



TRUSTING HaSHEM

THINKING POSITIVELY

What is the definition of *bitachon*? Rabbeinu Bechaye writes in *Chovas Halevavos* that *bitachon* is complete peace of mind, a state in which a person is fully calm, knowing that he can rely on *HaShem* and trust in Him. When a person contemplates how *HaShem* loves him, cares for him, is able to fill his needs, and knows what is best for him; when he considers how *HaShem* alone monitors his life, and always does good even to those who are undeserving; – he will then feel full *bitachon* in Him.

Such trust can be found only in *HaShem*, for any other option, such as mortal benefactors or financial security, can fail or discontinue.

(חובת הלבבות שער הבטחון פרק א)

When the revered *mashpia*, Reb Michoel Beliner (better known as Reb Michoel *der Alter*), was still a young man, his son fell deathly ill, and the doctors said that there was nothing they could do. Reb Michoel went to the local *beis midrash* and shared his bitter news with the chassidim who were there at the time. Doing their best to encourage him, they assured him that *HaShem* would surely have *rachmonus*, and advised him to travel immediately to the Rebbe, the *Tzemach Tzedek*. Reb Michoel began to weep, saying that he would strongly like to go, but the doctors said that it was only a matter of hours, so why should he set out on the road? One of the older chassidim berated him. He quoted from the *Gemara* that one should never despair of being granted *HaShem's* mercy, and added that surely the good *malochim* would succeed in having the Heavenly verdict postponed until he reached the Rebbe. One of those *chassidische yungeleit*, a tailor, offered to join Reb Michoel on his trip, and together they set out on foot, here and there hitching a cheap wagonride.

Arriving at last in Lubavitch, Reb Michoel was fortunately able to be received for *yechidus* immediately.

He later related: "When I entered the Rebbe's room and handed him my *pidyon nefesh* for my son, I thought to myself, 'Who knows what has meanwhile happened with him? The doctors said it's only a few hours...' and I began to

weep. The Rebbe read the note and said, 'Don't cry. You must have *bitachon* in *HaShem* with simple *emunah* that He will save your son. *Tracht gut vet zien gut.* (Think good and things will be good.) You will yet celebrate the *bar-mitzvas* of your grandsons! "

Soon after, the boy recovered completely. From then on, whenever Reb Michoel experienced difficulty he would bring to mind the luminous face of the Rebbe as he spoke those words, and the situation would change for the better.

(לקו"ד ח"א ע' קנט, אג"ק רי"ב צ"ח ע' קצב)

The Rebbe explains that when a person places his full trust in *HaShem*, feeling fully at ease with complete *bitachon*, that is enough for him to merit *HaShem's* salvation. This is true even for someone who is seemingly undeserving, for this *avodah* of *bitachon* alone gives him the merit to be helped. That is the deeper message of the words of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, "*Tracht gut*" – "*Think good and things will be good.*"

(לקו"ש ח"ו ע' 4)

UNWAVERING FAITH

Reb Shaul Ber Kobakov, a successful lumber merchant from Minsk, was one of the *chassidim* of the Rebbe Maharash and later of the Rebbe Rashab. Once, when on a business trip, as he waited on the railway platform, he heard an announcement that his train would be delayed, so he went to wash his hands and *daven Maariv*. Another Yiddische merchant present, knowing that this chossid was not one to rush through his *davening*, went over and warned him that his train would probably arrive before he finished *Shemoneh Esreh*.

"That's of no interest to me," replied the chossid. "Now is the time for *Maariv*, so I'll *daven* now."

While he stood in a quiet corner and *davened* for a full hour, the train came and left. When he finished, he waited for the next train and repeated to the other merchant that nothing mattered to him, even his business, when it was time to *daven*.

Just then the next train clattered to a halt, but before the chossid climbed on, whom did he

see, stepping down from the train? It was the owner of the forests to whom he was about to travel! That man came over and greeted him, explaining that he had waited for him at his station as they had planned, but when the Yid had not shown up, he had decided to travel to see him. From this, Reb Shaul Ber understood that he must be desperate to sell his forests, and was thus able to strike a good bargain.

On another occasion, this same Reb Shaul Ber went to *toivel* before *davening*, with a few thousand rubles in his pocket. In the midst of his *davening*, he suddenly realized that his pocket was not as heavy as it had been before, yet he did not rush to finish. He continued *davening* at his accustomed leisurely pace, then put on Rabbeinu Tam's *tefillin*, and at about two o'clock, when he was ready, he went back to the river where he had *toiveled*. There, at the place he had put his clothing down, he found his money – covered with sand that had been blown by the wind!

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' שמוא)

In response to a man who was troubled and downcast because of his many debts, the Rebbe wrote that his biggest trouble was his lack of *bitachon* in *HaShem*, for that is the key to everything. The Rebbe encouraged the writer to toil in strengthening his certain belief that even if there seems to be no way for matters to work out, he should nevertheless trust in *HaShem* – for He works above nature, and thus all will be good. When a person lifts himself out of his worldly mindset to the point that he appreciates that there is no power over him except *HaShem*, he is then able to cause everything to be good in actuality.

