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לזכות רפואה וישועה מרדכי בן שרה רינה

BITACHON WEEKLY

וִירָא

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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Yiddish #122 Hebrew #222 English #322

The new edition of Bitachon Weekly is researched and edited by

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BITACHON WEEKLY

פרשת וירא תשפ"ג

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פרשת וירא

שְׁמֵךְ אֲבָרָם יִזְה

The Power of Bitachon Is Stronger Than Any Cheshbon In the World

TRUE STORY

You ruined your life! It's your own fault! You were already redd your true *Basherter*, and because you were such a "*Drai-kup*" *indecisive* you rejected it! Now you're finished! A person I knew was told this by a tremendous *Adam Gadol*, who was a famous *Baal Ruach HaKodesh*. **

Guess what? A few years later, this "*Drai-kup Elter Bachur*" got married to a most phenomenal *Shidduch*, and he raised an unusually *Chashuva* family, with loads of success all over his life! ***

It's hard for me to believe that an *Adam Gadol* should say such negative things. But at any rate, **the power of Bitachon is stronger than any Cheshbon in the world.** I checked out these types of things with my *Rabbeim*, and I concluded that sometimes its' a *Mitzva* not to be *Gores* pay attention to such negatives, and make sure to **laugh hard at those negs!** [Your survival is at stake! *Pikuach Nefesh!*]. ****

I know several stories about people who were yelled at by the most *Chashuva* people for doing things that these people considered wrong, and in the end they turned out A-1 [P.S. They weren't capable of listening, so Hashem helped them despite their weaknesses]. *****

However, being *M'vatel* *surrendering* your *Da'as* to your *Rebbe* or an *Adam Gadol* can bring unbelievable *Nissim* and *Yeshuos*. You need *Si'ata D'shmaya* and loads of *Tefila* for everything. The point of these stories is to bring

out how wrong it is to have *Yi'ush* [unless you need to work on "happy acceptance" for a difficult situation]. *****

The first of the *Avos* should teach us the #1 lesson: **Have Romemus** [like his name, "*Avram*"] **and don't get caught in being petty.** During these *Parshiyos* especially, we need to try to be like the *Avos*. *Avraham Avinu* was above all the silly negativism that people have. He was *Ram* high and he was *Av* father. His thrill in life was his serving Hashem, and he wasn't involved in the petty difficulties that people have.

וְאֶקְחָה פֶּת לָחֶם וְסַעְדוּ לְבָבְכֶם יִזְה

Why Does Avraham Get So Excited to Help His Fellow Man?

Look how *Avraham Avinu* feels for his fellow man: הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת הָיְתָה לְרֵעָהּ *Fill yourselves up to your desire!* His pleasure in life is when people satisfy their needs. And not only in *Gashmiyus*, but also in *Ruchaniyus*, as it says: וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַזֹּאת הָיְתָה לְרֵעָהּ *the people they [spiritually] created.* Look how *Avraham* runs and runs and gets excited over his guests without end. They say that R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal* used to love watching people eat. And that R' Yisroel Salanter *Zatzal* became *Mamash*: הָיָה כְּהוֹלֵל *frantic* when he was *Osek* in *Hachnosas Orchim*. [1]. **

An Oved Hashem Gets Excited Only Over Hashem and Nothing Else

This entire first episode of *Avraham's Hachnosas Orchim* was talked about forever in *Slabodka*. The *Yesod* of a true *Oved Hashem* [especially in *Novardok*] is **when a person gets excited only by Hashem**, which includes the incredible greatness

¹ המאורות הגדולים [קו-אור ותיאורים מדויקים של האיש המוסרי יוצרי תנועת המוסר חיים ופעולותיהם, סידרם הרב חיים אפרים זייטשיק, מהדורה רביעית ירושלם תשכט, בחלק על ר' ישראל מסלאנט, עמ' סג אות רב] בענין הכנסת אורחים היה להוט ובהול עד מאד, והיה אומר: יש ולפעמים בא אורח הגון, שמן הראוי להכין עבורו סעודה הגונה. אבל שמא תימשך קצת ההכנה ולבו של האורח יחלש בינתיים, ובכן מוטב לתת לו תיכף ומיד דבר מה לסעד את לבו ואח"כ יכול להתחיל בהכנת סעודה רבתי לפי כבוד האורח, וכמו שמצינו אצל אברהם אבינו ע"ה שאמר וְאֶקְחָה פֶּת לָחֶם וְסַעְדוּ לְבָבְכֶם ואח"כ וַיֵּרֶץ אֲבָרָהָם וכו' וְאֵל הַבָּקָר רָץ אֲבָרָהָם וכו'.

hearted fearless person [*Ramban*²] who didn't
hesitate a second to go to war against the four
most powerful kings in the world. *****

He also smashed his father's idols, even though his father was a powerful friend of dangerous *Nimrod HaMelech*. Indeed, his father reported him to *Nimrod*, and he was thrown into a fiery furnace. You see the way he talked to *Melech Sedom*:
 וְלֹא תֹאמַר אֲנִי הִעֲשֵׂיתִי אֶת אַבְרָם
 You shouldn't say that I made Avram
 rich, and he is also tough to: עֶפְרוֹן Ephron.
 [Rashi³].

Chazal say⁴ that he was called *Avraham Ha'Ivri* since the whole world was on one side and he was on the other side. He had everyone *Farpocked* and as if they didn't exist. The *Rambam* calls him⁵: יָדָא which means "tough". [*Radak*⁶]. *****

He epitomized *Shaar HaBitachon* where the *Chovos Halvavos* describes⁷ a true *Baal Bitachon* as a person who worships only Hashem and not humans. This is why he said: **וְאֵנִי עָפָר** “I am but dust and ashes” since he realized that **all** humans are only: **נִבְרָאִים** “created ones” and are total zeroes. [The *Chovos*

² הרמב"ן בפרשת תולדות עה"פ אם מעשה עמנו רעה [כו כט] ויתכן שהיה אברהם גדול מאד ורב כח, שהיו בביתו שלש מאות איש שולף חרב, ולו בעלי ברית רבים. והוא גם כן חיל אשר לבו כלב הארית. ורדף ארבעה מלכים גבורים מאד ונצחם.

⁴ בראשית רבה (מב ח) נצד לאַבְרָם העֶבְרִי [לִן יֵד יג] רבי יהודה ורבי נחמיה ורבנן, רבי יהודה אומר, **כל העולם כולו מעבר אחד והוא מעבר אחד**, ר' נחמיה אמר, שהוא מבני בניו של עבר, ורבנן אמרי, שהוא מעבר הנהר, ושהוא משלים כלשון עברי.

