

# BITACHON WEEKLY

בלק

MENUCHAS HANEFESH

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

THE KEY TO ANSWERED TEFILLOS

THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING

RECOGNIZING YOUR POTENTIAL

*by Rabbi Yehuda Mandel*

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# BITACHON WEEKLY

פרשת בלק תשפ"ב

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# פרשת בלק

הָן עִם לְבָדָד יִשְׁכֹּן וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשֵּׁב כִּג ט

## The Banner of a Yid Is Someone Who Is an Individual and Unique

*Klal Yisroel* dwells alone, and doesn't count itself among the nations. [Me'am Lo'ez<sup>1</sup>]. Being "alone" and "different" takes tremendous toughness. This is hinted to in the beginning of the *Passuk*: כִּי לֹא יִשְׁכֹּן בְּגוֹיִם אֶתְּ אֶתְּ אֶתְּ אֶתְּ אֶתְּ *see them like a Tzur* [rock]. A *Tzur* is an example of toughness, since it is a very hard rock. [Hashem is called *Tzur Yisroel*].

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This is what *Haman* told *Achashveirosh*: תְּחִלָּה וְדִתֵּיהֶם שְׁנוֹת מְכֹל עִם אֶסְתֵּר ג ה *their laws are entirely "different" from any other nation and they shouldn't be tolerated. Just as Klal Yisroel is different, so must every individual Yid insist on being his unique self. Every Yid is a world by himself, and he has to realize this! As Chazal say:* יְחִיד שֶׁעָשָׂה תְּשׁוּבָה מוֹחֲלִין *Even if just one person does Teshuva, Hashem gives forgiveness to the whole world. And:* חֵיב כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד לִזְמַן *The holy duty of every single person is to insist: The vast universe was created just FOR ME.*

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Indeed, you need to be as tough as flintlock to "be yourself", without worrying all day about: מָה יֹאמְרוּ הַבְּרִיּוֹת *What will people say?* People tend to be critical, and it's impossible to make everyone happy. The *Velt* says: "Imitation is suicide". Sometimes, "following to crowd" is a *Mitzva* of *Hachna'a* and humility. But other times it can be a sin, like when your full potential isn't

realized, since you are so busy trying to please everyone and copy the whole world.

\*\*\*\*

The *Tur* begins his *Sefer* saying: הָיָה עֵז כְּנִמֵּר *"Be tough as a leopard in Avodas Hashem"* in order to withstand all kinds of pressures. If you have a certain *Geshmak* in a specific form of learning or *Avoda*, you stick to it, even though all the people around you are doing something else.

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## Your Success in Life Depends on Ignoring The "Holy" Opinions of Others

The *Passuk* says: וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשֵּׁב כִּג ט This can be interpreted to mean: *Klal Yisroel* doesn't "think" about what the *Goyim* will say. Lesson: You don't **care** what others think of you. You simply don't reckon with their "holy" opinions; which can actually ruin your individuality. I have seen lots of success with people who know how to "Farpock" [leave in the dust] the *Velt* and not be *Gores* recon with them.

\*\*\*\*\*

Say to them in your mind: You don't like *Chasidim*, *Litvak's*, *Sephardim*, *Russians*, or American types etc.? It's tough on you! **I need to be myself. I'll have to ignore and disregard the outside world.** I knew many *Gedolei Yisroel* who were very big "individualistic types", and this was exactly why they succeeded.

כִּי יִדְעָתִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר תִּבְרָךְ מִבְּרַךְ וְאֲשֶׁר תֵּאָר יוֹאֵר כִּבּוֹ

## Words Are Powerful!

The story of *Bilam* is an eternal lesson. We all need to be careful not to become what *Chazal* call "a *Talmid* of *Bilam*". Although the *Torah* says

<sup>1</sup> ילקוט מעם לועז עה"פ איכה וְשָׁכָה בְּדָד [איכה א א, עמ' כה ד"ה ועוד] ועוד שיש שני מיני בדידות, האחת לטובה, כמו שנתברכו ישראל [ברכה לג כח] וְשָׁכָן יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בְּדָד עֵין יַעֲקֹב, ובלעם אמר [בלק כג ט] עִם לְבָדָד יִשְׁכֹּן, וזו מורה על תפארתו של עם ששומר על יחודו ואין זר מתערב בו. אבל יש בדידות לרעה, וההבדל בפעל הנסמך לזה, שאם נאמר לשון שכן, מורה על המעלה, כמו עִם לְבָדָד יִשְׁכֹּן, וְשָׁכָן יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח, ואם נאמר בלשון ישיבה מורה על אבלות וצער, כמו איכה וְשָׁכָה בְּדָד, וכן ירמיה אמר [ירמיה טו יז] בְּדָד יִשְׁכְּתִי, וכן מצינו אצל אבלות ישיבה, כמו [וישב לח יא] שְׁבִי אֶלְמְנָה בֵּית אֲבִיךָ [איכה ב י] יִשְׁבּוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִדְמוּ.

that *Bilam* had a unique power of speech [his *Brachos* and *K'lalos* worked] **so do we!** Watch out from negative speech! אֵל תִּפְתַּח פֶּה לְשָׁטָן Don't predict doom, and allow the Satan to fulfill your prediction! Never verbalize a negative emotion. [R' Avigdor Miller].

\*\*

Keep talking positive [even lies!] and you can even change your destiny. Words are powerful! And look what becomes of a person [*Bilam*] who engages in negative speech! He becomes worse than a donkey. The donkey sees the *Malach* and he doesn't. And the *Malach* tells *Bilam* that he would rather kill him than the donkey.

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### The Destructiveness of Negative Speech

A lesson for all those who like to speak negatively: See the picture of a foolish donkey, being *M'vazeh* one of the most powerful humans. The human should be using his mouth for learning *Torah* and being positive; only **then** is he superior to an animal. The gift of speech is not a joke!

\*\*\*\*

### The Gift of Speech Needs to Be Respected

Notice how the father of *Balak* was: צִיפּוֹר Tzipor. A symbol of: צִיפּוֹר מְצַפֵּץ a chirping bird. A bird babbles and says silly things. *Balak* and *Bilam* made a joke out of speech. Speech is actually the holiest part of a human, and his main superiority to an animal. The word *K'lala* curse comes from the word *Kal* cheap. When you curse, you "play down" and "cheapen"; you make light and destroy.

