Bitachon Weekly

—— By Rabbi Yehudah Mandel שליט"א ——

פרשת וישלח תשפ"ז

A Person's Ikar Ma'ala is his Shviras HaMiddos

My Rabbeim have kept telling me in the name of the Gr"a: עִיקָּר חִיּוּת הָאָדָם שְׁבִירַת הַמִּדּוֹת the main existence of a person is for Shviras HaMiddos. And the Chasidishe Seforim are loaded with this concept. Why do we need to be told again and again in our Seforim HaKedoshim? Take a look at where everybody is running for Yeshuos; i.e., Kever Rochel. R' Dovid Bleicher Zatzal was there, and he said that he had more His'orerus there than at the Kosel HaMaaravi.

This is because the whole Ikar Ma'ala of Rochel was her Shviras HaMiddos, and for this reason she is available for Klal Yisroel to daven. And according to Chazal, she saved us when the Avos and no one else could save us.

Even the Ma'aseh of the Akeida wasn't enough; but giving away your own husband in order not to embarrass your sister, this is the peak of breaking Middos, and to Leah, who was her Tzara and her competitor!

When Avrohom and Yitzchok were on the way to the Akeida, the Satan tried to stop them with all kinds of tricks, including turning into a lake! The Medrash says, he told Yitzchok that his old father was senile, etc. The only thing that got Yitzchok a drop shaken up was when he was told that as soon as he is dead, then Yishmael, his competitor, will inherit his "toys".

The Yesod of all bad Middos is: קִנְאַת אִישׁ מֵרֵעֵהוּ קהלת ד ד jealousy of the other person. From Kayin and Hevel, Korach, Y'ravam ben Nevat, all the antisemitism, and all the wars.

All Tzaros and Churban comes from these Middos Ra'os. And this is why the Melech HaMoshiach (Dovid) is loaded with Ha'tavah B'makom Hakpada, i.e., Davka doing a favor (Ha'tavah) instead of being upset (Hakpada), and being nice to his competitors and his enemies.

We see from Rochel that by breaking Middos, especially with those you compete and dislike, you come out forever ahead. Rochel, despite having only two sons (Yosef and Binyamin) becomes the official mother of Klal Yisroel, more than anyone.

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, R"L, you must still daven, and **it's a sin** not to! אַפִּילוּ חֶרֶב חַדָּה מוּנַחַת עַל צַוָּארוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם, אַל יִתְיַאֵשׁ עַצְמוֹ מִן הָרַחֲמִים ברכות י א 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, how can you NOT have Bitachon; after all the wonders that you've seen? עַד אָנָה יְנַאֲצֵנִי הָעָם הַזֶּה וְעַד אָנָה לֹא יַאֲמִינוּ בִי בְּכֹל הָאֹתוֹת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ שלח יד יא 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: חֶרְדַּת אָדָם יִתֵּן מוֹקֵשׁ משלי כט כה this sin, 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.

The problem is that all those wonderous 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.

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Your Main Existence Is to See If You Can Overcome a Weakness

Rashi quotes Chazal who say that Eisav was assaulted by groups and groups of Malachim. When he said that he was the son of Avraham and Yitzchok, it didn't save him from the blows of Malachim. Only when he mentioned Yaakov, was he saved. Yaakov his brother was his weakness (in Novardok terminology, his "Makom HaMiddos"). You may be a wonderful person to all, except for your wife, son, chavrusa, or parent, etc. who you can't get along with.

Little do you know, the main reason for your very existence is to see if you can overcome a weakness. The Yetzer Hara keeps pointing out how you do so well in so many areas, and are a complete Tzaddik in the Velt. Just your main issue he doesn't allow you to conquer. Of course, our Dor is different, and often, you are just fine as long as you keep trying.

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Novardok

Yahrzeit of the Alter of Novardok - י"ז כסלו תר"פ

This coming Friday (17 Kislev), is the Yahrtzeit of R' Yosef Yoizel Horowitz Zatzal, the Alter of Novardok. The Alter could never bring himself to say: "This is mine". That's why he was so total Simcha'dik and relaxed. R' Isser Zalman Meltzer Zatzal said that the Alter was the Gadol HaDor (חַד בְּדָרָא) in Bitachon and Hefkeirus (selflessness).

After finishing his Hesped on the Alter, R' Isser Zalman turned to R' Leib Chasman Zatzal and asked: "Was I Maspid the Alter properly?" "No" he replied. "You forgot to mention that he was a Talmid Chochom Muflag".

The Alter would say: Some people make a K'negdo from an Ezer (i.e., they don't appreciate the positive side of their wife, and they lose a good life, in favor of holding onto bad Middos). And others are smart and make an Ezer from a K'negdo since they learn how to enjoy working on themselves and growing.

He taught how to turn a lemon into a lemonade, i.e., to work on converting minuses into pluses. For example, when he would miss the train, he would be happy, since he was so early for the next train. "The glass is half full instead of half empty".

This is the lifetime Avodas HaAdam. When a person lives like this, year after year his Simcha grows, since he is constantly finding new reasons to see good where he formally saw evil, and he grows and grows in his love and appreciation of Hashem's beautiful world!

Chazal say that Dovid gave thanks to Hashem for the fact that his great-grandfather, Boaz didn't curse his Bubbie Rus, when she suddenly appeared to him in the middle of the night. Look how Dovid is all-out to see only good, and to go back in his roots like this!

Dovid has nothing better to think about?? It's almost weird! Because Dovid was a true Melech who is above the stupidities of Olam HaZeh and all the kvetching. He had more Tzaros than any of us, but he was a big Baal Mussar who loved breaking Middos, and he came out ahead in Olam HaZeh and in Olam HaBah.

Don't think he didn't feel the pain of his many misfortunes and his unpopularity. Surely he did. But he was a soldier who enjoyed a good fight against his own Yetzer Hara, instead of being small and petty and immature and full of worry, and getting too involved in the stupidities and craziness of Olam HaZeh and its trials and pecklach. He was looking high-and-low for opportunities to prove how he could be positive despite the worst situation.

This is where the Alter of Novardok got his Shita. He writes a Gevaldige Mussar Shmuess about how Nisyonos are the best part of your life. If you read that Shtikel (piece), your whole life will change, and you'll be laughing while others cry (like Rabbi Akiva who always laughed even when Gedolei Yisroel cried).

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