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*New Medicine from the Rebbe's Pharmacy:*

# *If A Tree Can Start Over, So Can We!*

## *Chizuk and Inspiration on Tu Beshvat*

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The whole world excitedly anticipates the New Year's celebration.

There's breaking news – you've got to hear it! Something incredible is about to happen any day now. All of the stations are covering the story. The reporters are swarming the scene. The newspapers are filled with columns discussing this groundbreaking event. Everyone around the world is watching and waiting anxiously for it to begin. The anticipation is palpable. Some people are so excited that they're losing sleep over it. Day after day passes, and everyone wonders, "When will it happen? When's it going to be?"

Finally, on a freezing cold morning in the dead of winter, one of the reporters who's been camping out for weeks already, wakes up early to examine the scene. He looks closely . . . and, low and behold, it's there! He can't believe his eyes! It's so amazing! It's so new and beautiful! It's a miracle!

Within seconds, countless news teams with all their equipment have gathered around to make live reports of this unbelievable phenomenon. Minutes later, announcements go out on all of the stations and headlines are printed in all of the newspapers: "THE FIRST FRUIT TREE HAS GROWN A BUD!"

Upon hearing the news, people from all four corners of earth jump up in tremendous joy and celebration. Bands start playing and an abundance of "lechaims" are passed around. After so much excitement and anticipation, at last the day has come. Happy New Year to the trees -- Tu Beshvat is finally here! Nobody cares that it's six in the morning on a Monday. Obviously, on such a monumental occasion, all businesses and schools are certainly

closed. Nobody cares about the freezing cold weather or the sleet-rain that pours down the whole day. Nobody cares about the fact that they're drowning in debt and their life is a mess. Well, nobody . . . except for one person.

There happens to be one reporter who doesn't get it. He tells his colleagues, "Hey guys, what's the big deal? What's so awesome about a budding tree? I hate to say it, but I think the whole world has gone MAD! Our headlines usually talk about important things like bombs exploding, political scandals, hurricanes that drown hundreds of people, the SuperBowl highlights, war in the Middle East, etc., but this tiny little bud – this is not news!! It happens around the same time every single year. It's just a part of nature – a tree buds, grows a fruit, the fruit gets picked and eaten or dies on its own, and then the same thing occurs again. Everyone is absolutely insane for making such an uproar about such a tiny, insignificant thing!"

The news reporters get together to do teshuvah and drink Rebbe Nachman's "Sweet Lemonade Punch."

What happened was this reporter forgot to drink the special "Sweet Lemonade Punch." After many centuries of causing incredible darkness and suffering in the world, news reporters from around the world decided that it was time for change. They had to put an end to all of the negative information that they were constantly spewing out to the masses. They had to put an end to all of the inaccurate weather reports, pointless sports highlights, and political propaganda that they were shoving down people's throats. After examining many different options, they came to the conclusion that the best way to really have a positive outlook on life was to drink Rebbe Nachman's exciting, new "Sweet Lemonade Punch."

This punch is FDA certified to help people genuinely see the good in others and in themselves. It has already been tested on countless Breslover Chassidim from all over the world for centuries. It has been proven to inspire whoever drinks it to make a new start in his life and become a confident, optimistic person.

So, the news reporters organized a massive, worldwide conference on January 1st – just weeks before the monumental holiday of Tu Beshvat – during which they would

drink the rebbe's "Sweet Lemonade Punch." Everything went just according to plan . . . except for this one reporter who slept in and missed the communal drink. Poor guy!

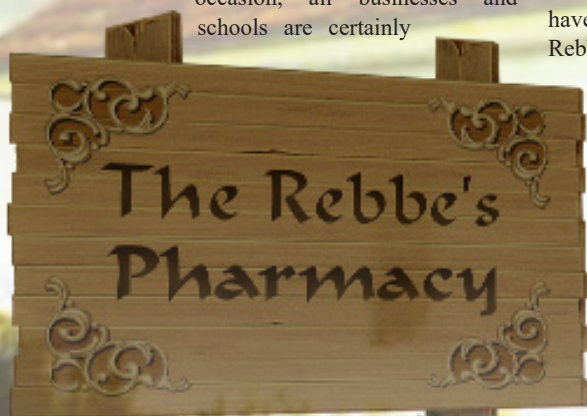
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What's really new and unique is the miracle that Hashem performs by growing a piece of fruit on a tree.

