תורת אביגדור

הגאון ר' אביגדור מיללער זצ"ל

Sefer Breishis - the CHOPP Holdings edition

לע"נ ר' מנחם מענדל בן נחמן ע"ה ור' שלום בן שלמה הלוי ע"ה

TORAS AVIGDOR

Rav Avigdor Miller ZT"L

פרשת וישלח

The Disturbed Wicked

Parsha Sponsor:

The Pollack Family

לע"נ ר' דוד ב"ר יעקב הלוי ע"ה

תנצב"ה

Mishpachat Levy — Founding Sponsor and Supporter of Toras Avigdor

לע"נ הרב אביגדור הכהן מיללער זצ"ל | הרבנית חנה עטיל מיללער ע"ה | מאיר אבנר בן לאה ע"ה | פלורי בת אסתר ע"ה | הונא בן דוד ע"ה | רות בת יוסף אשר ע"ה | חיים בן סוניא ע"ה | רחל בת ויקטוריה ע"ה | משה בן ליזא ע"ה | לינדא בת רינה ע"ה | שמואל בן רחל ע"ה | אליזבט בת לינדא ע"ה | שמטוב הלוי בן פלורי ע"ה | תנצב"ה לזכות אהובה בת מרים

Sefer Breishis

The CHOPP HOLDINGS editon

לע"נ ר' מנחם מענדל בן נחמן ע"ה ר' שלום בן שלמה הלוי ע"ה

Toras Avigdor booklets are available for *free* on the web:

Torasavigdor.org | Ladaat.info | Yiddishevinkel.com | Parshasheets.com | Torasavigdor.app
Via email: signup@torasavigdor.org | Whatsapp: 347.494.0820 | Telegram: /torasavigdor
Listen to a narration on TorasAvigdor.app, across all podcast platforms and on the Toras Avigdor app

Pick up a hard copy in the following cities:

Antwerp.....047.658.3946
Baltimore 410.908.3947
Berlin.....178.854.0868
Boca Raton..... 914.830.2483
Boro Park 646.315.4248
Chicago 773.789.9870
Cincinnati 513.630.7000
Cleveland..... 216.965.4216
Connecticut..... 203.721.5405
Deal.....732.539.6715
Detroit 248.224.7854
Eretz Yisroel.... 072.222.3383
Call for a complete listing of locations in Eretz Yisroel
Fallsburg.....845.866.3701
Far Rockaway.....718.954.1811
Five Towns.....516.417.8031
Flatbush.....929.314.7911
Gateshead 0793.018.9637
Great Neck..... 516.695.7606
Johannesburg.....82.446.1274
Kensington 718.683.6854
Lakewood 347.414.0304
Los Angeles.....323.370.5736
Melbourne 0418.314.071
Mexico City 552.572.0101
Minneapolis.....612.965.3608
Monroe 845.782.2438
Monsey 845.587.8343
Montreal..... 514.991.0453
Mountaindale..845.554.6348
New Square 845.354.5638
Passaic .....Bagel Munch
.....200 Main Ave.
Phoenix.....602.730.4564
Philadelphia ... 267.207.6002
Queens..... 917.608.5661
Seattle..... 206.722.2212
Staten Island... 646.923.1290
Toronto.....416.834.1444
UK.....0789.099.6936
Call for a complete listing of locations in the United Kingdom
W. Hempstead....516.417.8031
Williamsburg 917.627.2211

Or get a mail subscription,
email subs@torasavigdor.org or call/text 862-800-7905

Enjoying these booklets? Let others be inspired too!

