

BITACHON WEEKLY

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פרשת בהר תשפ"ד

The Less a Person "Does" And the More He Lets Hashem Run His Life, The More He Is Blessed

The *Malbim* says that the special *Bracha* of: *יְרַמְיָהוּ בְּה' יִבְטַח אִשְׁרֵי הַגִּבּוֹר הַגִּבּוֹר* a person who has *Bitachon* in Hashem, was said when: *וְהָיָה ה' מְבַטְחוֹ* his *Bitachon* is TOTALLY on Hashem; without any *Hishtadlus*, THEN he gets a *Bracha*. By *Shemita*, Hashem says not to work, i.e., no *Hishtadlus*, and then: *וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת בְּרַכְתִּי כִּהְיֶה כֹּהֵן* you get a *Bracha*. And probably, the less *Hishtadlus*, the bigger the *Bracha*. And by the holy *Mitzva* of *Shemita* we have a special: *וְצִוִּיתִי* decree of receiving *Brachos* (and *צִוִּיתִי*).

We need to work on *Menucha*, which is a form of doing zero and letting Hashem run our lives. Even during *Hishtadlus*, do it with *Menucha* and be relaxed; this will bring much more *Bracha*.

Bitachon Lessons From the Story of Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai

The *Gemara* tells the famous story of *Nachum Ish Gam Zu*, who was supposed to bring a box full of precious jewels to the king, but a wicked innkeeper stole them and put dirt inside instead. *Nachum Ish Gam Zu* was undaunted. He said *Gam Zu L'tovah*, and he gave this box to the king. The king was furious, but one of his servants (who was really *Eliyahu HaNavi*) told him that this dirt is from their *Zeide*, *Avraham*, who killed his toughest enemies in battle by throwing it at them. The king tried it out and it worked wonders; and *Nachum* was rewarded handsomely.

Nachum was the *Rebbe* of *Rabbi Akiva*, and *Rabbi Akiva* was the author of: *כָּל מֵאֵי דְעֵבִיד רְחֻמָּנָא לְטָב* *עֵבִיד* Whatever Hashem does, is surely best, and everything that happens to a person is good. I have found at least three powerful stories in the *Gemara* where *Raban Gamliel* and the other *Gedolei Yisroel* were all crying at sad situations, and *Rabbi Akiva* was laughing. He explained his positive outlook, and they all agreed with him.

Even when *Rabbi Akiva* was being tortured to death, and his *Talmidim* were full of pain watching him, all he said was that his entire life he had been hoping to give away his life for *Kavod*

Shamayim in such a horrific manner. And before *Nachum Ish Gam Zu* was *Niftar*, he asked for the worst *Yissurim* for each one of his limbs, and: *וְלֹא נִתְקַרְרָה דַּעְתּוֹ* he wasn't "cooled off" and satisfied only after his body was full of *Sh'chin*.

Notice the extreme *Bitachon* of this *Rebbe* and his *Talmid*. They can turn the worst situation into the best. The

Be Overflowing with Thankfulness for All Your Maalos

Look at all those multiple praises given to *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai*, and how he praised himself also! There is a story about the *Maggid* of *Zlatchov Zatzal*, that when the *Maggid* saw *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* he said: "What: *צוּרָה* form would we have without you, **but still, what: *צוּרָה* form would you have without us!**" And then the *Maggid* jumped on the table and started dancing.

I have a rule: **Whenever you're busy praising *Tzaddikim* and others, don't ignore yourself (or else you could be heading for depression!)** Hashem told *Avraham Avinu*: *בְּךָ חוֹתְמִין* "We end with you". (*Gemara*). Why does *Avraham Avinu*, who was total in *Chesed*, need reassurance; and that he should be superior to others? **The truth is that if you aren't overflowing with thankfulness over your own *Maalos*, then you have deep-seated complaints to Hashem for not making you better.**

The *Chovos Halvavos* says that first step to *Anava* is being aware of your own greatness; eventually you'll be spilling over with *Simcha*, and a happy person gives and loves others. So after you express admiration for others, don't forget to be *M'kayem*: *בְּךָ חוֹתְמִין* "We end with you". Like R' Ahron Kreiser *Zatzal* said "אִיךָ בֵּין אֹיְיךָ אַ מְאָמְעֵס אַ קִינֵד" ("I'm also a mom's child; i.e., I'm also worthy).

