

BITACHON

WEEKLY

מטות מסעי

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 מטות מסעי תשפ"ב

IN THIS ISSUE

- GIVING THE PROPER RESPECT IS SO IMPORTANT
- WHEN A PERSON HAS A GREATER *YETZER HARA* HE NEEDS TO GO TO THE OTHER EXTREME
- A PERSON HAS TO RESPECT HIMSELF!
- THE BATTLES OF *OLAM HAZEH* ARE WON THROUGH SELF-CONTROL IN *KEDUSHA* AND *MIDDOS*
- ANYONE CAN DO *TESHUVA* IN THE AREA OF *KEDUSHA*, EVEN THE LOWEST OF THE LOW
- WHEN YOU DON'T CONTROL YOUR *TA'AVOS*, YOU LOSE EVERYTHING
- LEARNING GOOD *MIDDOS* NEEDS A *REBBE*
- AN *ANAV* REALLY CARES ABOUT OTHERS
- EXCESSIVE *FRUMKEIT* CAN BE HARMFUL TO YOURSELF AND TO OTHERS
- THE TRUE *KANO'I* BRINGS ONLY GOODNESS AND PEACE
- *CHODESH AV* IS A TIME TO GET INTO A MODE OF *KAVOD SHAMAYIM*
- WE NEED TO TAKE OUR CREATIONS VERY SERIOUSLY
- THE *GADLUS* OF A HUMAN CAN BE SEEN IN THE POWER OF HIS WORDS AND OPINIONS
- JUST "WANTING" TO DO A *MITZVA* IS SUCH A *ZECHUS!*
- YOU ARE *GEVALDIG* AND YOU CAN DO IT!
- THE WORLD OF *TEVAH*, AND THE WORLD OF *NESS*
- STORIES OF NOVARDOK

פרשת מטות מסעי

וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי גָד וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן לְבֵן

Giving the Proper Respect Is So Important

In this week's *Parsha*, the *Bnei Gad* and *Bnei Reuven* approached *Moshe* with a special request. Notice how *Bnei Gad* are mentioned before *Bnei Reuven*. But wasn't *Reuven* older than *Gad*? Why are the *Bnei Gad* mentioned first? This order repeats itself consistently [seven times] throughout the entire episode! Even *Moshe* addresses the *Bnei Gad* first. *Chazal* say¹ that the reason why *Rochel* passed away before *Leah* was because she answered *Yaakov* before her older sister. **

However, when *Moshe* mentions them in *Parshas Mas'ei*, he says *Bnei Reuven* first. And thereafter, *Reuven* is always mentioned first [five times in *Parshas Devarim*, and about 20 times in *Sefer Yehoshua*]. *Chazal* say that these two *Shevotim* mentioned their animals before their children, and *Moshe* immediately corrected them. [*Rashi*²]. We have no understanding of these *Tzaddikim*, but for ourselves we have a major *Mussar Haskel*. ***

When we mix and don't give respect where it's due, like *Kibud Av v'Em*, or *Kibud* of an older sibling, in the end an animal can become a priority over a person. We see this in our modern-day world. Since the parents don't get the proper respect [*Chutzpa Yasgei there is an increase of Chutzpa*] we can have 100,000 people protesting the action of a Cincinnati zoo keeper, who killed

a dangerous Silverback gorilla to save the life of a human baby. ****

Notice how *Moshe* originally goes along with *Bnei Gad* being the leader; only later [in *Parshas Mas'ei*] does he mention *Reuven* first. [The *Meforshim* explain that he was putting emphasis on *Bnei Gad* because they were stronger. But we can offer another reason]. We all know that *Reuven* saved *Yosef*. One of the differences between *Yosef* and his brothers was that *Yosef* believed in being *M'karev* the *Bnei HaShefachos*. [*Rashi*³]. *****

Perhaps the reason *Reuven* was saving *Yosef* from his brothers was also because he agreed with this *Shita*. His name *Reuven* means: "Look at the difference between my son and my father-in-law's son [*Eisav*]". [*Rashi*⁴]. When *Eisav's* younger brother [*Yaakov*] took his *Bechora*, he wants to kill him, while *Reuven* actually saves his younger brother [*Yosef*] who took his *Bechora*. And *Reuven* was actually the answer to his mother *Leah's Tefilos* **not** to marry *Eisav*. *****

When A Person Has A Greater Yetzer Hara He Needs to Go to The Other Extreme

Reuven's stone was: אֶדֶם *Odem* opposite *Edom* [*Eisav*]. Despite his "red" potential like *Eisav*, he overcame it. [Otherwise, being "better than" *Eisav* doesn't mean much]. Similarly, *Yaakov* said that he never reprimanded *Reuven* since he feared that he might run away to *Eisav*. [*Rashi*⁵].