The question we must ask ourselves is, "What's new? Vos is naves?" We say this every day when we see our friends, but we don't usually ask ourselves. What's new in the world? What's new with me? What are the headlines in my life that are the most important to me, and which ones are meaningless?

Nowadays, the whole world is focused on what's new – new clothes, new phones, new cars, new music, new headlines, new politicians, etc. But are these things really new? Certainly, on the outside, the new ones look different from the old ones. However, on the inside – i.e. according to their spiritual essence – nothing really changes from one to the next. Two pieces of clothing could have different styles and colors, but their essence is the same: they cover our bodies in order for us to be modest and look respectful. Two politicians may seem to have very different opinions that could drastically change the course of history, but the truth is that the Torah tells us, "The heart of kings is in the hands of Hashem." If so, what's really deciding the future of this world is *our own tefillos* that go straight to the ears of the Master of the Universe!

So, what's really new? Every fall, this tree loses all of its fruit and leaves from the previous year and seems to be completely dead on the outside. But then, in the middle of the cold of winter, it is able to draw rainwater up from its roots, until after many months of internal growth, it sprouts a new bud.



Tu Beshvat is the time for us to hit the restart button and reawaken our emunah. Even though it may seem as if what we do in avodas Hashem is worthless, we must put on our 3D “emunah” goggles and realize that with every bracha we say we’re completely transforming all of the higher and lower worlds.

Afterwards, the new bud grows larger and a flower forms at its top. Next, the flower falls off revealing a small piece of fruit. The fruit gets bigger and bigger until finally it is ripe and ready to be eaten. Then finally, it gets picked and sold to a Jew. The Jew takes this juicy piece of fruit, makes a bracha, and eats it. He tastes the exquisite sweetness of each bite -- yummy! However, this is still not the end of the story. After the Jew swallows it, the juice from this fruit gets digested in his body and transformed into new life and strength for him to serve Hashem. This is real news! This is a miracle! Tu Beshvat is the time for us to hit the restart

button and refresh our view of the world. It’s the time to reawaken our faith in the Creator of the Universe. It’s the time for us to take a piece of fruit, cut it open, and look closely with eyes of emunah at the wonder of Hashem’s creation – all of the intricate lines and formations that are completely symmetrical, its extraordinary smell and taste, and the inexplicable power of each one of its seeds to be planted and grow into an entire tree! These are reports that deserve to be on the headlines of the newspaper!

Amidst a world full of Atheistic beliefs, every bracha that we say is a pure miracle.

What else is real news? The bracha that we say on this piece of fruit. Although we may not understand even one letter of the kavanos of the Ari z”l, nonetheless, when we see the numerous pages of holy names and intentions for each bracha, we can grasp from afar the awesome effect that they have in all of the higher and lower worlds. The sefarim explain that all these incredible things happen through the daily brachos of every Jew, even if we don’t have them in mind.

In addition, on a simple level, the entire purpose of a piece of fruit -- just like everything else in creation -- is to reveal Hashem’s Presence in this world. However, this reality is completely covered by the

Laws of Nature that cause most people across the face of the earth to think that the growth of a fruit is just a random occurrence, G-d forbid. Therefore, when we hold a fruit with our right hand and proclaim – “Blessed are You, our G-d, King of the Universe, Who created the fruit of the tree” – we are doing something very new and unique. We are destroying the spiritual shell of this fruit – the forces of evil that try to hide the Divine Providence of Hashem – and we’re revealing that it is the hand of Hashem that controls and grows every little thing in this world down to the most minute detail. In today’s world of widespread heretical beliefs, this is an awesome *chidush!* This is totally new!

By helping us to strengthen our emunah, the tzaddik teaches us how to turn lemons into lemonade.