⁶ ספר השרשים לרד"ק [אות א ערך אית] איתן מושקף [בלק כד כא] אֵל נָחַל אֵיתָן אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲבֹד בּוֹ [שופטים כא ד] גוי אֵיתָן [ירמיה ה טו]. ומשקלו בִּיתָן [אסתר א ה] ואם זה בצרי וזה בחירק **ענין כלם ענין חזוק** והם שמות התואר. ומשָׁבַב בִּאֵיתָן [יחזק מט כד] פירושו במקום איתן, וְאֵתָנִים יִסְלַף [איוב יב יט] פירוש החזקים בטענותיהם ובמיטב הדבור, וְהָאֲתָנִים מִסְדֵּי אֶרֶץ [מיכה ו ב] החזקים, בְּגֶזֶח הָאֲתָנִים [מלכים א ח ב] הוא תשרי ונקרא כן לטעם שאמרו רבותינו ז"ל [ר"ה יא א] שנוולו בו אינתי עולם. או רמז למעשים הנכבדים והחזקים אשר בו.

ובשער יחוד המעשה [פרק ד] מפני שכל מי שאינו יודע את אדוניו לא יעבדהו בלבד, אבל יעבוד מי שיודע ענינו ויתכן ממנו התועלת והנוק. ואם יעשה מי שאינו יודע את האלקים מעשה ממעשי העבודה, כוונתו בהם מי שיירא ויקוה מבני אדם בלבד, **ועובד בני אדם ולא הבורא אותם**, מפני שאיננו יודע ולא מכיר ענינו. וכן נאמר בהעובד כוכבים כי מביאו לזה סכלותו באלקים יתברך.

Halvavos notes⁸ that a dead human body smells worse than the carcass of any animal]. *****

And this explains how he unhesitatingly went to do *Akeidas Yitzchok* and slaughter his own son: since he understood well how Hashem is everything, and nothing else counts [including humans]. In *Novardok*, their #1 *Yesod* was not to have *Hispa'alus* over anything [especially of humans], and no difficult situation, *Nisayon*, or issue in life scares them. *****

Rabbi Miller *Zatzal* used to make *Choizek* fun of *Goyim* getting excited over a baseball game. **Hispa'alus in general is a no-no, and it should be reserved only for Hashem.** Yet, *Avraham Avinu* goes wild over his guests! R' Yaakov Kamenetzky *Zatzal* told me that there are two opposite extremes: ומוֹתֵר הָאָדָם מִן קהלת ג יט *Man is no better than an animal*, and: וְיִפַּח בְּאַפּוֹ נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים Hashem breathed into Man the soul of life. *****

Indeed, Hashem cannot be seen. Yet, He has miniature versions of Himself all over the world; in the form of humans. Do you want to see Hashem? Look at humans and enjoy! Every human is Gevaldig! He has Sechel, Bechira, and the power of speech. *****

Chazal say⁹ that if you smack a person, it is as if you did so to Hashem. Honoring humans is like honoring Hashem. *Bain Adam La'chaveiro* is most serious in our lives, and even Hashem can't be *Mochel* you until the person you hurt is *Mochel* you. [*Mishna*¹⁰]. *****

I was a *Bachur* who had just come from the U.S. to *Eretz Yisroel*, and I met R' Shlomo Wolbe

Zatzal. Although I wasn't the *Gadol HaDor* [yet], he was super friendly and very excited to see me, and he had tremendous *Simcha*. This is the *Chinuch* he had from *Gedolei HaMussar* [like his *Rebbe*, R' Yerucham *Zatzal*] who understood the *Chashivus* of humans. *****

Avraham means *Romemus*, and *Sara* means *S'rara nobility*. Just like *Avraham* saw greatness in himself, so did he see greatness in all humans. Giving a human to eat is like *Achi'las Mizbeach* the consuming ["eating"] of the [Korban on the fire of the] *Mizbeach* and the *Zechus* is *Gevaldig*. **The people in our lives should be viewed as golden opportunities of being M'chabed a Tzelem Elokim.** *****

In order for these ideas to sink in, you need to talk about them a lot [like they did in *Slabodka*]. "I love people!" [Keep lying!] "I see greatness in Mr. ____" [even though he doesn't seem too great]. *****

[P.S. If by nature you have an overwhelming fear of people, you may need to go the opposite way, since your *Bain Adam La'chaveiro* is loaded with fear of people. As always, you need a *Rebbe*].

הַכְבוֹד הַבָּל הַבָּלִים מְסִילַת יִשְׂרָאֵל פֶּרֶק כב

Kavod is Hevel Havalim

Avraham Avinu had a lifetime of inferiority (no children) and he didn't waste his energy with these silly worries.

STORY

A friend of mine used to be overwhelmed with *Kin'ah* for a fellow *Melamed*, who was so calm with his *Talmidim*. Whenever he walked into this *Melamed's* classroom, the atmosphere of calm and respect was tangible. My friend was more of

⁸ חובות הלבבות שער עבודת האלקים [הקדמה, והענין השני] כשנעיין במה שיש תוך גוף האדם מן הליכוכים והטינופיים, ומה שנראה עליו מחוץ ממה שהוא קרוב מהם, כשהוא נמנע מן הרחיצה והנקיות ימים רבים, וכן כאשר ימות, כי זוהמתו יותר כבדה מכל זוהמת כל נבלות שאר בעלי חיים, וצואתו יותר מסרחת מצואת שאר בעלי חיים, וכן שאר טינופיו.

⁹ סנהדרין נח ב, ואמר רבי חנינא, הסוטר לועז של ישראל כאילו סוטר לועז של שכניה, שנאמר [משלי כ כה] מוקש אדם ילע קדש.

¹⁰ משנה סוף יומא, עברות שבין אדם למקום, יום הפפורים מכפר, עברות שבין אדם לחבירו, אין יום הפפורים מכפר עד שירצה את חבירו. את זו דרש רבי אלעזר בן עזריה, מפל טטאמיתקם לפני ה' תטהרו [אחרי טז ל] עברות שבין אדם למקום יום הפפורים מכפר, עברות שבין אדם לחבירו אין יום הפפורים מכפר, עד שירצה את חבירו.

a nervous type, and he felt a certain inferiority next to him. He felt that he could be doing much better if he works more on *Ka'as*. **

“Envy is Ignorance”

Recently, this very [“calm”] person who he envied all his life, got angry at him publicly [more than once] and he had to ask him for *M'chila*. Look how people can spend a lifetime with *Kin'ah* for no reason! You may be thinking:

“Look at that:

- *Ois'ge'arbe'ta Tzaddik*
- *Masmid*
- *Savlan*
- *Simcha'dike* person
- *Pike'ach*
- popular person
- great husband and/or father
- what a wonderful *Tzadekes* wife

WOW!”

