of the night and your water jug was empty, you would need to get dressed, put on a heavy coat, and go out into the cold and darkness. Then you would need to draw up water into a bucket from the well, or crank it out with a hand pump. After that you would filter the water from the sand and sediments, and sometimes even boil it to remove germs and bacteria. Yet we just need to open the faucet and out comes clean, delicious water. Therefore, our first step to simcha is while we are filling up the cup. Think about how easy it is to get this basic pleasure of life.

Next, let us focus on the great pleasure of drinking water. First of all, your mouth was so dry and now the soothing elixir takes away that uncomfortable feeling. If you were hot and worn out, you will be overtaken by a refreshing feeling. Then pay attention to the fact that when you swallow, the water painlessly goes down your throat. (I am sure you remember what it felt like to swallow when you had a sore throat.)

Even though you probably have food inside your stomach, Hashem created a wondrous system that filters out the water and delivers it smoothly and swiftly in the precise amounts to every part of the body. Approximately 60% of our bodies are water: clearly it is very vital for our existence. Now, too much of a good thing is not good, and can even be damaging. Therefore, Hashem instilled an automatic gauge which ensures that any excess water gets sent to a special "container", where it waits for us to find a convenient time and place to remove it from our body. Normally, this is a painless process, which most people don't even give thought to. But the truth is that there are people who are scared to drink water, knowing that when they will need to expel the excess from their body it will be a very painful and difficult process. Yet, we merely pick up that glass of water and empty its contents without giving it a second thought!

So why doesn't drinking water make us happy? Because we drink it like a car swallows gasoline. But if we would bear this in mind while saying the beracha of *shehakol*, we would get more drunk with real everlasting happiness than a drunkard gets from a bottle of wine. When his drunken stupor wears off, he is back to his miserable life. But if we get drunk from a cup of water, it will put us in good spirits and help us discover more of these wonderful pleasures and joys of daily life.

Internalize It!

Once a day, before you say a *shehakol* on a cup of water:

- 1) Think about how thankful you are to Hashem for this life-saving elixir and for the wondrous mechanisms of the body that absorb it and send it to where it is most needed.
- 2) Next, say the beracha of *shehakol* with that *kavana*.
- 3) Finally, as you drink the water keep those thoughts in mind until you finish the cup. Bonus! Also imagine the water spreading life throughout your body.

We love feedback!

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