¹ בראשית רבה [עד ד] ונשען רחל וְלָאָה וְנִתְאַמְרָנָה לֹא [ויצא לא יד] למה מתה רחל תחלה? ר' יודן ור' יוסי, ר' יודן אמר שדברה בפני אחותה. א"ל ר' יוסי, ראית מימך אדם קורא ראובן, ושמעון עונה אותו? והלא לרחל קרא ורחל ענתה אותו. על דעתיה דר' יהודה נחא, על דעתיה דרבי יוסי לא מתה אלא מקללתו של זקן, שנאמר [ויצא לא לב] עם אשר תמצא את אלקיך לא יחנה, והיה כשגגה היוצא מלפני השליט.

² רש"י עה"פ וַיֵּאמְרוּ גְדֹרֹת צֶאֱן נִבְנָה לְמִקְנֵנוּ פֶּה וְעָרִים לְטַפְנוּ [לב טז] חסידים היו על ממונם יותר מבניהם ובנותיהם, שהקדימו מקניהם לטפם. אמר להם משה לא כן עשו, העיקר עיקר והטפל טפל, בנו לכם תחלה ערים לטפכם ואחר כך גדרות לצאנכם.

³ רש"י בפרשת וישב עה"פ וַיָּבֹאוּ יוֹסֵף אֶת דְּבָרָם רָעָה אֶל אָבִיהֶם [לז ב] כל רעה שהיה רואה באחיו בני לאה היה מגיד לאביו וכו' ומזלזלין בבני השפחות לקרותן עבדים.

⁴ רש"י בפרשת ויצא עה"פ וַתְּהֵרָה לָאָה וְנִתְלַד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ רְאוּבֵן [כט לב] רבותינו פירשו, אמרה: ראו מה בין בני לבן חמי שמכר הבכורה ליעקב, וזה לא מכרה ליוסף ולא ערער עליו, ולא עוד שלא ערער עליו אלא שביקש להוציאו מן הבור.

⁵ רש"י בפרשת דברים עה"פ וַיְהִי בְּאֶרְצֵי־עֵם שָׁנָה בְּעֶשְׂתֵּי עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ [א ג] מלמד שלא הוכיחן אלא סמוך למיתה. ממי למד? מיעקב, שלא הוכיח את בניו אלא סמוך למיתה. אמר: ראובן בני, אני אומר לך מפני מה לא הוכחתך כל השנים הללו, כדי שלא תניחני ותלך ותדבק בעשו.

ויבאו בני גד ובני ראובן לב

The Battles of Olam HaZeh Are Won Through Self-Control in Kedusha And Middos

Why is Gad together with Reuven? If Reuven wants to be M'karev the Bnei HaShefachos, what does he have in common with Gad more than the other Bnei HaShefachos? In Parshas Bamidbar and Parshas Pinchos, all the Shevotim are counted. They are all pretty much in chronological order, except for Gad, who is "up there" together with Reuven and Shimon. The other three Bnei HaShefachos [Dan, Naftoli, and Asher] are appropriately counted last. **

The Gemara mentions¹⁰ that Dovid would kill 1,000 Pelishtim with one arrow, until he sinned with Uriyah; then he could kill only 800. We see that the wars of Yidden corresponded to their war with the Yetzer Hara. Indeed, those who feared battle because of their sins, had to go back home. [Mishna¹¹]. ***

Yael was famous for her Tznius. She killed Sis'ra with the peg of her "tent", and an Ohel symbolizes Tznius. [Rashi¹²]. Sis'ra was famous for Z'nus [Ralbag¹³]. She killed him in his "head", because not using your Sechel causes Z'nus. [Gemara¹⁴]. That's why the Sotah's braids are undone, and a Nazir grows long hair. [When R' Yisroel Dovid Schlesinger Shlita was told this Pshat, he said it was Gevaldig]. ***

Anyone Can Do Teshuva in The Area of Kedusha, Even the Lowest of The Low

Why did Yehoshua marry Rachav HaZonah of all people? His job was to conquer Canaan, who had forfeited their rights to Eretz Yisroel because of

When someone once asked R' Shlomo Wolbe Zatzal how to work on Anava, he responded: "I think we have to work on Ga'ava!" R' Hutner Zatzal was famous for his Hanhaga of Romemus and commanding respect!