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Since *Bilam* played games with the holy power of speech, he was measured out his proper reward, with the most incredible *Bizayon*, and from the lowliest animal, a female donkey. The "zero of zeroes" made a fool out of him! Hashem showed

him how speech is a gift from *Shamayim*, and that He can make a stupid donkey talk intelligently, while an *Adam* [albeit a *Navi*] cannot say what he wishes.

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### Cheap Speech Leads to Cheap Behavior

In the same way *Bilam* starts off as a *Rasha* who "cheapens" speech to make *K'lalos* [*K'lala* comes from *Kal* which means cheap], his final advice of *Arayos* is similar, since *Arayos* is the epitome of degrading oneself and lowering the standards of a human. Especially in conjunction with the lowliest "bathroom type" of *Avoda Zara* [*Pe'or*].

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### When You Don't Respect Yourself, You Won't Have Respect for Others

The name *Bilam* means "*Bole'a*" to swallow up. *Chazal* say: אִישׁ אֶת רֵעֵהוּ חֵיִים בִּלְעוּ אבות A person is prone to swallow up his neighbor. A low person doesn't even see his neighbor; he just swallows him up, and makes a joke out of him. *Bilam* is the big *Leitz* who mocks the *Kavod* of Hashem's beautiful world.

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*Bilam* tears down, kills, does *Arayos*, and causes others to do *Arayos*. He curses and cheapens. And his punishment is *Midda K'neged Midda*. People who are *M'zalzel* in others, can expect *Bizyonos* in their lives. Those who give *Kavod* to others, end up being respected. The *Meforshim* say<sup>2</sup> that having *Bitachon* in Hashem is the greatest form of *Kavod Shamayim*, and indeed *Baalei Bitachon* are rewarded by becoming respected people.

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When a person trusts in Hashem, he is honoring Him. Hashem likes when people trust Him [even if the person is a *Rasha*]. **This is the supreme test of Olam HaZeh, to see if a person sees all the unending goodness of this**

<sup>2</sup> אוצרות רמח"ל [דרוש בענין הקיווי, עמ' רמז] המקוה אע"פ שיש לו מעט מעשים טובים לא יבוש שנאמר [ישעיה מט כג] וְיָדַעְתָּ כִּי אֲנִי ה' אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִבְשׁוּ קָנִי, וְזֶה כִּי יֵשׁ לְדֹל תְּקוּהָ, וְמִי שֶׁהוּא דֹל מִמַּעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים יֵשׁ לוֹ תְּקוּהָ, כִּי הַשֵּׁם מִתְּגַלֵּה עֲלָיו וּמַעֲבִיר כָּל פְּשָׁעִים. וְזֶה סוּף הַתִּיקוּן, מְגוּדֵל תְּקוּת כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאוֹרֶךְ הַגְּלוּת וּבּוֹטָחִים בְּאַמּוּנָה שִׁיגָלוּ. וְסוּף הַתְּקוּהָ [זכריה ג ט] וּמִלִּשְׁתִּי אֶת עֶזְרִי הָאֶרֶץ, וְזֶה [ויחי מט יח] לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קִימְתִּי, כִּי זֶה כְּבוֹד הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׂבוּחֵהֶם בּו. בֹּא חֲבִיקוּק וְהַעֲמִידָה עַל אַחַת – אַמּוּנָה – תְּקוּהָ.

## world, his own wonderful life, and has Bitachon despite his difficulties.

גול על ה' דרךך ובטח עליו והוא יעשה תהלים לו ה

### How to Work on Bitachon

Sometimes you are asking Hashem for a certain type of *Shidduch*, and you get a suggestion which wasn't exactly what you asked for. Now you have a choice: Either *Kvetch* that Hashem isn't really with you; or be happy, since recently you haven't had **any** suggestions at all, and now at least you are getting something! View it as a good *Siman* that things are moving, and soon we will get the right one!

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When I need money for Bitachon Weekly [which is about \$2,000 weekly] I don't collect. I just ask Hashem, and things start happening. Often, I don't get the money I need so quickly. Sometimes people start giving \$1 bills, or \$10 bills. I immediately see this as a good *Siman*, that soon there will be larger sums. Before long, I get hundreds and then even thousands.

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When *Dovid HaMelech* met *Golyas* the giant, he was **sure** he would kill him, since he had once killed a lion and a bear. He didn't say: "Although I succeeded in killing a lion and a bear, *Golyas* is a much bigger challenge, since he is a *Baal Bechira*".

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The *Madregas HaAdam* says<sup>3</sup> that a true *Baal Bitachon* believes in: *פרוץ הגבר אֶשֶׁר יִבְטַח* to such a degree, that even if there are many *Milchamos* against his *Bitachon*, he still

remains strong. Even if his *Bitachon* is against *Tevah*, against a person's natural senses, and against the *Sechel* of people who live with *Tevah*, he knows that the true *Tevah* is: *פרוץ הגבר* and the *Tevah* that people believe in is really a *Dimyon*. He is so **sure** of his *Bitachon*, that he is ready to give away his whole life and all his money to prove it.

There is no limit to what Hashem will do for those who have *Bitachon* in Him. A true *Baal Bitachon* laughs at *Tevah*, since Hashem is really in control. Like *Mordechai* who wasn't afraid of *Haman*.

מה טבו אהלֵיךָ יַעֲקֹב כִּי ה

### Tznius Is an Expression of Dignity and Self-Worth

*Rashi* says<sup>4</sup> that the official failure of *Bilam* was that he was: *פרץ גדר* broke boundaries and advised people to be *Mafkir* themselves to *Arayos*. When he said: *מה טבו אהלֵיךָ יַעֲקֹב כִּי ה* How beautiful are your tents, Yaakov [they did not face each another, to uphold privacy] he showed that he had an appreciation for *Tznius*. Such a person is all the more guilty for the *Pritzus* he caused. Cursing people is also related to cheapening humans [*K'lala* comes from the word *Kal* cheap] just like *Arayos*. This is the ultimate *Chutzpa*, no *Gedarim* boundaries, do as you wish.

