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BITACHON WEEKLY

עקב

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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שרה יהודית בת ביילא
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פרשת עקב תשפ"ה

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פרשת עקב

ומלתם את ערלת לבבכם וערפכם לא תקשו עוד י טו

A Person Has to Learn the Skills and the Beauty of *Eidelkeit*, Tactfulness, And Understanding Others Who Are Different Than You

Several years ago, a *Yungerman* in England put out a book on *Chinuch*, and he became an instant success. He was on the phone with his friend, to discuss how he could promote his famous book. His friend's wife took the phone for a minute, and she started giving him all her: beliefs and her lofty opinions why she doesn't believe in his book. His friend's wife was a known liberal-minded person, who was heavily exposed to the gentile way of thinking. **

Needless to say, his friend had suffered plenty from his "open-minded" rebbetzin. The *Yungerman* told this woman: "I am so proud of you that you are "man" enough to voice your own opinion. This is vital for your self-esteem. Always continue voicing your brilliant views, so that the world can benefit from your greatness. ***

"I'm so happy to hear that you dislike my book. And *Halevai*: שְׂיָרְבוּ כְמוֹתָךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל there should be more strong-minded people like you in *Klal Yisroel*. You are a credit to our holy nation. Tough-minded people command

Hachna'a applies in all areas, and the Rambam says¹ that a Melech is Mach'nia even to the lowest of the low

much more respect, and you should keep up the good work, and make sure to put people in their place". (This is exactly what he was doing to her, but I wonder if she had enough intelligence to "chap" his sarcasm). ****

It is sad when people don't have a *Chinuch* (training) in *Hachna'a* and *Anava*. All they believe-in is self-esteem and *Ga'ava*. Indeed, in many emergency cases, *Ga'ava* becomes a big *Mitzva*. However, ultimately, a person has to learn the skills and the beauty of *Eidelkeit*, tactfulness, and understanding of others who are a different type than you are. *****

The Tragedy of *Sin'as Chinam* and all *Machlokes*

WHEN ALL A PERSON SEES IS HIMSELF

I once witnessed a family *Machlokes*, where a member left the house: על with intention never to come back again. I spoke to both parties.

Both felt without a question "I'm right!". Everybody thinks that he's the *Tzadik*, and the other person is intolerable! "How can a person do such a thing, and to his own relative!" Nobody sees another person; all he sees is himself. This is the tragedy of *Sin'as Chinam* and all *Machlokes*. *****

Yirmiyahu wrote *Megilas Eicha*, and he quoted the very words of *Yoshiyahu*

¹ רמב"ם הלכות מלכים (ב ו) כדרך שחלק לו הכתוב הכבוד הגדול, וחייב הכל בכבודו, כך צוהו להיות לבו בקרבו שפל וחלל שנאמר (תהלים קט כב) וְלִבִּי חָלַל בְּקִרְבִּי, ולא ינהג גסות לב בישראל יתר מדאי, שנאמר (שופטים יז כ) לְבַלְתִּי רוּם לִבִּי מֵאֲחִיו, ויהיה חונן ומרחם לקטנים וגדולים, ויצא ויבא בחפציהם ובטובתם, ויחוס על כבוד קטן שבקטנים, וכשמדבר אל כל הקהל בלשון רבים ידבר רכות, שנאמר (דהי"א כח ב) שָׁמְעוּנִי אֲחֵי וְעַמִּי, ואומר (מלכים א, יב ז) אִם הַיּוֹם תִּהְיֶה עִבְדְּ לַעֲם הַזֶּה וגו', לעולם יתנהג בענוה יתירה, אין לנו גדול ממשנה רבינו, והוא אומר (בשלח טז ח) וְנָחֲנוּ מֶה לֹא עָלֵינוּ תִלְוָתֵיכֶם, ויסבול טרחם ומשאם ותלונותם וקצפם כאשר ישא האומן את היונק, רועה קראו הכתוב (תהלים עח עא) לְרֹעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עֲמוֹ, ודרכו של רועה מפורש בקבלה (ישעיה מ יא) כְּרֹעֶה עֹדְרוֹ יִרְעֶה בְּזֶרְעוֹ יִקְבֹּץ טְלָאִים וּבְחִיקוֹ יִשָּׂא עֲלוֹת יִנְהַל.

HaMelech: I צדיק הוא ה' כי פיהו מריתי איכה א יח I deserve Hashem's punishment, because I have rebelled against His command. *Yirmiyahu* was saying a *Hesped* on *Yoshiyahu's* holy *Midda* of giving-in and admitting you're wrong, even when you have plenty of "proofs" that you're the good-guy. *Yoshiyahu* was like his *Zeide, Dovid*, who said: ה' אָמַר Shim'i's curses are really coming from Hashem, and he was *Mochel* (forgave) even when he was right. This is true *Anava*, and: וְעֲנוּמִים יִירָשׁוּ אֶרֶץ תְּהִלִּים לֹא the humble will inherit the earth (and delight in abundant peace). They win, and indeed: דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ Dovid lives forever. Everyone loves an *Anav*, and dislikes a *Baal Ga'ava*.

