

Striking It Rich

Based Upon the Teachings of
Rabbi Nachman of Breslov
and of his student Rabbi Nossou of Breslov

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STRIKING IT RICH

Valuable advice on how to earn one's livelihood with ease; explaining why people find it hard to make a living; and encouraging those who are going through difficult times not to let their experiences upset them.

Based on the Teachings of
Rabbi Nachman of Breslov
and of his student
Rabbi Nosson of Breslov

1. A Generous Income

Are you having a hard time earning a living? Are you not making enough money? Take a good look at yourself. Have you grown accustomed to being cynical? Our Rabbis have warned us that "when a person is cynical his income decreases" (Avodah Zarah 18b). Our Rabbis said as well, "Cynicism is very harmful - it begins with troubles and ends in destruction" (Jer., Ber. 2:8).

There is nothing which removes a person so completely from G'd and from being a good person as cynicism. Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi, compiler of the Mishnah, told his children, "Do not live in Shechentziv because the people there are cynics, and they will influence you to become like them" (Pes. 112b). And, declared our Rabbis, "a cynic cannot come close to G'd" (Sotah 42a).

Therefore, run away from people who are always mocking everything. Then G'd will send you a generous income.

2. Provider and Sustainer of All Creation

G'd is the provider and sustainer of all creation, even "from the tiny eggs of lice to the great mountain sheep" (Shabbos 107b). Poverty stems from a person's unawareness of this. Instead of realizing that G'd supervises all of creation, people think that the world is ruled by nature.

Consequently, people are bitter and unhappy, because nature considered by itself, is analogous to night and darkness, in that anything cut off from G'd is in darkness. A person who perceives only "natural order", divorced from G'd's rule, gropes around in darkness and confusion, leading a life filled with poverty and misery.

The life of a poor person is a bitter one. Our Rabbis said, "A poor person is considered dead" (Ned. 64b). Also: "There is no suffering in this world worse than poverty" (Nfidrash Rabbah, Mishpatim 31: 7 1); And: "If all sufferings were placed on one side of a scale, and poverty on the other, poverty would outweigh the rest" (ibid. 14).

Therefore, in order to make a good living, in accord w . ith G'd's will, become aware that G'd supervises every aspect of this world; that there is no existence independent of Him; and that everything is subject to Him.

The more you fill your consciousness with awareness of G'd's being, the more will you free yourself from the tyranny of "nature". You will emerge from darkness, for G'd's light will shine on you. Then you will see even more clearly that your income depends solely on G'd.

This awareness in itself will aid you, and your situation will improve, for faith in G'd is itself the means of drawing down His goodness and

abundance. King Solomon said, "A man of faith enjoys many blessings" (Prov. 28) - faith in G'd will itself bring you many blessings. Therefore, do not be lax, but turn to G'd.

3. G'd's Supervision

When a person believes that not "natural process" but G'd's supervision of the universe is responsible for his sustenance, then the money he has earned acquires the status of the Manna, and all the characteristics which the biblical Manna possessed, his income will possess as well.

This is because faith in G'd is the essence of a person's life and spiritual pleasure. The Jews of Exodus had this faith and therefore, our Rabbis tell us, "The Manna provided them with any taste they desired" (Yoma 75a).

When Rabbi Nachman of Breslov told the Story Of the Wise Man and the Simple Man (Rabbi

Nachman's Tales, 9), he said that the simple man, who had a strong faith in G'd, tasted the most delicious foods whenever he ate a plain piece of bread.

In addition, when a person has faith in G'd, he doesn't worry about making a living from one day to the next. Our Rabbis tell us that those people in the wilderness who wanted to save some of the Manna for the morrow were lacking in faith (Nefidrash Rabbah, Shalach 25; 14).

A person who trusts in G'd and knows that his sustenance is in G'd's hands leads a tranquil life. He turns his eyes only to G'd, and the livelihood he receives is in the category of the Manna. Our Rabbis asked, "Why didn't the Manna arrive once a year in one large sum, but instead fell every day with only enough for that day? It was in order that the Jews would always look to G'd for their sustenance" (Yoma 76a). When a person realizes that his livelihood

comes only from G'd, then the food he eats acquires the attributes of Manna.

4. No One Can Touch What Is Meant For Another

Our Rabbis said, "No one can touch what is meant for another, nor can one kingdom encroach on another by as little as a hairsbreadth" (Yoma 38a).

Perhaps a competitor is stealing your customers and you are incurring profit loss. Nevertheless, don't antagonize him. Instead, turn to G'd, and put yourself completely in His hands. Become aware of His existence. Know that His presence is clothed within every thought, word and act; that He is hidden within every human being - including your competitor - and that His intent is solely for the good.

Even if you have business problems, be silent, be still, and turn to G'd alone. Then you will

enjoy a sweetness and illumination which you had never imagined could exist.

Were people to be aware of this, their lives would be graced with both spiritual and physical abundance, as our Rabbis have said "Whoever calls to G'd in his trouble his earnings are doubled" (Ber. 63a). When a person is aware that G'd is hidden in all his affairs and troubles, his enemies will, in the end fade away and he will enjoy an abundance of goodness. Not only will his spiritual life be illuminated, but his livelihood will also improve and he won't suffer any worries.

5. Invested With G'dliness

Every object and event in the world is invested with G'dliness. Discovering the Divine Essence, or finding Torah, in all aspects of the world, draws upon a person the blessing of abundant wealth and ample income. This is the essence of

each and every Jew's service of G'd in this world. Revealing G'd's divinity in all of creation is the means by which one merits wealth.

