

BITACHON WEEKLY

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פרשת אחרי-קדושים תשפ"ה

Further Improve Yourself and Continue Heading for Greatness

The *Cohen Gadol* is not like (*L'havdil*) the Pope "who never sins". Before he comes to be *M'chaper* on *Klal Yisroel*, he has to be *M'chaper* on his own sins, and the sins of his wife. He also has to be *M'chaper* on the *Aveiros* of the elite part of *Klal Yisroel*; i.e., the *Cohanim* (who may have inadvertently eaten *Korbanos* or entered the *Bais Hamikdash* while in a state of *Tum'ah*). It's a totally different world when you realize that you are doing *Teshuva* together with our most holy *Cohanim*, including the #1 *Cohen Gadol* himself!

You no longer look at yourself like you're a lowly bum, *Chas V'shalom*, and a sin doesn't make you automatically a loser. It is just a stepping stone to further improve yourself and continue heading for greatness. Do you know why accepting *Tochacha* (rebuken) is so difficult? Because the other person looks to you like he's "Mr. Good-guy" and you're the "nobody"; and that hurts!

RSRH *Zatzal* says that giving *Tochacha* shouldn't be done in a condescending way, rather we are all in this together and we all make mistakes. The: מוֹכִיחַ one who gives *Tochacha* should tell the person he is: מוֹכִיחַ giving *Tochacha* to, that he can also give back *Tochacha* when the: מוֹכִיחַ one who gives *Tochacha* does something wrong. There is no official *Tzaddik Gamur* and *Rasha עברין* sinner, all are the same. All are always making mistakes.

כִּי אָדָם אֵין צָדִיק בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה טוֹב וְלֹא יִחַטֵּא קְהֵלָתָם
There does not exist a person who never sinned even once during his entire life. It is interesting that the greatest of all our leaders, *Dovid Melech Yisroel*, should be *Nichshal* in a grave sin. And the lowest of the low; what appeared like sinning with an: אִשָּׁת אִישׁ a married woman and killing her husband. Of course, it's not: כְּפָשׁוּטוֹ literally (*Chazal*), but it was still a supremely embarrassing episode.

For a Person to Be Truly #1, He Needs to Be a Baal Teshuva, Who Is Truly on Top

How is it possible that the *Melech*, the leader of leaders, and *Dovid*, who was an unusual *Tzaddik*, should fall into such a cesspool, *Rachmana Litzlan*? We can suggest that since: בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁבַעֲלִי תְשׁוּבָה עוֹמְדִים אֵין צָדִיקִים גְּמוּרִים יוֹלִין

Believe That You Can Become a New Person, Even Though You May Be Feeling Worse Than Usual

ADERABA!

Pesach is in the spring, when the world renews itself; the dead trees wake up, and things start blossoming. This is a *Siman* for us; i.e., we can actually become new people. Really believe this (even though you will be tested, and you may even feel worse than usual! Always say "Aderaba!")

All those sudden appearances of beautiful flowers and leaves are like a *Ness*; look how a dead world suddenly wakes up! These are *Nissim*. Think all day of *Nissim*, and talk about them a lot (especially your own *Hashgacha Pratis* stories and answered *Tefilos*) and watch more and more *Nissim* enter your life!

Want To Get Much Further in Life? Start Believing in Compliments with Temimus

DO YOU HATE COMPLIMENTS?

I once complimented a substitute *Melamed* that I felt he'd be a great *Rebbe* someday. Afterwards, someone told him that I'm full of baloney, since I say that to everybody. The truth is that nobody can help a person except himself. Every human is loaded with all kinds of *Maalos*. But if he believes that he has those *Maalos*, and he takes compliments seriously, then indeed he will live up to himself.

R' Ruderman *Zatzal* was told by the *Alter* of *Slabodka* that he can become a future Rabbi Akiva Eiger, and he believed him! Try to believe compliments with *Temimus*; you'll get much further in life. *Chazal* say: מַעֲשֶׂיךָ יִקְרְבוּךְ it's up to you!

ברכות לד ב *Baalei Teshuva* are even GREATER than pure *Tzaddikim*; and therefore in order to be truly #1, you need to be a *Baal Teshuva* who is truly on top; nobody can stand in his place since he's higher.

Without a sin you're always second best, and a *Melech* who is on top has to be the BEST! גדולה תשובה שצדקות *Teshuva* transforms your *Aveiros* into *Mitzvos*, and the worse the sin, the greater is the *Zechus* of doing *Teshuva*! Such a lowly sin, by doing *Teshuva* becomes an unusually beautiful *Mitzva*. The very same wicked: מקטרג accusing angel which your sin created, has become a: סניגור defending angel, i.e., your friend who is constantly sticking up for you.

So the next time you're depressed about something you shouldn't have done, suspect that you're destined for greatness, and Hashem wants you to do *Teshuva* which will make you much greater than you ever were. And always realize how we are **all** doing *Teshuva*, including our greatest Jews like the *Cohen Gadol* himself, and doing sins are a normal situation. (Editor's note: This is your attitude to *Aveiros* done in the past; i.e., never let the *Yetzer Hara* get you down for what you did, *Chas V'shalom*. However, in regards to staying away from *Aveiros* in the first place, of course a person may not even expose himself to a situation where he may be *Nichshal*; i.e., the exposure itself is an *Aveira*, *Kal Va'chomer* from our *Chiyuv* to protect our physical wellbeing. *Chazon Ish*).

Novordak

R' Binyamin Grodkeh described the *Novardok* branch in *Bialystok* as a place with two types; those who were mainly into learning, and those who were *Baalei Mussar*. When asked: "Which type were you?" he answered: "I was just a *Bat'lan*" (loafer). This is typical *Novardok* humor, and: ביטול עצמי making nothing of yourself. He remembered an American *Bachur* who was wearing a fancy suit. The *Bachur* was once in middle of a fiery *Mussar Seder*, when he suddenly got up and tore off his fancy golden buttons, and folded over his luxurious collar.

During *Elul*, many *Bachurim* from other *Yeshivos* would come to *Novardok*, including R' Chaim Shmuelevitz, who considered *Novardok* to be more on fire than the greatest *Baalei Mussar* of the times. When the *Bachurim* would cram together to hear a *Shiur* or *Shmuess*, the son-in-law of the *Alter*, R' Yisroel Yaakov Lubchansky *Zatzal*, would walk slowly between the rows, and **very, very** gently would tell them to be careful not to push each other.

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Being gentle and *Eidel* was a major *Novardok* issue, despite their fire. No heavy *Kana'us*-type "*Mussaring-out*" people; just *Eidelkeit*, which is the Jewish way, as it says: יעקב תולדות כז כב the "voice" is the voice of *Yaakov*. They say that whoever heard a *Shmuess* from R' Yisroel Yaakov **had** to become a new person. Both *Slabodka* and *Novardok* had an ongoing agenda of people changing themselves completely.

Novardokers never make *Cheshbonos* and plans, like the *Gemara* warns: אל תצור צרת מחר יבמות סג ב 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. תמים תהיה עם ה' "Have *Temimus* with Hashem" was a favorite *Mussar* refrain.

There is a picture of all the *Gedolei Novardok* together; but R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal*, although he was sitting up front, you don't see his full face; he was facing to the side. Despite the fact that all those giants of his own *Shita* were posing normally, he made sure to do what he felt was good for him, and he wasn't impressed. No *Hispa'alus* in *Novardok*! He probably felt that normal posing for a picture is a form of *Redifas HaKavod* and trying to impress others, and he didn't care if he would look slightly weird