

BITACHON WEEKLY

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פרשת במדבר תשפ"ו

You Are Proud with The Way Hashem Made You

In this week's *Parsha*, the *Bnei Yisroel* were given the *Degelim* (flags), which were a distinguishing emblem representing each *Shevet*. Your *Degel* is your pride, and each *Shevet* had a flag which was the same color as its stone which represented it on the *Choshen*. Raising a flag and showing the true nature of your *Shevet* shows how proud you are with the way Hashem made you. *Reuven* had a red flag like his red stone, and *Yehuda* had a sky-blue flag like his blue stone.

Be A Kind Person and Love Yourself

There is a *Passuk* in *Mishlei*: *אִישׁ חָסֵד וְעָכָר שָׂאָרוֹ אֶכְזָרִי מִשְׁלִי יֵאָדָּם* If you do **yourself** favors, you are an *Ish Chesed*, and "*Ish*" is a *Lashon* of *Chashivus*. A real *Chashuva Baal Chesed* is the person who respects himself! He does **himself** favors. *אִישׁ חָסֵד וְעָכָר שָׂאָרוֹ אֶכְזָרִי* If you harm your own flesh, you are a sadist, and *Chas V'shalom* you'll be a sadist to others also, just like a: *אִישׁ חָסֵד וְעָכָר שָׂאָרוֹ אֶכְזָרִי* person who helps himself will end up helping others.

There is a famous *Rambam* in *Hilchos Taanis* that says that if you don't go out to save yourself during a *Tzara*, then it's: *אִישׁ חָסֵד וְעָכָר שָׂאָרוֹ אֶכְזָרִי* cruelty. So be a kind person and love yourself, and work hard on *Chazzering* your *Maalos*. Then, when your friend wins the lottery, or gets the best

boy in *Yeshiva* for a son-in-law, or he becomes rich, or if he becomes a big *Rosh Yeshiva* with lots of *Kavod* (which you don't have); it won't bother you. In fact, you'll be a: *אִישׁ חָסֵד וְעָכָר שָׂאָרוֹ אֶכְזָרִי* heart that rejoices with his brother's greatness, and you will be *Zoche* to be a real *Ahron HaCohen* who was *Zoche* to wear the *Choshen* on his heart.

Many, many of us need to make a lifetime career of being kind to ourselves, the more the better (and less and less envy and *Sin'as Chinam*). When you deeply appreciate what you yourself have, then you have room for others, and you *Fargin* and *Fargin* more and more. Always blow up your own good *Mazal* and add to it, and make: *אִישׁ חָסֵד וְעָכָר שָׂאָרוֹ אֶכְזָרִי* explanations on why you, **despite all your *Chesronos*, are the luckiest person in the world, and everyone else is a nebach *Rachmanus* (including all those *Gevir'im* and *Roshei Yeshivos* and popular people etc.!**

Never Want to Change Places with Someone Else!

Charity begins at home, and "home" means you-yourself! We learned in *Parshas B'chukosai*: *לֹא תִּשְׁחָטוּ אֶת אֲנִיְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי יִשְׁחָטוּ אֶת אֲנִיְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי יִשְׁחָטוּ אֶת אֲנִיְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם* no switching *Korbanos*. Don't decide to give your skinny and weak animal to the *Mizbeach* as *Kodoshim*, with the intention to take the fat and healthy *Kodoshim*

Warmth and Humility in Novardok

I know two elder *Novardokers* who are still active even during their 80's. Both are very involved in doing constant *Pe'ulos* against their *Ratzon*. One of them is an unusual *Anav*. He refuses to ever sit in the front seat of a car. He always sits in the back, and is *M'shamesh* (serves) everybody with *Z'rizus*, despite his age and his being a very dignified person. He is full of warmth and *Ahavas Yisroel*, and is always asking people for *Mechila*. It's his way of talking. Always with a low and warm tone: "I hope you have no *Hakpados* for this or for that that I may have done to you".

I knew a person who was quite rebellious as a teen, and he told me that the warmth of this person brought him back. Before *Yom Kippur*, he can make a trip to ask someone *Mechila*. Not having *Hakpados* and being *M'vater* is a major issue in his life. He told me that if a person doesn't work on his *Middos*, then as he gets older, he becomes an "old *Baal Ga'ava'nik*" worse and worse, *Chas V'shalom*. He said that a person can carry around *Hakpados* on people for years and years, *Rachmana Litzlan*.