On the other hand, if a Jew doesn't actively work to reveal G'd's presence, which is concealed in this world, he suffers the curse which G'd pronounced on Adam: "By the sweat of your brow will you eat bread" (Gen. 3). Such a person suffers because he has not realized that G'd's presence is with him at all moments and in all places. Moses warned the Jews that they would come to such a state, and that they would later regret their obtuseness and confess, "we have suffered evils because G'd is not among us" (Deut. 31) - i.e., because we have not realized that G'd is here with us. Such a person's life is bitter and he is subject to poverty, small-mindedness and distress.

Search for G'd in all your surroundings. Then you will transform this curse into a blessing, and enjoy great abundance. Everything comes from G'd. His G'dliness, which is His Torah, is

concealed everywhere, including in your business transactions. When you cling to G'd and realize this, then you draw his abundance down to you. By clinging to G'd's light, which is hidden within all aspects of this world, you draw down G'd's blessing and enjoy an ample livelihood.

6. Draw Down Abundance

When a person eats, he has a natural desire to draw down abundance from G'd. However, at the same time his evil inclination confuses him and tries to cut him off from G'd.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov taught that when a person eats, a mystical union takes place between G'd and His "presence." This union is the language used by our tradition to describe a state of peace and perfection, which when complete, will rule the globe in the era ushered in by the Messiah. (See Likutei Moharan 62).

G'd, although infinitely great, constricted His being, in the process of creation so that every object is invested with G'dliness. Thus, the food which one eats contains G'dly sparks. When a Jew eats food with this cognizance, he experiences a tremendous desire to return to G'd (see Likutei Moharan 2:7). As a result, he is granted a Divine flow of abundance.

However, a person's evil inclination tempts him to be aware of only the corporeality of food, so that he will not think of G'd. Since his good inclination wants him to become aware of the spiritual nature of the food, he undergoes an inner conflict of which the Zohar says, "The time of eating is a time of war" (Eykev 272a).

When you eat, your good inclination is battling your evil inclination and you must assist your good inclination. The way to do this is to learn Torah (see Likutei Moharan 1: 1). Therefore, at every meal learn something from the Torah. If not, your evil inclination will be victorious and the food on your table will be like sacrifices

offered to the dead. This is what our Rabbis meant when they said, "If a person sat at a meal and didn't speak words of Torah, it is as if he ate sacrifices for the dead" (Pirkei Avot 3).

Similarly, a person must make the appropriate blessing on the food he eats. 'Me Zohar says, "A person may not eat any food without first 'feeding' the Supernal King. How does he do that? By making a blessing" (Pinchas 241b).

The manner in which a person eats can have tremendous consequences for him. The Zohar states, "A person's table can earn him both this world and the spiritual world-to-come (Terumah 150a).

7. Transform Physicality Into Spirituality

Always run to G'd and transform physicality into spirituality. How do you do that? By becoming aware that there is no existence independent of G'd, and that all of creation - be

it mineral, plant, animal or human - is an expression of the essence of G'd's Life-force. The more you succeed in this, the more you will free yourself from unhealthy dependence on other people. You will be aware that no one can either help or harm you without G'd's permission, and you won't let anyone shame you into acting wrongly, because you will be aware that the fulfillment of your needs depends solely on G'd.

When you awaken to this realization, G'd will respond to you, and He will send you an abundant livelihood.

However, if a person lacks this faith and thinks that his livelihood depends on how well he can ingratiate himself with people, he won't succeed and he will suffer income losses.

Of such a person our Rabbis said, that "when a person needs other people, his face turns colors like a peacocks tail" (Ber. 6b). That is to say, such a person suffers humiliation, low self

esteem, and can earn his living only with great effort and difficulty.

Therefore, my dear fellow Jew, cling to G'd by always being aware of Him. Then you will be blessed with much goodness, for, as King Solomon said, "A man of faith enjoys many blessings" (Prov. 28). Your faith in G'd will bring you an abundance of blessings and tranquility.

8. Be A Giver, Not A Taker

Be a giver, not a taker. Always help others, and give charity without expecting anything in return.

A person who is always taking is suffering from a constricted and impoverished consciousness. This attitude leads only to trouble as our Rabbis have said, "Poverty attracts more poverty" (Bava Kama 92a). If a person begins to take that which he could have attained on his

own, he will need to take more and more until he is completely dependent on charity.

Rather, be a giver. Always give, even if at first it is only a small amount, because ultimately you will achieve the wherewithal to help others significantly. By giving YOU will learn to think big, have a generous attitude and thus, merit great wealth.

Our Rabbis said, "If a person doesn't need to take but does so anyway, he will ultimately depend on others; whereas if a person is in need (to some extent) and doesn't take, he will ultimately be able not only to support himself but to help others also" (Peah 8).

Therefore, always give, and do not take. Constantly taking is an illness, and people who do this remain poor their entire lives. When you always make a point of giving, however, G'd will give to you, so that you will strike it rich and be able to help others even more.

9. Be Stubborn And Strong In Prayer

No matter how strained your circumstances, do not get discouraged.

Have faith that G'd is doing everything for your good. If you suffer poverty, it is because G'd wants you to rise to heights you would never have reached otherwise. Perhaps you would never have been able to pray to Him as you can now. When you do turn to G'd with heart-felt prayer, then He becomes receptive to you.

If you suffer poverty, owe a debt, or suffer other pressing problems, find a place where you will not be disturbed, and speak to G'd in your own words. Be stubborn and strong. Tell G'd all the problems you are going through, and plead with Him to help you.

If you continue in this way - not once in a while, but regularly, day in and day out - you will witness the miracles G'd will perform for you. Every day set aside a time and place to pray to

G'd, to plead with Him, to tell Him all your worries and anxieties. Then you will be answered.

10. Nothing Can Achieve What Prayer Can

If poor people knew how highly G'd regards them, they would always turn to Him and tell Him all of their problems, as a person speaks with a friend.