Believe it or not, you are living in *Dimyon!* *** There are unending examples of *Kin'ah* situations. Hashem is actually testing you, in order to make you great by understanding the fallacy of your *Kin'ah*. So many people **were born** with that “*Gevaldige Ma'ala*” that you envy. That *Ma'ala* may also have a downside, that you aren't aware of. ****

Like “so-and-so” who works so hard *L'shem Shamayim* [unlike you, the lazy one] who has high blood pressure because he has no control over his high unending ADHD. Or “this *Menucha'dik* person” you so envy, who has a lazy streak that prevents him from *Shteiging* to his fullest. *****

Avraham Avinu didn't have these types of worries. His *Geshmak* in imitating Hashem and spreading *Emuna* and *Bitachon* overrode all petty problems.

אברהם ושרה

The Importance of a Beautiful “Name” Like *Avraham and Sara*

Several people have confided in me and have told me how low they have fallen in certain *Middos* [e.g. *Ta'avos*]. Yet, in certain ways they are super careful in certain branches of that *Midda*. I suggested that they should basically be proud of the positive side, and view the negative like temporary insanity. Besides the practical benefit you get from this, it is also a *Mitzva* to go this way since it is *Shviras HaMiddos* going against your nature, *נְעִיָקָר חַיּוֹת הָאָדָם שְׂכִירַת הַמְדוּת*, which is the main reason of life [Gr"1]. Try to live up to a good name that you actually have, or a high *shtempel* that you give yourself:

- “I'm the *Avraham Avinu* or *Sara* of our *Dor*.”
- “I'm the pride of my family/ of *Lakewood*/ of *Klal Yisroel*.”

You have no idea how much this can help you. There is always a grain of truth, which becomes more and more true the more often you keep “reminding” yourself of your “greatness”.

חמשים צדיקים בתוך העיר יח כד

The Importance of *Kiruv*

RSRH *Zatzal* explains¹² that only *Tzaddikim* who

¹¹ הגר"א בפירושו למשלי עה"פ הַחֲזֹק בַּמִּסְקָר אֶל תַּרְךְ נִצְרָה פִּי הָיָא חֲזִיק [משלי ד יג] כִּי הָיָא חֲזִיק, כִּי מָה שֶׁהָאָדָם חֵי הוּא כְּדִי לִשְׁבּוֹר מָה שֶׁלֹּא שֶׁבֶר עַד הֵנָּה אוֹתוֹ הַמְדָּה, לִכֵּן צָרִיךְ תְּמִיד לְהַתְחַזֵּק, וְאִם לֹא יִתְחַזֵּק לְמָה לוֹ חַיִּים.

¹² פירוש הגאון מוהר"ר רבי שמשון בן הר"ר רפאל הירש זללה"ה עה"פ האף תספח צדיק עם רשע אולי יש חמשים צדיקים בתוך העיר [יח כג-כד] הביטוי "בתוך העיר" מובלט פעמיים, הן בשאלתו של אברהם [פסוק כד], והן בתשובתו של ה' [פסוק כו]. אין אברהם אומר: "אולי יש חמשים צדיקים בעיר", אלא "בתוך" העיר. וגדולה מזו תשובתו של ה': "נאמר ה' אם אמצא בסדם חמשים צדיקים בתוך העיר ונשאתי לכל המקום בעבורם. להבנת ביטוי זה יש להשוות את הכתוב במקום אחר: "בתוך עמי אנכי יושבת" [מלכים א, ד יג]. הצדיק שבסדם, כפי שדמותו מצטיירת לעיני אברהם, ואשר למענו יינצל צבור החוטאים כולו, אינו מפקיר את ההמונים מתוך יהירות וזיחיות הדעת. אותו צדיק בסדם לא באפס מעשה יסתכל באבדנם המוסרי של בני עירו. אף אין הוא מתבודד בד' אמותיו ואומר: שלום עלי נפשי, אני את נפשי הצלתי. שכן, אם כך הוא עושה, בעצם התנהגותו זו כבר הוציא את עצמו מכלל הצדיקים, שהרי לא יצא ידי החובה הגדולה המוטלת עליו בסביבתו המיוחדת, ופחות מכל ראוי הוא, שלמענו יינצלו הרבים; הוא, שהפקיר אותם זה מזמן לגורלם המר, מה לזה ולצרת הרבים? הן אבדן החוטאים אינו נוגע אל לבו; ואף אולי בהרגשה של סיפוק הוא מצדיק עליהם את הדין.

are: בתוך העיר "within" the city can save

them. "Within" the city means that they involved and worried about everything with a "lively connection" to everybody. This *Tzaddik* is always trying to improve the *Matzav*. He never stops giving *Tochacha*. He never despairs. **He is never tired of trying, however distant the hopes of success may be.** **

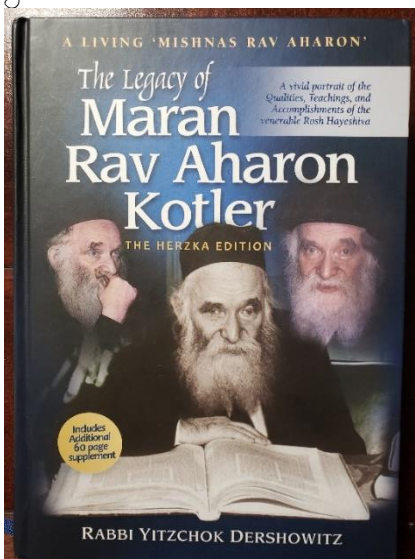
These are the *Tzaddikim* who would feel grief and pain at the death of each individual of these thousands, just as a gardener is concerned for the survival of his beloved plant in which he invested so much toil and energy. The *Gemara* says¹³ that **during the downfall of Yerushalayim the first ones to be doomed were the *Tzaddikim***

who had kept the Torah from ת-א [A to Z] but had not occupied themselves with bettering others. ***

This "other type" of *Tzaddik* has a certain *Ga'ava*, and when he sees the ruin of the masses [who he has a cold feeling for, and he has long given up on them] he may even possibly feel a

certain smug satisfaction that they "got what they deserve" [end quote of RSRH]. In the biography of R' Ahron Kotler *Zatzal*, R' Dershowitz *Zatzal* mentions how R' Ahron would urge *Gedolei Torah* [in a nice way] to get involved in *Klal* work. ****

We have a description of RSRH's picture of how a *Yid* should feel towards the *Klal* [never to look down at others, *Chas V'shalom*]. The *Alter of Novardok Zatzal* held that *Bnei Torah* have an extra *Achrayus* for the *Klal*. R' Nossan Wachtfogel *Zatzal* said that when *Moshiach* comes, "being" a *Ben Torah* will be considered very *Chashuv* indeed. But a "builder" of *Torah* will be much greater. *****