Quickpay/Zelle/Paypal – info@torasavigdor.org | **Cash App** – 732.844.3670
Credit Card donations Call/text 732.844.3670 or email info@torasavigdor.org

Year 3 | Issue 8

© Copyright 2019 by: *TorasAvigdor.org*

Email: info@TorasAvigdor.org | **Telephone:** 732.844.3670
Address: 5014 16th Avenue, Suite 488, Brooklyn NY 11204

פרשת וישלח

WITH

R' Avigdor Miller zt"l

The Disturbed Wicked

Contents:

Part I. *Esav's Disturbances* - 3
Part II. *Life's Disturbances* - 8
Part III. *Overcoming Disturbances* - 12

A Vort *on the Parsha* - 20

Part I. Esav's Disturbances

Esav Escapes

וַיִּקַּח עֵשָׂו אֶת כָּל קִנְיָנוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן – *And Esav took all of his possessions that he had acquired in Eretz Cana'an* – it means he took his wives and his children, and all of his livestock and cattle and wealth, וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל אֶרֶץ מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אָחִיו – *and he went to another land because of his brother Yaakov* (Vayishlach 36:6). Esav packed all his belongings, crossed the *Yardein*, the Jordan River, and resettled in what is now Trans-Jordan, מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אָחִיו, because he wanted to get far away from his younger brother, Yaakov.

Now, about Esav's actions on that day the medrash quotes a *possuk* as follows: נָסוּ וְאֵין רֹדֵף רָשָׁע – *The rasha runs away even when there is no one pursuing him* (Mishlei 28:1); it means that he panics even when there is no real danger. Esav was in no danger, says the *medrash*; so where are you running?! Why would anyone leave their

family territory, especially in those days? Everyone remained with his tribe always; So why did Esav leave? What was the big emergency?

Tremendous Disappointment

What happened? Esav had become tremendously disillusioned. He felt he had suffered blow after blow; when the time came for his father to bestow the *brachos*, וַיָּבֹא אֶל אָבִיו, it was Yaakov who gained all the *brachos*. You have to understand what that meant to Esav – he was his father's darling; וַיֶּאֱהַב יִצְחָק אֶת עֵשָׂו – *Yitzchak loved Esav*, and now when it came time to get blessed, it was his younger brother Yaakov who received the *brachos* instead of him. And his father said it was too late for Esav: גַּם בָּרוּךְ יִהְיֶה – Yaakov is the one who is going to be blessed.

Now don't think that it was a small thing; Esav knew his father was a *navi*, and if it turned out that Yaakov received the *brachos* instead of him, you have to understand that Esav was very hurt; he was terribly broken and upset. וַיִּצְעַק צְעָקָה גְּדֹלָה וּמָרָה עַד מְאֹד – *He cried out an exceedingly great and bitter cry* (*Toldos* 27:34). He didn't know what to do with himself. He was so disturbed that you could expect him to do anything – that's why Yaakov was sent to Padan Aram, to escape the wrath of his brother. That was the first great disillusionment in Esav's life.

And then Esav began to hear from the caravans that were traveling between Eretz Canaan and Padan Aram that his brother was doing very well; that he was becoming extremely wealthy there. And he heard also that he didn't have only one wife – he gained four wives! And now he was increasing like nobody's business, having children and children.

Yaakov Gets Around Everything

And so, when Esav heard that Yaakov was coming back to *Eretz Cana'an*, so he wasn't so pleased to have his competition back in town and he came to greet him with a welcoming committee of four hundred men. Now, when you come to greet someone with four hundred armed men, you're not coming just to say hello; Esav meant business. He wanted to vent his bitter and jealous heart on his brother's family.

But Yaakov Avinu succeeded in squirming his way out of Esav's grasp by dealing with him with very great diplomacy; he handled him with silk gloves. The whole story is told in the *chumash*, how he sent gifts to him ahead of time, and how the messengers bowed down and spoke with great respect to Esav; how they mollified him, and little by little, the fire of Esav's anger subsided. And finally when they met, Esav couldn't contain himself, couldn't control himself, and he fell on his brother's neck, and he kissed him. He hugged him and kissed him.