Notice how before the Torah is given, the Yidden are told how unique and special and precious they are. Like Rabeinu Yonah says³ that the first step in Avodas Hashem is to know your own greatness

Yesod Olam, and even a *Yachid* who does one *Mitzva* is: מְכַרֵּעַ עֲצָמוֹ וְאֵת כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוּ לִכְךָ tips the scales of the entire world *L'kaf Zechus*, and: יָחִיד שְׁעָשָׂה תְּשׁוּבָה, מוֹחֲלִין לְכָל הָעוֹלָם כּוֹלוּ if even ONE person does *Teshuva*, the entire world is forgiven. He continues explaining the greatness of even a single *Mitzva*. I always wondered why *Chazal* say that *Moshe* was: שְׁקוּל equal to the entire *Klal Yisroel*. We can suggest that *Moshe* truly believed in: בְּשִׁבְלִי the entire universe was created just for ME, and all the *Chazal's* that glorify the greatness of a *Yachid*. ** And indeed, before *Moshe* was *Niftar* he kept saying I'm different. I'm better than the whole world,

and I don't deserve to die. There is a tremendous: אֲרִיכוּת lengthiness on this story in the *Medrash* and *Me'am Lo'ez* how *Moshe* fought tooth and nail not to be *Niftar*, and insisting how special he was! ***

R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal* used to

כל המצוה אשר אנכי מצוך היום תשמרון לעשות למען תחיון ח א

You Are Considered Special and Important

The *Kli Yakar* explains² that the *Passuk* starts with: יָחִיד singular form, and ends with: רַבִּים plural form because a *Tzadik* is

² כלי יקר עה"פ כל המצוה אשר אנכי מצוך היום תשמרון לעשות למען תחיון (ח א) התחיל בלשון יחיד וסיים בלשון רבים תשמרון לעשות למען תחיון ורבייתם, לפי שצדיק יסוד עולם ואפילו יחיד שעשה מצוה אחת אשר לו שהכריע את עצמו ואת כל העולם לכף זכות כו', וכן יחיד שעשה תשובה מוחלין לו ולכל העולם כולו, לכך אמר אשר אנכי מצוך ליחיד תשמרון לעשות למען תחיון, כי שמירת היחיד דומה כאלו רבים שמרו המצות ויגיע התועלת לכולם. ונקט המצוה בלשון יחיד לומר לך שאפילו שמירת מצוה אחת כתקונה גורמת למען תחיון, כדעת ר' יוחנן בסנהדרין (קיא א) שדרש פסוק ופָּעַרָה פִּיהָ לְבָלִי חָק (ישעיה ה יד) למי שלא שמר אפילו חק אחד, הא אם שמר אפילו רק חק אחד ניצול מגיהנם לפי שהמצוה גוררת מצוה, כמבואר בפרשת שלח לך (טו לח).

³ ספר שערי העבודה לרבינו יונה (אות א) הפתח הראשון הוא שידע האיש העובד ערך עצמו, ויכיר מעלתו ומעלת אבותיו, וגדולתם וחשיבותם וחיבתם אצל הבורא יתברך, וישתדל ויתחזק תמיד להעמיד עצמו במעלה ההיא ולהתנהג בה תמיד, בכל יום ויום יוסיף אומץ לקנות מעלות ומדות אשר יתקרב בהם לבוראו וידבק אליו וכו' ויצא לו מזה כי כאשר יתאוה תאוה ויעלה בלבבו גאווה לעשות דבר שאינו הגון, יבוש מעצמו ויבוש מאבותיו, וישיב לנפשו ויאמר, אדם וחשוב כמוני היום שיש בי כמה מעלות טובות רמות ונשאות, ושאני בן גדולים בן מלכי קדם, איך אעשה הרעה הגדולה הזאת וכו' ואם חלילה וחס לא יכיר מעלתו ומעלת אבותיו, נקל יהיה בעיניו ללכת בדרכיו הפריצים וכו' על כן האיש העובד ישתדל תמיד להשיג ערכו וערך הצדיקים והחסידים ומעלתם וחשיבותם וחיבתם לפני השם יתברך ודביקותם, ויבין וישכיל וידע כי יוכל להשיג מעלתם וחשיבותם וחיבתם, כאשר יעבוד כמותם כל ימי חייו ועיתותיו ושעותיו ורגעיו כפי כחו והשגתו, כמו שנאמר כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד בפיו ובלבבך לעשותו, כי הקל יתברך אינו מבקש מבני אדם כי אם לפי כחם כאשר יתבאר בעזרת ה'. וגם האבות ז"ל לא עבדוהו כי אם לפי כחם והשגתם.

constantly emphasize during *Y'mei Elul* that: *if* יחיד שְׁעֵשָׂה תְּשׁוּבָה מוֹחֲלִין לְכָל הָעוֹלָם כּוֹלּוֹ יוֹמָא פּוֹב even ONE person does *Teshuva*, the entire world is forgiven. For good reason he became the *Tzadik HaDor* (to quote R' Ahron Kreiser *Zatzal*). It is a constant lifetime job to keep insisting that you're special. Even if you aren't on such a high *Madrega*, you can still consider yourself special and important, and with time, this attitude makes you greater and greater.

מה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ שָׁאֵל מֵעֲמֶךָ כִּי אִם לִירְאָה יִיב

It's Almost an Aveira to Do Any Type of Avoda That's Not for Your Level

There is an extremely important *Netziv* on this *Passuk* who elaborates⁴ how there are 4 types of people, each with his own type of *Avoda*. Some are businessmen who can't be expected to do what *Bnei Torah* do. And an *Osek* in *Tzorchei Tzibbur* is also a category by himself, and: women and children are *Patur* on plenty. He says **that it's almost an Aveira to**

do any type of Avoda that's not for your level!

And the same person may have changes in his life. This makes life much easier, when you always have to see your OWN *Matzav*, and don't look at others. We aren't all in one box. You can't expect the same learning from a person who doesn't have the *Kish'ron* (ability) or background as others. Yet, he gets good and jealous when he sees people finishing *Shas*, etc. He's dead wrong! Relax! You're in a different world, with different expectations. ***

Or an *Osek* in *Tzorchei Tzibbur*; he has all kinds of: פְּטוּרִים exemptions, sometimes *Tefila B'tzibur*, and we have to be careful.