The biography of R' Ahron Kotler



R' Shlomo Freifeld

R' Shlomo Freifeld *Zatzal* was one of the great *Talmidim* of Rav Hutner. He once commented to me that those who "go out to those far-off places" *Shteig* much more, and the *Velt* says that they are much happier. Many of their personal problems disappear, and they discover that they had much more *Kochos* and

לא זה הצדיק, שלמענו תינצל סדום; צדיקו של אברהם, שרוי בתוך העיר, בקשר ער וחי לכל סביבתו. אותו צדיק לעולם אינו פוסק מלהוכיח ומלהורות, מלמחות ומלהזהיר, מלתקן ומלהציל, ככל שידו משגת. לבו ער לכל, ואין הוא נלאה מלנסות ומלתקן, גם אם רחוקה התקוה ההצלחה. לעולם אינו מתייאש מן האדם, והוא נחליץ לכל פעולה שהיא למען האדם. כגון זה, העמל וטורח על נטע שעשועיו, כן רואה הצדיק תפקידו בתקון האדם והצלחתו: איככה יוכל הוא לראות באבדן בני טפוחיו שנפשו קשורה בנפשם! אכן חמישים כאלה, הנמצאים בתוך העיר, אפשר ולמענם תינצל גם סדום כולה מן הכלייה. חכמינו ז"ל אמרו [שבת נה א] בחורבן ירושלים החל המשחית מן הצדיקים "שקיימו את התורה כולה מאל"ף עד תי"ו" מפני שאף הם לא היו בתוך העיר, לא מחו ולא החזירו למוטב, במקום שהיה למחות ולתקן.

¹³ שבת נה א, אמר ליה רבי זורא לרבי סימון: לוכחינהו מר להני דבי ריש גלותא. אמר ליה: לא מקבלי מינאי. אמר ליה: אף על גב דלא מקבלי לוכחינהו מר, דאמר רבי אחא ברבי חנינא, מעולם לא יצתה מדה טובה מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא וחזר בה לרעה חוץ מדבר זה [שנאמר במקרא זה שהוציא דבור לטובה, ומפני עונש תוכחה חזר בו. רש"י] דכתיב [יחזקאל ט ד] 'ניאמר ה' אליו עבר בתוך העיר וירושלם והתחית תו על מצחית האנשים הנאנחים והנאנקים על כל התועבות הנעשות בתוכה וגו' [אלו צדיקים] אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא לגבריאל: לך ורשום על מצחן של צדיקים תיו של דיו שלא ישלטו בהם מלאכי חבלה [שאני רוצה לשלוח בעיר] ועל מצחם של רשעים תיו של דם כדי שישלטו בהן מלאכי חבלה. אמרה מדת הדין לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבוננו של עולם, מה נשתנו אלו מאלו? אמר לה: הללו צדיקים גמורים, והללו רשעים גמורים. אמרה לפניו: רבוננו של עולם, היה בידם למחות ולא מיחו. אמר לה: גלוי וידוע לפני שאם מיחו בהם לא יקבלו מהם. אמרה לפניו: רבוננו של עולם, אם לפניך גלוי, להם מי גלוי? והיינו דכתיב [יחזקאל ט ו] 'עון פחור וכתולה נטף ונשים פהרגו למשחית ועל כל איש אשר עליו התו אל תגשו וממקדשי תחלו [מעיקרא ועל כל איש אשר עליו התו אל תגשו, ולבסוף וממקדשי תחלו] וכתיב [שם] נחלו פאנשים הנאנכים אשר לפני הכית. תני רב יוסף, אל תקרי מקדשי אלא מקודשי [שהודה למקטרג מדת הדין, וחזר מן הטוב] אלו בני אדם שקיימו את התורה כולה מאלף ועד תיו.

capabilities than they realized. *****

Avraham Avinu is the #1 example of *Kiruv*, and there is a special *Chazal*¹⁴ where Hashem claps one hand against the other and He wishes that the world would be full of *Avraham Avinu*'s. The average person, including a *Ben Torah*, becomes settled in his mode, and he **cannot** move [he's molasses!]

I know plenty of people who went-out for *Klal Yisroel*, and they were extremely successful. Constant brainwashing about the importance of *Kiruv* has done the job for many. *Novardok* was constantly involved in public speaking, and through this they broke their fear of people.

If you really care for others, then you never give up hope on them. P.S. Include yourself

אולי ימצאון יה ל

Plead Your Case Before Hashem

Look at how a human pleads with Hashem. The *Kapitchnitzer Rebbe* was famous for this, and every *Yid* has a right to discuss with Hashem and plead his own [and others'] case before Hashem. **This is *M'chazek* a person's *Emuna*, and a person can turn over situations with these *Tefilos*.**

ויעל לוט מצוּעֵר וישב בקר ושתיו עמו יט ל

Why Do I Have Such A Strong *Yetzer Hara*?

Rashi says¹⁵ that the incident of *Lot* and his daughters happened because *Lot* had a strong lust for *Arayos*. What does a person do if he has a

strong *Yetzer Hara* for something? He should have patience with himself, and realize that the end result of the story of *Lot* and his daughters produced *Dovid HaMelech* who had a strong lust, which he channeled for his unusual *Ahavas Hashem*.

וילכו סדמה ואברהם עודנו עומד לפני ה' יח כב

Is There Anything Hashem Cannot Do??

The *Malachim* had already gone to destroy *Sedom*, yet *Avraham* prayed for their survival. The *Sforno* points out¹⁶: אפילו חרב חדה מונחת על צנארו של אדם, אל תיאש מן היתקיים as impossible as your situation may seem, NEVER give up hope! **What a lesson: Never give up** even on the worst *Rasha*. Even after years of a heavy addiction, you can still have *Yeshuos*. This is because when Hashem told *Avraham*: ה' יפלא מה' דבר יה יד Is there anything Hashem cannot do?? he took it seriously. **

Bitachon In Impossible Situations Is Always Rewarded

There is tremendous *Schar* for people who never give up on themselves and impossible situations. Perhaps *Avraham*'s stubborn *Bitachon* that he used for *Sedom* was a *Zechus* for his spectacular success in having *Yitzchok* and the most beautiful nation. Shortly after this *Tefila* and the destruction of *Sedom*, his nephew *Lot* was saved, and the origin of *Malchus Bais Dovid* was born. *Rabeinu Yonah* says¹⁷ that even if your *Bitachon* didn't

¹⁴ תנא דבי אליהו רבה [פרק ו] כשם שהקב"ה יהי שמו הגדול לעולם ולעלמי עולמיא זוכר ומשבח מעשה הצדיקים והכשרים וטופח שתי ידיו זו על גב זו ואומר למה לא נתמלא כל העולם כאברהם יצחק ויעקב וכמשה ודוד.

ובספר אור הצפון [מאמרי מוסר של הגה"צ מרן נתן צבי פינקל, הסבא מסלבודקא, חלק שני עמ' קסד] הביא לשון תנא דבי אליהו כך: הקב"ה מוחא כף על כף ואומר: מתי יתמלא כל העולם כולו כאברהם אבינו.

