

The Weekly Farbrengens



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TRUSTING HASHEM

POSITIVE THINKING

What is the definition of *bitachon*? Rabbeinu Bechaye writes in *Chovas HaLevavos* that *bitachon* is complete peace of mind, a state in which a person is fully calm, knowing that he can rely on *HaShem* and trust in Him. When a person contemplates how *HaShem* loves him, cares for him, is able to fill his needs, and knows what is best for him; when he considers how *HaShem* alone monitors his life, and always does good even to those who are undeserving; – he will then feel full *bitachon* in Him.

Such trust can be found only in *HaShem*, for any other option, such as mortal benefactors or financial security, can fail or discontinue.

(חובת הלבבות שער הבטחון פרק א)

When the revered *mashpia*, Reb Michael Beliner (better known as Reb Michael *der Alter*), was still a young man, his son fell deathly ill, and the doctors said that there was nothing they could do. Reb Michael went to the local *beis midrash* and shared his bitter news with the *chassidim* who were there at the time. Doing their best to encourage him, they assured him that *HaShem* would surely have *rachmonus*, and advised him to travel immediately to the Rebbe, the *Tzemach Tzedek*. Reb Michael began to weep, saying that he would strongly like to go, but the doctors said that it was only a matter of hours, so why should he set out on the road? One of the older *chassidim* berated him. He quoted from the *Gemara* that one should never despair of being granted *HaShem's* mercy, and added that surely the good *malochim* would succeed in having the Heavenly verdict postponed until he reached the Rebbe. One of those *chassidische yungeleit*, a tailor, offered to join Reb Michael on his trip, and together they set out on foot, here and there hitching a cheap wagonride.

Arriving at last in Lubavitch, Reb Michael was fortunately able to be received for *yechidus* immediately.

He later related: "When I entered the Rebbe's room and handed him my *pidyon nefesh* for my son, I thought to myself, 'Who knows what has meanwhile happened with him? The doctors said it's only a few hours...', and I began to weep. The Rebbe read the note and said, 'Don't cry. You must

have *bitachon* in *HaShem* with simple *emunah* that He will save your son. *Tracht gut vet zien gut.* (Think good and things will be good.) You will yet celebrate the *bar-mitzvas* of your grandsons!"

Soon after, the boy recovered completely. From then on, whenever Reb Michael experienced difficulty he would bring to mind the luminous face of the Rebbe as he spoke those words, and the situation would change for the better.

(לקו"ד ח"א ע' קנט, אג"ק רי"צ ח"ז ע' קצז)

CONSIDER

Did the mashpia Reb Michael not know that HaShem could heal his son? What did the Tzemach Tzedek teach him?

Was Reb Shaul Ber obligated to neglect the train or his wallet? Was he allowed to? Why?

The Rebbe explains that when a person places his full trust in *HaShem*, feeling fully at ease with complete *bitachon*, that is enough for him to merit *HaShem's* salvation. This is true even for someone who is seemingly undeserving, for this *avodah* of *bitachon* alone gives him the merit to be helped. That is the deeper message of the words of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, "*Tracht gut*" – "*Think good and things will be good.*"

(לקו"ש חל"ו ע' 4)

UNWAVERING FAITH

Reb Shaul Ber Kobakov, a successful lumber merchant from Minsk, a *chossid* of the Rebbe Maharash and later of the Rebbe Rashab. Once, when on a business trip, as he waited on the railway platform, he heard an announcement that his train would be delayed, so he went to wash his hands and *daven Maariv*. Another Yiddishe merchant present, knowing that this *chossid* was not one to rush through his *davening*, went over and warned

him that his train would probably arrive before he finished *Shemoneh Esreh*.

"That's of no interest to me," replied the *chossid*. "Now is the time for *Maariv*, so I'll *daven* now."

