

BITACHON WEEKLY

BY: RABBI YEHUDAH MANDEL SHLITA

פרשת וישלח תשפ"ו

A Baal Bitachon Is Rewarded That Hashem Causes His Enemies to Fear Him

Yaakov was afraid that the *Canaanim* would gang up against *Bnei Yaakov* and go to war against them, and this is exactly what happened. The *Medrashim* are loaded with the war stories of *Yaakov Avinu* against the *Canaanim*. Despite *Yaakov's* complaint against them, and despite his expressing his fears about potential wars, *Shimon* and *Levi* didn't seem impressed.

They just said: *הַכְזֹזְנָה יַעֲשֶׂה אֶת אֲחוֹתֵנוּ לֹד לֹא* "Shall we allow our sister to be treated like *Hefker*?" They stood their ground even against their father! They felt that they did the right thing and all they cared about was the *Kavod* of their sister and they had *Bitachon*! And indeed, despite this story, it says later: *וַיְהִי חֶתֶת אֱלֹקִים עַל הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבוֹתֶיהֶם וְלֹא רָדְפוּ אַחֲרֵי בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר* that the *Canaani* neighbors suddenly became petrified of *Bnei Yaakov*. This is the *Schar* of a *Baal Bitachon*; i.e., that Hashem causes his enemies to fear him.

I have seen this many times. I have a friend who is by nature very gentle and he has lots of respect; but also fear, fear of people. He was taught to become a macho personality. This was very much against his grain. But it worked wonders, and it helped him work on his own weaknesses. He once had a serious court case, but his fearlessness caused his enemies to fear him!

RSRH *Zatzal* points out from *Shimon* and *Levi* that a Jew is: *בְּעֵצָם* essentially a tough person, and it's no *Mitzva* to always be soft and *Eidel*. There is a time and place for: *אֲמִיצוּת* courage, which *Novardok* was famous for. So much *Zikkui HaRabbim* is lost because of fear of humans. Usually, your meekness and softness can be overcome if you work on it. It will make you a "free" person, and it gets you out of your self-imposed lifetime "jail".

I once discussed working on: *אֲמִיצוּת* courage with R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal*, and he told me that my *Avodas*: *אֲמִיצוּת* courage depends upon how much I want to spend my life all locked up with fear of other people's opinions. I counted 14 *Pesukim* where *Yaakov Avinu* defended himself and praised his own integrity and decency (to *Lavan*

Even If Things Seem Hopeless, It Is a Sin to Lose Hope

The *Ralbag* says that the situation with *Yaakov* was just about lost, and *Yaakov* wasn't *Mya'esh*. The *Me'am Lo'ez* says that from here we learn that if you visit a sick person who appears to be more dead than alive, *Rachana Litzlan*, you must still daven, and **it's a sin** not to! *אֲפִילוּ חֶרֶב מֻנַּחַת עַל צַוְאוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם, אֵל יִתִּיאֵשׁ עִצְמוֹ* to! *אֲפִילוּ חֶרֶב מֻנַּחַת עַל צַוְאוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם, אֵל יִתִּיאֵשׁ עִצְמוֹ* even if a sharp sword is resting on a person's neck, he shouldn't lose hope! Even though everyone is saying that for sure this sick person's life is over!

In *Novardok*, when they learned *Mussar* on *Bitachon*, they would demand from themselves *Bitachon*; i.e., how can you NOT have *Bitachon*; after all the wonders that you've seen? *עַד אָנָּה יִנְאַצְנִי הָעָם הַזֶּה וְעַד אָנָּה לֹא יֵאֱמִינוּ בִּי* After all the miracles I did for them, when will they finally believe in Me?? The *Bais HaLevi* says that being afraid and not having *Bitachon* is a sin, and: *יִתֵּן מִוֶּקֶשׁ מִשְׁלִי כִּטְכָּה* this sin (of worrying) invites problems, which come as a punishment for not having *Bitachon*. Yet, we see how people are always worried, and working on *Bitachon* isn't easy.