(אג"ק ח"ו ע' קמז)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Did the *mashpia* Reb Michoel not know that *HaShem* could heal his son? What did the *Tzemach Tzedek* teach him?
- Was Reb Shaul Ber obligated to neglect the train or his wallet? Was he allowed to? Why?

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Bal Talin - Paying on Time

If one returns home from an event and realizes that he only has a large bill with which to pay the babysitter, is he obligated pay with that (and have her owe him the difference) or can he push off paying her until sometime later?

- One who withholds payment due to a worker or employee, besides stealing, it is also a transgression of a specific prohibition related to withholding wages: "*Lo sa'ashok es rei'acha* - You shall not cheat [i.e. withhold wages from] your fellow." (*Vayikra* 19:13).
- Furthermore, there is an additional obligation to pay wages on time and prohibitions against delaying payment: "*B'yomo titen scharo, v'lo sovo alav hashemesh* - On that day you shall pay his hire; the sun shall not set upon it" (*Devarim* 24:15); "*Lo solin pe'ulas sachir itcha ad boker* - A worker's wage should not remain with you overnight." (*Vayikra* 19:13). This *issur* is known as "*bal talin*". One transgresses *bal talin* at the end of the day or night when the work was completed.
- A violation of the prohibition *midoraisa* only occurs at the specific time the wages are due. Once that time has passed, and one has already violated the *issur min hatorah*, there continues to be an *issur derabonon* until he pays.
- In addition, one only violates the prohibition if he has available funds. However, one should not hire someone knowing that he won't have the funds to pay on time, unless the worker is informed prior to being hired and agrees.
- If one has money in the bank or in the hands of a friend, he is obligated to use that money. Furthermore, if one had money when hiring the worker and then spent it, he transgresses the prohibition. Even when one has no available funds, it is a *midas chassidus* (an act of piety) to borrow in order to pay on time.
- One only violates the prohibition if the employee asks for his wages. However, if there is a concern that the employee wants the payment but is silent out of shame, it is considered as if he requested the payment.
- Furthermore, according to the Zohar (quoted in the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*) one should be extremely stringent to pay wages on time, even if the employee desires that the employer hold onto the wages (rather he should pay him and then take it back to hold it).
- In conclusion: Considering the fact that there are so many variables and it is easily possible to transgress an *issur d'oiraisa*, one should always be careful to pay on time for any work done.

ראה שו"ע חו"מ סי' שלט, שו"ע אדה"ז חלק חו"מ הל' שכירות סעיפים יא-יג, ספר ארבת חסד (לבעל החפץ חיים) דיני תשלומי שכר שכיר, ספר פתחי חושן חלק ד פרק ט.

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THE SFAS EMES

Reb Yehuda Aryeh Leib Alter was the third Rebbe in the Ger dynasty, and under his leadership, the Chassidus of Ger flourished, becoming the stronghold of Chassidus in all of Poland. He became the Rebbe at the age of 23, after the passing of his grandfather the Chidushei Harim. He is known by the title of his sefer "Sfas Emes", which contains *perushim* on the Torah and Shas. He passed away at the young age of 58, on the 5th of Shvat, תרס"ה (1905) and is buried in Ger.



When the Sfas Emes was young, he and his friend once spent the whole night learning, and only at daybreak did they go to sleep. The following day, the Sfas Emes arrived a bit late to his learning session, and his grandfather reprimanded him. All the while, he sat listening without saying a word. When his friend asked him why he had not told his grandfather that he had stayed up late to learn, the Sfas Emes said, "Yes, but then I would have missed out on the admonishment of my grandfather..."

A tzaddik came to visit the Sfas Emes, and as they parted, the tzaddik expressed his hope that there should always be an *ahava rabba* (great love) between them. The Sfas Emes responded with a smile, "Besides for *ahava rabba*, we should also wish for an *ahavas olam* (literally: a love of the world); for often, there can be a great love between two tzaddikim, yet among their chassidim there is no peace..."

In the Shul of the Sfas Emes, two daily *minyanim* for *shachris* took place successively. When the second *minyan* would begin to daven, the *mispalelim* from the first would stay to talk. When word of this reached the Sfas Emes, he rescheduled the *minyanim* so that the first group would finish socializing before the second *minyan* would begin.

ליכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

"YOU ARE DOING HIM A GREAT FAVOR"

Harav Chadad, one of the Rebbe's *Shluchim* in Milan, Italy, relates:

There was a seniors club in Milan, where about a hundred elderly *Yidden* would visit a few times a week, to play cards. The owner would deceptively serve them non-kosher food, showing them an old receipt from the kosher butcher.

I asked the Rebbe in *yechidus* whether I should try providing kosher food, for perhaps it is unbefitting to bring kosher food into a place where they play cards. To this the Rebbe said, "And people who play cards are permitted to eat *treif*?!" "But in any case, these people eat *treif* at home?" I asked.

The Rebbe then explained to me, "Let me tell you something for you to remember. If you manage to stop one person from eating *treif* just once, you are saving him from a grave *aveirah*, from a requirement to bring a *korban chatos*. You are doing him a great favor, one that cannot be measured."

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לע"נ ר' נפתלי איסר ב"ר יצחק ע"ה ומרת איתא בת ר' נפתלי ע"ה