While he stood in a quiet corner and *davened* for a full hour, the train came and left. When he finished, he waited for the next train and repeated to the other merchant that nothing mattered to him, even his business, when it was time to *daven*.

Just then the next train clattered to a halt, but before the *chossid* climbed on, whom did he see, stepping down from the train? It was the owner of the forests to whom he was about to travel! That man came over and greeted him, explaining that he had waited for him at his station as they had planned, but when the *Yid* had not shown up, he had decided to travel to see him. From this, Reb Shaul Ber understood that he must be desperate to sell his forests, and was thus able to strike a good bargain.

On another occasion, this same Reb Shaul Ber went to *toivel* before *davening*, with a few thousand rubles in his pocket. In the midst of his *davening*, he suddenly realized that his pocket was not as heavy as it had been before, yet he did not rush to finish. He continued *davening* at his accustomed leisurely pace, then put on Rabbeinu Tam's *tefillin*, and at about two o'clock, when he was ready, he went back to the river where he had *toiveled*. There, at the place he had put his clothing down, he found his money – covered with sand that had been blown by the wind!

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' שמוא)

In response to a man who was troubled and downcast because of his many debts, the Rebbe wrote that his biggest trouble was his lack of *bitachon* in *HaShem*, for that is the key to everything. The Rebbe encouraged the writer to toil in strengthening his certain belief that even if there seems to be no way for matters to work out, he should nevertheless trust in *HaShem* – for He works above nature, and thus all can be good. When a person lifts himself out of his worldly mindset to the point that he appreciates that there is no power over him except *HaShem*, he is then able to cause everything to be good in actuality.

(אג"ק ח"ו ע' קמז)



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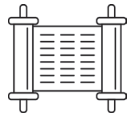
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REB YOSEF YITZCHOK OF AVRUTCH

Reb Yosef Yitzchok was born to his father the Tzemach Tzeddek in 5582 (1822), in the city Lubavitch. He married his first cousin, the daughter of Reb Yaakov Yisroel of Tcherkas who was a son in law of the Mitteler Rebbe. After his chassunah, he settled in Horonsteipel near his father-in-law who supported him, and would visit his father and brothers in Lubavitch from time to time. Around the year 5617 (1857) he was appointed by his father-in-law to be the Rov in Avrutch and lead the Chernobler Chasidim there as a Rebbe. He became known for his mofsim and people flocked to Avrutch to see him. After 18 years of leadership, he passed away on 18 Kislev 5637 (1876). His daughter Rebbetzin Shterna Sara married the Rebbe Rashab.

Reb Yosef Yitzchok responded that he heard from his father, the Tzemach Tzeddek, in the name of the Alter Rebbe, that the idea of tefila betzibur is to collect and gather (tzibur means gathering) all of one's kochos hanefesh (inner faculties) and sparks of kedusha. Now that takes a lot of time.

(ת"מ חכ"ד ע' 277)

The chassunah of Reb Yosef Yitzchok took place in the year 5596 (1836) and was attended by the Tzemach Tzedek and many Lubavitcher chassidim, as well as by the grandfather of the kallah, Reb Mottel Chernobler along with many Chernobler chassidim. When the Lubavitcher chasidim asked the Tzemach Tzedek to say Chassidus, the Chernobler Chasidim protested saying that Avrohom Avinu said "yukach na me'at mayim" implying that Torah (which is compared to water) is best kept short. The Lubavitcher chassidim argued that those words were said to people that appeared like Arabs. Yidden, however, need an abundance of Torah.

Reb Hillel Paritcher resolved their dispute by saying that the entire Torah is called a 'kad,' a pitcher of water, since there are 24 seforim in Tanach (כ"ד). Thus, however much Torah will be said, it will always be 'a little.'