Spend Time to Always Talk About the Miracles in Our Lives

The problem is that all those wonderful *Yeshuos* that we are always experiencing don't register in our minds. We don't take notes and write *Hashgacha Pratis* booklets, and we don't spend time to always talk about the miracles in our lives..

and to his wives).

Many, many of us have imaginary "*Lavan's*" and internal voices, who keep reminding them of their shortcomings and sins, and this is a major obstacle in *Shteiging*.

Feelings of guilt are rampant, with so, so many of us; and they are almost total-lies of the *Yetzer Hara* who doesn't want you to have *Simcha* and *Shteig* and engage in *Zikkui HaRabbim*. R' Yerucham Levovitz *Zatzal* says that the reason people don't do *Zikkui HaRabbim* is because they don't work on their weakness of having fear of people.

Just like *Yaakov Avinu* said many *Pesukim* (14) where he defended himself against *Lavan*, so should we do, and we'll *Shteig* much more, with Hashem's help. I recommend writing all the complaints which the "*Lavan*" inside you is always telling you, and to defend yourself with: אוֹנֵס רַחֲמָנָא פְּטָרִיהּ בִּי קַח ב (It was beyond my control, for which I am not responsible). / "I had a difficult youth" / "I'm being too *Machmir* on myself" / "I'm ignoring so many of my *Maalos*, so I can't function properly" / "I never had a real chance, or the proper *Chinuch*."

Novardok

Yohrzeit of the Alter of Novardok

י"ז כסלו תר"פ

The *Bachurim* in *Novardok* (*Bialystok*) had very little, and when they had to go out for a *Shidduch*, Rebbetzin Yoffen ע"ה gave them a special suit that looked at least half-decent. She redd a *Shidduch* for R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal*, and she gave him the suit. He paced back and forth for a while, and then he said that he simply can't wear such a "fancy" suit. (He was totally "out" of *Olam HaZeh*, and that was the secret of his unusual *Simcha*). So she told him to break his *Middos* and *Davka* wear it, in order to go against his grain. This did the job, and he wore it!

The *Alter Zatzal* once wrote a card to a former *Talmid* who had left *Yeshiva*. The entire card had only one word in big letters: אַיָּה Where are you? One word can change a person's life, and the *Alter Zatzal* was very powerful in turning people around even with minimal efforts. R' Chatzkel Abramsky *Zatzal* said that a brief discussion with the *Alter Zatzal* made him create his famous *Sefer, Chazon Yechezkel* on the *Tosefta*.

The *Velt* says that most of us live a life of "quiet desperation". People live a lifetime wanting "this" and "that" in *Ruchaniyus* and in *Gashmiyus*. *Chazal* say: בִּידּוֹ קָהֳלֵת רַבָּה אֶלֶב, גִּיג a person does not fulfil even half of his desires in his lifetime. The *Novardokers* had unusual *Simcha* despite even the worst *Nisyonos*. *Madregas HaAdam* has a way of getting people to love going against their *Ratzon*, since: עֵיקַר חַיּוּת הָאָדָם the main existence of a person is for *Shviras HaMiddos*, and without it, what is the point of living?! Like a soldier feels proud by proving his fearlessness and his greatness in challenging adversity.

Perhaps this is why we were called: צְבָאוֹת ה' "The army of Hashem" when leaving *Mitzrayim*. A *Mitzri*: שְׂטוּפִי (steeped in immorality) environment encourages just getting your *Ratzon*. This produces *Atzvus* (depression) since: בִּידּוֹ קָהֳלֵת רַבָּה אֶלֶב, גִּיג a person never gets even half of what he wants. R' Gershon Liebman *Zatzal* was unusually *B'simcha* at all times, including and especially during the Holocaust! They say he was like a *Malach*!

He was once seen walking around as if looking for something. They asked him what he's looking for. He said, "I'm looking for opportunities to break my *Middos*! אָמֵן, אֶמֶן May his merit protect over us, *Amen*. if you keep peeking into *Madregas HaAdam* properly, you can also develop a *Geshmak* in going against your *Ratzon*!