Maharal says that **saying Gam Zu L'tovah causes the most extreme evil to become the most extreme goodness. And they can both appreciate being in the worst situation!** They are both the *Rebbe*, and *Rebbe's Rebbe* of *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai*.

Now we understand how *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* said that the day of his death, which is the saddest day, should be a day of intense *Simcha*. When he was bathing to alleviate his terrible wounds (that came as a result of being buried in the sand for 12 years), his son-in-law *Rabbi Pinchos ben Yair* cried. The tears fell on his wounds and made it worse.

When *Rabbi Pinchos ben Yair* expressed his pain from watching *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* in such a state, *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* said: "*Aderaba*, because of those wounds he became such a giant in *Torah*, and it was all worth it". *Lag Ba'omer* should be a lesson for us to emulate these people. Especially according to the *Chofetz Chaim Zatzal* who said that before *Moshiach* comes, the only way to last is by working on *Bitachon*.

There is a famous *Kashya*: Why is *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* such an unusual celebrity, more than anyone else; more than other *Tana'im*, from all the personalities of *Tanach*, and from so many *Gedolei Yisroel* of all generations? We can suggest that *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* remains a message for all of us: **Positivity to the extreme**. Besides *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* having the most extreme *Shita* in *Bitachon* (since he didn't believe in going to work), he is also loaded with all kinds of *Inyanei Bitachon* which can be *M'chazek* all of us in any situation.

After losing 24,000 *Gedolei Yisroel*, *Rabbi Akiva* had no *Yi'ush*. He was *M'kayem*: וְדָרַךְ קְהֵלֵת יֵאוּשׁ Don't stop producing in your old age, and he started all over again with new *Talmidim*. (*Gemara*). **No Yi'ush!** No negativism!

Novardok

TRUE STORY TOLD BY R' YAAKOV BERMAN SHLITA, IN THE NAME OF R' BEN-TZION BRUK

A group of *Talmidim* were learning in a shul with *Bitachon* that Hashem would provide them with stuffed duck and old wine, because they wanted to work on the *Midda* of *Bitachon*. In the morning, a woman brought them bread, which they refused. Towards evening, an old lady came in requesting they come to her house since she needed a *Minyan* for her *Seuda* in honor of her husband's *Yahrzeit*. She would be serving good food, including stuffed duck and old wine! Again, they refused because they were *M'kabel* to remain in shul. A half hour later she returned with all the food, since she couldn't find a *Minyan*. **The power of *Bitachon* can give you exactly what you want!**

In *Bialystok*, they taught you again and again that the current era is: שְׁעַת הַשְּׁמַד a time of religious persecution, which means that you don't surrender an inch of *Yiddishkeit*. (*Gemara*). **By constantly hearing these fiery words during their *Mussar Vaadim*, the *Novardokers* were able to hold strong throughout the worst *Nisyonos*.** Getting used to being *Moser Nefesh* was their *Derech*, and by constantly hammering in these concepts, they became more and more real.

This is a #1 *Yesod* of *Novardok*: **Repetition, repetition, repetition, is what it takes.** If you have some weakness (like *Ka'as*), don't just hear a nice *Vort* about this issue; when you constantly talk about it, it sinks in, and you become a new person. I personally witnessed how the *Tzaddik*, R' Pinchos Menachem Malach *Zatzal* was reading a *Novardok* song about being a tough soldier and becoming like *Rabbi Akiva*, who was ready to have iron rakes destroy his body.

Novardokers never make *Cheshbonos* and plans, like the *Gemara* warns: וְאַל תִּצְרַח עֲצָרָת מָחָר יְבוֹמֹת סוֹב Don't worry about tomorrow's problems. Their situations were so difficult, they would not have been able to last even one day, if not for the fact that they threw all their *Cheshbonos* and worries on Hashem. They weren't involved in *Protec'tzia* (i.e., flattering the rich) and trying to get on the good side of important people. תְּמִימִים תְּהִיָּה עִם ה' "Have *Temimus* with Hashem" was a favorite *Mussar* refrain.