So now Esav saw that even his plan to get even with Yaakov wasn't going as planned – it wasn't going to come to fruition. Yaakov's cunning enabled to get around that too and now Esav didn't know what to do with himself – he was reeling with *behala*, with confusion. "I can't look at him! I don't want to see his face! It hurts me to see his success." That's what the *possuk* means that he left *mipnei Yaakov achiv*. He couldn't stand seeing him.

Esav's Big Mistake

Now, we understand that Esav made mistakes in his life. One of his first mistakes was that he didn't sit in his father's tent as much as Yaakov did. Yaakov sat in the tent learning from his mother and father. But Esav thought he could get along without that. He wanted to be an *ish sadeh*, an outdoor man, a hiker and a hunter. And that's why Esav lost out. It's like the boy who spends all of his spare time playing ball while his *chaver* spends his time *chazering* the *gemara*. In the end he loses out. Esav made other mistakes too. He wasn't careful when choosing a wife. He looked at superficialities and he chose wives who ended up having a bad influence on him.

But of all the errors that Esav committed in his lifetime, the very worst was the one when he decided to leave. That decision to leave was the very greatest misstep in his career; it was a tragedy. If Esav would have remained, it's true – he would have been second to his brother. But there are worse things than that. Alright, so he made a mistake and sold the *bechora.* It's not the end of the world. So you're not the *bechor*, does that mean you resign from the family altogether?!

Esav Could Have Remained

Esav could have remained with Yaakov together in *Eretz Canaan.* Nobody would have driven him away. Esav was a real Jew — he was a child of Yitzchok and Rivkah. He surely was circumcised. You think Yitzchok wouldn't circumcise his son?! And Yitzchok surely taught Esav in the house up to a certain degree before he ran out in the fields. After all, he didn't run out to go hunting the day after he was born. So Esav could have remained a brother of Yaakov. He could have remained together with Yaakov. He would have been part of the family; part of the *Am Yisroel* forever.

Don't you remember when Moshe Rabeinu said to Yisro, "לְכָה אִתָּנוּ, *Come with us,* וְהָיָה הַטּוֹב הַהוּא אֲשֶׁר יֵיטִיב הַשֵּׁם עִמָּנוּ וְהֵטַבְנוּ לָךְ – *and that happiness that Hashem will bestow on us, the Am Yisroel, it'll be for you too (Bamidbar* 10:32). And the Keini – that's the family of Yisro – they did join us eventually and they participated in all the happiness of the Jewish nation. Some of them even became very great. מִבְּנֵי בָּנָיו שֶׁל יִתְרוֹ יָשְׁבוּ בְּלִשְׁכַּת הַגָּזִית – *Yisro's descendants sat in the Sanhedrin.* They came from Midian – they were *gerim* and they became great.

That was Yisro's descendants; Esav's descendants *surely* would have been great. After all, Esav was not a stranger; he belonged to the family. He was from the same parents. And he could have helped Yaakov later in life, and his children could have helped Yaakov's children. They could have stayed in Eretz Canaan together and filled the land up. Esav's descendants could have stood at Har Sinai with us and they also could have sat in the Sanhedrin alongside us like the *Keini* did. There could have been *Tana'im* from Esav – no reason why not. Who knows what would have been!

What he lost when he ran away was enormous. It was a mistake, a terrible tragedy for him. That's why our sages say about Esav that נָסוּ וְאֵין רֹדֵף רָשָׁע – The *rasha* runs away even when there is no one chasing him. What are you running away for? Remain with your family! They're a blessed family; the *Shechina* rests on them. Wouldn't it be good enough to be secondary in that holy family? You have to be the leader?

Esav Makes Excuses

But no, Esav couldn't take that! He was overcome by emotions and he felt he couldn't stay here anymore. Of course, he made some excuse. וְלֹא יָכְלָה אֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵיהֶם לָשֵׂאת אֹתָם – Esav said, "The land is not big enough for both of us." Can you imagine such a thing? The land of *Eretz Cana'an* shouldn't be big enough for both brothers?! *Eretz Yisroel* is not that small.