A poor person is a broken person. Poverty causes much suffering. Our Rabbis said, "If all the sufferings in the world were put on one side of a scale, and poverty on the other, poverty would outweigh them" (Midrash Rabbah, Mishpatim). Because a poor person suffers, and because his spirit is crushed, G'd accepts his prayer. The Zohar says, "King David began Psalm 102 with the words, 'The prayer of a poor person when he is faint.' The word 'faint' - yaatof - has the same root as the word

'to wrap' - ataf. When a poor person prays, he can envelope within his prayer the prayers of such people as Moses and King David, and all their prayers are elevated through his" (Zohar Balak).

If you are in distress, find a quiet place where you can be alone and speak your heart to G'd. Be assured that G'd will hear, and moreover, that He will help in ways beyond anything you had imagined. Don't think that you have better ideas than this on how to help yourself. Nothing can achieve that which prayer can.

11. Increase Your Prayer

Perhaps you have prayed to G'd at length to help escape your poverty and miseries. Perhaps the days you have stretched into weeks. the weeks into months and the months into years. Still and all, do not become discouraged. Continue to pray to G'd and even

increase your prayer to Him. Ultimately He will answer you.

There was one particular case of a person who prayed to G'd for the means to be able to learn Torah full-time. He finally achieved his goal - but only after nine and a half years of beseeching G'd. Nine and a half years he pleaded with G'd without skipping a single day, until G'd at last answered him.

Therefore, do not just speak to G'd for a few minutes once or twice and then give up. You must be strong and resolved to turn to Him and trust in Him day after day.

Don't ever think that your prayers are in vain. At times G'd puts a person through difficult circumstances precisely so that he will pray, and G'd then utilizes those prayers to help him, or - if not him - his children or grandchildren. Our Rabbis said, "The Torah tells us, 'poor people will not disappear from the land of Israel' (Deut. 15). A person should always pray to G'd that he be spared poverty. Then this

prayer may aid him or his offspring" (Shabbos 151b; see Maharsha ibid).

Be assured that your prayer to be saved from poverty is efficacious - even if you yourself are not answered, then your prayer will be of use for your children and your children's children.

12. Wealth As A Test

When a person is wealthy, he is tested by G'd to see how he will use his money. Poverty, however, is a much more difficult test. A poor person is always bitter and broken, and he lacks a sense of self-worth.

Therefore, always be careful to treat poor people respectfully. In particular, if a person approaches you for help, treat him kindly. If you embarrass him, you will anger G'd, and it will be difficult to gain forgiveness.

Even if a poor person abuses you, judge him favorably. His sufferings and burdens have driven him to the oint where his is "drunk, yet not from wine" (Isa. 5 1). Our Rabbis said that "there is no suffering comparable to that of poverty" (Midrash Rabbah, Mishpatim).

Speak pleasantly to poor people and try to comfort them. You will then perform the greatest of G'd's commandments. Our Rabbis said, "Charity is equal to all the other commandments of the Torah, and charity is complete only when one makes the poor person feel better" (Bava Batra 9a).

Sometimes speaking kindly to a poor person is more important than handing him money. Your words can give him new life and hope, and uplift him. Therefore, always help the poor and treat them sympathetically.

13. Called By Name And Assigned A Place

You will succeed - both spiritually and financially when you impress on your consciousness the truth of G'd's existence, and know that everything is in its essence the Divine Life-force, and that no one can either help or harm you without G'd's permission.

Our Rabbis have said, "Every person is called by name and assigned his place. No one can touch what is meant for another, and no kingdom can encroach on its neighbor by as little as a hairsbreadth" (Yoma 38a). The commentator Rashi explains, "Do not worry that someone else will take away your income. You will be called by name to sit in your spot and there you will be given what is reserved for you. You don't receive gifts from others, but a set amount is allotted to you from heaven."

Once you internalize this awareness, nothing will upset you. You will be confident and successful both spiritually and physically.

Success is achieved by a simple faith in G'd. Having this, you will have struck it rich.

14. Fortunetelling, A Worthless Business

Whatever problems you may experience, your only recourse is to run to G'd and speak to Him of your trouble without affectation.

The Torah tells us, "Be simple with G'd your L'rd" (Deut. 18). Rashi comments, "Walk with G'd in simplicity, and look only to Him. Do not engage in fortunetelling. Accept simply all that which occurs to you. In that way, you will be with G'd."

Whatever you may be undergoing, do not turn to fortune-tellers, astrologers, tea leaf readers, mezuzah analyzers, and the like. All of this is a delusion which has taken hold in the last few years. Today whoever wants to make a living hires himself out as a seer. But the whole business is worthless.

The best thing to do is to turn to G'd, to cling to Him and to His ways with faith and simplicity, and to ask Him that He help you out of your problems. Then you will experience in your own life the words of King Solomon, "Hope to G'd and He will save you" (Prov. 20).

15. Chasing A False Prospect

Some people are crushed by the burden of their needs. They are never calm but always under pressure, chasing one false prospect after another and trying all sorts of get rich quick schemes. Don't be fooled. Become aware that the best thing you can do is to run to G'd and freely pour your heart out to Him, telling Him in your own words all of your problems and asking Him to help you.

At first, this may be difficult to do, but that is only because your faith in Him is not strong enough. The experience of speaking to G'd will

in itself strengthen your faith. If you speak to G'd persistently, day after day, you will ultimately be answered with miracles which are beyond the realm of nature.

My dear fellow-Jew, it is painful to run yourself ragged from day to day and still not attain the basic needs for yourself and your family. Why not listen to the simple advice of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov and turn to G'd, telling Him your troubles in your own words? You have already tried everything else, and it didn't work. Why not try this advice and begin to speak to G'd regularly? You will achieve success beyond anything you had ever learned. You must be strong, and then you will experience wonders.

16. The Baal Shem's Tov Analysis

The Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chassidism, once said, "In the past the evil inclination tried

to keep a person from enjoying the spiritual world-to-come. Now, however, the evil inclination tries to keep him from enjoying the physical world as well." In other words, people are so befuddled and desperate @g to earn a living that they can't ever enjoy the physical world, much less set aside time for their spiritual growth.