רבי יצחק הוטנר ורבי שלמה וולבה בריקוד של מצוה בעת משתה היין של סעודת פורים R' Shlomo Wolbe [left] dancing with R' Hutner [right] on Purim

It is interesting that the holy Chida writes about his life's experiences and how he was Makpid on his Kavod - he wanted respect. **It is a Chiyuv for every Yid to respect himself and his position! You are a father! A mother! An older brother! A Rebbe! An in-law! Don't make a joke out of yourself, like so many modern thinkers do!**



You have no right to belittle yourself no matter what your position! Hashem made you a super-qualified Tzelem Elokim. Appreciate it!

¹⁰ מ"ק טז ב, הוא עדינו העצמי [ש"ב כג ה] כשהיה יושב ועוסק בתורה היה מעדן עצמו כתולעת, ובשעה שיוצא למלחמה היה מקשה עצמו כעץ, על שמנה מאות קלל בפעם אחת [שם] שהיה זורק חץ ומפיל שמונה מאות חלל בפעם אחת, והיה מתאנה על מאתים, דכתיב [האזינו לב ל] איכה ירדף אקד אלקי, יצתה בת קול ואמרה: רק בדבר אוריה החתי [מ"א טו ה].

¹¹ משנה סוטה [ח ה] ונספו השטרים לדבר אל העם ויאמרו מי האיש הגרא ורד הלכב גלך ונשב לביתו. רבי עקיבא אומר, הגרא ורד הלכב, כמשמעו, שאינו יכול לעמוד בקשרי המלחמה ולראות הרב שלו. רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר, הגרא ורד הלכב זהו המתגרא מן העברות שבנדו, לפיכך מלמה לו התורה את כל אלו, שישתזור בגללו.

¹² רש"י בפרשת וירא עה"פ ויאמרו אליו איה ערה אשתך ויאמר הנה באהל [יה ט] צנועה היא.

¹³ רלב"ג בספר שופטים עה"פ הלא ימצאו יתלקו שלל רחם רחמנים לראש גבר [ה ל] ולהיות פרוצים בעריות הקדימו בספור שלל העריות, אולי השיג כל אחד מהן נערה אחת או שתיים.

¹⁴ סוטה ג א, ריש לקיש אמר, אין אדם עובר עבירה אלא אם כן נכנס בו רוח שטות, שנאמר [נשא ה יב] איש איש כי תשטה אשתו, "תשטה" כתיב.

Z'nus. By marrying *Rachav*, he showed that even the lowest of the *Canaanim* could do *Teshuva* and marry the biggest *Tzaddik*. His *עצם basic* marriage proved that they were finished, since they could have done *Teshuva*, and they didn't. [*Yehoshua* had sent them a letter¹⁵ requesting they should abandon *Avoda Zara* [which leads to *Z'nus*] and then he would leave them alone, but they refused]. *****

Perhaps this is why *Shaul* told *Dovid* to bring him one hundred: *Orla* פלשתים ש"א יה כה skins of *Pelishtim*. *Pinchos* had spent a night in *Rachav's* house without the slightest *Hir'hur*, and his killing *Zimri* is symbolic of the battle of *Kedusha* over *Z'nus*. *****

Leah had always davened not to fall into the hands of *Eisav*, and when *Reuven* was born, she said: "Look at the difference between my son [*Reuven*] and my father-in-law's son [*Eisav*]. [*Rashi*]¹⁶. *Reuven* saves the younger brother who took away his *Bechora*, and *Eisav* hated *Yaakov* forever for this reason. His purity in *Middos* could be the reason why *Reuven* was such a tough front line soldier. *****

Just as *Reuven* was *Leah's* first biological child - so too *Gad* was the first child of her *Shifcha*, *Zilpah*. Perhaps *Gad* had a *Koach* in *Inyanei Kedusha* since he was a: *מה ול ל* baby born

ראשית *Yaakov's* first strength, which also symbolizes *Kedusha*. The fact that *Gad* would hack off his enemy's head and arm in one blow, could be because the Jewish soldiers would go to war wearing their *Tefilin*, and *Gad* was a special *Tzaddik* in *Inyanei Tefilin*. *****

וְרָאוּ כָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי שָׁם ה' נִקְרָא עֲלֵיךָ וְנִקְרָאוּ מִמֶּנִּי תבא כח י וְתִנְיָא רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר הַגְּדוֹל אָמַר אֵלּוּ תְּפִילֵינְךָ שְׂבָרָא שׁ ברכות ו א
"The nations of the world will see Hashem's name is upon you, and they will fear you". Rabbi Eliezer The Great says: This is referring to the *Tefilin Shel Rosh*.