And so וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל אֶרֶץ – *Esav went to a different land*, מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אָחִיו – *because of his brother Yaakov.* Now, it doesn't say he went to any particular land; וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל אֶרֶץ — He went to *a* land – any land. "I just want to get away מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אָחִי from seeing my brother. So what did he do? He took all that he had and he decided, "I'll leave everything over to Yaakov; he wants to have *Eretz Canaan* that was promised to Avraham and Yitzchak, let him have it. I'll go someplace else. I can't look at him. It hurts me to see his success. He went away. And that's how he lost out.

And that was the greatest loss. When Esav lost his equilibrium, his *menuchas hanefesh*, he became so upset that he thought that it didn't pay to remain. And because he yielded to the *yetzer hara* of being flustered, and he ran away, that's the worst *yetzer hara.* נָסוּ – *When you lose your menuchas hanefesh,* וְאֵין רֹדֵף – *and nobody is chasing you,* רָשָׁע – *you are wicked.*

What's A Rasha

So you'll say, "A *rasha*?! What could Esav do?! He was in a tizzy; he was rattled! Isn't that going too far to call him a *rasha*?!" No, it's not going far at all. Because to be rattled by the circumstances around you is also a wickedness, a *rishus*. That's what the word רָשָׁע means. You know, in *lashon kodesh*, the letters are transposed many times. כֶּבֶשׁ and כֶּשֶׂב, you know that. Same word, just the letters are transposed. קָצַף, to be agitated, and קָפַץ, to jump. Same word, and they mean similar things. That's how it is in *lashon kodesh.* And רָשָׁע too; you see right away, it's רַעַשׁ. *Ra'ash* means disturbance; רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל, a big noise, a disturbance. A *rasha* is always in *ra'ash* – he's always excitable; he's not calm.

You hear that? *That's* a *rasha.* Now you might think it's talking about people who rob other people, who kill people. No, it's talking about excitable people, people who lose their peace of mind because of circumstances they face; that's a *rasha.* And that's what the *possuk* (Yeshaya 57:20) says: וְהָרְשָׁעִים כַּיָּם נִגָּרֹשׁ— *The resha'im are like the driven sea.* The waves of the sea don't rest; they're constantly moving. Waves, waves and more waves; it doesn't rest. הָרְשָׁעִים כַּיָּם נִגָּרֹשׁ - *The wicked are like the driven waters of the sea,* הַשְׁקֵט לֹא יוּכָל - *they're not able to keep quiet.*

Now, if Esav hadn't been a *rasha*, if he hadn't been so excitable, who knows what would have been – the entire course of history might have been different. Maybe it would have been "Yaakov and Esav" the same way we say "Moshe and Aharon." Did Aharon say, "*My younger brother is taking over, I'm terribly disappointed! I'm going to leave the whole business*!" No he went along, and therefore he became the *Kohen Gadol.* And Aharon is everywhere in the Torah because he went along. Don't think it was easy – it was his younger brother, little *Moishele*. But Aharon didn't get agitated; he was an *ish menucha*, and he succeeded because of that. And Eisav could have done the same thing if he had not lost his peace of mind. But instead, נָסוּ וְאֵין רֹדֵף רָשָׁע, he made the biggest mistake in his life and he left his place.

Part II. Life's Distubances

Bitachon and Peace of Mind

When the *Chovos Halevavos* wants to tell us about fulfilling our function in this world as servants of Hashem, he first tells us what he thinks is the most necessary requirement for that career. Now, suppose they would ask *us* that question: What's the most necessary ingredient for *avodas Hashem*? Well, we'd probably say to keep the Torah – to study Torah and do *mitzvos*, that's number one. But the *Chovos Halevavos*, he doesn't say that. He says there that the most necessary ingredient for service of Hashem is to have peace of mind. If you wish, you can call it *bitachon* — it's more familiar in that sense, but it's the same quality. Now, you wouldn't hear this elsewhere, but

the *Chovos Halevavos* teaches that. He says that in order to be any kind of a Jew – and we'll add; in order to be any kind of a human being — *the most necessary requirement is peace of mind.*

And that's because the mind is the implement that we need most to serve Hashem. You don't serve Hashem merely by doing acts; it's primarily by means of our mental faculty; the ability to understand and to think properly that we serve Hashem. רַחֲמָנָא לִבָּא בָּעֵי, Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants the mind; that means He wants your thoughts and your feelings; *that's* the way to serve Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

And therefore, says the Chovos Halevavos, it's most important to guard this torch of *da'as* that's burning in the mind. It's a precious light because that is capable of guiding all your actions and you therefore must protect it at all times that it shouldn't flicker or diminish in its brightness. You must always be on guard – you can't allow the *yetzer hora* to disturb your peace of mind.

Counsel From Koheles

In *Koheles* (10:4) it states, אִם רוּחַ הַמּוֹשֵׁל תַּעֲלֶה עָלֶיךָ – *If the spirit of the powerful one – that's the yetzer hora – rises up against you*; it means if you are attacked suddenly with some unexpected situation and now you're thrown into confusion, so what should you do? מְקוֹמְךָ אַל תַּנַּח – *Don't leave your place.* The first thing is *don't do anything*; stay where you are.

That's number one: Don't do anything in confusion because it's probable that you'll do the wrong thing. And sometimes you might even make an error, like Esav did, that is irreversible. In a moment of *behala*, of panic, מְקוֹמְךָ אַל תַּנַּח – Don't leave your place. No matter what happens, stay where you are; don't budge from your *menuchas hanefesh*, your equilibrium. Remain where you are. Keep on going to your *beis hakneses.* Keep going to the *yeshiva*. Remain with your family. Be as you were before, a loyal observant Torah Jew, and the end - you'll see - will be that all the things that got you excited will pass away while you remained.

Escape to Paris

Here's a man who lived together with his father-in-law and mother-in-law. The father in law was a big *lamdan* – the son-in-law was a yeshiva man, but not a big *lamdan*. And whatever he did, his father-in-law put him down, he showed him he was wrong. A true story.

And then one day it exploded. This man had *paskened* something in the house, some small thing for his wife, but his father-in-law butted his nose in and announced that his son-in-law was wrong. And this son-in-law became so upset that he lost his equilibrium, his *menuchas hanefesh*, and he took a plane out of the country. וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל אֶרֶץ – He went to another land because of his father-in-law.

Now let's say the plane landed in Paris. He has some family there maybe. So now he's off the plane. So what should he do? The first thing is to get a ticket and take the plane right back again. No question about it. Your wife will say, "Where were you last night?" So you'll say, "I had to be away somewhere on business." But he didn't do that. He allowed that foolish decision that he made in a moment of panic to continue. And once he was away for a couple of days then there was trouble already. Now he decided he made a mistake; that he wants to come back so he called up. "Where are you?" his wife said. "In Paris?! What are you doing there you *meshugener*?! Stay there; don't come back." And that was the end of the story. His wife won't let him come back anymore. He lost his wife, he lost his children.

Now, had he come to these lectures, so on the way to the airport he would have stopped the taxi - even though it might be in the middle of Long Island on the way to the airport – and he would say, "I'm turning around now and I'll walk home. I'll get home maybe next morning, but it pays; it's better than going on and ruining my life because of my agitation." מְקוֹמְךָ אַל תַּנַּח — *Don't leave your place when the yetzer hora tries to upset you.* And if you did leave your place, come back as soon as you can and act like nothing happened. Don't be embarrassed to come back.