¹⁵ רש"י עה"פ ותשקב את אביה [יט לג] ובצעירה כתיב [פסוק לה] ותשקב עמו. צעירה, לפי שלא פתחה בזנות אלא אחותה למדתה, חיסה עליה הכתוב ולא פירש גנותה. אבל בכירה שפתחה בזנות, פרסמה הכתוב במפורש. ובקומה של בכירה נקוד על וי"ו של "ובקומה" לומר שבקומה ידע, ואעפ"כ לא נשמר ליל שני מלשותות. א"ר לוי, כל מי שהוא להוט אחר בולמוס של עריות, לסוף מאכילים אותו מבשרו.

¹⁶ ביאור על התורה אשר חבר און וחקר הגאון השלם האלקי כמה"ר ר' עובדיה ספורנו זלה"ה עה"פ ואברהם עודנו עומד לפני ה' [יח כב] אף על פי שהמלאכים אשר שלח להשחית כבר הגיעו לסדום, מכל מקום "אברהם עודנו עומד" לבקש רחמים וללמד זכות, כאמרם ז"ל [ברכות י א] אפילו חרב חדה מונחת על צנארו של אדם, אל ימנע עצמו מן הרחמים. וכן בחייבי מיתות אמרו [סנהדרין מ א] מחזירים אותו ארבעה וחמשה פעמים, עד שיהיה ממש בדבריו.

¹⁷ ביאור רבינו יונה לספר משלי עה"פ תוֹחֶלֶת צְדִיקִים שְׁמֶקֶה [י כח] הנה כתוב בענין התאוות לעושר וכבוד [משלי יג יב] תוֹחֶלֶת מְשֻׁכָּה מְחַלֶּה לֵב, אך תוחלת הצדיקים איננה מחלת לב, כי ששון ושמוחה ימצא בה כי תוחלתם לא על כוחם ועוצם ידם ולא אל בינתם ישענו כי על רחמי השי"ת, וכן כתיב [משלי ג ה] בְּטַח אֵל ה' כָּל לֵב וְאֵל בִּינָתָהּ אֵל תִּשְׁעֶן, ולא ידאגו בהמשך התוחלת, כי אינן דואגין למיעוט העושר, ככתוב [משלי טו טז] טוֹב מְעַט בִּינָתָהּ ה' מְאוּצָר רַב וְהוֹמָהּ

work for the thing you asked for, it will still work for other areas that are more *Chashuv* than what you asked for.

וַיֵּרָא וַיִּרְצֶן יֵה ב

The Path to Recovery for Z'nus Is to Go All Out in *Chesed* And Selflessness

Avraham's Z'rizus is all over the place, and he is extreme in his *Chesed*. The opposite of *Chesed* is *Z'nus*, where you **use** people for your *Ta'avos*, instead of **giving** to them. *Sedom* was around the corner of *Avraham Avinu*, and they were extreme in *Z'nus*, as it says: הוֹצִיָאם אֶלֶינוּ וְנִדְעָהם bring out your guests so that we can get to know them. They were beyond normal *Z'nus*; they were distorted. The *Rambam* says¹⁸ that when working on *Middos* you need to be extreme. Perhaps *Avraham Avinu's* extreme *Chesed* could be [among other reasons] that he wished to counter the extremism of *Z'nus* that was prevalent in his times. **

Avraham didn't even know what his unusually beautiful wife looked like. [*Rashi*¹⁹]. The *Dor HaMabul* was guilty of *Avoda Zara*, *Gezel*, and

Arayos; all three are signs of lack of *Sameach B'chelko*. By *Avoda Zara*, Hashem says: מָה הָיָה לָכֵן מִצָּאָה אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בִּי עוֹל יִרְמִיָה ב ה why do you need to look at strange g-ds? And *Gezel* and *Arayos* are an obvious lack of *Sameach B'chelko*. ***

Sameach B'chelko Isn't A Side Inyan It's Your Main Tachlis!

The *Gemara* says²⁰ that the *Churban Bais Hamikdash* came about because of *Sin'as Chinam*. The *Gr"a* explains²¹ this means a lack of *Bitachon*, i.e. not being *Sameach B'chelko*. The *Gr"a* also says²² that that the main purpose of the giving of the *Torah* was that we should learn *Bitachon*. The #1 *Nisayon* of mankind is *Bitachon*; i.e. not being *Sameach B'chelko*. The *Nachash* wanted *Chava*, and *Kayin* was jealous of *Hevel*. So *Avraham Avinu* goes to the extreme in the areas that the *Dor HaMabul* is guilty of. He goes against *Avoda Zara* by being thrown in the fire in order not to serve *Avoda Zara*. In the area of *Gezel*, his shepherds gave *Tochacha* to *Lot's* shepherds for stealing. ****

בו, אך שמחה ישיגון מן התוחלת על כל פנים, כי הם שמחים בכל עת אשר השיגו לערוך תוחלתם לאלקים ולשום תקותם לחסדו, וכל מה שנמשכת ומתאחרת תוחלתם הם מתענגים על העבודה אשר יעבדו את האלקים בתוחלת ובבטחון. גם תוכל לפרש תוחלת צדיקים שמהם כי אין ממושכה תוחלתם כי קרובה ישועתם לבא, ואם לא יגיע הענין שמיחלים עליו, תהיה צדקת התוחלת סבה לתועלות ולחסדים רבים ונכבדים מן הענין אשר בקשה נפשם, ככתוב [תהלים לב י'] וְהַבֹּשֶׁת בְּה' חֶסֶד וְסוֹכְבָנוּ.

¹⁸ רמב"ם הלכות דעות [ב ב] וכיצד היא רפואתם מי שהוא בעל חמה אומרים לו להנהיג עצמו שאם הוכה וקולל לא ירגיש כלל, וילך בדרך זו זמן מרובה עד שיתעקר החמה מלבו, ואם היה גבה לב ינהיג עצמו בבזיון הרבה וישב למטה מן הכל וילבש בלויי סחבות המבזות את לובשיהם וכיוצא בדברים אלו עד שיעקור גובה הלב ממנו ויחזור לדרך האמצעית שהוא דרך הטובה, ולכשיחזור לדרך האמצעית ילך בה כל ימיו, ועל קו זה יעשה בשאר כל הדעות אם היה רחוק לקצה האחד ירחיק עצמו לקצה השני וינהיג בו זמן רב עד שיחזור בו לדרך הטובה והיא מדה בינונית שבכל דעה ודעה.

¹⁹ רש"י בפרשת לך עה"פ הנה נא ידעתי כי אשה יפת מראה אף [יב יא] מ"א שעד עכשיו לא הכיר בה מתוך [מרוב] צניעות שבשניהם [שביניהם], ועכשיו ע"י מעשה הכיר בה.

