

BITACHON WEEKLY

Stories of Novardok

פרשת האזינו וסוכות תשפ"ג

Great Things Come Only from Difficulties and Hardship

The Passuk says, יִצְרָנָהּוּ כְּאֵישׁוֹן עֵינוֹ Hashem guards us like the pupil of His eye. *Rashi* explains the word: אֵישׁוֹן means the black part of the eye from which light [vision] comes out.

Light only comes from blackness, not from the white part of the eye. Good things and great people come only from difficulties and hardship. The problems we face, the people we dislike; they were all given to us purposely by Hashem in order to brighten our lives and make us great. The easy parts of our lives [the “whiteness” of our eyes] although important, are not the main part. Our biggest *Olam HaBah* [and even *Olam HaZeh*] comes from overcoming and accepting the blackness of our lives.

The *Madregas HaAdam* says, our difficult tests activate us and give us *Chi'yus vitality*. It is through them that our *Bitachon* becomes real and alive. Without them, we are like dead people without challenges.

A person should welcome his hardships with *Simcha*, since there is no greater thrill than having *Bitachon* despite hardship. It can be more *Geshmak* than having a life without problems, if we learn a lot of *Mussar* on *Bitachon* and become close to Hashem.

The “pupils of our eyes” should be guarded and appreciated. They are the most important part of our lives.

The holy *Zohar* says that there is no light unless it comes from darkness. The more it is dark, the more you can expect even more light. When a person has dark moments in his life, and he really believes that they are 100% proof of big *Yeshuos*, he will be *Zoche* to big *Yeshuos*. But if he doesn't have *Bitachon* and he doesn't believe this, then *Chas V'shalom* he can remain in darkness.

The *Passuk* says: וַיִּנְקְהוּ דְבַשׁ מִסֵּלַע וְשֶׁמֶן מִחֶלְמִישׁ צוּר לֶבֶי Hashem gave us honey and oil from hard rocks. Again, we see that the most wonderful things and successes can come *Davka* from very hard and difficult situations, like honey from a rock.

R' Tzadok HaCohen *Zatzal* says that when a person has a weakness, it may be a sign that he can *Davka* become strong in that area. For example, if a person is a worrier by nature and has fears, it may be a sign that with constant *Tefila* etc. he can *Davka* become a great *Baal Bitachon* and a *Tzaddik* like *Moshe Rabeinu* in his own way.

Successful People Are Always Going in Two Opposite Directions

When I first got involved in *Zikkui HaRabbim*, my *Rebbe* would give me a *Hashkafa* of “taking over the world.”

This attitude helped me become ambitious, and conquer so much *Middas HaShiflus* that causes people to do very little. This *Hashkafa* was *Gevaldig*, until I started becoming frustrated... since I wasn't actually accomplishing as much as my *Hasagos ambitions*.

So, I went to a different *Rebbe* who told me: “You **don't have to** take over the world.” Although an ambitious *Hashkafa* is very important, a person can get caught up in *Redifas HaKavod*. You become competitive, and you're never happy with what you have.

“I love my **small** success, and this is plenty good; I don't have to be the big knocker!” **The “slow down” mentality gives loads of *Menuchas HaNefesh* and *Simcha*. It is closely related to *Middas HaAnava*, which gives *Menuchas HaNefesh*.** This principle can be applied in all areas of your life.

Try hard for *Gadlus B'torah* and all the great *Middos Tovos*, including *Bitachon*. But you have to have a passive side to you; a healthy lazy streak, and an attitude of happy acceptance. Just like a street needs red lights and green lights; in our lives too, we need both the “red” and “green” lights.

חג הסוכות

Why Is the *Esrog* So Special?

First of all, some say that the *Eitz HaDa'as* was an *Esrog*. Look how we make a big *Shpeil* out of the “sin fruit”. So the *Esrog* was the #1 sin of the universe which caused so much pain - death! And it caused: *קוֹצֵת אֶפְיָךְ תֹּאכַל לְהֵם בְּרֹאשִׁית* *Sweating for Parnasa*, and: *לִיָּדָה לִי לִיָּדָה* *birth pains* and getting thrown out of *Gan Eden*, etc.