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When the *Yidden* needed a *Refua*, they were told to gaze at the *N'chash HaN'choshes*, which inspired them to think about the evil of *Chutzpa*, which the lowly *Nachash* is famous for [he attacks

<sup>3</sup> ספר מדרגת האדם [מאמרי הסבא מנוברהרדוק, רבי יוסף יוזל הורביץ זצ"ל], הוצאה חדשה ירושלים תשסב. מאמר בקשת השלמות פרק יא עמ' לט ד"ה [אם] כי מה שנאמר [ירמיה יז ז] פרוץ הגבר אֶשֶׁר יִבְטַח בה', המציאות הוא כמו שכתוב, וזו היא הטבע האמיתי, וכל מה שמראים חושי הטבע בבלתי אפשרי הוא שקר מוחלט. כי באמת הדבר הוא מבהיל על הרעיון איך סיכן [נקדימון בן גוריון, עיין תענית יט א] שמים עשרה ככר כסף בבטחונו שודאי ירדו גשמים, בשעה שכבר עברה כל השנה כולה ולא ירדו גשמים, שהשכל הטבעי אז עומד ביאוש ואינו מאמין שפתאום יתקדירו שמים בעבים. דוקא אז באותו הזמן מפני שהיה חזק בבטחונו כי בודאי ירדו גשמים כי היה מוחלט בשכלו כי פרוץ הגבר אֶשֶׁר יִבְטַח בה' [ירמיה יז ז] והיה לו בטחון שכאשר יבוא קביעות הזמן בלי ספק ירדו גשמים, וכל כך היה חזק בבטחונו, עד שלא היה מרגיש בממונו שום סכנה, והיה אצלו ברור כשמש כי ירדו גשמים, מה שבדרך הטבע לא היה שום משהו מן ההשערה שיהיה כן, כי זה היה נובע רק מהסכמתו הכבירה כי המציאות והטבע האמיתי הוא רק כמו שכתוב בתורה, ואפילו שהעבר יחזה אחרת אינו כלום, ואין אנו צריכין להתחשב עם זה כלל. אלא על מה צריך האדם להביט? רק על מה שכתוב בתורה. ולא היה אצלו שום נפקא מינה באמיתת הדבר בין קודם המעשה לאחר המעשה. כי אצל הבורא אין שום נפקא מינה כי יכלתו הוא בלתי גבול ובלתי תכלית, וכל הדבר תלוי רק בלב האדם, כי ה' צלך ובמדה שאדם מודד מודדין לו, וכיון שהאדם עומד חזק בדעתו ומובטח ואינו מתפעל מן העבר, כי מרגיש כי אין גבול ליכולת ה' כי היפלא מה' דבר, לכן מודדין לו גם כן מן השמים במדה זו, ונותנים לו למעלה מן הטבע ומן הרגיל.

<sup>4</sup> רש"י עה"פ ארץ בני עמו [כב ה] וא"ת מפני מה השרה הקב"ה שכניתו על גוי רשע? כדי שלא יהא פתחון פה לאומות לומר אלו לנו נביאים חזרנו למוטב, העמיד להם נביאים והם פרצו גדר העולם, שבתחלה היו גדורים בעריות, וזה נתן להם עצה להפקיר עצמן לזנות.

creatures double his size, in his sneaky and unexpected way]. The snake gave *Klal Yisroel* an idea how they themselves looked; when they had the *Chutzpa* to complain about the *Mon*. And copper is a *Chutzpadik* metal, since it looks like gold but is really cheap.

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### **Chutzpa Has Its Time and Place**

A person can use *Chutzpa* positively, like *Shimshon* who was like a sneaky snake by living among the *Pelishtim* as if he was their friend [and even to marry their daughters, in order to find excuses to destroy them]. That's why *Shevet Dan* [*Shimshon*] is compared to a snake. The *Tur* begins with: *עַז כְּפָנִים* *be bold as a leopard*, to tell you that you **start** *Avodas Hashem* with *Chutzpa*. For example: *וְלֹא הַבִּיטָן לְמַד אֲבוֹתָ* *A bashful one will not be able to learn*. To be a successful *Talmid*, a person needs to have boldness and be brave to speak up and ask.

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The **beginning** of the *Mishkan* contained the *Mizbeach HaN'choshes* "copper" *Mizbeach*, and the **beginning** of the *Azara* had "copper" doors [*Shaarei Nikanor*]. When *Dovid HaMelech* had his **first** battle, he faked "his own cousin"<sup>5</sup>, *Golyas HaPelishti*, and both used their *Chutzpa* [for good, and for bad]. *Chazal* say<sup>6</sup> that his name *Golyas* means *Gilui* [like *Gilui Arayos*]. He was the result of his mother *Orpah*'s extensive *Z'nus*. [*Gemara*<sup>7</sup>].

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The *Passuk* describes *Golyas* as being covered with copper from head to toe [Mr. Total *Chutzpa*], and he "blessed" Hashem, the epitome of *Chutzpa* [*Gemara*<sup>8</sup>]. When the *Pelishtim* had captured the holy *Aron*, the brazen person who took out the *Luchos* was none other than he. [*Medrash*<sup>9</sup>]. He also cursed *Dovid*, and was *M'vazeh* him.

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He was a giant - Mr. Big Shot. *Dovid* wasn't afraid of his height, and he *Davka* used sticks and stones, which are normally used in killing dogs. *Dovid* had never been to battle before, while *Golyas* was a seasoned warrior. *Dovid* kept calling him an: *עָרֵל* *Arel* ["uncircumcised", a derogatory term]. When *Golyas* told *Dovid* that he would give *Dovid's* flesh to the animals and birds<sup>10</sup>, *Dovid* responded<sup>11</sup>: "I'll chop off your head, and I'll give the "carcasses" of the *Pelishtim* ["carcass" is generally used for dead animals] to the wild animals of the field and the birds.

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*Dovid* made a joke out of the powerful giant, that the entire *Klal Yisroel* including *Shaul HaMelech* was petrified of<sup>12</sup>. When used properly, *Chutzpa* is extremely important in *Avodas Hashem*. The main *Shviras HaMiddos* in *Novardok* was *אִמְצוּת* *courage*; i.e. being tough and unafraid. This is why public speaking was #1 in *Novardok*. We have a *Novardok* shul in Lakewood, and after *Mincha* each person gets up to say a two-minute *Vort* on the *Parsha*, or to talk about his own

<sup>5</sup> *Dovid's Bubby, Rus, and Golyas' mother, Orpah, were sisters.*

<sup>6</sup> סוטה מב ב, גלית, אמר רבי יוחנן שעמד בגילוי פנים לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא.  
<sup>7</sup> סוטה מב ב, וגלית שמו מגת, תני רב יוסף שהכל דשין את אמו כגת. כתיב מערות וקרינן מערכות, תני רב יוסף שהכל הערו באמו. כתיב הרפה וכתוב ערפה, רב ושמואל, חד אמר הרפה שמה ולמה נקרא שמה ערפה שהכל עורפין אותה מאחריה, וחד אמר ערפה שמה ולמה נקרא שמה הרפה שהכל דשין אותה כהריפות, וכן הוא אומר ותקח האשה ותפרוש המסך על פני הבאר ותשטה עליו הריפות, ואי בעית אימא מהכא אם תכתש את האויל במכתש בתוך הריפות בעלי.