Because this is the state of affairs today, pray to G'd that He give you breathing space - i.e. that you can earn a living without burning yourself out. Ask Him for free time every day. Then use this free time to grow spiritually - in particular, bring yourself close to G'd by speaking to Him in your own words.

17. Channel To Receive Goodness and Blessings

Always yearn to come close to G'd; be constantly aware of the truth of His being. As a

result, G'd will extend His goodness to you, and you will enjoy both spiritual and physical blessings.

However, before G'd will reward you, He will first test your sincerity. Therefore, my dear fellow Jew, no matter what troubles and pressures hound you, accept everything with quiet fortitude. With these troubles, G'd is testing you.

Once you do pass through this stage, you will come so close to G'd that you will be nullified before Him and totally enveloped within Him. You will become a channel to receive His goodness and He will fill your life with blessings.

18. Deers Don't Harvest

When a person sins, he falls into the realm of the physical. He then feels constricted as if no place is wide enough for him. This was how

Cain felt after he killed his brother Abel: "Cain said to G'd, 'You have thrown me off the land, and now I am a wanderer' (Gen. 4).

When a person sins, he perceives the world as only confining. He feels squeezed and oppressed and finds it difficult to cope with the pressures of life, i.e. to earn a living and keep a decent apartment etc., and his life is full of suffering.

It is not the inevitable condition of man that he suffer. To the contrary, our Rabbis said, "I never saw a deer harvesting, a lion carrying packages or a fox running a store. They earn their living easily, and they were created only to serve me (because the whole world was created to help man.) And what was I created for? To serve my Maker. If these animals who were created only to serve me find their food easily, shouldn't I - who was made to serve G'd - earn my living without trouble? But, I sinned, and in doing so I myself ruined my 9 chances to earn a living" (Kid. 82b).

The minute a person sins, the limitations of time and space of this physical universe gain control over him, and he is unable to enjoy a restful moment.

To counter this - to earn a decent wage and to find a decent place to live - return to G'd. Then you will transcend above time and space. You will escape the pressure of this world; your attitude will improve and you will become optimistic. G'd will freely pour His goodness out to you both spiritually and physically.

19. Acquisitions And Sales

My dear fellow Jew, be aware that whatever a person earns is decided by G'd Himself. The more you turn to G'd and trust in Him, the more easily and quickly will you be able to earn a living.

Contrarily, the more a person attributes his income to natural causes and to his effort alone,

the more difficult it will be for him to earn his wages.

Many people wander about unemployed and anxious about what tomorrow will bring. This is because they ceased to realize that everything comes from G'd, and instead attributed their ability to make a living to nature and chance.

A person must, however, link in his mind this very nature and chance to its spiritual source. How can they do this? By gaining the awareness that everything is in its essence an aspect of Divinity; that nature itself is an aspect of G'd's supervision of every detail of existence.

Unfortunately, it is difficult for us, with our limited consciousness, to perceive this. Nevertheless, even a businessman who is caught up in acquisitions and sales and thinks his profits are a result of natural economic principles should realize that there really is no such thing as autonomous laws of finance. Everything comes from G'd.

It may be that a person succeeds at a business, and then another person, following the same formula, fails. This is a situation which we see repeated every day.

Why? Because in the final analysis how much a person earns, when he will succeed and when he will not succeed, is determined by G'd Himself.

Why, then, do we need to go to work at all? Or in general, why do people need to exert themselves for anything, if everything comes from G'd and He gives to whomever he wants in the manner and in the time that He desires? The answer is that this is part of G'd's pattern of creation: G'd in His wisdom willed that man must exert his own will and effort in this world. Ultimately, however, the reasons for this pattern of reality decided upon by G'd are beyond our ability to comprehend.

G'd created the world ex nihilo - out of absolute nothing. Now as well, creation takes place constantly: grass grows for the beast to graze

on, trees spring from small seeds, and so on. G'd could have easily caused trees to give their fruits without man needing to tend his Orchards; G'd could have given us wheat without the need to plant, plow and harvest.

But G'd created this world for man, so that man should exert his effort - that he should tend the trees, harvest the wheat, that he should engage in business before he can gain his living. Nevertheless, the entire process is according to G'd's will, and under His constant supervision.

20. The Yoke Of Torah

Nullify yourself before G'd, and fill yourself with the sweetness and illumination of faith in Him, in awareness that nothing exists independent of G'd. You will then find it easy to earn your living.

How can you attain a solid faith in G'd? You must learn Torah diligently. Then, having faith,

you will find it much easier to earn your living. Our Rabbis have said, "When a person accepts the yoke of Torah, the yoke of government and of making a living is removed from him" (Pirkei Avot 3); and "Reduce your business, and busy yourself with Torah" (ibid. 4).

When you learn Torah, your faith will grow, and then you will be able to more easily receive G'd's bounty.

The reason why people struggle so hard to make a living can be traced back to the sin of Adam and Eve. When they ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Adam, together with all his descendants, was cursed, as is stated in the Torah, "You shall eat by the sweat of your brow" (Gen. 3).

However, our Rabbis tell us that when the Jews stood at the foot of Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah, they were freed of the consequences of Adam's act (Shabbos 146a), and they were instilled with faith in G'd.

Therefore, when you now learn Torah, you as well fill yourself with faith; in so doing, you cast off the curse which stemmed from Adam's sin; and as a result, you can earn your living more easily.

21. A Person's Earnings, Decided Every Morning

My dear fellow Jew, why should you be so discouraged and desperate, running from person to person begging for work? Rather than turn for help to people, wouldn't it be better to run to G'd and pour out your heart to Him? Speak to Him as though you were discussing matters with your best friend, and tell Him everything that you are suffering.