This person may have to forget his good-old *Yeshiva* days, when he may have been much more *Oisgehalten*. He can feel like a *Rasha*, *Chas V'shalom*, since he simply can't stick to his former high level. ****

There is R' Berel "before" a certain trauma, or his sudden severe sleep disorder, or

Always defend yourself, especially to your own self, when your self-criticism can hamper your Simcha level and make you nervous, which diminishes your Avodas Hashem

⁴ הנצי"ב בהעמק דבר עה"פ ועתה ישראֵל מה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ שָׁאֵל מֵעֲמֶךָ כִּי אִם לִירְאָה אֵת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לְלַקֵּחַ בְּכָל דְּרָכָיו וְלֹאֲהַבָה אֶת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ בְּכָל לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ, לְשַׁמֵּר אֶת מִצְוֹת ה' וְאֶת חֻקָּיו אֲשֶׁר אֶנְכִּי מֵצִוְךָ הַיּוֹם לְטוֹב לְךָ (י-יב-יג) הַפְרָשָׁה תַּמּוּה, שֶׁהִרִי כָּל מִה שֶׁאִפְשֶׁר לְבַקֵּשׁ מִכָּאֲנוּשׁ מְבוֹאֵר בַּשְּׁאֵלָה זֶה, וּמִה יֵשׁ עוֹד לְשֹׁאֵל, עַד שֶׁבִּאֲמַת בִּשְׁחוֹ"ט (תַּהֲלִים לו) אֵיטָא בְּבִקְשַׁת דּוּד (תַּהֲלִים כז ד) אַחַת שְׁאֵלְתִּי מֵאֵת ה' אוֹתָהּ אֶבְקֶשׁ, שְׁבִתִּי בְּבֵית ה' כָּל יְמֵי חַיִּי, לְחֻזּוֹת בְּנֵעַם ה', וְלִבְקֶר בְּהִיכְלוֹ, אִמֵּר הַקֵּב"ה לְדוּד, אַתָּה אִמַּרְתָּ "אֶחָת שְׁאֵלְתִּי" וְאַתָּה מִבְּקֶשׁ הַרְבֵּה! אִמַּר לוֹ, גַּם אַתָּה אִמַּרְתָּ "מִה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ שָׁאֵל מֵעֲמֶךָ" וּבִקְשַׁת הַרְבֵּה. אֲבָל זֶה אֵינוֹ אֵלָא לִשְׁוֹן הַלְצִי, אֲבָל וְדָאִי גַּם הַקֵּב"ה גַּם דּוּד לֹא בִקֵּשׁוּ יִתִּירָה מִמֶּה שֶׁהַחֲלוּ. וְיוֹתֵר מִזֶּה קִשָּׁה, הָאֵל דְּאִיתָא בְּגַמ' (בְּרִכּוֹת ל ג ב) אֵטוּ יִרְאֶה מִלֵּתָא זּוֹטֵרְתִּי הִיא? וּמִשְׁנֵי אֵין לִגְבִי מִשֶּׁה מִלֵּתָא זּוֹטֵרְתִּי הִיא. וְהַפְלָא שֶׁהִרִי לֹא יִרְאֶה לְבַד קָא חֲשִׁיב, וְלִמָּה זֶה הַקִּשָּׁה עַל יִרְאֶה יוֹתֵר מֵעַל אֲהַבָה וְלַעֲבֹד בְּכָל נַפְשׁ? וְתוּ אֵינוֹ מוֹבֵן וְכו', אֲבָל עַכ"ז יֵשׁ לְהַבִּין לְמִי נִאֲמָרָה פֶּרֶשָׁה זֹה. אִם נֹאמֵר לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּשְׁוֹה, הֵיאֵךְ אִפְשֶׁר שֶׁתֵּהָא מִדְּרָגָה זֹה יִרְאֶה וְאַהֲבָה בַּפְּחוֹת שְׁבִיִּשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁאֵינוֹ מִשִּׁיג אוֹתָם כָּלִל, וְהִרִי אֲהַבָה אֵינָה נִמְצָאֵת אֵלָא בְּאֲמֻצְעוֹת תּוֹרָה אוֹ עֲבוּדַת בְּהַמ"ק, שֶׁהֵן הַמָּה ה"לֶחֶם" הַמַּחֲבִירִים אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֲבִיָּהֶם שְׁבִשְׁמִים, כִּמְש"כ בִּס' בְּמִדְבָר כ"ח ב' בִּפְי' אֶת קֶרְבִּנִי לְחֲמִי וּבִכ"מ. וְהֵיאֵךְ יִבָּא הַקֵּב"ה בְּטֵרוּנִיָּא אֶת בְּרִיּוֹתָיו לְשֹׁאֵל מִהֶם מִה שֶׁא"א בְּדֶרֶךְ הַטִּבֵּעַ? וְאִם נֹאמֵר שֶׁלֹּא דִבֵּר כָּאֵן אֵלָא עִם מִי שֶׁרָאוּ לֶכֶךְ, הֲלֹא לֹא נִתְפָּרַשׁ עִם מִי הוּא מִדְּבֵר? אֵלָא ע"כ יֵשׁ לְדַקְדֵּק וְלִהְתַּבּוֹן בְּאוֹתָהּ פֶּרֶשָׁה עֲצָמָה שֶׁהַקֵּב"ה אֵינוֹ שׁוֹאֵל מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֵלָא מִכָּל אָדָם לְפִי עֲרֻכּוֹ. שֶׁהִרִי כְּתִיב "לְלַקֵּחַ" בְּכָל דְּרָכָיו, וְלֹא כְּתִיב "וּלְלַקֵּחַ" בְּכָל דְּרָכָיו. כִּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב "וְלֹאֲהַבָה" אֶתוֹ "וְלַעֲבֹד" וְגו' וְכֵן "לְשַׁמֵּר" אֶת מִצְוֹת ה', וְלֹא "וּלְשַׁמֵּר". מְבוֹאֵר דְּכִמוֹ הַתַּחֲלִית הַדְּבוּר הוּא. וּמִזֶּה נִבּוֹא לַעֲנִין. דְּרָאוּ לְדַעַת שִׁישׁ אַרְבַּע מִדְּרָגוֹת בִּישְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁהֵם א. רֹאשִׁים וּמְנַהֲיִגִים בִּישְׂרָאֵל. ב. ת"ח הַנִּקְרָאִים זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. ג. בַּע"ב עוֹסְקִים בְּפִרְסוּתָם. ד. נָשִׁים וְעַבְדִּים וְקִטְנִים. וְכָל אֶחָד מִכְּתוּת הַלּוֹ אֵינוֹ דּוֹמֶה לְחִבְרֵי בִּשְׁאֵלַת הַקֵּב"ה מִמֶּנּוּ. וְמִה שֶׁשׁוֹאֵל הַקֵּב"ה מִזֶּה אֵינוֹ שׁוֹאֵל מִזֶּה, וְכִמְעַט שֶׁאִסּוּר לִכְתּוּב הַשְּׁנִית, כֹּאשֶׁר יוֹבָר וְכו'.

