

*This publication is a dose of chizuk based on the weekly parasha inspired by the Torah of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zt"l*

# The Rebbe's Pharmacy

## Chizuk and Inspiration for Today's Spiritual Illnesses

### Parshas Vayishlach

If our avodas Hashem feels like a flat tire sinking slowly into the ground, we must take a deep breath of fresh air and fill it up! (Based on Likutei Mohoran I, 8)

**When we feel like we are lacking in our life and avodas Hashem, we must take a deep breath and renew our spirit.**

Many of us go through life feeling like we're constantly lacking. Our house or apartment seems too small. Our job doesn't pay enough for us to cover our expenses. We always feel tired and little under the weather. Our children aren't doing as well as we hoped in school and yeshivah.

Although we sometimes don't realize it, the same is true for our avodas Hashem. We daven three times a day, we learn Torah and we follow halacha, but something is missing. On the books, we do everything correctly – we keep Shabbos, we only eat kosher foods, we say krias shema in the morning and evening, etc – nonetheless, it seems to us that all of our mitzvos are severely incomplete. Our avoda feels kind of like a flat tire that is slowly sinking into the ground, or like a balloon that has lost its helium and become weak and soggy.

Therefore, it is very important that we get to the nearest gas station to pump up. In other words, we need to bring new air into our lives by taking a deep breathe and calling out to Hashem – "Oooyy!" We need to renew our spirit and life force by taking a deep breathe of fresh air and blowing out all of our impatience and frustration.

Breath is the source of all life, like the verse says about Adam HaRishon, "And [Hashem] blew into his nose a breath of life." It is our neshama (which shares the same root word as breath) that sustains and enlivens us. So too, it is the ruach (breath/spirit) in every single creation which is the source of its chiyus (life/strength). Thus, when we feel like something in our life is lacking, either physically or spiritually, it is really just a lack in the ruach of that thing; and by lengthening our breath by sighing or screaming to Hashem over what is missing in our lives, we can bring completion to everything we have.

For example, when we feel like we don't have enough space in our home which causes us to feel great constriction, by taking a deep breath and calling out to Hashem we immediately feel much calmer. Our heart begins to pump more slowly and regularly and

we feel much less pressure on our mind. Then, if we let out another few sighs or screams, we become even more settled and at peace. By lengthening our breath we find that our home really is okay just the way it is. Although the physical characteristics of the space have not changed one bit and it is still as tight and cramped as it was before, nonetheless, since we've found more patience and calm within ourselves, it doesn't feel so bad anymore. In essence, what we've done by increasing our ruach is we've breathed new life into our home. We've rediscovered and enlivened the chiyus in our home that we thought it was lacking.

The same is true for our avodas Hashem. After we daven shemonah esrei without any kavanah whatsoever and we feel like we're greatly lacking in our tefillah, we should take a deep breath and sigh or call out to Hashem, "Oooyy Tati, please help me daven better!" Through this, we settle our mind and renew our spirit, and are indeed able to daven with more kavanah. By lengthening our breath we draw into our being more ruach and inspiration. We reinvigorate our spirit and awaken ourselves to serve Hashem with more chiyus. Through this, we can fill up our physical and spiritual tires with fresh new air, and attach ourselves to avodas Hashem with true deveikus.

**Yaakov Avinu and the true tzaddikim of every generation carry the ruach of the Torah which can bring completion to our lives.**

However, it is important for us to know that there are two sources of ruach – one is kadosh and one is not. These two sources are represented by Yaakov and Esav. The verse says, "Give truth to Yaakov." From here we see that the aspect of Yaakov is truth. This is because Yaakov constantly "sat in the tents" of Torah, which is called "a teaching of truth." Therefore, by attaching themselves deeply to the truth of Yaakov, the tzaddikim of every generation are able to draw down the ruach of the Torah into this world and make it accessible to us, even though we ourselves are not so deeply connected to the Torah. This was the role of Moshe Rabbeinu. Only Moshe was able to have the utmost deveikus in the teachings of Hashem to the point that he could go up Har Sinai and receive awesome ruach of the Torah and bring it down for all of Am Yisroel. Through this, even those who were severely lacking in their spiritual development could access the incredible spirit of the Torah and complete everything that was lacking in their lives.

And Moshe was not the only one. Close to the end of his life, Moshe asked Hashem to appoint a leader for the Nation of Yisroel who was an "ish asher ruach bo – a man with spirit." On this verse, Rashi explains that Moshe wanted someone who could "connect with the ruach of each and every Jew." In other words, someone who could help every single person no matter how low they had fallen to get the ruach chaim – spirit of life from the Torah. Hashem appointed Yehoshua to do the job.

In addition, the first Mishna in Pirkei Avos explains that this ruach of the Torah was passed down from Yehoshua to the Elders, from the Elders to the Prophets, etc. Even though the Mishna stops

with the Tanaim, we know that this tradition was continued through the Amoraim of the Talmud, then to the Gaonim, the Rishonim, the Acharonim, and even until today. Thus, in order for us to receive the breath of life and inspiration which can bring completion to all of the things that we feel like we're lacking both physically and spiritually, we must find and attach ourselves to those tzaddikim of our generation who have this special ruach of the Torah.