My dear fellow Jew, there is nothing better for you than this. At first, when you speak to G'd in this manner, it may appear to you that no one is listening. But this attitude is due to your own

inability to sense spirituality, which in turn was caused by previous wrong doings.

However, if you are strong and regularly speak to G'd and ask Him to help you in every detail of your life, then you will see what miracles G'd will perform for you. Your ability to earn a living depends on how closely you cling to G'd , and on your prayer to Him.

Our Rabbis have told us that "the key to a person's wages lies in G'd's hands alone" (Ta'anit 2a). Don't think that your earnings depend on some other person. This is a harmful delusion. Our Rabbis commented on the verse "'It was appointed for us in the mornings', that "this refers to a person's earnings - every morning it is decided in heaven how much he will earn that day" (Jer. Rosh Hashana 1:3).

It is best, therefore, to run to G'd and beseech Him that you may earn a decent wage. You must be patient, and realize that no prayer goes to waste. G'd hears your every word, and your prayers are formed into channels with which

you can receive His goodness. Speak to G'd regularly and at length in your own words. As a result, G'd will bless you and upgrade your living standards.

22. Manna From A Jar

My dear fellow Jew; cling to G'd and learn His Torah diligently. Then you will be able to earn a living easily. At first you may be tested. However, if your trust in G'd remains strong, if your faith in Him is resolute, and if you continue to learn Torah, He will give you wealth.

Our Rabbis said, "When a person works hard to learn Torah, then he earns his living from the Torah and he becomes successful and prosperous" (Midrash Tanchumah, Tisah). Our Rabbis said as well, "Jeremiah the prophet asked the Jews: 'Why aren't you learning Torah?' They replied, 'If we learn Torah, how

will we earn a living?' Jeremiah took the jar which contained Manna (this jar was stored in the Temple), and he placed it before the Jews. 'Our forefathers in the wilderness', he said, 'learned Torah and this is how they made their living, if you learn Torah as well, G'd will provide for your needs also... (Mechilta, Beshalach).

Therefore, my dear fellow Jew, run to the Torah and immerse yourself in its teachings. Your situation will improve and you will prosper. Indeed, once Rabbi Nachman of Breslov was urging someone to learn Torah, and he told the man, "What will you lose by learning Torah? On the contrary, the Torah itself will make you rich."

23. Succeed And Grow Prosperous

Your earnings are justified only when you give charity. Our Rabbis said, "When you give a

tenth of your wages in charity, you will prosper.... (Sifti, Re'eh). The more charity you give, the more does G'd open windows in heaven through which He will give you a larger income more easily earned. (Our Rabbis have determined that a person should give from ten to twenty per cent of his earnings to charity.)

We can see around us that those people who give charity generously continue to succeed and grow prosperous. On the other hand, those who are stingy, saving everything for themselves, often lose what they had and grow progressively worse off. A perceptive person can sense that when someone doesn't give charity, his money acquires a foul odor. Our Rabbis said, "If you want to salt your money so it will be preserved, lessen it by giving charity" (Ket. 66b)

Our Rabbis compared charity to salt. Just as salt preserves food, so does charity preserve a person's capital. Contrarily, when a person doesn't salt his money with charity, then -just

as unsalted meat rots and stinks so does his money acquire a foul smell.

Therefore, if you want to earn your living comfortably, give charity. The more you give to others, the more G'd will give to you.

24. Improves Your Fortune

When a person nullifies himself before G'd, he improves his fortune.

Most people - and especially poor people - are unhappy, and believe that they are victims of bad luck or that their stars are crossed. This is a great mistake, because the Jews are above the influence of luck, nature or the stars. They are solely under the control of G'd's word.

Our Rabbis said, "Eyn Mazal L'Yisroel - There is no star' for the Jews" (Shabbos 156a) - that is, their success depends only on G'd. The Baal Shem Tov commented, "Eyn - which literally

means nothing - refers to G'd's supernal will, which is so beyond us that it appears as nothingness. It is this supernal will which is the "Mazal LTisroel" - the only 'star' and fortune of the Jews."

Therefore, if you wish to succeed and earn a good living, nullify yourself before G'd, the Infinite One, Who is the Life of the universe. Remove your mind from the concerns of this world, and desire only that which G'd desires. Then G'd will pour out to you an abundance of goodness.

25. Involved In Disputes And Lawsuits

My dear fellow Jew, be aware that today, as well as in the days of the Exodus, Manna falls daily from heaven to every individual according to his merit. 'Me only difference is that in the days of the Exodus, the Manna fell openly and everyone saw it daily descend from

Heaven, whereas today the process is hidden and camouflaged under the guise of natural causes.

As a result, most people forget that their sustenance comes from G'd, thinking that everything is a result of natural causes. Thus, people get involved in disputes and lawsuits, and they eat themselves with worry. They are convinced that their living comes only from their work, and that other people are out to get them.

However, if you become aware that Manna is falling today as it did in the days of Moses, and that although your income comes from a specific source, that source itself comes from G'd, then you will never worry about what tomorrow may bring, or about what others may do. You will realize that everything, no matter how disguised in the garb of nature, comes from G'd.

The Torah tells us that G'd commanded Moses, "Take a jar and put in it an omer's weight of

Manna, then place it before G'd (that is, in the Tabernacle) as a remembrance for the coming generations, so that they will see that bread which I fed you in the wilderness" (Ex. 16).

This passage of the Torah is telling us the following: In the days of the Exodus, the Jews saw how Manna fell directly from heaven without natural intermediaries. But the future generations, G'd told Moses, should possess one jar of the Manna. This jar represents natural events" within which the Manna of today is concealed.

A perceptive person sees that even this vessel itself is an illusion created by G'd, and that there is really no such thing as nature or cause-and-effect, because nature and cause-and-effect themselves are directed by G'd.