²⁰ יומא ט ב, מקדש ראשון מפני מה חרב? מפני שלשה דברים שהיו בו, עבודה זרה וגלוי עריות ושפיכות דמים וכו', אבל מקדש שני שהיו עוסקים בתורה ובמצוות וגמילות חסדים, מפני מה חרב? מפני שהיתה בו שנאת חנם, ללמדך ששקולה שנאת חנם כנגד שלש עבירות עבודה זרה גלוי עריות ושפיכות דמים. רשעים היו, אלא שתלו בטחונם בהקדוש ברוך הוא, אתאן למקדש ראשון.

²¹ הגר"א [בביאורו לאגדות דסבא דבי אתונא] ובגמל וארנבת ושמן סימן טהרה שלהם מעלה גרה, וסימן טומאה שאינו מפרס פרסה, ובחזיר להיפך, והענין כמ"ש במדרש [ויקרא יג ה] גמל זו מלכות בבל, ארנבת זו מלכות יון, חזיר זו מלכות אדום. ואמרו [יומא ט ב] ראשונים עדיפי או אחרונים עדיפי, ואמרו ראשונים עדיפי, אדרבה אחרונים עדיפי דעסקי בתורה, תנו עיניכם בבירה. והענין כי ראשונים שנתגלה עוונם נתגלה קיצם, והטעם כי הראשונים היו מעשיהם הטובים טמונים ועוונותיהם גלויים כי לבם היה טוב, ואחרונים להיפך, ורחמנא ליבא בעי כמ"ש [סנהדרין קו ב] רבותא למיבעי בעי, בשני דרב יהודה [כולי תנויי בניקין וכו'] ורב יהודה שליף מסאני ואתא מיטרא, ואנן צווחינן וליכא דמשגח בן, אלא הקב"ה ליבא בעי, דכתיב וה' יראה ללבב] ואמרו ראשונים שהיה בהם עבודה זרה גלוי עריות ושפיכות דמים, אלא שתלו בטחונם בהקב"ה, נמצא כי מעשיהם רע מאד שכולן ביהרג ואל יעבור עבירות חמורות שבתורה, ולבם היה טוב מאד שמעלת הבטחון על כולם, ואחרונים עסקו בתורה ובגמילות חסדים ומפני מה חרבה? מפני שנאת חנם, ללמדך ששקולה שנאת חנם וכו', והוא מחוסר הבטחון, שכל הקנאה והשנאה ממנו, ולכן ראשונים הוגלו בשלש מלכויות שסימן טהרה שלהם מבפנים וסימן טומאה שלהם מבחוץ, ואחרונים בגלות אדום שנמשלה לחזיר שהוא בהיפך, והוא פושט טלפיו להראות סימני טהרה שלו ושבע תועבות בליבו, וכן הוא בגלות זו מדתן של הערב רב 'ונעשה לנו שם' כנ"ל, וז"ש 'טובה צפרנן של ראשונים' סימן טומאה שלהם, 'מכריסן של אחרונים', והבן.

²² הגר"א בביאורו למשלי עה"פ להיות בה' מְסֻקָּה [כב יט] ועיקר תנינתו התורה לישראל הוא כדי שישימו בטחונם בה' וכו' והוא לפי שיעקר מהכל הוא הבטחון השלם והוא כלל כל המצות וכו' שזה אות על שריית השכינה בתוך בני ישראל.

Avraham is always happy, and he never complains. This is the nature of a true *Baal Bitachon* and *Anav*. R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal* was known **never to complain** when he was in a concentration camp. And he was known to be heavily involved in emulating *Avraham Avinu*

²³ רש"י עה"פ ו'ר'קצו רג'ליקם [יח ד] כסבור שהם ערביים שמשתחיים לאבק רגליהם, והקפיד שלא להכניס ע"ז לביטו.
²⁴ א.ה. בזה יתבאר לשון המשנה באבות [ד א] איזהו מכבד, המכבד את הבריות, שנאמר (שמואל א, ב ל') כי מכבדי אכבד ובני יקלו.

Perhaps this is why *Sara* had such a strong *Hakpada* against *Hagar*, since she makes a joke out of authority. This is the destruction of the world. No respect. Everything is a joke. A parent, a teacher, a *Rebbe*, a human being; all deserve respect. *Avraham* is the extreme opposite.

* * * *

He runs to help three *Malachim* who appeared like Arabs that worship the dust of their feet [*Rashi*²³]. He is in **awe** of every *Tzelem Elokim*, since this is the closest we can get to seeing Hashem *Mamash*, and: כִּנְיָוִל figuratively giving Him food and honoring Him. *Avraham Avinu* seems to go wild over this golden opportunity. He bows down to them and respects them, as if they are Hashem.²⁴ *****

We all need to learn from this how the entire *Inyan* of *Bain Adam La'chaveiro* is *Kodesh Kodashim*. **A human being is not a joke!!** *Avraham Avinu* even

²³ רש"י עה"פ ורצו רגליכם [יח ד] כסבור שהם ערביים שמשתחווים לאבק רגליהם, והקפיד שלא להכניס ע"ו לביתו.

honors Lot. He says: כִּי אֲנָשִׁים אֵהְיָ אִתָּם אֲנִי וְנָנוּ We are brothers. Avraham even tries to save low-life Sedom! He has a *Bris* treaty with *Melech Pelishtim* and *Avimelech*, a country whose very existence came from swapping each other's wives. [Rashi²⁵].

And he takes *Hagar*, the daughter of *Paroh Melech Mitzrayim*, a country of the lowest *Madrega* [who were: זִמָּה שְׁתוּפִי immoral] as a *Shifcha* and then a wife. His name is *Av-ram*. "Av" is a father, who gets the most respect [since *Kibud Av* is #1], and "Ram" means high and exalted. "Sara" means *S'rara* rulership and dignity. **Avraham and Sara respect the biggest low-lives, while Hagar is M'zalzel in the highest:** אֲבִי יִרְתָּה master.

Sara Is Known for Tz'niyus, And Tz'niyus Means Self-Respect

No wonder *Sara* had such *Hakpada* on *Hagar*. The basic of her main *Yesodos*, **respect**, is cheapened! Women especially, have to understand this concept. About *Sara* it says: הִנֵּה בָּאֵהָלָא she is in the tent, which *Rashi* explains: הִיא צְנוּעָה she is a *Tzenua*. *Tz'niyus* means respect, as it says: כָּל כְּבוֹדָהּ בַּת מֶלֶךְ the *Kavod* of a princess is her *Tz'niyus* [concealment]. Not respecting a woman means *Z'nus* and *Hefkeirus*. Do whatever you wish, without rules and *Gedarim*. *****

Notice that the Arabs have: ט' קַבִּים שָׁל זִמָּה nine out of the ten measures of *Z'nus* that came down to the entire world [Gemara²⁶] and look how their wives are like nobodies. The husband abuses them physically, and can divorce without any restrictions. A lady is a joke in Arab culture, thanks to *Hagar's* making a joke out of her: אֲבִי יִרְתָּה master; the extreme opposite of

Avraham Avinu, who respects even the lowest.