The power of *Tefilin* scares off enemies, and perhaps for good reason. The *Aveira* that causes Jewish soldiers to return home from the battlefield is speaking between *Tefilin Shel Yad* and *Tefilin Shel Rosh*. [*Gemara*]¹⁸. The *Bais HaLevi* says¹⁹ that Jewish wars were fought with the power of *Bitachon*. *Tefilin* means *Bitachon*, and they said *Sh'ma* during battle. [*Meforshim*]²⁰. *K'riyas Sh'ma* is also *Bitachon*. *****

Either way, it was *Ruchaniyus* that these battles were all about. The good *Middos* of *Reuven* [who sticks up for *Yosef*, and is *M'karev Gad* by letting him go first when they approached *Moshe*] wins the wars against *Goyim*. *Chazal* say²¹ that *Amalek*

¹⁵ תוספות בגיטין בשם הירושלמי [מו א, ד"ה כיון] ואע"ג דאמרין בירושלמי דשביעית פרק ששי אמר רבי שמואל בר נחמני שלש פרוזדוגמאות שלח יהושע לארץ ישראל עד שלא יכנסו לארץ: מי שהוא רוצה לפנות, יפנה. להשלים, ישלים. לעשות מלחמה, יעשה מלחמה. גרגשי פינה והלך לאפריקא, גבעונים השלימו שנאמר [יהושע י א] וכי השלימו ישיבי גבעון את ישראל. שלשים ואחד מלכים עשו מלחמה, ונפלו.

¹⁶ רש"י בפרשת ויצא עה"פ נתהר לאה נתלד בן נתקרא שמו ראובן [כט לב] רבותינו פירשו, אמרה: ראו מה בין בני לבן חמי שמכר הבכורה ליעקב, וזה לא מכרה ליוסף ולא ערער עליו, ולא עוד שלא ערער עליו אלא שביקש להוציאו מן הבור.

¹⁷ רש"י בפרשת ויצא עה"פ נתאמר לאה בן נתקרא את שמו גד [ל יא] בן גד בא מזל טוב כמו [שבת סז ב] גד גדי וסנוק לא, ודומה לו [ישעיה סה יא] הערבים לגד שלחן. ומ"א שגולד מהול כמו [דניאל ד יא] גדו אילנא.

¹⁸ מנהות לו א, תנא, סח בין תפילה לתפילה עבירה היא בידו, וחוזר עליה מערכי המלחמה.
¹⁹ בית הלוי בקונטרס הבטחון [אות ב] דמלחמתם של ישראל לא היתה בגבורתם, רק בבטחונם, וכמאמר הכתוב [ישעיה ל טו] בְּשֶׁקֶט וּבְבִטָּחָה תִּהְיֶה גְבוּרַתְכֶם.

²⁰ מצאתי מקור לזה בספר גימטריאות [לר' יהודה החסיד בעל ספר חסידים, נדפס לראשונה בירושלים שנת תשס"א, עה"פ וְאֶשֶׁר תִּרְבֵּי גְּאֻנְתָּךְ [ברכה לג כט] עמ' נה אות סה] "אשר חרב גאות" בגימטריא קריאת שמע; שהיה הכהן מזרזן במלחמה לקרוא 'שמע' בקול רם - ונוצחים, דכתיב [פ' שופטים כ ג] שָׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־קוֹלֵי הַיָּם לְמַלְחָמָה. וזהו: וְתִרְבֵּי פִּסְפִּיּוֹת בְּיָדָם [תהלים קמט ו] וזהו: לְאֶסֶר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזִקִּים וּנְכַבְדֵיהֶם בְּכִבְלֵי בְרָזֶל [שם פסוק ח] תיבות שבקריאת שמע. [וכתב בעל המגיה שם: ואיני יודע מנין לרבינו שהיוצאים למלחמה היו קוראים קריאת שמע בקול רם ובזכות זה נוצחים, וצ"ע].

²¹ ב"ב קכג ב, בעא מיניה ר' חלבו מר' שמואל בר נחמני, כתיב [ויצא ל כה] וְהָיָה כְּאֶשֶׁר יִלְדָה רַחֵל אֶת יוֹסֵף וַיֵּקֶב אֵל לָבָן שֶׁלַחְנִי וְאֶלְכָה אֵל מְקוּמִי וְלֶאֱרָצִי, מאי שנא כי אתיליד יוסף? אמר ליה, ראה יעקב אבינו שאין זרעו של עשו נמסר אלא ביד זרעו של יוסף, שנאמר [עובדיה א יח] וְהָיָה בֵּית יַעֲקֹב אֵשׁ וּבֵית יוֹסֵף לֶהָבָה וּבֵית עֵשָׂו לְקֶשׁ וְדָלְקוּ בָהֶם וְאֶכְלִיֻּם וְלֹא יִהְיֶה שְׂרִיד לְבֵית עֵשָׂו כִּי ה' דָּבָר.

everything with *Darchei Noam*. When you are always thinking about “what people glorify”, you may end up doing more than you should, and causing serious problems and unhealthy stress.