Don't Get Excited

Even if you do a *cheit*. Of course, a *cheit* is a very great loss, no question about it. But don't get excited about a *cheit*. Sometimes a man because he did a *cheit* so he thinks there's no use anymore; "I won't even try anymore – I give up." So Shlomo says about that man, אַל תִּרְשַׁע הַרְבֵּה — Don't becomes a big *rasha* (*Koheles* 7:17). The question is, a big *rasha* you shouldn't be, but a little *rasha* yes? And the answer is yes; sometimes when a man is a little bit of a *rasha* so he loses himself, he wants to give up. No, it's bad enough what you did! You're only a little *rasha* now; stop where you are, מְקוֹמְךָ אַל תַּנַּח, don't get any worse. Even if you won't get better at least remain where you are. And then why not think of doing *teshuva* too.

מְקוֹמְךָ אַל תַּנַּח – Don't leave your place. No matter what happens, keep your same schedule. Wake up in the morning and go to yeshiva, or to work. Don't ever say, "I'm too upset; I'm not going to work today." *Chas v'shalom!* Because once you do that anything can happen. Maybe instead of work you'll go to a big *tzadik* to get a bracha, maybe. But maybe you won't. Maybe you'll go to other, much worse, places.

Keep Your Calm

You had a fight with your boss? As soon as possible tell your boss you made a mistake. Say I'm sorry. He might not accept it, he might yes accept it. Whatever it is, don't do anything rash. You can always rectify it to some extent if you revert back to your *menuchas hanefesh*. But by leaving your place, your calmness of mind and continuing in your wrong decision, you're surely going to lose.

I know a man who had a *mechutan* who wouldn't talk to him anymore. His *mechutan* was an angry fellow who got upset at him and wouldn't talk to him. And still this man would come every Purim to the *mechutan* to bring him *shaloch manos*. That's how it should be – you do yours; don't budge from being calm.

What we're learning now is actually the subject entitled *menuchas hanefesh*, to have calmness of mind as much as possible because without that *middah*, sooner or later you'll find yourself in trouble. When a person loses himself, he makes mistakes – sometimes terrible mistakes.

The Bird And The Snake

It is told that there is a certain snake in South America that feeds on birds. But the snake can't fly and he can't climb trees either. So what does he do? He waits until a bird decides to take a rest and perch itself on a bow, on the branch of a tree. And now the snake slithers over underneath the branch and it opens up its big fierce mouth directly underneath the bird. Now, if the bird wouldn't look down nothing would happen – he's as safe as could be. But the bird looks down and it sees that terrible mouth directly underneath waiting to devour it.

Now, if the bird was present here tonight and he heard tonight's lecture, so what would he do? He would calmly turn around and deliver a little bit of droppings right into the snake's mouth. That's all, finished. But like others, the bird won't listen to advice; that's the trouble with many young people, and old people too; they never heard any advice. So he looks down at the snake – that's the *yetzer hara* – and he becomes hypnotized with fear and he loses his *menuchas hanefesh.* And because he's rattled for a second, his hold on the branch becomes weakened and he falls down into that fierce mouth that is waiting for him. It's all because he wasn't trained in *menuchas hanefesh.*

It's possible to train yourself to become an *ish menucha.* It doesn't mean you take sleep all the time, that you're taking naps during the day. It means that you've trained yourself to always be calm, to never get ruffled. One of the ways to achieve this is to be prepared; to find ways and means of preparing for eventualities that might make you lose your composure.

Part III. Overcoming Disturbances

Always Be Prepared

Like I said before, if you come to these lectures, if you read the right *seforim*, so you'll begin learning very many possibilities and how to deal with them. And that way you have a store of solutions to sudden crises that might arise. It's a long term system; it takes

thinking, but it pays. When the *ruach ha'moshel* is *ya'aleh alecha*, so you'll be prepared; instead of looking into the mouth of the snake like that poor bird did, if the bird would have just learned to turn away its head and not look, that would have been its *hatzalah*.