before he left Lakewood to go into business in NY, or Mrs. Gold before she had her triplets (which are driving her crazy), or Chaim Smith before he got *Semicha*, or became the *Rosh HaKahal*, etc., and the same person “after” the above. *****

There is a big *Yetzer Hara* who demands more (or less), and doesn't let you use your *Sechel* to adjust and realize that today you're in a different *Matzav*. Yet, sometimes we say: להגיד שבו של the *Torah* praises *Ahron* that he never had a dip in his *Avodas Hashem*. Every person is a new world. Although it's a serious lifelong challenge to work hard on *Sameach B'chelko*, sometimes you may be ready to do more, and you don't even realize your capabilities. *****

You Really Can't Demand from People Who Didn't Have the Right *Chinuch*

I don't want to stress this last statement, since it can “kill” many idealistic people who simply don't have the *Chinuch* for (let's say for example) more *Zikkui HaRabbim*, and you really can't demand from people who didn't have the right *Chinuch* (since their friends and mentors never encouraged *Zikkui HaRabbim*) even though they have innate capabilities that will never materialize. *****
In Bialystok (*Novardok*) they had two groups: they had the “*Lomdim*”, and the “*Mussarniks*”.

*In our days,
it's not
K'dai to be:
demand
from
yourself so
fast. Just
keep giving
yourself a
pat on the
back, no
matter
what!*

R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal* was the main *Menahel* (leader) of the *Mussarniks*. When there were misunderstanding between the two groups, R' Gershon would tell the *Mussarniks* to bend backwards, and give-in and be a *Tzadik* to the other type. *****

He said: This person is a fine *Lamdan*, but he doesn't learn *Mussar* as much as you do. Therefore we expect YOU, the *Mussar'nik* (who is constantly working on his *Middos*) to be the *Tzadik* and to give in. Don't expect from an American “Harry” or an Israeli or a Russian what you expect from others. Or an older person vs. a younger person. It's worth sitting down with your *Rebbe* and coming to a clear conclusion at every stage; what you should expect from yourself, and what not to expect. *****

Imagine! The *Netziv* says that it's almost an *Aveira* to go higher than where you belong. How can you expect a person who doesn't sleep well at night, or he just lost a million dollars, or he just moved to a different city, or he was *Chas V'shalom* diagnosed, or he just lost his job, or just got divorced, etc. to be the same as before? However, R' Yisroel Salanter *Zatzal* said⁵ that there are no כָּלִים rules, and sometimes you can be even better despite the change. But be careful with this last statement! *****

⁵ אור ישראל (קבוצת מכתבים ומאמרים להליהב הלבבות ליראת ה' וללימוד היראה והמוסר, לאדמו"ר הרב הגאון רשכבה"ג החסיד והעניו אור עולם המפורסם בכל קצוי ארץ מרנא ורבנא ישראל לביקין מסאלאנט צוקללה"ה, חובר מאת תלמידו הרב הגאון הגדול צדיק ונשגב שמו מרן רבי יצחק בלאזער זצ"ל בעל שו"ת פרי יצחק, וילנא תר"ס, מכתב כ, עמ' 66) יקרת מכתב כת"ר מן כ"ב שבט נכון הגיעני. אנכי נחוץ להשיב לכת"ר. כבר כתבתי כי בדרכי תהלוכות המוסרי היסוד הפראקטיש. ואין לתת גדר נכון בזה כמו בתהלוכות המסחר. ובפרט לאדם גדול כמ"ב. כבד הדבר למאוד (ואולי קרוב להפסד ח"ו) לכתוב בזה את אשר ינקרו במשכיות לבב איש פרטי. ובכלל בכחות נפש האדם. אין לדמות מילתא למילתא. יש אשר בדבר אחד נקל לפניו. ובדבר אחר כבד לפניו הרבה להשיגו. ובדבר הקשה ההכרח להתגולל בנחת. ולהשיגו ברוב זמן ועידן. עם התשווקה להשיגו במהרה. והן ב' כחות מתנגדות. אשר צריך האדם לנגוע בשניהם וכו'.

Accept People with Lower Capability (Including Yourself!)

TRUE STORY

I once witnessed a scene that took place with a *Bachur* who was together with a small *Olam* (group) in a *Kollel*. The *Rosh Kollel* had a super plan of covering two blatt a day. The *Bachur* was a big *Baal Kish'ron* (smart) and he screamed at the other boys who were struggling. Needless to say, they hated him like poison. He simply didn't understand "Why can't you knock-off two blatt a day?" "You're crazy!" "You're a moron!" ***** This is exactly what we all do to ourselves (and to others) when we have to always fit "in the box" and never be our true selves! This is dire cruelty and lack of sensitivity. A heart of stone or a callous person without *Sechel*. Here is a true *Chochom* without *Daas* (sense) who hurts people with the worst *Ona'as Devarim* (hurtful speech), and we can all be guilty of this behavior when we fail to realize that Yankel the great *Askan* simply can't be his old self as the previous *Masmid*. *****

Just like: נָשִׁים וְיֶלְדִים women and children have a totally different world of *Avodas Hashem* than men, and a businessman is not a *Ben Torah* or an *Askan*, so must we all adjust to our present *Madrega* and be happy, without being: מְשִׁלִּי כִּזְיָד like a fool who is always looking "elsewhere", which causes all kinds of unnecessary depression and anxiety and all kinds of pain.

Novardok and Slabodka both said it would be worth being less of a Tzaddik, as long as there is whole hearted Shalom and acceptance and understanding of the other "Shevotim"

וְאִשְׁרָף אֹתוֹ בָּאֵשׁ וְאָכַת אֹתוֹ טָחוֹן הֵיטֵב עַד אֲשֶׁר דֶּק לְעָפָר ט כא

Whenever You Are Intimidated by Humans, Try to Envision *Moshe* Destroying the *Eigel* and Turning It to Dust

Look how *Moshe* utterly destroyed the *Eigel*, first burning it and smashing it, reducing it to dust and powder. This symbolizes how any potential *Koach* in the universe (especially *Avoda Zara*) to him is zero minus, since when *Moshe* said: אֵין עוֹד מְלִבְדּוֹ there exists no power other than Hashem, he meant it. His utter destruction of what people considered a god (see RSRH⁶) showed his *Madrega* in *Emuna*. **

This is what we should all do: see the entire world in its right perspective and have zero *Hispa'alus* from massive mountains and tall buildings and oceans, etc. and mainly from important humans; they are all as if smashed into smithereens and into nothingness.

Whenever you are intimidated by humans, try to envision *Moshe* destroying the *Eigel* and turning it to dust. ***

An *Eigel* is a symbol of a favorite food or wife (like by *Dovid & Michal*, *Shimshon & Delila*) and it was made out of the most precious metal; i.e., gold. A person like *Moshe* had unreal *Geshmak* in Hashem, and to him, all delicious and precious and beautiful *Kochos* in the world were nil and as if ground into dust compared to his incredible love and *Simcha* and respect and awe for Hashem Himself.

⁶ פירוש הגאון מוהר"ר שמשון בן הר"ר רפאל הירש זללה"ה, עה"פ וְאִתְּ חֲטָאתְכֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם אֶת הָעֵגֶל לְקַחְתִּי וְאִשְׁרָף אֹתוֹ בָּאֵשׁ וְאָכַת אֹתוֹ טָחוֹן הֵיטֵב עַד אֲשֶׁר דֶּק לְעָפָר וְאִשְׁלַךְ אֶת עָפָרוֹ אֶל הַנָּחַל הַיָּרֵד מִן הָהָר (ט כא) הַשְׁמַדְתָּ עֵגֶל הַזֶּהב וּפִיזוֹר עָפָרוֹ הָיוּ לִפְנֵי אַרְבַּעִים הַיּוֹם, וְהֵם נִזְכָּרִים כֹּאן דֶּרֶךְ אֲגַב כְּהִעָרָה נֹסֶפֶת, כִּנְרָא כִּי לְהַזְכִּיר לְכָל הַדּוֹרוֹת הַבָּאִים אֶת הָאִיוּלוֹת שֶׁבְחֻטָּא זֶה, שֶׁכֵּן הֵם יִיחָסוּ כּוֹחַ אֱלֹקֵי לְעֵגֶל הַזֶּהב, וְאִזּוּ הוּא הוֹשֵׁמֵד בִּידֵי אָדָם וּפּוֹזֵר לְכָל רוּחַ.

לא תַעֲרֹץ מִפְּנֵיהֶם זכא

**Being In Awe and Hispa'alus of Others
Makes a Person Weak and Incapable**

(וְכָל־מִן פִּתְחֵיהֶם אֶת פִּיָּהֶם means to admire (וכו' ומַעֲרִיצִים) It also means to become crushed, or to fear. When you admire a human too much, you don't realize that your *Hispa'alus* crushes you and diminishes you and makes you susceptible and fearsome. Admiring people can be a big *Mitzva* and a *Zechus*. But if the person admiring isn't stable himself, then it makes him feel insignificant and worthless, at least to some degree. **

Getting too excited over the greatness of others can hurt your own ego. You melt! You become *Battel*. The old *Novardokers* were on guard not to allow the important people in their lives take them over and make them feel zero and *Battel*. Perhaps that's why the previous *Passuk* speaks about the: צִרְעָה hornet that Hashem sent out to kill the *Canaanim*. Why a tiny hornet? ***

**Instead Of Being Busy
Admiring Others, Realize
Your Own Self-Worth**

Perhaps it was to show the nothingness of those giant *Canaanim*, that even a tiny hornet can destroy them. After seeing the: צִרְעָה hornet in action, you lose your fear, and become a: לא תַעֲרֹץ fearless. **People think that admiring others and being in awe about them is harmless. They don't realize how admiration and *Hispa'alus* makes a person weak and**

incapable. You become broken with fear. This may be subtle, yet it can ruin people who spend 99% of their energies being busy admiring others, instead of realizing their self-worth.

וְאִשָּׁר עָשָׂה לְדָתוֹ וּלְאִבֵּירָם בְּנֵי אֱלִיָּאב בֶּן רְאוּבֵן
אִשָּׁר פָּצְתָה הָאָרֶץ אֶת פִּיהָ וַתִּבְלַעֵם יֵאוֹ

**Speaking Lashon Hara Destroys the Gift
of Speech**

In *Parshas Sh'mos*, when the *Torah* first introduces *Dasan* and *Aviram*, they became known as the *Baalei Lashon Hara*, and *Moshe* sees that as the reason for *Shi'bud* (the slavery of) *Mitzrayim*. (*Rashi*⁷). People who speak *Lashon Hara* destroy the gift of speech, which is special for a *Tzelem Elokim*, and they don't deserve to exist. An *Eved* doesn't really exist, since he is only an extension of his master. **

With the *Ma'aseh* of *Korach*, *Dasan* and *Aviram* again abused their speech, with their *chutzpa* and negativism and complaints together with *Korach*. So when the *Adam* doesn't use his *Tzelem Elokim* mouth properly, then the *Onesh* (punishment) is that the lowest element, the earth, opens its mouth, and swallows the

Adam. Or we have *Bilam* who

abuses his speech, and he has a: חֲמֹר donkey, who symbolizes: חוּמְרִיּוֹת physicality and *Gashmiyus* and lowly: אֶרֶצִּיּוֹת earthliness, who is *M'vazeh* the *Adam* who abuses his speech, like it says: אֶת פִּי הָאֲתֹן Hashem opened up the donkey's mouth. ***

*Massive
mountains and
high skyscrapers,
even great
Tzadikim are
there for you
ONLY to bring
you closer to
Hashem, not to
have your tongue
hanging out in
awe of a human,
and getting
depressed why
you aren't on a
higher Madrega*

⁷ רש"י בפרשת שמות עה"פ וַיִּירָא מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכֵן נֹדַע הַדָּבָר (ב יד) וַיִּירָא מֹשֶׁה כַּפְּשׁוּטוֹ. ומדרשו דאג לו על שראה בישראל רשעים דלטורין אמר מעתה שמא אינם ראויין להגאל. אֲכֵן נֹדַע הַדָּבָר כַּמְשַׁמְעוֹ. ומדרשו, נודע לי הדבר שהייתי תמה עליו מה חטאו ישראל מכל ע' אומות להיות נרדים בעבודת פֶּרֶךְ, אבל רואה אני שהם ראויים לכך.

The More You See Yourself as a Chashuva Big Tzadik, The More You'll Refrain from Doing Lowly Deeds

People who speak *Lashon Hara* and degrade their most respectable gift of speech, are: שפלים lowly and lowlife mentality, and deserve major *Bizyonos* and degradation, like a stupid donkey, and to be swallowed by the filthy and lowly earth. The *Gemara* says⁸ that according to some, the true reason why *Yehoshua* and *Kalev* didn't carry any of the giant fruits *Eretz Yisroel* was because they were *Chashuva* people, and it didn't fit their respectability for them to lift these giant fruits; and it was exactly these two who didn't speak *Lashon Hara*. ****

Respectability is of utmost importance! The more you see yourself as a *Chashuva* big *Tzadik*, the more you'll refrain from doing lowly deeds, especially *Lashon Hara*!

ואכלת ושבעת יא טו Be "Full" And Satisfied in Ruchaniyus

This week's *Parsha* has the second *Parsha* of *K'riyas Sh'ma*, where the *Torah* promises that if we will keep the *Mitzvos*, Hashem will reward us that He will give us food and we will eat and feel full. *Rashi* says⁹ that there is an extra blessing here, that even if you eat little, you will feel full as if you ate a lot. *Dovid* and *Moshe* couldn't be like *Amram*

and *Yishai* (who never sinned even once in their lifetime. *Gemara*¹⁰) since they were involved in the *Tzibbur*. The *M'zakeh HaRabbim* might fall in *Inyanei Ka'as* and *Shmiras Einayim*, or *Hasmadat HaTorah* or *Kavana* in *Tefila*, or having sensitivity in *Bain Adam La'chaveiro*. There are many people who often fall in *Avodas Hashem* and they have pain. They miss their old *Madregos* in learning *Torah* and in *Kedusha*, etc. But despite not doing what they used to do or

desire to do, they are full, since they know: חישב לעשות מצוה ונאנס ולא עשה, מעלה עליו הכתוב כאלו עשה א if a person planned on doing a *Mitzva*, but in the end he was unable to carry it out, it is considered "as if" he actually did it. **

שביעה can mean be "full" in *Ruchaniyus*. Even though you do less, but since you desire more, you get double *Schar*; for what you DO, and for what you WANT to do. Here we have: שביעה feeling full by *K'riyas Sh'ma*, and earlier we had: שביעה feeling full by *Birchas HaMazon*: ואכלת ושבעת וברכת. A *Yid* should always be full of:

שביעה, like it says: יאכלו עניים וישבעו תהלים the humble will eat and be satisfied. The *Chovos Halvavos* in *Shaar HaBitachon* brings the *Passuk* of צדיק אכל לשבע נפשו וברטן the *Tzadik* eats and feels full, whereas the stomach of the *Reshaim* is always empty. The *Gr"a* says¹¹ that if you

*The Choshen
had:
אבני מלאים
Avnei
"Milu'im"
("full" stones)
to symbolize
how each of
the Shevotim
felt "full"
with their
own unique
Avoda*

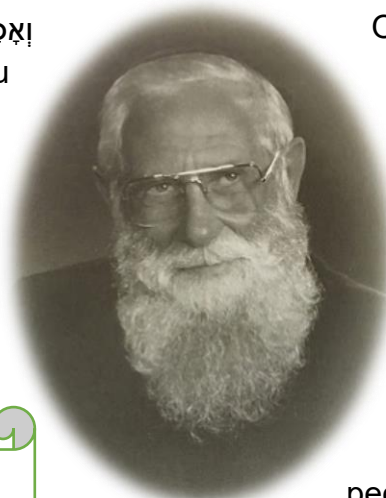
⁸ סוטה לד א, הא כיצד, שמנה נשאו אשכל, אחד נשא רימון, ואחד נשא תאינה. יהושע וכלב לא נשאו כלום, אי בעית אימא משום דחשיבי, ואי בעית אימא שלא היו באותה עצה.

⁹ רש"י עה"פ ואכלת ושבעת (יא טו) הרי זו ברכה אחרת שתהא ברכה מצויה בפת בתוך המעים ואכלת ושבעת.

¹⁰ שבת נה ב, ארבעה מתו בעטיו של נחש ואלו הן, בנימין בן יעקב, ועמרם אבי משה, וישי אבי דוד, וכלאב בן דוד.