<sup>8</sup> סוטה מב ב, גלית, אמר רבי יוחנן, שעמד בגילוי פנים לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא, שנאמר [שמואל א, יז ח] ברו לךם איש ונרד אלי, ואין איש אלא הקדוש ברוך הוא, שנאמר [בשלח טו ג] ה' איש מלחמה. אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא, הריני מפילו על יד בן איש, שנאמר [שמואל א, יז יב] ונדוד בן איש אפרתי הנה.

<sup>9</sup> אגדת שמואל [פרק יא] ששים מיל הלך שאול באותו יום. במערכה היה, ושמע שנשבו הלוחות והלך וחטפן מיד גלית ובא. וברש"י עה"פ ויגרץ איש בנגמון מהמערכה ויבא שלה ביום ההוא [שמואל א, ד יב] איש בנגמון, זה היה שאול, שחטף את הלוחות מיד גלית וברח לו.

<sup>10</sup> ויאמר הפלשתי אל דוד לכה אלי ואמתנה את בשרך לעוף השמים ולבהמת השדה. שמואל א, יז מד.

<sup>11</sup> היום הנה יסגרה ה' בנדי והפיתך ונקסרת את ראשך מעליך ונתתי סגר מחנה פלשתים היום הנה לעוף השמים ולחית הארץ ונדעו כל הארץ כי יש אלקים לישראל. שם פסוק מו.

<sup>12</sup> וישמע שאול וכל ישראל את דברי הפלשתי האלה ויחתו ויראו מאד. שם פסוק יא.

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## True Story

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## Amazing True Story

## The Tragedy of Being a “*Bilam*” [A Super-Success]

- I'm poor
- I'm single
- ugly
- dysfunctional
- A depressive type
- from a broken home
- always coming late
- a sloppy type
- a loner with few friends
- lacking social skills
- unpopular in the family
- weak in learning
- too cool

6



- too serious
  - always making mistakes
  - always saying the wrong thing
  - not capable
  - not respected
  - inappropriate
  - full of anxiety
  - loads of unwanted issues
  - too much *Ga'ava*
  - too much *Anava* [and people take advantage of me]
  - I'm always ignored
  - I'm overweight
  - I have impulsiveness
  - addictions
  - chronic jealousies
  - uncontrollable lusts
  - an angry nature
  - too sensitive
  - getting old
  - a weak disposition
  - physical weaknesses
  - disease, *Rachmana Litzlan*
  - no *Parnasa*
  - bipolar
  - ADHD
  - OCD
  - all kinds of mental and/or physical issues
- Rachmana Litzlan* etc. etc. עַד אֵין the list goes on and on.

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These are all *Min HaShamayim*, and are all for the good. **Each person has the perfect Chisaron that he needs for his Shleimus. Either to tolerate or to overcome, partially or completely.** [You need a *Rebbe*

and plenty of *Tefila* to know how to deal with your personal challenge]. For good reason, *Tanach* and *Chazal* are loaded with stories of even our greatest *Tzadikim* who suffered from all kinds of *Ruchaniyus* and *Gashmiyus* difficulties; they are examples for all of us. Calm down and be happy! We are in Hashem's hands, and He knows **exactly** what He's doing!

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All your life, you may be thirsting for a *Yeshua* in the area that Hashem made you weak. **Often, it would be the worst thing for you if you got what you wanted.** Here's a poor man, who finally became wealthy and comfortable. But with money comes a new *Yetzer Hara* which he never had before. This can ruin him *Chas V'shalom*, and send him straight to *Gehinom Chas V'shalom*.

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The *Goyim* wanted a *Navi*, so they got *Bilam*. R' Chaim Kanievsky *Zatzal* says<sup>14</sup> that *Bilam* actually started off being a nice person, but thanks to the lofty levels he reached, he became a super *Rasha* and *Baal Ga'ava*. When you "have it all" you have zero, because being a *Baal Ga'ava* means an express ticket to the worst *Gehinom*, *Rachmana Litzlan*. *Moshe Rabeinu* was unusual; he had everything, yet he gave Hashem the credit, and he became the *Anav Mi'kol Adam*.

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People who are *M'kabel Yissurim B'ahavah* are *Zoche* to tremendous *Tikkunim* for their *Neshama*. The *Zechus* is priceless, and many other *Yidden* benefit from one *Yid's Kabbolas Yissurim B'ahavah*. Truly accepting *Yissurim* with your whole heart [as best as you can] can be a *Segula* to quickly rid yourself of them, *B'ezer Hashem*.

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When you see others [or yourself] who have

<sup>14</sup> ספר טעמא דקרא [לגאון עוזנו עטרת ראשינו מרנא שר התורה הגאון רבי חיים קנייבסקי זצוקללה"ה, פרשת בלק אות ה] אָרץ כְּנִי עֲמוֹ [כב ה] פִּירשׁ"י וּאִתְּ מִפְּנֵי מַה הַשְׂרָה הַקֶּבֶ"ה שְׂכִינָתוֹ עַל גּוֹי רָשָׁע? כְּדִי שְׁלֵא יִהְיֶה פִּתְחוֹן פֶּה לְאוֹמוֹת לִוְמֵר אֵילוֹ הֵיוּ לָנוּ נְבִיאִים חֹזְרֵנוּ לְמוֹטֵב, הָעֵמִיד לָהֶם נְבִיאִים וְהֵם פִּרְצוּ גֹדֵר הָעוֹלָם כּו', וְכ"ה בְּמִדְרָשׁ. וְיֵשׁ לַעֲיִין, אֲכַתִּי יֵשׁ לָהֶן פִּתְחוֹן פֶּה לִוְמֵר לְמַה הָעֵמִיד לָהֶן נְבִיא רָשָׁע, הוּא לִיָּה לְהָעֵמִיד נְבִיא טוֹב? וְי"ל דְּבִאֲמַת הִיא בִלְעָם הַטּוֹב שְׁבָהֵן, אֵלֹא מִתּוֹךְ שְׁנַעֲשָׂה נְבִיא וְהֵכֵל הָיוּ צָרִיכִין לוֹ עֲלֵתָה גִאוּתוֹ, וְזֶה הֵבִיאוּ לְכָל הַמְדוּת הַמוֹשַׁחַתוֹת. וְזֶה מַה שֶּׁהָרָאָה לָהֶן הַקֶּבֶ"ה שְׁלֵא טוֹב בְּשִׁבְלֵן נְבִיאִים.