26. A Person Always Occupied

Many people are disturbed that G'd created the world in such a way that a person has to work quite hard to earn a living. Granted that G'd wished that person exert his will in this world, why couldn't an easy token effort suffice?

But actually, labor is good for a person, for it occupies him so that he doesn't have the leisure time to act wrongly.

A person who learns Torah, however, doesn't have to work, for the Torah itself saves him from wrongdoing. Not everyone, though, can learn Torah constantly. Therefore, without work, he will eventually lose his Torah learning as well. "It is good to unite Torah learning with this-worldly living, for the effort of the two together takes a person's thoughts away from wrongdoing." (Pirkei Avot 2)

Thus, between Torah learning and working, a person is always occupied. However, tzaddikim

(people who have reached a high spiritual level) are constantly involved with Torah. Therefore, it is unnecessary for them to go to work to earn a living. A person who has reached a level where the Torah itself is his sole occupation is fortunate indeed.

27. Businessmen And Storeowners

It is especially easy for businessmen and storeowners to see G'd's wonderful supervision of our world. A person opens a store or begins an enterprise, and there is no sign of a customer. To the contrary, he is surrounded by competing firms, and customers patronize them. Nevertheless, suddenly customers appear and then his business thrives.

A person who is aware of G'd's supervision will begin to see that what, at first glance appeared an ordinary sale or transaction, was actually so unusual and unlikely that it was obviously

given its impetus by G'd. This itself will bring him closer to G'd.

28. Shattering Of Vessels

My dear fellow-Jew, do not be disturbed when you see that unethical people are getting ahead and making fortunes.

Everything comes from G'd and that includes the income of dishonest or non-believing people.

However, when people don't serve G'd correctly, He doesn't send them their sustenance directly from high spiritual planes, but instead via spiritually unclean levels. Our tradition teaches that a primordial spiritual catastrophe took place in spiritual worlds. There had existed spiritual vessels filled with an even, fine spiritual light. However, this light increased to such an extent that its pressure shattered the vessels. The sustenance of such

people comes from the shards of these spiritual vessels which have fallen to the spiritual depths.

Why is that? Because these people attempt to conceptualize G'd: A form of dangerous speculation, which if not curbed, exceeds the limitations of the human mind and results in "overenlightment". In the process of trying to grasp G'd's infinity, they magnify His greatness to such a degree that G'd becomes in their mind too abstract and remote to be involved in a trivial world as ours. Hence their efforts, meeting with failure, brings them to reject G'd's providence completely, which is termed the "shattering of the vessels". In turn G'd relates to these people in the abstract, impersonal manner with which they perceive Him. Their insufficient belief in G'd's involvement in matters of our world, is in effect idol worship and falls under the Torah's prohibition of (Ex. 23) "Do not mention the names of other gods". Therefore the sustenance of such non-believing Jews is impure and defiled, because they deny

that it was drawn directly from G'd. It is also forbidden to become business partners with such people. We should distance ourselves from those who believe that their successes and achievements are self determined, because we must believe that all our sustenance comes only from the generous hand of G'd. The more a Jew instills within himself this faith and dependence in G'd, the more he draws from the wellsprings of holiness. Therefore cling to faith in G'd and do not envy the ill gotten gains of wrongdoers.

29. Self Confidence Contingent On Trust And Faith

The more a person is aware of G'd, trusts in Him and realizes that his well-being is in G'd's hands, the greater confidence does he gain, and he isn't intimidated by other people.

Self confidence is contingent on having trust and faith. Isaiah the prophet said, "I will trust, and I will not fear" (Isa. 12) - when a person trusts in G'd, he isn't afraid of what might happen to him.

People are generally insecure regarding making a living. This is because they don't have sufficient trust and faith in G'd. A person who really is close to G'd never worries, but is always tranquil. Furthermore, G'd will generously extend His goodness to such a person.

Do not think that how much you succeed in business depends solely on your marketing efforts. This is an illusion which will only be met by disappointment and depression. Everything is ultimately under the control of G'd Himself.

We can see two people with exactly the same product or the same service yet customers flock to one and bypass the other; by one they

buy extravagantly and by the other they count their pennies.

In the final analysis, the only sound advice is that a person turn to G'd and ask Him for assistance, for "wealth and honor are His" (Prov. 8). When you do this, G'd will treat you well - you will succeed, and customers will flock to your business. When you pray to G'd, you draw His love to you and then He will readily grant your request.

30. The Success Of Others

Do not be upset when you see the success of others. Everyone has his needs, and G'd helps each individual in the manner and to the degree which His wisdom seems fit.

So why should you be envious of others? Rather, turn to G'd and ask Him for all your needs. Then G'd will grant you success in all

your endeavors and in the end you will surely strike it rich!

Excerpts From Likutey Moharan

Excerpts From the Holy and Awesome Book "Likutey Moharan" Pertaining to Earning a Livelihood

1. When a person has such joy from Torah and mitzvot that he literally dances for joy, his material affairs are elevated (Likutey Moharan 2:81).
2. When a person conducts his business with faith and honesty, he thereby fulfills the commandment to "love the Lord your G'd" (Deut. 6:5) and his income will be sent to him without worry and toil (Ibid. 1:210).
3. Business activity is wholly Torah. Therefore, during the time a person spends on his work he should bind his thoughts to Torah alone, and in

particular to the laws which are clothed within the activities in which he is engaged (Ibid. 1:280).

4. A person who fails to bind his thoughts to Torah in the course of his business activities will eventually be punished by having to come before the judges in a law case based on Torah law. The outcome of the case will depend on the degree of his previous neglect. Sometimes the punishment is merely having to undergo the case at all, and the person in question wins his case. But where people have allowed their business activities to diverge too far from Torah teachings, it usually happens that they lose their case (Ibid.).

5. The time a person spends working is a time of battle. The battles is against the forces of the Other Side, and the goal is to sift out the sparks of holiness and elevate them. Sifting out the sparks is the main purpose of all business and commerce. One has to be literally perfectly honest. Every word he speaks should be true.

His "yes" should be "yes" and his "no" should be "no". He must also bind his thoughts to Torah. When he is working, only the exterior aspects of his thoughts should be concentrated on the work itself-, the inner thought should be bound to Torah. Through this he can sift and elevate many fallen holy sparks. AU the worlds are elevated and awesome tikkunim are achieved, just as they are through prayer (Ibid.).

6. A person who wants to provide for those who are dependent upon him must be a person of strength and fortitude, not the opposite. A certain amount of authority and "push" are required in order to earn money (Ibid. 2:7).

7. When a person conducts his business honestly and with faith, his soul - i.e. his mind and intellect - is renewed through this faith (Ibid. 1:35).

8. The whole body of Torah law dealing with business affairs is relevant to practical business activity. Anyone who wishes to conduct his

business with faith and honesty must be expert in all the laws of business in order not to transgress any of them (Ibid.).

9. A person who genuinely wants to conduct his business with faith and honesty must guard his faith very carefully from any possible flaw. He must be as scrupulous as Rav Safra, (see Makhoth 24a) and he must "speak the truth in his heart" (Psahns 15:2). Even if he merely decided something in his heart, he must not change it later on. If he guards his faith carefully his soul and intellect will be refreshed and renewed through his faith (Ibid.).

10. When a person conducts his business with faith and honesty, it is as precious as the daily offerings and incense brought in the Holy Temple, which caused the husks to fall away and all the sparks of holiness trapped within them to ascend. His mind is elevated and refreshed, and it is accounted as if the Holy Temple had been rebuilt in his time (Ibid.).

11. A person can come to possess stolen property without even physically stealing it himself. It is possible to rob one's neighbor merely by being jealous of what he has. This is why the prohibition against envy and covetousness is so grave (Ibid. 1:68).

12. Giving charity can make amends for any money which has come into one's hands improperly because of envy. But for money which has literally been stolen there is no remedy except to return it to its rightful owner, or, in cases where it is impossible to return it to its owners to devote it to the public good, as our Rabbis explained (Bava Kama 94b) (Ibid.).

13. If a person finds the money he has to live off is too little for his needs, the best thing to do is to make it into charity. Charity is the tikkun for material possessions. In the end he will have plenty of money (Ibid.).

14. With every step that a person takes and every word he utters in his efforts to make a living, he should have in mind that his purpose

in making a profit is to be able to give money to charity. Charity is the tikkun for business activity (Ibid. 1:29).

15. Anger can be very harmful to a person's livelihood. You should know that when the evil inclination starts tempting you to get angry, at that very moment a flow of blessing is descending from above with a certain sum of money intended for you. The evil inclination wants to thwart this blessing with the anger it tries to provoke in you, because anger is so damaging to the flow of blessing. Even a person who already possesses money can lose it if he becomes angry (Ibid. 1:68).

16. Craving for money puts power into the hands of the forces of wickedness - the domain of Haman the Amalekite, who constantly harries the side of holiness, the vital source of which lies in the wisdom of Torah. In direct opposition to this, the forces of wickedness constantly hunger after money, swallowing the sparks of holiness hidden in the money and

rooted in the supernal colors. The more a person breaks his lust for money and draws closer to the wisdom of Torah, the more he releases the holy sparks from the forces of wickedness. The power to achieve this is drawn from the Tzaddikim, who are truly devoted to Torah. They have the power to humble the forces of wickedness and release all the trapped sparks and make of them Torah (Ibid. 1:56).

17. The deeper a person is sunk in desire for wealth, the less his understanding and the shorter his days will be. He will never hear the voice of the Torah, which calls on men constantly to return to G'd. He will be forced to toil for his living, and it will come to him only with great difficulty. But if he strives determinedly to deepen his understanding and think only thoughts of Torah, ignoring his desire for wealth completely, his livelihood will begin to come to him easily and he will hear the voice of the Torah calling and beckoning. The "voice of the Torah" is the good thoughts which

rise constantly in a person's heart with the idea of returning to G'd. In the end he will be worthy of returning to G'd in truth (Ibid. 1:56).

18. A person should always feel contented with what he has. He should take no more from the world than is absolutely essential. People who lack this sense of contentment are referred to in the saying that "the belly of the wicked shall want" (Prov. 13), because they are always in need of something. A man should be contented with what G'd has given him, and even out of this minimum he should still contribute a portion to charity. This brings about great unification in the worlds above, and the world is blessed with abundance (Ibid. 1:54).

19. Worthless pursuits and malicious gossip can only lead to poverty in the end. Pride also causes poverty. The remedy is to give charity, which brings blessing and prosperity (Ibid. 1:4).

20. The less careful a person is about upholding his moral standards, the more unpleasantness

and hardship he will experience in his efforts to earn a living (Ibid.. 1:5).

21. Intense prayer makes one worthy of one's livelihood (Ibid. 1:9).

22. The mitzvah of mezuzah is a remedy against the lust for money. When you observe this mitzvah carefully your livelihood will fly into your hands! (Ibid. 1:23).

23. In order to draw G'd's providence upon ourselves completely, it is necessary to break the desire for wealth. The way to do this is by giving charity. When a person gives money to charity, it cools his urge to acquire. He will conduct his business affairs truthfully and honestly, he will be satisfied with his portion in life, and he will have pleasure and contentment from what G'd has blessed him with. Because he is not desperate to get rich, he is free of the constant struggle to make extra profit. The burden of this struggle is the fulfillment of the curse: "by the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread" (Genesis 3.). Giving charity frees a

person from this. It is accounted to him as if he had made an offering of incense before G'd (Ibid. 1: 13).