¹¹ הגר"א (ביאור לאגדות סבי דבי אתונא, ד"ה אייתי בודיא, הובא באבן שלמה פרק ג אות ב) כי ענין סימני טהרה שני סימנים, מעלה גרה ומפרסת פרסה. והענין כמ"ש הקדמונים כי בעוף אמרו כל עוף הדורס טמא, והענין כי מאכילת הדבר כפי מזג המאכל כן יהיה טבע האוכל, כי אבר מחזיק אבר, וזה סוד נפש הבהמית שבאדם ונפש החוטאת וסוד הקרבנות כידוע. וכל העבירות והחטאים הכל מחמדה כמ"ש, כי לא תחמוד כולל כל הדברות וכל התורה כמו שהאריכו בזה ועיין בדבריהם. וכל

have *Bitachon* then you always feel full. ***
 אַכְלֶת וְשָׂבֵעֶת וּבִרְכָּת After feeling full, we are
 commanded to bentch. *Chazal* say¹² that
 Hashem gives Klal Yisroel special treatment,
 since we are only required to bentch after:
 שְׂבִיעָה total fullness, yet we bentch even after
 just a *K'zayis* or *K'beitza*. But the *Nusach*
 (text) of bentching is the same, and how
 can we say the words: אַכְלֶת וְשָׂבֵעֶת
 you shall eat and be "full" if you
 only ate a *K'zayis*? The answer is
 that *Tzadikim* make themselves
 happy as if they had שְׂבִיעָה total
 fullness since they are
Sameach B'chelko, and
 because they fill their brains
 with *Bitachon* for a good future.



R' Michoel Tenenbaum

NOVARDOK

R' Michoel Tenenbaum *Zatzal* (27 Av 5763)
 was a *Chashuva* Gerrer *Chasid* who survived
 the war and he settled in Boro Park. When he
 was a young bachur, he learned in the
 Ostrolanka Branch of *Novardok*. It
 made a tremendous impression on
 him. There was much, much
 more stress of perfecting *Middos*
 than any other *Yeshiva*. At first,
 it was difficult to listen to such
 long *Shmuessin*, but after a
 while they got used to it. **
 (*Slabodka* also had not-so-easy
 types of *Shmuessin* which you
 had to get used to). He met many
 people years later who remained frum
 only because they once learned in
Novardok. The *Alter Zatzal* was smart, and
 he knew how to affect people in a way that it
 sinks into you and stays there forever. ***

*The main Yesod of Bitachon
 is when it changes the
 person who works at it, and
 makes him a happy person
 who is closer to Hashem*

העוף הטורף טרף הוא סימן שאין בו מדת ההסתפקות. וכמ"ש סוף מכות בא חבוק והעמידן על אחת, וצדיק באמונתו
 יחיה, והוא ההסתפקות. וכן הוא בבהמה סימן מעלה גרה שמסתפק במאכל שבקרב. וכן מפרשת פרסה הוא סימן שאינו
 דורס וטורף טרף אלא גדל על אבוסו.

בגמל וארנבת ושפן, סימן טהרה שלהם מעלה גרה, וסימן טומאה שאינו מפריס פרסה, ובחזיר להיפך. והענין כמ"ש במדרש
 רבה (שמיני יג ה) גמל זו מלכות בבל, ארנבת כו' ע"ש היטב, כמ"ש (תהלים פ ד) יְכַרְסֶמֶה חֲזִיר מִיָּעַר, כמ"ש פסחים (קח)
 ע"ש, ואמרו (יומא ט ב) ראשונים עדיפי או אחרונים עדיפי, ואמרו ראשונים עדיפי, אדרבא אחרונים עדיפי דעסקי בתורה, ואמרו,
 תנו עיניכם בבירה כו', והענין כי ראשונים שנתגלה עונם נתגלה קיצם, אחרונים כו', והטעם כי הראשונים היו מעשיהם הטובים
 טמונים ועונותיהם גלויים, כי לבם היה טוב ואחרונים להיפך, ורחמנא ליבא בעי, כמ"ש (סנהדרין קו) רבותא למבעי בעי, בשני
 דרב יהודא כו' ע"ש. ואמרו, ראשונים שהיה בהם ע"ז וג"ע וש"ד אלא שתלו בטחונם בהקב"ה, נמצא כי מעשיהם רע מאוד
 שכולן ביהרג ועל יעבור עבירות חמורות שבתורה, ולבם היה טוב מאוד שמעלת הבטחון על כולם כנ"ל. ואחרונים עסקו בתורה
 ובגמילות חסדים, ומפני מה חרבה, מפני שנאת חנם, ללמדך ששקולה שנאת חנם כו', כמ"ש (ברכות סג) איזה פרשה קטנה
 כו' ואהבת לרעך, והוא מחוסר הבטחון, שכל הקנאה והשנאה ממנו. ולכן ראשונים גלו בג' מלכיות שסימן טהרה שלהם
 מבפנים וסימן טומאה שלהם מבחוץ, ואחרונים בגלות אדום שנמשלה לחזיר שהוא בהיפך, והוא פושט טלפיו להראות סימני
 טהרה שלו, ושבע תועבות בלבו. וכן הוא בגלות הזה, מדתן של ערב רב "נִנְעָשָׂה לָנוּ שָׁם" כנ"ל. וענין סימני טהרה בטלפיו "וצא
 הַשָּׁדָה וַצִּוְהָ לִי צִיד" בכיבוד אב, אבל כי ציד הוא סימן טומאה צד וטורף כנ"ל בפיו שאינו מעלה גרה כו', וז"ש טובה צפרן של
 ראשונים (סימן טומאה שלהם) מכריסן של אחרונים, והבן.

¹² ברכות כ ב, דרש רב עזריא, זמנין אמר לה משמיה דרבי אמי, וזמנין אמר לה משמיה דרבי אסי, אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני
 הקדוש ברוך הוא, רבונו של עולם, כתוב בתורתך (עקב י יז) אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִשָּׂא פָנִים וְלֹא יִקַּח שֹׁחַד, והלא אתה נושא פנים לישראל,
 דכתיב (נשא ו כו) יִשָּׂא ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, אמר להם, וכי לא אשא פנים לישראל, שכתבתי להם בתורה (עקב ח י) וְאֶכְלֶת וְשָׂבֵעֶת
 וּבִרְכָּתָתְ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, והם מדקדקים על עצמם עד כזית ועד כביצה.