Sometimes being a *Kano'i* like *Pinchos*, whether concerning yourself or others [=being too critical] can be a disaster, and the opposite of *Ratzon Hashem*. The “*Pinchos-mode*” can be very attractive, and easy for a *Ka'asan* to fall into; causing trouble for himself and/or others if he doesn't have guidance. You have to remember: **שְׁלוֹם**. The true *Kano'i* brings only goodness and peace, not a life of being a nervous wreck.

אָב אֱלוֹל תִּשְׁרִי

Chodesh Av Is A Time to Get into a Mode of Kavod Shamayim

Notice how before: **יְמֵי הַדִּין וְהַרְחָמִים** the days of *Din* and *Rachamim* we are given *Chodesh Av*, a time to worry about the *Churban Bais Hamikdash* and *Kavod Shamayim*. The *Mashgiach R' Nosson Wachtfogel Zatzal* used to say that the *Tefilos* of *Rosh Hashanah* concentrate totally on *Kavod Shamayim* because this is how a person is *Zoche b'Din*. *Chodesh Av* gives us a head-start, putting us in a *Kavod Shamayim* mode. Also, an *Ish HaKlal* is *Zoche b'Din* easier. **Now is the time to step up on *Zikkui HaRabbim*. It is a *Chashuva Shelo Li'shmah*, which is healthy for your own sanity as well.**

אִישׁ כִּי יִדַּר נִדְרָא... לֹא יִחַל דְּבָרוֹ לֵאמֹר

We Need to Take Our Creations Very Seriously *Nedarim* is a very serious *Chet*. [*Gemara*²⁹]. Why? A *Neder* is an exercise of the power of a human. He “creates” his own new sins that

Hashem never forbade in the *Torah*. Hashem wants us to respect our *Tzelem Elokim* and take our self-created sins very seriously. This is similar to the concept: **הַכִּיבִין דְּבָרֵי סוּפְרִין יוֹתֵר תּוֹרָה** *The D'rabanan is even more precious than a D'oraísa.* **

The Gadlus Of A Human Can Be Seen in the Power of His Words and Opinions

The cemetery is full of people who died because of *Ayin Hara*. [*Gemara*³⁰]. It's so important to look at others with *Ayin Tova*. And when you judge others *L'kaf Zechus*, then Hashem judges you *L'kaf Zechus*. Our words and opinions are really strong, as we find: **הַחֲלוּמוֹת לְפִי הֵפְתְּרוּ נִים** the way you interpret a dream is what happens. *Kol Nidrei* is a #1 *Tefila* on the holiest of days. Keeping your own words is so important. We see from this that *Gadlus HaAdam* is no joke.

וְהָ יִסְלַח לָהּ לֵו

Just “Wanting” To Do a Mitzva Is Such a Zechus!

Rashi says³¹ that if a woman violated her a *Neder*, even though it was already voided [without her knowledge], she still needs a *Kapara* since she **thought** she was doing a sin. **מְדָה טוֹבָה מְרוּבָה** How much more is this true in a positive way! **If a person thinks that he did a Mitzva, even though it really wasn't, he still gets a big Zechus!** **

We see how: **לֵיבָא בְּעֵי** the main thing is just **WANTING to be good**. Imagine how much *Schar* we get for “wishing” we could be better in *Torah* and *Yiras Shamayim*! **All those frustrating and unending *Retzonos* and aspirations are the gold mines of your life.** ***

²⁹ שבת לב ב, תניא, רבי נתן אומר, בעון נדרים מתה אשה של אדם, שנאמר [משלי כב כז] אם אין לך לשלם למה יקח משפךך מתחת ידך. רבי אומר, בעון נדרים בנים מתים כשהן קטנים, שנאמר [קהלת ה ה] אל תסתן את פיך לקטיו את בשרך ואל תאמר לפני המלאך כי שגגה היא למה יקצר האלקים על קולך ויחבל את מעשה ידך, איזה הן מעשה ידיו של אדם, הוי אומר בניו ובנותיו של אדם.

³⁰ ב"מ קז ב, רב סליק לבי קברי, עבד מאי דעבד [יודע היה ללחוש על הקברות ולהבין על כל קבר וקבר באיזו מיתה מת, אם מת בזמנו אם בעין הרע. רש"י] אמר, תשעין ותשעה בעין רעה ואחד בדרך ארץ.