*Yissurim*, you may often look down at them. It may seem there's something wrong with them, or they are being punished for some *Aveira*. But *Shlomo HaMelech* calls them privileged people. The *Chofetz Chaim*<sup>15</sup> once encouraged a *Bachur* to do a *Shidduch* with a girl, since her father was a *Baal Yissurim*. The *Chofetz Chaim* lived with the *Emes*, without being affected the way *Goyim* think, or by *Daas Baalei Battim* the opposite of *Daas Torah*. \*\*\*\*\*

### Amazing True Story

Twenty-five years ago, a South American *Yid* told me that his wife had difficult issues because of her unhappy childhood. A therapist cured her completely, and now she is a super success with a successful professional career. As she rose up in the world, their *Shalom Bayis* went down. She is super critical of her husband, and full of *Ka'as*. In *Novardok*, she is just the opposite of success. She has major *Ruchaniyus* sicknesses [*Ga'ava* and *Ka'as*] which must be addressed or else, *Rachmana Litzlan!* \*\*\*\*\*

### True Story

I know of a very beautiful woman who had serious *Shalom Bayis* issues, because her beauty gave her plenty of *Ga'ava*, and she looked down at her husband<sup>16</sup>. Although it can be a *Mitzva* to aim for the top, and healthy *Ga'ava* can be a *Mitzva* [if it helps you grow], sometimes you need to invest all your energies in becoming a *Gadol* in being a

*Sameach B'chelko*, which is an integral part of *Bitachon*. \*\*\*\*\*

Remember: Envy is ignorance! Imitation is suicide! *Korach* and *Bilam* were those "types" that everyone envies, and look what happened. Enjoy being yourself!

### Strive to Have Tolerance for Imperfection and for When Things Don't Go Your Way

Learning *Shaar HaK'niya* was #1 in *Novardok*. *Hachna'a* will save you from nervousness and impatience. You'll be able to tolerate those traffic jams, all those unwanted people, and your own mistakes and failures. The Germans were famous for "being on time" and being *M'sudar'dik* organized and their perfect workmanship etc. Look how much *Ga'ava* "being perfect" can produce! And *Sedom* was a perfect country: כָּן יָגֵן לִי לִקְוֹתָי לִי יָגֵן לִי לִקְוֹתָי *Like Gan Eden*.

### I Love Being "Mr. Not Perfect"

**So thank Hashem for all your shortcomings! [But don't stop trying to improve!] Say: I love being "Mr. Not Perfect". It causes me to have so much less *Ga'ava* in my life! Better more *Anava* with less *Ga'ava*, than to be a *Tzaddik* with *Ga'ava*. [*Chovos Halvavos*<sup>17</sup>].**

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### The Pleasure and Satisfaction in Life That Comes Along with *Anava*

- Your *Ta'ava* level will drop, since you won't be like a *Bilam* who wants to be *Bole'a*

<sup>15</sup> ספר מכתבי חפץ חיים, נסדר על ידי בנו ארי' ליב הכהן, וארשא תרצ"ז [בחלק דרכיו נמוקיו ושיחותיו של הרב חפץ חיים זצ"ל עמ' יט אות מז] שמעתי פעם שדיבר עם בחור בן תורה שבא בחיתון עם יתומה, ואביה היה בן תורה, ואח"כ גגםם הבחור על השידוך. וטען עמו החפץ חיים על מיאוונו, באמרו הלא אביה היה בן תורה וירא שמים ובעל יסורים כמה שנים, הלא יש לה זכותים רבים.

<sup>16</sup> כעין זה במסכת תענית [כג ב] ותו רבי מני הוה שכיח קמיה דרבי יצחק בן אלישיב, אמר ליה: עתירי דבי חמי [פירש"י עשירים של בית חמי] קא מצערין ליה! אמר: ליענו [היו עניים] ואיענו. אמר: קא דחקו לי [ליתן להן פרנסה] אמר: ליעתרו, ואיעתרו. אמר: לא מיקבלי עלי אינשי ביתי [אין אשתי מקובלת עלי, שאינה יפה] אמר ליה: מה שמה? חנה. תתייפי חנה, ונתייפת. אמר ליה: קא מגנדרא עלי [מתגדלת עלי מתוך גבהות יופיה] אמר ליה: אי הכי, תחזור חנה לשחרוריתה, וחזרה חנה לשחרוריתה.

<sup>17</sup> חובות הלבבות שער עבודת האלוקים [פרק ד] והמדרגה התשיעית אנשים, האמינו בתורה ובגמול ובעונש עליה בשני העולמים, וכווננו בעבודת השם לשמו ולמה שיאות לו, אלא שלא נשמרו ממפסדי העבודות ונכנס ההפסד עליהן ולא הכירו מאין, דומה למה שנאמר [קהלת י א] זבובי מִנֶּת יִבְאִישׁ יִבְעֵי שִׁמְן רוֹקֵם יָקָר מִחֶמְקָהּ מִקְבֹּד סְכָלוֹת מַעֵט, ואמר [קהלת ט יח] וחוֹטֵא אֶחָד יִאֲבֹד טוֹבָה הַרְבֵּה. ואמר קצת החסידים לתלמידיו: אלו לא היו לכם עוונות, הייתי מפחד עליכם ממה שהוא גדול מן העוונות. אמרו לו: מה הוא גדול מן העוונות? אמר: הגבהות והגאווה, כמ"ש הכתוב [משלי טז ה] תוֹעֵבֶת ה' כָּל גְּבוּהָ לֵב. ובחובות הלבבות שער התשובה [פרק ח] חוטא זה הוא שיש לו יתרון על הצדיק, שלא חטא החטא ההוא והדומה לו, כי הצדיק אין בטוחים בו, שלא יתגאה ויגבה לבו וירום במעשהו, וכבר נאמר, כי יש חטא שמועיל לשב יותר מכל צדקות הצדיק, ויש צדקה שמזקת לצדיק יותר מכל חטאות השב, כשיפנה לבו מן הכניעה ודבק בגאות ובחונף ואהבת השבח, כמ"ש אחד מן הצדיקים לתלמידיו: אלו לא היה לכם עון, הייתי מפחד עליכם ממה שהוא גדול מן העון. אמרו לו: ומהו גדול מן העון? אמר להם: הגאות והחונף.