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' קפב)

Reb Yaakov Yisroel once asked his son-in-law what his custom is in regards to davening. Reb Yosef Yitzchok answered that he tries to daven betzibur and Reb Yaakov Yisroel was happy with the response (in Reb Yakov Yisroel's circles, davening at length was not the custom). Reb Yaakov Yisroel once sent a messenger to call Reb Yosef Yitzchok but he was found still davening, although the minyan was long over. The messenger was sent again a while later but once more, he was found still davening and so it happened several times. When he finished davening, his father-in-law asked him, "Didn't you tell me that you daven 'betzibur'?"

A Moment with The Rebbe



לזכות שניאור זלמן בן חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות

THE OTHER CHILDREN

After one of their children had become engaged, a couple came to the Rebbe to ask for a bracha for the chassuna and for the building of the new home.

They explained that the Rebbe's time is very dear to them, and they didn't want to burden the Rebbe with matters that were not time sensitive.

After the Rebbe promised to mention the name at the Ohel of the Friediker Rebbe, they turned to leave, but the Rebbe called them back, "What about your other children? Why didn't you give their names in?"

But the Rebbe saw things differently. "When one child has a simcha," the Rebbe explained, "with all the preparations and attention focused on that child, the others could feel neglected. It is therefore important that you include the other children, especially now."

FORGETFUL ACTIVITIES

Which activities cause forgetfulness and for whom?

Chazal mention certain foods and activities that put a person at risk of forgetting their Torah learning (kasheh leshich'cha), and there is a Torah prohibition to actively cause oneself to forget their learning. Below are some examples:

Foods: Eating bread that wasn't fully baked, the heart of an animal or fowl, or food from which a pest ate (though it is questionable how large of a piece is problematic). Eating the very end of a loaf is said to be problematic, so a little piece is removed, though there is no clear source for this.

Chazal say that one who eats olives regularly is prone to forget. How "regularly" isn't clear, and it may only apply when eating a lot and without anything else. Moreover, the Gemara states that olive oil has a positive effect of restoring the memory of Torah learning. Thus, poskim record the custom to add olive oil to olives and then eat them together.

Clothing: Putting one two garments at once (though not wearing a garment inside out, which is improper for other reasons), drying hands on one's garment, sleeping with shoes on, and having clothes sewn while wearing them.

Practices: Leaving a sefer open in the middle of learning and walking away. Reading protruding letters on a tombstone. For a man to walk between two women (who are within four amos of each other), though in a pressing situation, he can hold onto some object (some say his tzitzis) to form a separation.

While some hold these avoidances are more pertinent for men and boys, who have an obligation not to forget the Torah they learned, others hold that women should also be careful, especially if pregnant, for the sake of the sons they may give birth to.

- 1. ראה ליקוטי מהר"ח (סדר קביעות עיתים לתורה), שו"ת דברי מלכיאל ח"ד סי' א'. ובשו"ת משנה הלכות ח"ג סי' ס"א וח"ה סי' ק"א מלמד זכות על המקלין דסמיכין שהאידינא נשתנו הטבועים.
2. הרבה מהם בהוריות יג ע"ב.
3. הוריות שם, וראה רש"י שם. לאידך ראה כף החיים או"ח סי' ב' סק"ג ראשית חכמה דרך ארץ שער ג' סי' ט"ו.
4. מג"א או"ח סי' ק"ע סק"ט.
5. שמירת הגוף והנפש ע' פ"ז.
6. ראה שו"ת מנח"ח ח"ט סי' ח' שכן הוא נוהג מעולם אבל תמה על מקור המנהג.
7. שו"ת שלמת חיים ח"א סי' מ"א.
8. שו"ת מהוד"ב או"ח סי' ב' ס"ג.
9. בשלחן הטהור סי' ב' ג' שלא לפשוט ב' בגדים יחד, וכה בתורת חיים (לאדמו"ר האמצעי) שמות תנב ע"א ועטרת ראש שער יום הכיפורים כ"ט ע"א ול"ו ע"א.
10. מג"א סי' קנ"ח סי"ז. ובפמ"ג מסתפק

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה