

פרשת וירא

THE POWER OF BITACHON

68

לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי ש"י בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

MAKING IT GOOD

While traveling together with the Baal Shem Tov, the Tzaddik Reb Mendel of Bar felt very thirsty. The Baal Shem Tov told him, "If you will have true bitachon in Hashem, you will definitely find water." Shortly afterwards a goy approached and asked if they had seen horses roaming around, for he had lost his horses three days ago and has been desperately searching for them. They replied in the negative and then asked him if he had some water. "Sure I have!" the goy answered, and he gave Reb Mendel a drink before continuing on his way. Reb Mendel asked the Baal Shem Tov, "If the purpose of the goy's traveling was just for my sake, to relieve me of my thirst, why was it necessary for him to travel for three days?" The Baal Shem Tov replied, "Hashem prepared him earlier in case you would exhibit true bitachon, then your desire would have been granted immediately!"

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 379)

When he was young, the son of the chossid Reb Michoel Beliner fell deathly ill and the doctors said that there is nothing they can do. Reb Michoel went to the group of chassidim and shared with them his bitter state. The chassidim encouraged him, telling him that Hashem will surely have rachmonus, and advised him to travel immediately to the Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek. Reb Michoel began weeping, saying that he would strongly like to go, but the doctors say that it is only a matter of hours, so why should he set out on the road. One of the older chassidim berated him and quoted from the Gemara that one should never despair from Hashem's mercy, and he then added that surely the good malochim will succeed in postponing the decision until he arrives at the Rebbe. One of the chassidische youngerleit, a tailor by profession, offered to join Reb Michoel on his trip, and together they set out on the way.

Arriving in Lubavitch, Reb Michoel was fortunately able to enter yechidus immediately. Reb Michoel 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 my son? The doctors said it's only a few hours...' and I began to weep. The Rebbe read the note and said to me, 'Do not cry. You must express your potential of bitachon in Hashem with simple emunah that Hashem will save your son. טראכט גוט וועט זיין גוט (Think good and it will become good).'" Soon after, his son recovered completely. From then on, whenever Reb Michoel would experience difficulty, he would remember the Rebbe telling him those words, and the situation would change for the better.

(לקו"ד ח"א ע' קנט, אג"ק רי"צ ח"ז ע' קצז)

The Rebbe explains that by placing full trust in Hashem, feeling fully at ease with complete bitachon, is enough to merit

Hashem's salvation, This is true even for someone who is seemingly undeserving, for this avodah of bitachon, gives the person the merit to be helped. This is the full intention of the words of the Tzemach Tzedek "טראכט גוט", Think good.

(לקו"ש חל"ו ע' 4)

RELYING ON HASHEM

As per the instructions he had received from shamayim, the Baal Shem Tov once traveled with his talmidim to a certain town, to learn the midah of bitachon. They arrived at a local inn, where the owner graciously welcomed them in, truly happy with the guests' arrival. The next morning while they were davening, a police officer walked in with a stick in hand, banged on the table three times and left. The talmidim stood still, not knowing what the officer wanted, but their host was as cheerful as he had been before. A half hour elapsed and the same police officer returned, once again banged three times on the table and left.

When the Baal Shem Tov asked the innkeeper to explain these strange happenings, he explained, "This is a warning, reminding me to bring the rental payment to the poritz. It is repeated three times, and if I do not bring the money at that point, my family and I will be thrown into prison." Hearing this, the Baal Shem Tov told him, "Looking at your calmness, it seems you have the money ready, so why not go pay your fees? We will await your return, and then we will be able to eat peacefully. The innkeeper answered, "Truthfully, I currently do not have a single coin, but Hashem will surely not forsake me and will provide the money. Let us eat without haste because three hours still remain to the time limit."

They ate together unhurriedly, and the innkeeper's face expressed no stress of his dangerous situation. At the end of the meal, the officer strode in for the third time and once again banged on the table; undisturbed, the owner remained calmly in his place. After benching with kavana, the innkeeper dressed himself in his Shabbos clothing and announced that he will now go pay his dues." The Baal She Tov asked him a second time if he has the money he needs. Shaking his head, the host answered, "I haven't got a single penny yet, but I am sure Hashem will take care of me!" He took his leave, and the Baal Shem Tov and his talmidim went out to the porch, overlooking the road, to see him off on his mission.