swallow up everybody and “own the world”

- You'll be soft and pliable
- You'll become a better listener
- And less of a *Ka'asan*
- You won't get carried away with your *Shitos* and *Frumkeiten*
- You'll be able to deal with your aggravations
- **Instead of loving to get what you want, you'll love tolerating what you dislike**, like *Moshe* who was an *Anav* and a *Savlan* tolerant. [*Rashi*<sup>18</sup>]
- People love an *Anav*

### *Hachna'a* and *Bitachon*

*Hachna'a* is closely related to *Bitachon*, since it brings to *Menucha*, which is the foundation of *Bitachon*. [*Chovos Halvavos*<sup>19</sup>]. An *Anav* is a relaxed person who has an easier time tolerating difficult situations and difficult people. He has *Menucha* and *Bitachon*. He knows that Hashem is in charge, and everything is for the good, even when he doesn't understand.

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### ונפשונו קצה בלחם הקלל כא ה

### Without Working on *Bitachon*, Your Mind Is Susceptible to The Most Ridiculous Distortions

Last week's *Parsha* says: וְנַפְשׁוֹ קָצָה בִּלְחֶם וְהָקָל לֵקָל חֶקֶת כֹּה הִיא and *Rashi* says<sup>20</sup> the *Yidden* were disgusted with the *Mon*. The epitome of delicious food has suddenly become disgusting and almost inedible. *Doson* and *Aviram* complained that how could *Moshe* take them out of *Mitzrayim*, an *Eretz*

*Zavas Chalav u'Dvash* land flowing with milk and honey! How does an unbearable and torturous country suddenly become *Eretz Zavas Chalav u'Dvash* [the epitome of sweetness and *Geshmak*]? We don't really understand these great people, but for us we have an important lesson: If a person doesn't work on *Bitachon* and on his *Middos* he can become disgusted even with the pleasant things in his life, like delicious *Mon*.

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**Whatever you don't have now or what others possess, becomes Gevaldig; and what you do have is worthless, and even repulsive.** They were punished by being bitten by snakes, just like the *Nachash HaKadmoni* who also wasn't satisfied with what he had. [*Gemara*<sup>21</sup>].

People do this with their spouses, their jobs, their own unique qualities [in *Ruchaniyus* and *Gashmiyus*], and their *Derech* in *Avodas Hashem*. A friend of mine's parents had a terrible relationship all their lives. When his father was *Niftar*, he told his mother that now she can finally remarry and have a good life.

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His mother screamed at him and said that her “dear and beloved” husband was irreplaceable. **A person has a big job to insist that what he has is Gevaldig, and what others have is terrible (at least for him). Everything is up to you!** The *Alter Zatzal* says<sup>22</sup> that an

<sup>18</sup> רש"י בפרשת בהעלותך עה"פ וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָו מְאֹד [יב ג] עָנָו - שפל וסבלן.

<sup>19</sup> חובות הלבבות שער הבטחון [פרק א] אך מהות הבטחון היא **מנוחת נפש הבורח**, ושיהיה לבו סמוך על מי שבטח עליו, שיעשה הטוב והנכון לו בענין אשר יבטח עליו, כפי יכלתו ודעתו במה שמפיק טובתו.

<sup>20</sup> רש"י בפרשת חקת עה"פ בְּלֶחֶם הַקָּלָל [כא ה] לפי שהמן נבלע באיברים קראוהו קלוקל, אמרו: עתיד המן הזה שיתפח במעינו, כלום יש ילוד אשה שמכנים ואינו מוציא?

<sup>21</sup> סוטה ט א, תנו רבנן, סוטה נתנה עיניה במי שאינו ראוי לה, מה שביקשה לא ניתן לה, ומה שבידה נטלוהו ממנה; שכל הנותן עיניו במה שאינו שלו, מה שמבקש אין נותנין לו, ומה שבידו נוטלין הימנו, וכן מצוינו בנחש הקדמוני, שנתן עיניו במה שאינו ראוי לו, מה שביקש לא נתנו לו, ומה שבידו נטלוהו ממנו; אמר הקב"ה: אני אמרתי יהא מלך על כל בהמה וחיה, ועכשיו [בראשית ג] ארור הוא מכל הבהמה ומכל חית השדה; אני אמרתי יהלך בקומה זקופה, עכשיו על גחונו ילך; אני אמרתי יהא מאכלו מאכל אדם, עכשיו עפר יאכל; הוא אמר אהרוג את אדם ואשא את חוה, עכשיו איבה אשית בינך ובין האשה ובין זרעך ובין זרעה. וכן מצוינו בקין, וקרח, ובלעם, ודואג, ואחיתופל, וגחזי, ואבשלום, ואדוניהו, ועוזיהו, והמן, שנתנו עיניהם במה שאינו ראוי להם, מה שביקשו לא ניתן להם, ומה שבידם נטלוהו מהם.

<sup>22</sup> ספר מדרגת האדם [מאמרי הסבא מנובהרדוק, רבי יוסף יוזל הורביץ זצ"ל], הוצאה חדשה ירושלים תשסב, אמרות ופתגמים עמ' רלז] חז"ל אומרים אעשה לו עזר כנגדו, זכה עוזרתו לא זכה כנגדו [יבמות סג א]. אחד עושה מהעזר "כנגדו", ואחד מצליח ועושה מכנגדו "עזר".

unwise person is liable to turn his “Ezer” into a “K'negdo”. But a wise person turns a “K'negdo” into an “Ezer”. \*\*\*\*\*

An *Anav* feels like a flat *Matza*, and he doesn't mind when things don't go his way. A blown up *Chametz*-type person thinks he owns the world, and he angers easily since he believes everything is coming to him. An *Anav* tries to be low-key, and tries to be soft and *Eidel*. Like the soft *Kol* of *Yaakov*; not like “tough-guy” *Eisav* who always sounds like he knows everything. *Anava* brings *Menucha* and relaxation. *Ga'ava* breeds nervousness and impatience. An *Anav* doesn't mind being stepped on. [However, every human needs a certain amount of healthy *Ga'ava*, or else he's not going anywhere].