³¹ רש"י עה"פ נה' יסלח לה [ל ו] במה הכתוב מדבר? באשה שנדרה בניור, ושמע בעלה והפר לה והיא לא ידעה, ועוברת על נדרה ושותה יין ומטמאה למתים, זו היא שצריכה סליחה ואע"פ שהוא מופר. ואם המופרים צריכים סליחה, ק"ו לשאינן מופרים.

I Feel So Incapacitated!

"I can't do so many things that I'd like to do! So much time wasting!" So many of us have a burning need to always **do** something, or else they feel like a vagabond. Especially when there is a physical or mental condition that limits you. Or when you get older and weaker; this can cause depression and a feeling of inadequacy. ****

It is my fervent desire to have as much **"doing"** as possible. Like R' Nosson Wachtfogel *Zatzal* said: איר מוקט עפעס טאן *You need to do!* However, while it isn't happening, how do you deal with your feelings of stagnating? The cardinal rule no matter what: It's all *Min HaShamayim* and all *L'tovah*. I once told a person who felt like a *Bat'lan*, that in our religion you can *Chas V'shalom* get stoned to death when **"doing"**, like for example, *Chilul Shabbos*. ****

But **not** working [when you should, like during the week] is never *Chayav S'kila*. And the *Gemara* speaks about the importance of having: עשרה בטלים *"Ten Bat'lanim"* [in shul for a *Minyan*]. A *Dayan* once said that he never saw a *Laidigaer* good-for-nothing in *Bais Din*. So being a **"Bat'lan-nobody"** can be a *Segula* for *Shalom Al Yisroel*. The **"hard-working"** person can get nervous and angry, with plenty of *Sin'as Chinam*. *****

Never make away with your present Matzav. There is always something positive which you must work on finding.

A friend of mine had a *Yerida*, and *Baruch Hashem* he snapped back to normal. Yet, he remembered that during his *Yerida* [as bad as it was, and it must be avoided, yet] he used to cry during *Shmoneh Esrei*, and now he doesn't.

הפטרת דברי ירמיהו

ניאמר ה' אלי אל תאמר נער אנוכי ירמיהו א ז

You Are Gevaldig And You Can Do It!

R' Nosson Wachtfogel *Zatzal* used to constantly mention this *Passuk*: א ל תאמר נער אנוכי *Don't say: "I'm just a kid!"* How many precious *Yungerleit* will never meet the full potential that Hashem gave them, since they keep putting themselves down! **

On *Zechariah ben Avkulas* it says³² that his *Anava* destroyed the *Bais Hamikdash*. And the same with *Gedalia ben Achikam*. This is considered a weakness. But *Yirmiyahu* strengthened himself and overcame his weakness, and he became a *Navi B'yisroel*. There is a story in *Sefer Yehoshua*³³ about the *Bnei Yosef* who felt they were too weak to conquer some tough *Canaan* place. But *Yehoshua* encouraged them. He told them that they are strong enough to overcome them, **and there is nobody better than you.** ***

This is a leader, a *Rebbe*, and a parent's job; to tell the student: **"You can do it!"** A person has to copy Hashem [who strengthened *Yirmiyah*] and tell his friends [and surely himself] **"You are Gevaldig and you can do it!"** Like *Calev* said:

עלה נעלה ונרשנו אתה פי יכול נוכל *We WILL succeed. Yehoshua* had a history of giving encouragement; he encouraged himself during his difficult *Nisayon* with the *Meraglim*, saying: *We* **פי להמנו הם!** *שלח יד ט* *will eat them like bread!* Now he went on to encourage others [the *Bnei Yosef*]. ****

³² גיטין נו א, אמר רבי יוחנן, ענוותנותו של רבי זכריה בן אבקולס החריבה את ביתנו ושרפה את היכלנו והגליטנו מארצנו.
³³ ספר יהושע [ז טז-יח] ניאמרו בני יוסף לא ימצא לנו ה' רכב ברזל בכל הפנעני הישב בארץ העמק [ומה שאתה אומר לעלות היערה ולכבוש בארץ הפרזי והרפאים, עם חזק הוא אותו כנעני ורכב ברזל לו. רש"י] ניאמר יהושע אל בית יוסף לאפרים [למנשה לאמר עם רב אתה וכה גדול לך. פי הר' יהודה לך] [אותו שאמרתי לך עלה לך היערה] פי יער הוא ובראתו [כי יער הוא ואינו ראוי אל לא עם רב ויבראוהו ויפנהו] [נהיה לך תצאתיו פי תוריש את הפנעני פי רכב ברזל לו פי חזק הוא] [על ידי שאתה עם רב. פי רכב ברזל לו - ואין אחד משאר השבטים כדאי להלחם בו. כי חזק הוא - ואתה יש בכך היכולת ותורישנו].