The same way *Sara Imeinu* dislikes: וַתִּקַּל וְכִבְרִיתָהּ לִּי לְטוֹרָה לְטוֹרָה disrespects for authority, so does she dislike *Yishmael* when he is: מְצַחֵק כֹּא טִיב joking inappropriately and she wants him removed so he shouldn't influence *Yitzchok*, *Chas V'shalom*. And then we have: וַיִּכְזֵּז עֵשָׂו אֶת בְּעֹרָה Eísav scorned the *Bechora*. *Bechora* is the greatest *Kavod*, but *Eisav* makes a joke out of it, and he loses everything. The only reason we can be hurt by *Eisav* is his *Zechus* of *Kibud Av*. This little bit of *Shaychus* connection with "respect", is his entire power in this world.

Indeed, the name *Yitzchok* means joking, but in the proper way. Like how they laughed in *Novardok*; at the *Yetzer Hara*, and at the foolishness of *Ta'avos Olam HaZeh*, and *Kavod* [which is *Hevel Havalim*]. The name *Yitzchok* is in future tense, meaning "he will laugh". וַתִּשְׁחַק לְיוֹם אַחֲרֹן מְשֻׁלֵּי לֵאמֹר כֹּה She will laugh on the last day. The *Eishes Chayil* [who is *Sara*] will laugh in the end. "The one who laughs last, laughs best." She was *Zoche* to her "Yitzchok" who laughs in the proper way, and will be *Zoche* to *Olam HaBah*. *****

The laughter of *Yitzchok* is in the future. But the laughter of *Yishmael* - *Hagar* and *Eisav* - *Edom* ends up in *Gehinom* with all kinds of *Tzaros*, *Rachmana Litzlan*. While *Simcha* is extremely important these days, we have to be careful; and not become one big sarcastic cynical joke.

Be Careful Not to Be the Type That Cheapens People

We need to work on sincerity, and avoid cheap flattery and fake praise [although sometimes it's

²⁵ רש"י בפרשת נח עה"פ וְאֵת פִּתְרָסִים וְאֵת פְּסִלָּחִים אֲשֶׁר יָצְאוּ מִשָּׁם פְּלִשְׁתִּים [י' יד] מְשֻׁנִּים יָצְאוּ, שֶׁהֵיוּ פִּתְרוּסִים וְכִסְלוּחִים מְחִלְפִּין מְשֻׁכָּב נְשׁוּתִים אֵלּוּ לֵאמֹר, וַיִּצְאוּ מֵהֶם פְּלִשְׁתִּים.

²⁶ קידושין מט ב, עשרה קבים חכמה ירדו לעולם, תשעה נטלה ארץ ישראל ואחד כל העולם כולו. עשרה קבים יופי ירדו לעולם, תשעה נטלה ירושלים ואחד כל העולם כולו. עשרה קבים עשירות ירדו לעולם, תשעה נטלה רומי ואחד כל העולם כולו וכו' וכו'. עשרה קבים זנות ירדו לעולם, תשעה נטלה ערביא ואחד כל העולם כולו. [ובתוספות מסכת כתובות לו ב [ד"ה וכו'] הביאו הגמ' בלשון הזה: עשרה קבין זימה ירדו לעולם תשעה נטלו ערביים].

better than nothing]. Hashem told *Avraham* to be a *Tamim*; to be real, and truly respect all kinds of people. There are plenty of types who can be “weird” or “nebachs” or somewhat koo-koo. Some people are inconsistent or immature, or not too intelligent.

They are all *Nisyonos Min HaShamayim* to see if we can still respect them and care for them, and take them seriously. To try to focus on their *Maalos*; be *Dan* them *L'kaf Zechus*, and try to see where they are better than us. If you are the critical type, you are prone to be *M'zalzel* in humans all the time.

The best *Eitza* is to daven to Hashem, to help you respect those you are *M'zalzel*. And: אָהַרױן
בְּכִיב last but not least, respect yourself! A lot!
A lifetime *Mussar Seder*. “I’m *Chashuv*!” Be careful not to be a: וְתַקַּל גְּבוּרָתָהּ בְּעֵינֶיהָ the type that cheapens people!

NOVARDOK

R' Chaim Mordechai Wainkranz

R' Chaim Mordechai Wainkranz *Zatzal* was a major *Tzaddik*. He specialized in going against his nature, and worked hard on this all his life; he was known to have *Ruach HaKodesh*. I used to visit him with several *Yungerleit* from Lakewood.



R' Chaim Mordechai Wainkranz with a Bar Mitzva Bachur

Everyone felt that the *Shechina* was in his kitchen. He learned lots of *Mussar* to become this way; especially *Chovos Halvavos* and *Madregas HaAdam*. *Madregas HaAdam* is a powerful *Sefer* which makes you realize that “always getting what you want” will destroy you, as *Chazal* say that *Kin'ah*, *Ta'ava*, and *Kavod* take a person out of the world; and it teaches you that going against your *Ratzon* and your personal *Negi'a* benefit gives you tremendous *Simcha*.

On the topic of going against your nature, Reb Shlomo Freifeld *Zatzal* told me that whenever he wants to get angry, he *Davka* doesn't; just to spite his *Yetzer Hara*!

**

Many Sephardi women used to come to R' Wainkranz for all kinds of issues. He would recommend that they learn *Chovos Halvavos* for half an hour each day. After a year, he would give them a *Bracha* in the *Zechus* of what they did. Barren women had children, and operations were avoided. People had miraculous and complete *Yeshuos*. His son *Shlita* told me that when one of his [sons'] daughters was pregnant, the doctor said there would be complications. So he learned *Shaar HaBechina* of *Chovos Halvavos* on the phone with her for seven months, and she gave birth to a perfectly normal baby.

A woman had a rebellious teenager, and R' Wainkranz told her to continuously buy her a chocolate-bar every day. This turned around the whole situation.

R' Wainkranz used to learn *Chovos Halvavos* for **hours** daily. People who visited him felt a real *Kedusha* in his house. Once, someone told him that he comes late to davening. He became excited and said: “How can you do that to Hashem??” He had a real relationship with Hashem, and he was hurt by what this person had told him. When he talked about Hashem, his face would shine with *Simcha*. He talked about the concept of “being embarrassed before Hashem” when doing something wrong. [He once told me that a person

who looks for *Kavod* is very far from Hashem].