\*\*\*\*\*

When *Rivka* had aggravation with *Eisav's* wicked wives, she said: קָצַתִּי בְּחַיֵּי מִכְּנֵי בְנוֹתָי [with a small *Kuf*]. She had *Eisav's* wicked wives in her midst, and she was rightfully disgusted. Yet, the *Kuf* is small. Even when a person has a right to be disgusted [for a *Ruchaniyus'dik* reason] he still plays down his disgust, since he has *Bitachon* and knows that Hashem is behind everything.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Bilam* and *Balak* brought rams and oxen for *Korbanos*, but no sheep. R.S.R.H. says that bringing a ram for a *Korban* shows the *Midda* of leadership and strength, and an ox shows hard work. A sheep symbolizes *Eidelkeit* and *Bitachon*, giving in to others, and *Middos Tovos*. We know that *Bilam* was a *Navi* and he had a connection with Hashem, yet we don't find *Anava* on his agenda [*Chazal*<sup>23</sup>]. Indeed, he brought many *Korbanos* of oxen and rams, but no sheep. Also, whenever Hashem speaks to *Bilam*, it says:

Elokim came to Bilam, not like by Moshe where it says usually: Hashem said to Moshe. “Elokim” represents *Din* strictness, and “Hashem” displays *Rachamim*. An *Eidel* person gets different treatment than a blown-up *Baal Ga'ava*. \*\*\*\*\*

A *Goy* thinks that he created himself, and he thinks he'll live forever in this world. When learning about *Anava*, a person reminds himself about the truth of his existence. His job isn't his, his wife and children aren't really his, and even his hands and feet don't really belong to him. Everything he owns really belongs to Hashem, who gave a person all he has, including life itself, in order to test him and make him great, so he can earn a reward in *Olam HaBah*.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Acquiring True Anava

Acquiring true *Anava* isn't easy. But when a person is faced with a very difficult situation, it may be worth his while to go “all out” to acquire this *Midda*, and read *Shaar HaK'niya* in *Chovos Halvavos*, or *Shaar HaAnava* in *Orchos Tzaddikim*, *Reishis Chochma*, and *Mesilas Yesharim*; in the places that they talk about *Anava*. Also, the *Sefer “LaAnavim Yiten Chen”* is very powerful, with stories and *Chazal's* about people who mastered this *Midda*.

But beware, you may need lots of building yourself up while you learn this *Shaar*, and you may need to skip certain parts which can get you depressed. I know true stories of people who had a physical *Refua* after they worked on *Anava*. However, there are those of us who must focus only on kosher *Ga'ava*, despite the risk of non-kosher *Ga'ava* that gets mixed into the picture. [Just try to avoid *Ka'as* and not being *M'vater*].

<sup>23</sup> אבות ה' יט, כל מי שיש בידו שלשה דברים הללו מתלמידיו של אברהם אבינו, ושלשה דברים אחרים מתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע. עין טובה ורוח נמוכה ונפש שפלה מתלמידיו של אברהם אבינו, עין רעה ורוח גבוהה ונפש רחבה מתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע. מה בין תלמידיו של אברהם אבינו לתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע? תלמידיו של אברהם אבינו אוכלין בעולם הזה ונוחלין בעולם הבא שנאמר [משלי ח] להנחיל אוהבי יש ואוצרותיהם אמלא, אבל תלמידיו של בלעם הרשע יורשין גיהנם ויורדין לבאר שחת שנאמר [תהלים נה] ואתה אלקים תורידם לבאר שחת אנשי דמים ומרמה לא יחצו ימיהם ואני אבטח בך.

פְּלִחָהּ הַשּׁוֹר כּבֵּד

## Our Ultimate *Hatzlacha* Depends on Guarding Our *Kedusha*

The *Yidden* were compared to an ox who licks up the greenery of the field. We can suggest that the example of an ox was used because the power of *Yosef* [who is compared to an ox] took us out of *Mitzrayim*, and all our *Hatzlachos* came from *Middas HaYesod* which *Yosef* spearheaded. Indeed, in the end, *Bilam* advised on being *Machshil* us in *Z'nus*, and this was our downfall.

# NOVARDOK

The *Alter* had been a big businessman, until one day he was shaken up by R' Yisroel Salanter *Zatzal*, who reminded him that he should start worrying about the next world. So he dropped all his business, and started learning day and night. The *Alter* succeeded in building over 30 *Yeshivos*. Sometimes a person needs to have *Bitachon* and do something extreme, only then will he really succeed. But of course, a person needs a *Rebbe* to guide him. \*\*

Reb Shlomo Wolbe *Zatzal* described how the *Alter* was able to actually build **new** *Yeshivos* in middle of WWI when the whole world had shut down [similar to corona]. He said that it's impossible to understand the greatness of this *Tzaddik's Bitachon*. He ignored "reality" and continued building *Yeshivos* successfully. He

was seen going to the *Mikva* and relaxing, while the whole world was in bedlam. \*\*\*

I knew a big *Tzaddik*, R' Pinchos Menachem Malach *Zatzal*, who was a *Talmid* of R' Yisroel Movshovitz *Zatzal* [*Mashgiach* of the Bialystok *Yeshiva*]. During WWII the Nazis were terrorizing Europe,



R' Pinchos Menachem  
Malach

and he was young *Bachur* who was caught in the midst of all these horrors. People were screaming in the streets, running in all directions in panic. Although it was *Shabbos*, he was allowed to take a train since it was *Pikuach Nefesh*. He stepped onto the train, and there he saw his *Rebbe*, sitting relaxed in his usual calm manner as if there was no war at all. His *Rebbe* had one question to ask him: Did you eat *Shalosh Seudos*?"

\*\*\*\*

Eye witnesses saw R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal* davening in the concentration camp. They saw him standing for an hour and a half in one spot, while all kinds of atrocities were going on around him. Screams and yells, dogs barking, with all the notorious Nazi decrepit behavior happening full blast; and R' Gershon was in his own world with Hashem. Forever calm and fearless, his crazy extreme environment had no effect on him whatsoever. \*\*\*\*\*

This is the #1 *Yesod* of *Novardok*: Don't be *Nis'pael*! Not from people, or from situations.