The word “*Esrog*” means: *רְגֵיג* *desirable*. It is also called *עֵץ הָדָר* *P'ri Eitz "Hadar"* which means “beautiful”. It has a good taste and smell, which symbolizes the *Talmid Chochom* who has *Torah* and *Ma'asim Tovim*. We can suggest that during the *Y'mei HaDin* and *Teshuva* we realize that *Teshuva* makes *Aveiros* turn into *Mitzvos*; this is symbolized by the “evil” *Esrog* becoming the most special of all the *Arba Minim*.

All the Evil in Your Life Is Potential Greatness and Goodness

And this is exactly the way a *Yid* has to view all his failures, mistakes, difficulties, horrific issues, and his wicked thoughts and sins which drive him crazy. They are all potentially pure beauty, and most desirable and courted. Like *Dovid HaMelech*, the *Admoni* and *Mo'avi* who became our beloved *Melech HaMoshiach*. **This is what all the evil in your life is all about - everything is potential *Gevaldige* greatness and goodness!**

This is the “*Aderaba*” mentality that every *Yid* should have every second of the day [for sanity purposes!] This is the *Yesod* of *Nachum Ish Gam Zu L'tovah - Bitachon!* The most **extreme** bad becomes **extreme** good!

The Bumps in Life Are What Make Us Kosher and Beautiful

The *Esrog* shows how important and precious all those “few” and “rotten” good things we do [without *Geshmak* and without *Li'shmah*] are; similar to the “bitter” fruit of the *Esrog*. We treasure the “measly” and “weak” goodness in our lives! Actually, the bumps and ridges of an *Esrog* [שְׂקֵיעוֹת וּבְלִיטוֹת] are considered *Mehudar*. This can symbolize a “rocky”, difficult, and *Tz'tumel'dik* type of life, which isn't smooth like a lemon.

A smooth life without hard *Nisyonos* is *Passul!* Just as people look for: *שְׂקֵיעוֹת וּבְלִיטוֹת* *bumps and ridges* as a form of a beautiful *Esrog*, so is the person with “issues” the most precious, thanks to his “lovely” pecklach [but don't look for trouble!] This is the real truth of our existence.

Sukkos Is When We Show How Happy We Are for The *Kapara* of *Yom Kippur*

Did you ever wonder how does lack of *Simcha* suddenly become the cause of all the horrors, *Din*, *Churbanos*, and holocausts of our lives? Actually, not having a happy *Sukkos* could be the problem. *Sukkos* is *Zman Simchaseinu*, and is the only *Regel* where it says: *אַךְ שְׂמַחַת רֵאָה טוֹ טוֹ* be ONLY happy.

Why is it so important to be especially *B'simcha* during *Chag HaSukkos*? The *Rema* says that if a person doesn't believe that *Yom Kippur* is *M'chaper* and it takes away all your sins, then he doesn't lose any sins, *Chas V'shalom*. During the *Simchas Bais HaSho'eva* in the *Bais Hamikdash*, they would sing: *אַשְׁרֵי מִי שְׁלֹא הָטָא וּמִי שְׁהָטָא יָשׁוּב וְיִמְחַוֵּל לוֹ סוּכָה נֶגַע* *Fortunate is a person who never sinned, but one who sinned should do Teshuva and he will be forgiven.*

The reason why we have *Chag HaSukkos* after *Yom Kippur* is so that we can show how happy we are post *Yom Kippur*. And the happier you are during *Sukkos*, the more you lose your sins. R' Nosson Wachtfogel *Zatzal* said that the more you believe that you lost your sins on *Yom Kippur*, the bigger *Kapara* you get. If we say that: *תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא עָבַדְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה תֵבֵא מִזְ* *servicing Hashem without Simcha* is referring to not being happy during *Zman Simchaseinu*, then it is obvious why all the *Tzaros* is coming from lack of *Simcha*, since we are still carrying our baggage of sins.

The *Chinuch* mentions what a *Chesed* is *Yom Kippur*, since without *Yom Kippur* your sins would accumulate and you would be in horrific trouble, *Rachmana Litzlan*. We see that not being happy during *Zman Simchaseinu* means not really having the desirable effect of *Yom Kippur*. And all the *Tzaros* of the world are open, *Rachmana Litzlan!*