There was young *yeshiva* boy who was confronted by two bums, *goyim*, driving by in a car and calling him names. Now, this boy wasn't prepared and so he lost his head and he started acting like a hero; he picked up his fist. It was the biggest mistake; a tragedy. One of the bums took a hammer and broke his skull on the spot, *nebach nebach.*

Now, had he been prepared for all eventualities, had he learned to be ready with *seichel*, with *menuchas hanefesh* for all scenarios, so he would have known that the best thing is to do nothing. Karate?! Forget about it; just keep on walking like a *golem*. They'll keep calling you names, and in five minutes you'll forget all about it. You'll be eating lunch somewhere enjoying life. Of course, while you're eating eating lunch you could whisper a prayer under your breath, "Hakodosh Boruch Hu, please make those bums drive their car into a telephone pole – today." No harm in *davening*; but more than that you shouldn't do, and it's all forgotten about. But this young man wasn't prepared and in the *behala*, in the excitement and confusion, he made a big mistake.

The Sidewalk And The Subway

You have to prepare for that. אֵיזֶהוּ חָכָם הָרוֹאֶה אֶת הַנּוֹלָד – A wise person prepares himself for things that might happen. He thinks about how he'll react – it's all planned out before it even happens, so when it comes he's all prepared; he knows exactly what to do. You're walking in the street and a bum says something to you, don't turn around and look at him! That's dangerous! Pay no attention at all! If you're prepared, so you'll keep on walking and in another minute you're out of danger.

I was walking in the street once and four *shkatzim* blocked the sidewalk so I couldn't go any further; I couldn't pass by. But I was prepared for such a thing. So what did I do? I got off the sidewalk and walked further. I didn't look back and I didn't say a word. In a second it'll all pass by. Here's a person looks back and he says, "What right do

you have to do that?!" Oh no! *Chas v'shalom.* That means he's not prepared.

Let's say a woman in a packed subway car suddenly feels a knife pressing against her ribs and she hears a voice in her ear, "Come off with me at the next stop or I'll hurt you." And so she's paralyzed with fear and if she obeys, so she's out of luck. But if she heard this lecture and she prepared for eventualities so she falls down in a faint on the spot. "*Oy vey*, a lady fainted!" And suddenly there's a big hubbub. Someone pulls the emergency stop cord and by the time the guards come, she's out of danger already.

Coming Home

A man who comes home at night, he has to be prepared for everything. No matter how difficult his day was, he has to know that his wife was with the children; all the homework and quarreling and noise. So a man who doesn't understand that אֵיזֶהוּ חָכָם הָרוֹאֶה אֶת הַנּוֹלָד, so he opens the door and walks in without thinking and his wife says something silly to him, and there's already an argument. No; don't do that. You have to prepare. So when you're taking hold of the doorknob, before you walk in the house, you prepare yourself – you make up your mind, "No matter what my wife says, no matter what the children do, tonight I'm not going to react. I'm only going to smile and remain calm no matter what." The effect will last for the next five minutes at least. Alright, five minutes is also a big achievement. And after a while, if you keep practicing, it'll last for five hours.

And as soon as he opens the door, a pail of bilge water is poured on his head. "Where were you all evening? I was left with the children. They were driving me crazy!" And so on and so forth. So instead of exploding and saying, "What do you want from me? I'm trying to make a living!" he keeps quiet. He says in a quiet voice, "Oh no; I'm so sorry. Tell me what happened."

But you can't do it just naturally – you have to prepare yourself. You have to steel yourself. You have to prepare it beforehand. It's only when a man knows his weakness, he studied himself, then when the time comes, he's prepared. So therefore, he should make himself ready, "No matter what happens, I'm not going to react." Now the first evening, it's not so easy. His blood is boiling within him and he

keeps his tongue locked behind his teeth. Another day passes, another day and after a while it comes easier and easier.