24. The desire for wealth is literally a form of idolworship. So long as it continues to exist, the world is under the shadow of G'd's anger. But the more completely it is uprooted, the more G'd's anger is lifted and the world radiates with the blessing of Fhs love. The messianic spirit begins to spread; understanding springs forth, and it is as if the Holy Temple had been rebuilt. New horizons of Torah are revealed - the Torah that is destined to be revealed in fi= to come (Ibid).

25. People who are obsessed with the idea of getting rich lack faith in G'd's power to send man his livelihood with little effort on his part. Instead they get involved in all kinds of complicated enterprises in the struggle for extra profit. Only after great toil and anxiety do they eat their daily bread. They are constantly worried and depressed. They have attached

themselves to the "countenance of the forces of the Other Side" - the domain of darkness, depression, idolatry and death. It is completely different for those who go about their work in a spirit of faith and trust in G'd. Having decided to content themselves with what they have, they are happy with their portion regardless of what it may be. They know and believe with perfect faith that G'd alone is the source of man's wealth and income - except that He desires that man should make some small movement of his own to initiate the chain of events that will bring his income to him. People like this are attached to the light of G'd's countenance, which is the realm of radiance, life and joy (Ibid. 23).

26. Another way of breaking the desire for wealth is to contemplate the spiritual source from which material wealth and blessings flow. By concentrating on this root, the desire for material wealth is dissipated. Because here at the root, radiant with translucent light, the joy is purely spiritual. By comparison, the object of

the craving is very degraded. Only a fool would throw aside spiritual joy for the sake of some crude pleasure. But the only way to attain this spiritual perception is through self-purification, as it is written: "And from my flesh will I perceive G'd" (Job 19). Only when a person has sanctified himself and his body can he contemplate G'dliness. This explains why the basic remedy for the desire for wealth is through fulfillment of the Covenant. When a person achieves this, he will not fall into this desire (Ibid.).

27. Whenever a person falls from his level, the fundamental reason is always the desire for money. This is basically why people fall into heresy and idolatry. For the same reason when the enemies of the Tzaddik stir up opposition against him and G'd wants to chase them away, He causes them to fall into lust for money. There is no greater fall than this. As a general rule, in times of controversy and strife, the greater the purity with which a person guards the Covenant and the closer he is to the

Tzaddik - who is the embodiment of the Covenant - the greater his power to resist his opponents and throw them down. And when they fall, it is into lust for money. For this reason a person who finds himself involved in a dispute should be very careful not to succumb to the temptations of wealth (Ibid.).

28. As long as a person is reluctant to spend money on the mitzvot he performs, his mitzvot are deficient because they have not entered the category of true faith, which gives them their perfection. But when a mitzvah is so precious in his eyes that he does not mind parting with his money and he spends liberally for the sake of the mitzvah, this is called Faith. Because the essence of a person's faith is seen in his relation to money. When he breaks his desire for wealth he becomes attached to the "countenance of holiness" (Ibid.).

29. People who are sunk in the desire for wealth are always in debt. When people are dissatisfied with what they have they start

trying to speculate - and saddle themselves with a mighty burden of debt. They borrow from others in the hope of making big profits from the investment. But in the end they die as debtors. And even if they are not literally in debt when they die, they are always effectively in debt to their own lusts, as we can see. There are many people who have more than enough to cover their needs. Yet they spend all their days chasing after profit. They are prepared to struggle and submit to all kinds of risks and inconvenience just for the sake of money. In fact they behave exactly like someone with real debts strung around his neck - except that their only real debt is the debt they owe to their desires, which are so demanding that it is as if they really did owe an enormous sum. In effect they are debtors all their lives, and they die in debt - to their desires. Even a whole lifetime is not long enough for them to pay off the debts they owe to their desires, because there is no limit to them, for "No one in this world achieves even half of what he wants before he dies" (Koheleth Rabbah, 1). All their days they are

depressed, worried and bitter because of the appetite for money. The more money people have the more depression and worries they have, because they are entangled in idolatry which is the very source of depression, darkness and death. Their money consumes the days of their life with problems and worries (Ibid.).

30. You should realize that it is nothing but a "fool's game" when people make money dishonestly or refuse to give any of their money to charity. (Our Sages established that we should give between a tenth and a fifth of our net income to charity in lieu of the priestly tithes.) It is a "fool's game", because the money plays with them as one amuses a little child with coins. In the end the money itself kills them. The Tikkuney Zohar speaks about this game of the fool. "Who is the fool? It is the "other god", the child's croup. It smiles at them with the allure of wealth in this world, and then it kills them. Why is it called a "child"? Because those who are trapped in it do not have the

sense to escape from it" (Tikkuney Zohar 140a). The way to escape the allure of wealth is through the purity of the Covenant and by drawing close to the Tzaddik, who is the embodiment of purity and of whom it is written, "He who is good and walks before G'd will be saved from it" (Eccl. 7).

The Tzaddik possesses true wisdom and understanding, and knows how to escape this trap. Even the greatest of men need deep wisdom and understanding if they are to escape the pain and toil which can be involved in @g to earn a living. Most ordinary people suffer terrible bitterness all their lives because of this. They lose both worlds, this world and the World to Come. There is no limit to the bitterness of this world. As the Holy Zohar says: "Were it not for salt the world could not endure the bitterness: (Zohar 1, 241b). Were it not for the strength of the Tzaddikim who observe the Covenant with absolute purity and who are called the "eternal covenant of salt" (Numbers 18), the world would not be able to endure at

all because of the terrible bitterness caused by the desire for wealth. The closer a person comes to the Tzaddik, the more he can sweeten this bitterness. But those who are far from the the Tzaddikim and from personal purity, and especially those who are actually opposed to the Tzaddikim, will be the victims of the full force of this bitterness. Fortunate is the person who escapes this completely! (Ibid.).

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