**Although we know that the leaders of Esav are rotten, their extraordinary success in this world causes us to fall under their influence.**

However, it's not so easy, since there is another source of ruach in the world: Esav HaRasha. Just like there are great tzaddikim and rabbonim in every generation which draw their ruach from the kedusha of Yaakov Avinu, so too, there are rabbonim/leaders who draw their ruach from the tumah of Esav, like the verse says, "Yesh li rav – I (Esav) have greatness." These prominent figures of Esav are the politicians, the sports celebrities, the leaders of contemporary fashion, the famous businessmen and other secular people with great wealth and importance.

Although we know deep down inside that these people are rotten at the core and are terrible influences on our lives, nonetheless, it is very hard not to get caught up in their world. This is because we see that they are incredibly successful. It looks like they've got this world figured out. They've made it big time. They have power, kavod, beauty, and money – all the things that we feel like we're lacking. Thus, we're drawn to their source of ruach, since it seems as though it could certainly bring perfection to our lives as well. We follow their lives and envy what they have, sometimes so subconsciously that we don't even realize it.

Additionally, not only do the rabbonim of Esav appear to have much more glamor and success than those of Yaakov, they also far outnumber the tzaddikim who are attached to the ruach of the Torah. We see this from the end of this week's parsha which mentions the thousands and thousands of Esav. The Targum Unkelos translates the word "thousands" to "ravravei," which can be understood as rabbonim—leaders. On the first verse in next week's parsha, Rashi comments that Yaakov became afraid upon seeing the incredible thousands of leaders of Esav, while he had only himself and his twelve sons.

Thus, due their great success in this world and their overwhelming population



which surrounds us on all sides, it is very hard to escape their influence, and we end up searching for our ruach chaim from their sources of tumah.

**The greatness of the rabbonim of Esav is very short lived, and they usually end up in the gutters of society.**

However, when we pay closer attention to their lives we see that, although they may achieve incredible fame and prosperity well beyond that of the tzaddikim, it hardly ever lasts for very long and it usually ends in complete and utter destruction. They go way way up, just to fall down really really far down. This is because their "ruach" is a "ruach se'arah – stormwind" which blows very strongly for a while but then eventually dies down completely and in the meantime it destroys everything in its path.

Not only is this true when we consider what happens to them in the World of Truth, rather even in this world we see their massive downfall, with very few exceptions. Many of the really great businessmen, sports stars, and politicians end up with severe drug and/or alcohol problems. They get involved in scandols and many go to jail, not to mention the ridiculously high suicide rate, amongst a myriad of other serious life problems. Thus, although in their prime they seem to achieve perfection in their lives, nonetheless, they end up in the gutter of this world, lacking in every single way. All this is due to the ruach hatumah of Esav.

Despite all of this, our yetzer harah causes us to overlook the outcome of the leaders of Esav and focus only on their incredible success. Thus, many of us get caught up in their influence and find it hard to escape.

**A religious rabbi who uses the Torah to attain kavod also receives his ruach from Esav.**

What makes it even more difficult is the fact there are rabbonim even in the religious world who are deeply attached to the ruach hatumah of Esav. The Sages say that the Torah has the potential to affect us in two ways: "If we merit – by learning for the sake of Heaven – it becomes an elixer of life. If we don't merit – by learning for kavod or money – then it becomes an elixer of death." Therefore, it is possible for someone to become a great talmid chacham and yet still receive his ruach chaim from the powers of this world – the tumah of Esav. These rabbonim use their Torah knowledge to attain powerful positions in the frum world and fulfill their desires for honor and wealth. In addition, they despise and slander the true rabbonim and tzaddikim of the generation, since they feel threatened by their deep sincerity and attachment to the Torah solely for the sake of Heaven. The rabbonim of Esav even feel it is their

duty to destroy the reputation of the true leaders of Yisroel, since they want to take all of the kavod for themselves.

When we are connected to these rabbonim and all the more so to the secular leaders, it won't help us to lengthen our breath and try to bring new life into our physical and spiritual lackings. Since we're receiving our ruach from the tumah of Esav we will get caught in a stormy wind which may blow us up for a little while, but will eventually drop us down into the depths.

For example, we might make very high risk investments which pay off greatly in the short term, but since our desire is fueled by Esav to make more and more and become exceedingly wealthy, we end up eventually losing everything when our dangerous ventures inevitably fail.

Similarly, in our spiritual endeavors we may see a great boost in our avodas Hashem since our ego gets blown out of proportion and we think that we're so much better than everyone else. The arrogance of Esav has tremendous power to inspire us to stay up late at night learning, give lots of money to tzedakah, and even daven a long shemona esrei. However, sooner or later, our big balloon will pop and we will fall off of our grand pedestal. This same process will repeat itself over and over, all the time that we're getting our ruach from the rabbonim of Esav. We will go up and down, from the sense of completion of arrogance to utter lacking and frustration.