## R' Chaim Shalom Yisrael *Zatzal*

R' Gershon's beloved *Talmid*, R' Chaim Shalom Yisrael *Zatzal*, would bring loads of water into the

הנהגת רבי חיים יצחק זצוקל - סיפור, הנהגת רבי מרדכי ליבסון זצוקל  
משכנאל, סאטמאר, עשור הנהגת רבי חיים שלום ישראל זצוקל



R' Chaim Shalom Yisrael [center], flanked by  
his *Rabbeim*, R' Gershon Liebman [left], and  
R' Chaim Zaitchik [right]

*Bais Medrash* on *Shevi'i Shel Pesach*, and practice imagining *K'riyas Yam Suf* by wading through the water. Although people thought he was *Meshuga*, he couldn't care less; like a good *Novardoker*. \*\*

There is a legendary story about his courage, well-known all-over Paris. Once, one of the wealthy Jews in Paris invited him to be *Mesader Kidushin* at his



daughter's wedding. After some investigating, R' Chaim Shalom found out that the upscale hall and the food served there is non-kosher [in violation of the local custom to make the *Chuppah* in the shul]. R' Chaim Shalom immediately notified the man that he would not officiate. "Go find yourself a different Mafioso to run your *Goyish* affair". The man responded arrogantly: "Go find yourself a different supporter for your *Yeshiva!*". R' Chaim Shalom would not budge, despite the loss of vital funding... A few days later, the man came begging the *Rosh Yeshiva* to come to the *Chasuna*, promising to do it the right way. \*\*\*

Born in Fez, Morocco a year after the war [5706] R' Chaim Shalom joined a small group of boys [recruited by the emissary of R' Gershon] to go learn *Torah B'Tahara* at the age of 11. [A year prior, R' Gershon himself had come riding on a donkey, to save the Moroccans from assimilation and bring them to his *Yeshiva* in France. But he was unsuccessful because of the language and culture barrier]. Knowing that he would not return home in time, his family made an early "celebration" of his *Bar Mitzva*. \*\*\*\*

As a true *Novardoker*, he opened up many successful *Torah* institutions. First, he opened a seminary for Moroccan girls in France, the first of its kind. Then, after giving over the leadership of the seminary to others [upon R' Gershon's advice] he opened a *Cheder* for boys. He continued being involved in helping his *Rebbe* R' Gershon's *Yeshiva* grow and flourish, by founding more branches and helping them run. He was involved in establishing many *Mosdos* of *Torah* and *Chinuch* all over France. \*\*\*\*\*

Eventually, he moved to *Eretz Yisroel*, and opened a *Yeshiva* in *Har Nof*, called *Ner Shmuel* [named after his son who was killed in a car accident. He originally wanted to call it *Madregas HaAdam* like the *Alter's Sefer*, but his *Rebbe* R' Chaim Zaitchik *Zatzal* said that people of today's

generation wouldn't appreciate the concept]. On the topic of the *Alter's Sefer*, it was none other than R' Chaim Shalom who reprinted *Madregas HaAdam* in the beautiful new format with many additions that we have today, as part of his mission for *Zikkui HaRabbim*. After printing the *Sefer* [in 5762], R' Chaim Shalom was mysteriously *Niftar* a month later. \*\*\*\*\*

When he saw the need for a new *Cheder* for Sephardi boys, he decided to open one himself. Despite the hopelessness of the situation, his *Bitachon* left no room for *Yi'ush*. Hardly anyone came to the first meeting for the new institution, which seemed to many "unrealistic". But R' Chaim Shalom had a vision, and today the *Cheder* is thriving as ever.

He saw himself going in the path of *R' Chiya*, who applied himself toward the goal of teaching *Torah* by physically doing all the preparations himself, even the menial tasks, to ensure that it would be done in purity. In his speech to the *Rabbeim* of his *Cheder*, he said: "Your work is *Avodas HaKodesh*. You are responsible for the future generation of *Gedolei Yisrael!* The children's *Chinuch* toward *Torah* and *Yiras Shamayim* is the foundation of the future stronghold of *Klal Yisrael*; without the baby goats, there can be no mature goats!"

זכותו יגן עלינו



R' Yair Yisrael Shlita, son of R' Chaim Shalom Yisrael Zatzal [right] at a recent *Bitachon Vaad* in Lakewood by Rabbi Yehuda Mandel Shlita [left]



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# Questions To Rabbi Mandel



**Question:** I have a first cousin who is 29 years old, who only wants to marry a super-thin girl. [I consider myself someone who understands people and life, and I say with full conviction that he recently declined to continue seeing a girl who is absolutely phenomenal in every way imaginable, for this very reason]. Is there anything reasonable for me to do to convince him out of this?

**Answer:** Now, if he is someone who is willing to listen to you, then you should try to convince him how fake this “concern” is, and that the *Ikar* is *Middos Tovos*. But, if he isn’t willing to accept, then you shouldn’t push him. Sometimes Hashem has His plans, and part of that plan is that He made him think this way.

\*\*\*

**Question:** I am currently in a small *Kollel*, where the *Rosh Chabura* is convinced that *Klal Yisroel*’s most severe issue is the level of *Gashmiyus* in the *Kollel*’s locality. Incidentally, I’m convinced otherwise. But besides for that, is the fact that he continues focusing only on this theme in literally every *Shmuess* I have ever heard him give, and he does it with excessive cynicism and hate. Even though it’s only fifteen minutes a week, it’s too hard and too painful for me to sit through; I even skipped the last two *Shmuessin* he’s given. I think he’s noticed, and has grown upset at me for this. Is there a recommended approach for this?

**Answer:** I agree with you 100% that a person should not criticize their surroundings. So if your *Rosh Chabura* is the listening type and will hear you out, then speak up. But it doesn’t sound like he is. I would recommend that you go to the *Shmuess*, but no one says that you have to listen to him. During the *Shmuess*, you can busy yourself with other things, like writing down your *Maalos*. It’s not a good thing to go “against the system” and not attend, but you are not obligated to actually listen to what he is saying.

You can submit your questions to Rabbi Mandel by emailing them to  
[questionsforrabbimandel@gmail.com](mailto:questionsforrabbimandel@gmail.com)