From the distance they saw a wagon driving towards the innkeeper, which slowed down as the innkeeper exchanged a few words with the rider. The wagon then continued on its way. After a few moments, the driver backtracked, called out to the innkeeper and then handed him some money. The wagon then headed to the inn where the curious onlookers asked the driver

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what had transpired. "I had proposed a deal to the innkeeper," he said, "And offered to buy all he is due to make this winter, but he did not agree to my price and continued on his way. Seeing his stubbornness, but knowing his honesty, I decided to give him the amount he had asked for. He then hurried ahead saying he was on his way to pay his rent." Said the Baal Shem Tov to his talmidim, "Look how powerful the midah of bitachon is!"

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 379)

The tzaddik Reb Noach of Lechovitch told the following story to his chassidim: Hirshke, a simple Yid, earned his parnasa by selling merchandise in the market. Before daybreak, he would go out to the countryside to meet the goyishe farmers before they would arrive in town, and bargain with them over their goods.

One day a Maggid came to town and spoke of the intrinsic worth of living with bitachon, and explained that no man ever earns more than what Hashem has ordained for him. Hirshke took these words to heart, and on the following market day decided not to rush out early to try reaching the farmers before his competitors. His wife, seeing him lying in bed, urged him to get up. He told her what he had heard from the Maggid, concluding that whatever Hashem has planned for him, he would be able to buy at home. She tried convincing him otherwise, but Hirshke refused to leave the house.

A while later when they heard the other buyers making their deals with the goyim, Hirshke's wife pleaded with her husband again, but to no avail. Then one of the farmers called out, "We're not selling any more stuff until Hirshke shows up!" The goyim began banging on the shutters of his house, shouting for him to get up. Hirshke got dressed, brought the farmers inside and bought everything at a discounted rate without having to bargain. From that day on, he never had to leave his house, for the goyim would come to him, and he made a respectable parnasa to the end of his days.

Reb Noach finished the story and added, "This worked for him, because he was a simpleton whose faith was whole and uncomplicated. It wouldn't be the same for someone else who already tried to improve his bitachon by adding the sophistication of reason."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 381)

Reb Shaul Ber Kabakov, a successful lumber merchant from Minsk, was one of the chassidim of the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab. Once when on a business trip, as he waited for a train, and an announcement was made that his train would be delayed, so he went to wash his hands and daven maariv. Another yiddishe merchant present, knowing that he was not who rushes his davening, went over and told him that his train would probably arrive before he would finish Shmone Esrei. "It is of no interest to me," the chossid replied. "Now is the time for maariv, so now I will daven." He stood in a corner and davened for a full hour, during which the train came and left. When he concluded, he waited for the next train and reiterated to the other merchant that nothing matters to him when it is time to daven, even his business.

"Just then the next train came, and before the chossid climbed on, he saw the property owner to whom he was about to travel, exiting the train. After greeting him, the owner explained that he had waited at the station as they had planned, but when the Yid had not shown up, he had decided to travel to him. Reb Shaul Ber understood that the property manager must be desperate to sell his

forests and was able to bargain a very cheap price.

On another occasion, Reb Shaul Ber went to toivel himself before davening, with a few thousand rubles in his pocket. While davening, he suddenly realized that his pocket was not as heavy as it had been before, yet he did not rush to finish davening. He continued davening slowly, put on Rabbeinu Tam tefillin, and at about two o'clock, went to the river where he had toiveled. Arriving at the place he had put his clothing down, he found his money covered with sand which had been blown by the wind!

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' שמוא)

When the tzaddik Reb Yitzchok Meir of Gur married, he lived and was supported by his father-in-law and was free to spend his entire day learning and serving Hashem. After about ten years, his father-in-law lost all his money and the family was left poverty stricken, but Reb Yitzchok Meir continued fasting and learning Torah as before.

Once his wife asked him how he sat undisturbed, without worry about their situation. Reb Yitzchok Meir answered, "Your father chose me for a son-in-law as an 'illuy', one who can learn in one day what takes others a year to learn. Similarly, with regard to worrying; what takes others over three days to worry about, I can accomplish in one minute." The Rebbetzin asked what he accomplishes with his minute of worrying, and he returned the question, "And what does the worrying of three days accomplish? There is no place for any of this, for everything Hashem does is for the best."

A short time later, Reb Yitzchok Meir's brother Reb Moshe Chaim came to his hometown Warsaw, bought a house and appointed Reb Yitzchok Meir as financial secretary. This is how he supported his family until he was chosen as a Rov in Warsaw.

(החידושי הרי"ם ע' 159, 167)

Someone wrote to the Rebbe of his many debts, and the Rebbe responded that his biggest trouble is his lack of bitachon in Hashem, for that is the solution to everything. The Rebbe encouraged him to toil in strengthening his bitachon and believing that even if there seems to be no way for matters to work out, he nevertheless trusts in Hashem, who works above nature, that all will be good. When a person lifts himself up so that he feels 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' קמוז)

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