Hashem wants this, like it says in the *Brachos*:
 יג וְאוֹלַךְ אֶתְכֶם קוֹמְמֵי יוֹת בְּחֻקֵי כּוֹ יג **You will go upright with self-esteem and Bitachon! Or else – Churban, Chas V'shalom!**

NOVARDOK

During WWII, many *Novardokers* found themselves in a Siberia camp where they were forced to do labor, even on Shabbos. They decided that they would transgress a *D'rabanan* [*Bedi'eved*], but never an *Issur D'oraisa*. When Yechiel Michel Yoselovsky was forced to dig a ditch on *Shabbos*, he used the shovel backwards, and started digging in a crazy way. They pulled a gun on him, and kept teaching him how to use the shovel properly; but he kept turning it around to be used with a major *Shinui*. A *Ness* happened. They decided he was *Meshuga*, and they left him alone.

**

Reb Pinchos Malach *Zatzal* was ordered to go on a train on *Shabbos*, or else they'll shoot him. He was adamant, and was ready to give his life. Suddenly, a superior officer decided that he should be left alone.

Bitachon and Hefkeirus



R' Shmuel Seneor *Zatzal* was a *Novardoker* who worked on *Bitachon*. He would *Davka* leave his suitcase in a public area unguarded, he would sleep in a bedroom with the door open, and the door in his office in

France was kept open. He was a calm and relaxed person without fear and nervousness.

**

R' Yoffen and his Rebbetzin *Zatzal's* names were *Avraham* and *Sara*, and indeed, there names fit



רבי אברהם יפהן חתנו של הסבא מנוברדוק זצ"ל
 R' Avraham Yoffen
 son-in-law of the Alter

them, as their house was open to the whole *Yeshiva*. They say that when there was a shortage of beds, the *Bachurim* would remove the door from the doorway, and put it on two chairs. I heard the same thing about R' Boruch Kaplan *Zatzal's* house.

R' Boruch married Vichna Eisen, one of the outstanding *Talmidos* of Sara Schenirer in Europe. [She later went on to establish Bais Yaakov in New York]. Since she was orphaned, she was adopted by her uncle, R' Yisroel Yaakov Lubchansky *Zatzal*, *Mashgiach* of *Baranovitch* [the *Alter* of *Novardok's* other son-in-law]. She had the same *Hanhaga* in her home with all kinds of interesting guests; she didn't mind their course behavior, only seeing the little child in them. R' Avraham Yoffen was also known for seeing good in people to the extreme. This is *Novardok* style - to enjoy being *Mafkir* yourself for others and to see only their good side.

After WWII R' Galinsky *Zatzal* visited R' Liebman *Zatzal* in a D.P. camp. R' Galinsky asked R' Gershon how he could build a *Yeshiva* in such a place with so many different types of people. He said that he gives each individual only what he likes.

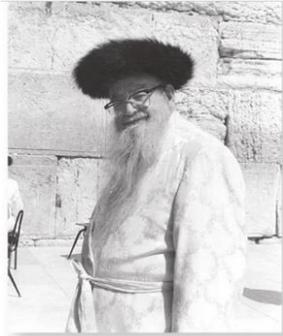
Humor in Novardok



R' Yisroel Dovid Nivner

R' Yisroel Dovid Nivner *Zatzal* was davening in the shul of R' Gavriel Cohen *Shlita* in Los Angeles. When he was introduced to say a few words, the Rav said we have a very *Chashuva Yid* with us – R' Yisroel interjected - a very, **very Chashuva Yid!** This is typical *Novardok* “making fun” of *Kavod*. R' Shalom Schwadron *Zatzal* was introduced to speak in the Aguda of Far Rockaway. **

They described him as “*HaGaon HaGadol*”. As soon as he heard “*HaGadol*”, he stretched out his hands over his stomach in front of everybody [he was indeed overweight]. *Novardok* was known for making fun of the *Yetzer Hara*, like *Chazal* say about *Yosef* that he was:



רבי שלום שבדרון בימי חוה"מ ליד כותל המערבי
R' Shalom Schwadron

ה' עָרַו מִפְּטָט מִפְּטָט made a joke out of his *Yetzer Hara*. They say in the name of the *Chazon Ish* that had they done these comedy shows [ridiculing the shtick of the *Yetzer Hara*] a long time ago - they could have destroyed the power of the *Haskalah*.

The World of *Tevah*, And the World of *Ness*

Of course, a person should wear a coat during the winter. However, I didn't wear a coat for five years, and I davened that even the coldest days shouldn't bother me. I never got a cold, while my friends did catch colds, despite their warm coats. One day, someone told me that I should put on a coat “just to look normal” in such freezing weather. **

As soon as I put on a coat, I caught a cold [within a day or two]. When you work under *Tevah*, then you need to go with the rules of *Tevah*. A *Yid* from Australia was having terrible *Shalom Bayis*

problems. His wife was constantly texting him poison pen texts, calling him nasty names, etc.

He also didn't think his wife looked good. I told him that with just *Bitachon*, I can give him a *Yeshua*. I gave a *Bracha*, and within 24 hours his wife mysteriously texted him kind words. He also suddenly felt an urge to be nicer to her, and he also decided that her looks were fine! She was amazed at his sudden change. ****

This harmony lasted for two weeks. It stopped as soon as they went for therapy and started to open a “can of worms” with constant rehashing of all the negative details. **When you sink into negativity and your problems, you remain under the power of *Tevah* and you lose *Si'ata D'Shmaya*. Like people who worry about their financial problems; the more they keep talking about them, the worse they make them.**

True Story

Paltiel Weiss had a booming business for years and years. Recently, he stopped getting calls. He felt that he had been rubbing his customers wrong, and they were abandoning him. A week ago, he drove to the Catskill Mountains with his wife. Instead of telling her his peckel, he decided to work on *Bitachon*. He spent at least an hour or two telling his wife all his **past** successes, and how everyone loved him. After talking positive for such a long time, he changed from having a feeling of “*Chaser*” lack, to a full feeling. That very night, he received four phone calls, two of them from people he thought disliked him! The next day the telephone calls started again!

The more positive stories a person hears, the more *Bitachon* he has. “Never verbalize a negative emotion. Better a positive lie than the negative truth.” A positive lie means you are working on *Bitachon* that things should improve.

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Questions To Rabbi Mandel



Question: When it comes to making life decisions, how important is it to go against our *Middos*? For example, should the “*Gaon*” focus on his learning, and the *Baal Chesed* to stick to his *Chesed*, or vice-versa? Or if a person is faced with choosing a career, and he has the opportunity to pursue something that comes naturally to him and he finds easy, or he can choose to “go against his *Middos*” and *Davka* pick an area he has difficulty with, what is the right thing to do? Understandably, going against one’s *Middos* is important. But what about taking in to account the ramifications of such a decision? He is taking a risk of falling on his face! Even if he doesn’t, is it worth giving up the potential of reaching advanced levels and becoming a master in his field, the ability to do so with less effort, the extra motivation [in the form of higher earnings, the *Kavod* he receives, and the satisfaction and enjoyment of doing what he does well]. Does it make sense to get involved in a career that doesn’t fit his nature, where he will constantly be pulled down and forced to struggle? What is the proper balance?

Answer: One should definitely focus on the things they are good at, and not be concerned about going against your *Ratzon*. I do that myself. *Aderaba*, the more you stick to what you're good at, the better. However, once you are spending time doing what you are “cut out” for, and you have been involved with it as much as possible, then there are times you should go against your nature [with guidance]. For example, when you have a nuisance in your life, or you have *Kin'ah*, *Ta'ava*, and *Kavod* issues. **That** is when you may need to do things that are against your nature. Nevertheless, you should proceed slowly and do it in small dosages.

Additionally, if you surround yourself with people who support you, and you learn the *Alter of Novardok's Sefer*, you become infused with the desire to go against your nature. You will be psyched up to want to do it, and you enjoy it. The world is psyched up to wanting to do whatever you want.

Question: I did not grow up frum. My nature is negative, and I suffer from depression and anger, etc. etc. Considering my weak background and our weak *Dor*, what *Mussar Sefer* should I learn first? Do you have any recommendations for *Mussar Seferim* that have English translations [like ArtScroll]?

Answer: Ideally, you should find a mentor or a *Rebbi* near you, that will know you personally and will be able to guide you, either in person or by phone. But you should go slowly at your own pace.

You can submit your questions to Rabbi Mandel by emailing them to
questionsforrabbimandel@gmail.com

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Shiur ID	Duration	Language
197986	5:49	English
197393	4:09	Yiddish
197392	5:12	Hebrew
198247	41:31	English
198218	3:56	Hebrew
198213	3:49	Yiddish
197987	8:24	English
197988	5:05	English
198386	19:17	Hebrew
198387	16:38	Yiddish
198255	2:45	English
198214	3:28	Yiddish
198219	3:12	Hebrew
198257	9:18	English
198852	42:22	English
198215	3:02	Yiddish
198220	3:33	Hebrew
198222	2:28	Hebrew
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