

# BITACHON WEEKLY

BY: RABBI YEHUDAH MANDEL SHLITA

פרשת עקב חשפ"ד

## Hashem Wants Us to Be Close to Him Through Lots of Positivity and Thankfulness

What does Hashem ask from us? Only to have: יִרְאָה *Yir'ah* (fear) from Him. *Yir'ah* means awareness of Hashem.

*Chazal* say on this *Passuk* that the word: מָה is similar to: מְאֵה (one hundred), from which we learn that a person is required to say 100 *Brachos* every day. Unfortunately, so many people become aware of Hashem only when their unwanted "pecklach" arrive. Then, they run to Hashem, and start working on *Bitachon* and *Tefila*.

The ideal awareness of Hashem is by making 100 *Brachos* daily. One hundred "100", besides the literal number, symbolizes a רבוי magnitude of *Brachos*; i.e., praise Hashem a lot! Not just a 5-minute *Seder* of saying "thank you" every day (although even 5 minutes is plenty good). The *Torah* is saying: Be positive! כָּל מְאֵי דְעָבִיד רְחֻמָּה Whatever Hashem does, is surely best. Being aware of Hashem, is tantamount to saying "be positive".

No wonder saying: מְאֵה בְּרָכוֹת (one hundred *Brachos* daily) is: מְבַטֵּל cancels harsh decrees (*Chazal*) and brings *Yeshuos* and prevents *Tzaros*. All you need is to be close to Hashem; that's all Hashem wants from you. By being positive, you are heading for a beautiful life in *Olam HaZeh* and *Olam HaBah*. Similarly, it says: וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבָקִים בְּה' אֲלֵקִיכֶם חַיִּים כְּלָכֶם If you are connected (דְּבָק) to Hashem, then you're

### Two Amazing Stories

A *Yungerman* was paid a free ticket to come to an out-of-town community to spend *Shabbos* there and be *Mashpia* (have positive influence) on them. He was an A-1 and much celebrated public speaker. He davened a lot that Hashem should help him make a great speech, and bring lots of: הַשְּׁפָעוֹת טוֹבוֹת (*goodness from Shamayim*) to the *Olam* (crowd). However, the first night he spoke, he noticed plenty of people leaving in the middle, and/or falling asleep on him (seems like the davening didn't work...? What do you do now??).

He was looking through his notes, and at his diary full of *Hashgacha Pratis* stories, when he noticed that many years ago he had had the same exact predicament. Instead of kvetching to Hashem, he had thanked Him for the "great speech" that he made, and how they all loved him and begged him to come again. Also, in his notes he had once mentioned how he had davened for something, and what he asked for simply didn't happen. He had been greatly disappointed, so he decided: הַעֲקֵשׁן יִצְלִיחַ the stubborn will be *Matzliach*, and he davened again, and he had a *Yeshua*. So he davened again, which involved going against his nature to be *Mya'esh* and give up.

The next time he spoke he was a major "hit"! They loved his speech and he became very popular with them.

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A *Yungerman* was having loads of aggravation from his teenage daughter who was growing ultra long hair. Instead of saying anything to her, he spent a long-time thanking Hashem for giving him such a wonderful child "who davens, and says *Tehilim*, and has friends, and good marks, and helps in the house, etc." He didn't even say to Hashem: "But! Can you please teach her more *Tz'niyus* concerning her hair style?!"

He just thanked and thanked and thanked for all her *Maalos*, and ignored her *Chisaron* completely. The very next day, he was driving to New York and his daughter was sitting in the back seat. He turned around to look at her, and he noticed that she had taken a major haircut; and now she had a *Tz'niyus* hairstyle!

**Look how much power there is in insisting to see only positive, and how the negative can disappear on its own.**

**alive!**

And the *Baal HaTurim* says that the 'ק (letter *Kuf*) of the word: הַדְּבָקִים is *Gematria* 100 *Brachos*. Again, being “connected” (דְּבָק) with Hashem means recognizing His unbelievable goodness. There is a famous *Rashi* in *Maseches Brachos* that says that when you praise and thank Hashem, you become close to Him, and now you are ready to ask Him for your needs.

There are people who are constantly davening all day. But if they are mainly asking Hashem: “Give me this, and give me that” (although this is a plenty good thing to do) they still aren’t really “close”. The *Korbanos* that were brought in the *Bais Hamikdash* are called: קָרְבָּן “*Korban*” קָרֹב מְלִשׁוֹן which means that they make you “close” to Hashem.

When you shecht a *Korban*, you are saying to yourself that you could have been dead just like the *Korban*, but instead you are alive. Saying thank you that you are alive is the greatest closeness to Hashem! And a person should really thank Hashem for every breath of air! (*Chazal*). *Chazal* say that since the *Churban*, the world has lost loads of its goodness and pleasures. Fruits don’t taste as good, etc. No wonder! The whole essence of the *Bais Hamikdash* is a place that we became close to Hashem by being thankful, and: כִּי־דַעַת as we know, the more you thank, the more you are given more and more goodness and pleasure! Indeed, the *Churban Bais Hamikdash* means a *Churban* of thankfulness in the world. That’s why the *Meraglim* and the *Dor HaMidbar* couldn’t enter *Eretz Yisroel*, since they were too kvetchy and were always complaining.

And so is 100 *Brachos* a **big** gesture of: שְׂבַח וְהוֹדָאָה praise and thankfulness. When you see good, the good grows into more and more goodness!

## Novardok

Once, a brilliant young Jewish boy was coming to the city of Novardok, and he had lots of ambitions, including.... learning the Russian language. The Alter had his spies, who knew exactly on which train this boy would be arriving. They met him at the train station, and invited him to have free “room and board” in the Yeshiva. As soon as he came to the Yeshiva, the Alter met him in his office, and told him that he’ll try to help him fulfil his dreams. But first, he would like him to spend a month in the Yeshiva and learn Mussar. At the end of the month, this boy was a changed person. He became a top Talmid of the Alter, and he became an Adam Gadol.

The Novardok Shita is based a lot on the Gr”a. A favorite Novardok story is about a certain person who would fast from Shabbos to Shabbos. Every Friday, he would meet a group of children who would look how skinny he was becoming, and they would admire him for his fasting. They told the Gr”a about him. The Gr”a was skeptical about this person, and he said that the children should stop going to him. After two weeks, this person was Niftar.

The Gr”a pointed out how the entire existence of this person and his ability to fast, came from the Kavod these little children were giving him. Novardokers are very keen about Kavod, and they can try to shower a person with Kavod, if they see that he has problems. Even physical problems can become lessened and even cured when a person gets Kavod. The Novardokers work on getting true Kavod: אֵין כְּבוֹד אֵלָא תוֹרָה and indeed they produced phenomenal Masmidim.

R' Chuna Hertzman Zatzal once told me a story that he heard from R' Michael Ber Weissmandel Zatzal. He was a young Bachur and a big Illui. He wanted to learn without being seen, in order to avoid getting Kavod, so he went to a private Bais Medrash. But people started looking inside through the window, so he closed the blinds of the window. Then, he noticed how people pushed aside the blinds to take a peek at him, so he left the Bais Medrash, and went downstairs to learn in the basement.

There was a boiler room in the basement, and pretty soon he fell asleep altogether.... Lesson: If you’re trying to run away from Kavod, watch what you’re doing; you can Chas V’shalom lose everything. Shelo Li’shmah can come in handy to get you moving in Avodas Hashem.