There were many *Mussar Sedarim* with the lights out, and plenty of screaming and crying going on. There was also plenty laughing at the *Yetzer Hara* going on. I would assume that when your emotions are so involved, then you don't forget so fast. He said that his entire *Bar Mitzva* was getting an *Aliyah* in shul, and after davening, the gabbai held a tray of cake above his head, and gave everyone a piece. ****

That was the end of the *Bar Mitzva*. I've heard similar stories of quick and brief *Bar Mitzvah's*, etc. It's quite possible that they simply didn't have more. But instead of making a shpiel and feeling sorry for themselves, they did the best they could, and didn't care at all. The *Alter Zatzal* would make a joke out of eating, since they had no food anyway; and he had everyone happy and rolling. *****

Novardokers Brainwashed Themselves Until They Were Totally Happy and They Couldn't Care Less

This is a *Yesod* in many areas, where *Novardokers* laughed at their problems, and they brainwashed themselves until they were totally happy and they couldn't care less. They were on fire in general. In the concentration camps before Yom Kippur one year, a Jewish doctor was asked to steal a *Tallis* for a minyan of *Yeshiva* boys. They

were going to have a minyan for *Kol Nidrei*, and the leader was a *Novardoker*. *****

He insisted that since he was the *Chazan*, it's unthinkable for a *Chazan* for *Kol Nidrei* not to have a *Tallis*. The doctor had (with *Mesirus Nefesh*) the capability of sneaking into the warehouse, and he came back with a *Tallis* and some *Siddurim*. The *Tallis* lifted everyone's spirits. *****

I was once eating at a *Novardoker's* house, and the children were acting up at the table. It was *Shabbos*, and he was saying a *Vort* on the *Parsha* in his usual low and soft voice. His response to the acting up: To speak even lower and softer than usual! And as usual, he was always in a state of good humor. He laughed and laughed. He created a happy home, thanks to his hours and hours of learning *Shaar HaBitachon*, which is where he got his tremendous *Simcha* from. His tremendous *Hachna'a* and *Eidelkeit* came from hours and hours of learning *Shaar HaK'niya*. *****

Novardok husbands always blame themselves, since they live by the *Chovos Halvavos Shaar*

HaBitachon who says¹³ that when your relatives mistreat you, you should be *Mochel* them and *Davka* do lots of *Chesed* to them; just blame your own sins and do *Teshuva*. They go with *Dovid HaMelech's Shita*. When *Shim'i ben Gera* cursed him, he said: It's not him! Hashem is talking to me via him!

My Rebbe, R' Ozer Schwartz Zatzal seemed to always be on such a high, just like his Rebbe, R' Gershon Liebman Zatzal. They probably laughed in their sleep. R' Ozer Zatzal once told me that he has a hard time with crying; his Simcha was oozing non-stop

¹³ חובות הלבבות שער הבטחון (פרק ד, ד"ה אבל פרוש החלק השלישי, בסופו) אבל עניני אויביו וחומדיו ומבקשי רעתו, יבטח בעניניהם על הבורא יתעלה ויסבל חרפתם, ואל יגמל להם כפעלם, אך יגמלם חסד ויעשה להם כל מה שיוכל לעשותו מן הטוב, ויזכר בלבבו, שתועלתו ונזקו ביד הבורא יתעלה. ואם יהיו סבה להזיקו, יחשב עליהם טוב, ויחשד את עצמו ומעשיו ברוע הקדמותיו אצל אלקיו, ויתחנן אל האלקים ויבקש מלפניו לכפר עונותיו, ואז ישובו אויביו לאהבתו, כמו שאמר החכם: ברצות ה' דרכי איש גם אויביו ישרים אתו.



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Parshas Va'eschanan 5785

Shiur ID	Duration	Language
385355	1:00	English
385356	2:43	English
385952	36:57	English
385357	4:47	English
385956	5:36	English
385957	4:18	English
385958	2:26	English
386840	41:50	English

Questions To Rabbi Mandel



Undergoing Challenges and Great Tests in Life

(The following was said in response to a person undergoing challenges and great tests in life)

Everything will go beautiful. You are getting a great shidduch, that you richly deserve. You are a very special person. Hashem will take good care of you. Laugh off those problems. They will all be forgotten in a short while as if they never happened. Your family member should have a complete *Refua* with *Nissim G'luyim*. Don't let anything bother you; do the best you can. You've come such a long way, you are a walking *Kiddush Hashem*, there's no one like you. You are so unusual. What you've accomplished in such a short time. You are a holy *Neshama*.

I want to tell you one *Yesod*. The *Chofetz Chaim* says that in the next world, the main thing is "What do you look like?" "What are you all about?" Not "How many children did you have", "How much money did you make", "How much did you learn?" Of course, that's important, the *Ruchaniyus* that you did. But more than anything else is "How do you look?" A person like you has overcome so much. You are a person who is happy despite who-knows-what; that is a special accomplishment. The way you look, in the next world, you are with the greatest *Tzadikim*; you should be so proud. Your *Yissurim* and your *Nisyonos* have made you the most unusual person, that should make you so proud. Look what you're becoming. Look what became of you. That's the main part of your life!

Here we have two people. Here's someone with success all over, but he's still angry, he's still jealous. The other guy is maybe not-so-successful, but he purified himself in so many areas. In this world they may look at him like a *nebach*. But in the next world, he's the big winner, by far! And the other guy is a *Rachmanus*.

Now you, I wish you'll get both worlds. But in the meantime, always be proud of how you are growing, and how great you are becoming. How you are able to weather the storm of things that other people couldn't deal with, and look what you are doing. You must be a very special *Neshama*.

You should get everything good in this world. *K'pshuto* good! What's normally considered good, on all fronts, you should get it in this world. And *Im Yirtzeh Hashem* after a long, happy, productive life, in the next world too.

Something tells me that you would be great for the public, to teach them how to do a lot of things that you did with your life. *Ashrei Chelkichem*. Kol Tuv

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