This is the Sweet Lemonade Punch that Rebbe Nachman made for all of us to drink. Rebbe Nachman teaches us to open our eyes of emunah and see the world and ourselves in a new light. It’s true that there are some lemons in our lives – i.e. the physical and spiritual suffering that we’re going through. These “lemons” are what cause us to feel very negative about ourselves and others and push us to have a pessimistic outlook. However, the bitterness of these “lemons” is just the peel that surrounds the fantastically sweet fruit that is on the inside. Underneath it all, everything is completely good. Everything that we’re going through is coming directly from HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Who is simply trying to purify our soul in order to give us the most delicious piece of fruit – the feeling of true closeness to Him. All we have to do to overcome the peel of obstacles and suffering is make a bracha and awaken our awareness that Hashem is right here with us. We just have to strengthen our emunah in the extraordinary sweetness that is on the inside of what we’re going through, like the famous saying goes, “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade!”

Even though it may seem as if what we do in avodas Hashem is worthless, we must put on our 3D “emunah” goggles and realize that with every bracha we say we’re completely transforming all of the higher and lower worlds. We must use our special “emunah” sunglasses to look up to the skies and notice the beauty of the sun, the moon, the stars, and the wondrous cloud formations – the awesome miracles of Hashem. We must take out our spectacular “emunah” magnifying glass and examine the indescribable amount of artistic detail that is on every fruit and leaf that the Master of the Universe created.

Even in the spiritual cold and numbness of our lives, we can awaken our ratzon for Hashem by drinking the sweet Torah of the tzaddik.

And if we feel as if we’re dead on the inside and our avodas Hashem is so cold and

frigid that there’s no way it could have any positive effect, then we must remember the story of the tree. In the fall, the tree loses all of its leaves and fruit until it has absolutely nothing left. On the outside, it is totally dead and barren. But nonetheless, on the inside, it doesn’t give up. It doesn’t despair! Instead, it holds on tightly to its ratzon and yearning to grow again and bear fruit. Then, as the rains fall, it begins to gather in tiny little bits of moisture here and there, which ascend the inside of its trunk. At this point, even though there is no noticeable change on the outside, the tree starts to see its potential for new life. This gives it even more motivation to grow, until finally it’s able to sprout a small bud, which will eventually become a ripe fruit.

So too with us, if we see that our avodas Hashem seems to be dead without any “fruits” to show – i.e. we’re unable to daven, learn, and do mitzvos – nonetheless, we can’t let go of our ratzon! We can’t give up! Instead, we should continuously yearn on the inside to be close to Hashem. In addition, we should remember that the Torah of the tzaddik is like fresh rainwater that can give us new life and restore our soul. It is like a Sweet Lemonade Punch that can transform all of our negative thoughts and feelings into new hope and joy. So, we should try to drink a little bit each day. Although it may take some time before we see any external results, nevertheless, we must realize that through this process of yearning and learning, we’re indeed getting closer to growing real fruit. Then, when the day comes and we merit to see a tiny “bud” of change in ourselves, we must celebrate as if we just won the SuperBowl or the presidential election – depending on which one is more important.

If a tree can start over, so can we!

In other words, just like the trees start over every single year, so too, we can make a new start in our life. Just like we get together and celebrate Tu Beshvat – the New Year of the Trees – so too, we can rejoice over every new attempt that we make to come closer to Hashem. Even though the fruits from one year look similar to those of the previous year, when we look carefully with eyes of emunah, we see that they are, in fact, entirely different. So too, even if it seems like the results of our new beginning are exactly the same as they were before – that we fail to see any progress – nonetheless, with the eyes of emunah we can see that they are completely different. Every new effort we make is unbelievably precious to Hashem. Every new ratzon we awaken within ourselves is invaluable to Him. Each one of these things totally transforms our being and brings us closer to Him. From a cold place of emptiness, we are beginning to have a new existence.

This is huge! This is enormous! This is a real news headline: DEAD MAN COMES BACK TO LIFE!

This article is based on the Torah of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zt”l and his primary talmid Reb Noson zt”l, as given over by Rabbi Nissan Dovid Kivak, shlit”a. For comments, questions, and donations, or to subscribe to receive future articles by email, you may contact: usaoffice@meirat.org. To join The Rebbe’s Pharmacy Group on WhatsApp, send a message to: +1-718-207-1468 or scan this QR Code:

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