To erase a *Hakpada*, you need to talk to the other person and melt the ice again and again without end. To make telephone calls just to have a conversation with the person you dislike.

animal for yourself. Or, let's be frum and decide that *Hekdesh* should get the better deal; you'll take the weak *Kodoshim* animal and replace it with a nicer one. And the *Torah* says that if you do this (*Temura*), then: וְהָיָה הוּא וְתַמּוּרְתוֹ יְהִי־קֹדֶשׁ כִּי **both** become *Kodesh*, and you lose completely.

We can suggest that this is a *Remez*: Never want to change places with someone else! And if you are in such an envy-mode, albeit by being frum and wanting more for your friend, you lose everything! **You need to constantly work on being satisfied with what you have! Put on those “blinders” and spend a lifetime of Avodas Hashem which dramatizes and appreciates and even exaggerates your own qualities**, and sometimes especially your weaknesses and difficult pecklach which are all *Min HaShamayim*.

The *Yetzer Hara* sends your brain racing all over, albeit to the biggest *Tzadikim* and their phenomenal accomplishments. As long as you forget your own *Maalos* and become an *Anava P'sula* (misplaced humility) person, you are actually being cruel and sadistic to yourself and you are inviting plenty: תְּלִישוּת הַדַּעַת distress, depression and secret envy. **Love what you are and what you have, yourself, your family, your Kishronos (abilities) and your weaknesses.** Now you are a true: גַּמְלַן נִפְשׁוֹ אִישׁ חֶסֶד “*Ish Chesed*” who is kind to himself & you will easily give to others.

Novardok

After WWI there was upheaval all over Russia; the whites and reds were killing each other, and the streets were dangerous and bloody. The whites were especially anti-Semitic. The *Alter of Novardok Zatzal* was at a train station, and a train full of whites pulled up. The *Alter's Talmid* was standing next to him, and his face paled with fear. So the *Alter Davka* went over to the General, and asked him for a light for his cigarette!

I was told that R' Gershon would not kick out the tough *Talmidim* who gave him trouble. He had great hopes for them. And *Novardokers* pride themselves with their ability to tolerate chutzpa. Of course, everything has its limits. But a lot of their *Talmidim* don't bother them at all. It goes over their heads, and they *Shteig* in working on their *Middos*.

They say that the best thing you can do for your child [or *Talmid*] is to show your own control over yourself. When you are involved in disciplining others, you don't realize how your own age-old *Ga'ava*, *Ka'as*, *Ak'shanus*, and taking *N'kama* gets involved. R' Nosson Wachtfogel *Zatzal* once told me that with bad *Middos* you can't be *M'chanech* children. Of course, there is a time for being strict; and as soft as *Novardokers* can be, they still believe that children should know their place and should have *Hachna'a*.

R' Gershon was able to make a rag out of himself, and still maintain his dignity. If a different person would put himself down the way R' Gershon did, it could be a disaster. He was a *Melech* and a general, and at the same time he was as soft as butter and sweet as can be.

He was a non-stop smiler, because of the *Simcha* and sheer pleasure that all his hours and hours of *Mussar* gave him. He was once trying to be *M'karev* a depressed person, and he gave him loads of *Kavod*, since he considered the lack of *Kavod* to be the #1 cause for depression. Then he smiled to this person, hoping that his own *Simcha* would affect this person's sour mood.

He would do *Pratim* non-stop. Every move he made; was anti-*Kavod*. Most of his *Pratim* were normal behaviors, but they do the job of rebelling against the lust for recognition. Like leaving a button open, or eating heartily in public. You would never see him with a *Gemara*; only a *Chumash* or *Mishnayos*. However, when a beginners-*Gemara* was printed [it had a special translation for beginners] he would get one and make sure to be seen with it. He told me that he's embarrassed to be seen with it. It's hard to believe that he was embarrassed the same way we are. He was “doing his thing”, in his lifetime-war against *Kavod*. No wonder he was so happy at all times! הַקָּנָה הַתְּאֵהָ וְהַקְּבוּד מוֹצִיאִין אֶת הָאָדָם מִן הָעוֹלָם “*Kavod*” [literally] takes a person out of the world!