**Since it is so difficult to distinguish between Yaakov and Esav, we often give up on finding the renewing our spirit altogether.**

However, most of the time it is not so clear to us who are the rabbonim of Yaakov and who are the rabbonim of Esav, since both of them are great talmidei chachamim, just like Yitzchak Avinu had trouble discerning that Esav was trying to trick him. We cannot see their inner intentions – who is "lishmah" and who is not. This is the main source of our suffering and lacking in this world. Because of this, we sometimes connect ourselves to people who are not able to give us the true ruach of the Torah, or perhaps even more frequently we don't even search for any rabbonim to receive our breath of life, since we're so afraid of making a mistake. However, as mentioned before, we simply cannot get the chiyus that we need on our own. We need the true leaders of each generation to guide us. Without them, we will remain a flat tire for the rest of our lives.

**We must cross over the very narrow bridge of this world by cultivating within ourselves the attribute of truth and searching for the true tzaddikim.**

This is why Rebbe Nachman says (Likutei Mohoran II, 48), "And you must know that every person must pass over an extremely narrow bridge, and the main thing is not to be afraid at all!" In other words, this life is extremely difficult and perilous. With one misstep we can easily fall into the depths. By attaching ourselves to the ruach of Esav we can quickly end up in a bottomless pit of destruction.

However, we cannot be afraid! We cannot let ourselves fall into such anxiety that we remain standing in our barren place, deeply lacking in our lives and with no inspiration to serve Hashem. This is why Hashem sent us down into this world – to cross over the torrent of evil waters and make it to the other side – the Next World.

Therefore, we must find the bridge and get across. Reb Noson explains (Likutei Halachos, Tefilin 5:41) that Yaakov who represents the truth of the Torah is himself the bridge that we must pass over. He brings what Rashi says (Bereishis 32:23) that when going to meet Esav, Yaakov stood in the middle of the river and made himself like a bridge by carrying all of his family and possessions from one side to the other.

From here we see that there is a way to get across – by searching for the truth with all of our heart and soul. Every day we must pour out our heart to Hashem to help us find the true tzaddikim who can give us the ruach chaim of the Torah. We must express to Hashem our deepest yearning to attach ourselves to the truth of Yaakov and be saved from the evil waters of Esav. We must build within ourselves a sincere desire to serve Hashem with truth – only for the sake of Heaven, and connect ourselves with others who are also yearning to pass over the bridge of truth.

In other words, we must cultivate *within ourselves* the attribute of truth. We must long to Hashem to be able to serve Him completely lishmah – only for the sake of Heaven!

And if we continue on this path of genuine desire and search for the truth, then without any doubt we will be able to cross the narrow bridge of this world safely. Without any doubt, Hashem will guide us to find the tzaddikim of our generation through whom we can receive the true breath of life that will bring completion to our lives. We will be able to rise above all of our physical and spiritual poverty. We will be able to take a deep breath and find real contentment with the possessions we have, and a constant and powerful inspiration in every aspect of our avodas Hashem.

## The Rebbe's Pharmacy – The Book!

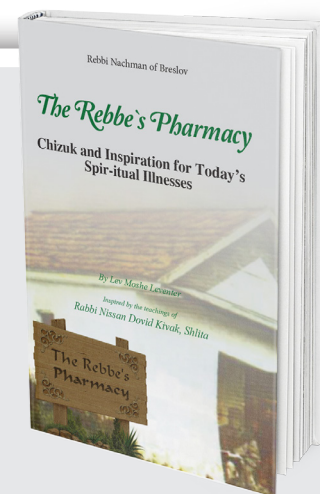
Thanks to many of you who have volunteered to help distribute, the book "The Rebbe's Pharmacy" – a compilation of last year's articles – is on its way to numerous destinations in Eretz Yisroel and soon to other countries as well. Here are a few important updates:

- 1) Anyone who is able to come to Jerusalem may contact the email below to receive books, both those who wish to distribute and those who just want a copy for themselves.
- 2) Anyone who can't come to Jerusalem may request to have books sent to them by mail if they think they know at least five people in their vicinity who would be interested. Volunteers are especially needed in the following cities: Lakewood, Toronto, Montreal, Miami, Atlanta, Baltimore, and Chicago. And although there are already others who are helping in the NY area, due to the size of the community more volunteers would be helpful.
- 3) Those of you who donated toward the project may contact the email below to receive copies of the book regardless of where you are located. Also, for individuals in other places, the book will be available on Amazon in the near future, G-d willing.
- 4) Funds are still necessary to cover all the shipping costs, so please try to help out the distribution process by donating at either of these secure sites:

PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme2/levmoshe>

The Chesed Fund: <https://thechesedfund.com/leventer/pharmacy>

To conclude, may we all merit to receive true spiritual healing and spread the light of Rebbe Nachman to all those who are searching for it!



*Based on the Torah of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zt"l and his primary talmid R' Noson zt"l, as given over by R' Niszon Dovid Kivak, Shlita. For further comments and questions, or to sign up to receive the articles by email, you may contact: [leventermusic@gmail.com](mailto:leventermusic@gmail.com)*