My father once told me a story about R' Yonasan Shteif *Zatzal*. A *Bachur* who was his secretary once noticed how he suddenly jumped out of his seat and ran to the wall and said: Hashem, I'm so sorry for what I did! I'll try to behave from now on." He sounded like a little child talking to his father.

My sister, Mrs. Rochel Feder was a big *Tzadekes*, and she had a strong connection with Hashem. After she was *Nifteres*, they discovered that she had a diary, in which she used to write to Hashem about what was going on in her life.

I have a friend in Lakewood who told me that when he has problems, he doesn't tell anybody. He just talks them over with Hashem.

I knew an old *Almana* who lived in a section of Brooklyn which wasn't known to be ethnically the safest. She told me that although she lived alone, she wasn't afraid, since she actually felt that Hashem was always with her.

I once heard a story about one of the greatest and world-famous *Baalei-Mussar*, that a *Goy* once observed him davening in Shul. The *Goy* remarked that everyone was praying, but this person was actually talking to someone!

In the last generation, there was no *Gadol* as great as the *Chofetz Chaim*, who was in a class by himself. He was known to be special in his **real** connection with Hashem.

R' Wainkranz once told me that you get self-esteem when you have a busy schedule. He once told me that if you stick to a *Seder HaYom* for several weeks and you are *Moser Nefesh* to hold on to your *Seder* no matter what, then after a while it becomes second nature. He was indeed

very regimented, and although he was an extremely warm and humble person full of *Chesed*, when you called him on the phone, you got a quick answer and then he would be abrupt and almost hang up on you.

Indeed, he was very busy. But I suspect that his abruptness may also have been a "Prat" and an exercise of going in the opposite direction of *Chanufa* flattery and

needing *Kavod*. When I went collecting with R' Galinsky, once he got what he came for, he also became very abrupt. He didn't linger on with smiles and all kinds of words of gratitude. He said thank you, gave a *Bracha*, and disappeared. I felt that "holding on" in the world of *Novardok*, could be a symptom of *Redifas HaKavod*.

Many years ago, a friend of mine was davening in Bais Yosef [*Novardok* of Boro Park] on Shabbos during *Mincha* time. R' Wainkranz *Zatzal* was the *Gabbai* during *Kriyas HaTorah*. There was a person there who wasn't 100% who started screaming at R' Wainkranz, calling him the worst names and pouring on him the worst curses. The people present were horrified by his base actions. They were speechless, and there was an uncomfortable silence. My friend remembers R' Wainkranz's reaction. He wasn't impressed or annoyed in the least. He was calm and relaxed. My friend saw the greatness of *Mussar* on his face; he was like a fish in water. This was his line, his life accomplishment in action. Like the *Chovos Halvavos* says²⁷, that *Hish'tavus* is the most desirable *Madrega*, i.e. when a person feels the same whether he receives compliments or criticism.

R' Yonasan Shteif



²⁷ חובות הלבבות [שער יחוד המעשה, פרק ה] וכבר אמרו על אחד מן החסידים, שאמר לחבירו: הנשתוית? אמר לו: באיזה ענין? אמר לו: נשתויה בעיניך השבת והגנות, א"ל: לא. א"ל: א"כ עדיין לא הגעת. השתדל, אולי תגיע אל המדרגה הזאת, כי היא העליונה שבמדרגות החסידים ותכלית החמודות.

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Questions To Rabbi Mandel



Question: I find myself having a very negative eye, feeling critical and jealous of others [due to a lack of self-esteem, and a difficult upbringing where one of my siblings was cruel to me]. For example, one of my children is struggling with his *Yiddishkeit* [we are trying our best to deal with it], while my neighbor has children who are all *Shteiging* in their own way! I know that everyone has their own package in life, and I try my best to think positively. What are some "practical" *Eitzos* for me to overcome these jealous thoughts?

Answer: I know a *Novardoker Talmid Chacham* who struggled with his kids, while all his relatives and neighbors had star kids. Yet, he became the most beloved of all those around him, because he threw himself into *Ayin Tova* by looking at the good in others. He went to all their *Simchos* and was happy with them, and enjoyed with them. He didn't sit all day and stew with his problems; he went out and enjoyed life. Life was created to enjoy, not to kvetch around and say "He has this and I have that". It's a waste of energy. There are people that have "everything" and are broken to pieces because they focus on their issues. And there are people that have "nothing" yet are happy and don't let the "problems" get in their way. HAPPINESS IS UP TO YOU; IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT IS GOING ON. Many people have a preexisting disposition to "want" pain and unhappiness. "*Ki Yetzer Lev HaAdam Ra MiNeurav*". I see people with large families who are kvetching that they want more children.

Now you have to know that "Envy is Ignorance". People don't realize that there is another side to people. The *Yetzer Hara* blows up the good side to the person until you see only the good they have and not the bad. There may be a terminally ill person in the family! I had a relative who seemed like they "had it all". One day, the husband passed away. We found out that he was terminally ill for years, and they kept it a secret. All the wasted energy of "envy" people had on them went out the window in one second. This point is so important. YOU HAVE TO ASSUME THAT THERE IS SOMETHING SERIOUSLY WRONG WITH THOSE YOU ENVY. The average person has "something". So says the *Mesilas Yesharim*.

Another point is that indeed having good children is important, but someone who doesn't have good children must say that having good children is just *Kavod*, and there isn't anything to it. This is so important, and the world doesn't get it. It's so true, but the world doesn't look at it like that. Take a look at *Dovid HaMelech's* family in comparison to *Shaul HaMelech's* family. Who had more *Nachas*? *Shaul* had *Michal*, *Yonasan*, *Ish Boshes*, *Mefi'boshes*; all *Tzadikim G'murim*. *Michal* wore *Tefilin*. There were no rebels in the family. And *Dovid*? *Dovid* had *Amnon*, a *Rasha*. Don't forget *Avshalom*. And *Adoniyahu*. The whole family was a mess! Only two good children, *Kil'av* and *Shlomo*. Yet, *Dovid* came out ahead, despite his family problem. In *Novardok* they laughed at this. It's a hoax to put energy into this. Most of the time it's *Kavod*. "My child this, my child that" [although sometimes it is justified].

If you are happy with other people's children, then you are pure, and you are for Hashem. Being happy with your own children is not for Hashem; how come you not happy with the other child? *Haman* went around boasting about his many children and their prestigious jobs. *Mordechai* didn't boast about that. *Penina* also boasted about her children while *Chana* was suffering. Without learning *Mussar* you could suffer. If you keep repeating these concepts you will be happy. Children are a medium for happiness, but just a medium. You could be so happy without the children. I know a person who had everything; good children etc. yet he was bitter. So don't fall for all this. If you are happy with others, like *Ahron* who was a *Lev Sameach B'gedulas Achiv*, then you are like Hashem and you are ahead of everyone!

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