Or the wife, she knows that her husband is coming home from work soon. She knows that he had a tough day with his customers, or maybe his boss yelled at him, so she makes up her mind, "I'm going to be very quiet today." And that way it will be a beautiful evening. Not only a beautiful evening, but by doing this, the husband and wife are planting the seeds of perfection in their souls.

Shlomo Hamelech's Advice

Now, why do I repeat all these stories, all these scenarios? Because by studying them, by hearing these ideas, we gain a number of precedents that will guide us in times of emergency. Many times these precedents come in handy just when they're needed. How many such cases are there that one has to study, to prepare for? Thousands of cases! And it pays to study them. Mishlei is full of cases. Isn't it valuable to hear good advice?! שֹׁמֵעַ לְעֵצָה חָכָם – If you listen to a wise man, he might even save your life (Mishlei 12:15). תּוֹרַת חָכָם מְקוֹר חַיִּים לָסוּר מִמֹּקְשֵׁי מָוֶת – The teaching of Shlomo Hamelech is a source of life to rescue people from the traps of death (ibid. 13:14).

Now, it's not always possible to prepare for all eventualities. Sooner or later you'll be surprised by something. And so, one of the important strategies to employ in such instances is that golden ring that Shlomo Hamelech once made. There's a story – where it comes from I don't know, but still the story is worth saying over for itself. Shlomo Hamelech once asked, "Can anyone supply me a ring that whenever I'll be too excited, too flustered, I'll be able to look at that ring and it'll have the *segulah*, the power to bring me back to calmness of mind?"

Ah! Wouldn't that be a good ring to have? If your peace of mind becomes disturbed because of some success, or some calamity *chas v'shalom*, or even smaller thing – maybe your husband or your neighbor said something to you; so many people have done foolish and reckless things in those situations – so you'd have a *segulah* ring to protect you from losing your head. And so finally someone gave Shlomo Hamelech a ring with three letters on it, ג ז י which stand for

גַּם זֶה יַעֲבֹר – *This too will pass away.* I once spoke about this here and a man made me such a golden ring – I still have it.

This Too Shall Pass

Gam zeh ya'avor! It's not so terrible; it's not so great – it too will pass away. Don't get excited. Even if you succeed in winning the sweepstakes. Even when you make your first million or your first billion, don't get excited. Or *chas v'shalom*, if something else happens, the other way, don't get excited. Sometimes you might be embarrassed in public. Or maybe you suffered a loss. *Gam zeh ya'avor* – it'll pass by. Most of the world continues to function and they regain their normalcy, their equilibrium. It doesn't take long to forget something that happened.

But if you're going to take action in the midst of your confusion then you might do something you'll never forget. Like the man who called me from Canada again and again. He wanted to commit suicide. "What's the hurry?" I said. "You can commit suicide next week too." A couple came to me this week; they want to break up. They can't take it any longer! They want a *get*. "No," I told them. "It's no hurry. You can give a *get* next month too." And by next month it could very well be that it will be fine. Maybe they'll even like each other too! *Gam zeh ya'avor*, it all passes by.

Shalom Bayis

Here's a man, his wife became very insolent to him. And one day she threw him out of the house. A big tough wife – and she threw him out of the house. A true story. And he didn't go back. Weeks later he came to me to tell me his plight, that he's out of the house. I said to him, "Why didn't you go back the same night? You ring the bell, open the door and run in! That's all. And stay inside. Hold on to the bed and don't let her throw you out." But he lost his head and he remained outside. She threw him out so he went out. Why should he go out?! You can't force a man to leave his own house.

Now, he wants to come back but the police won't let him because she's been there alone for some time already. It's his house too. But she changed all the locks; now he comes back and he tries to get in, he can't get in. It's too late now. Now it's already a *chazaka*, it's already

established, it's her place – he's an outcast. He should have held onto the bedpost – "I'm not leaving! Nothing doing!" She would maybe hit him with the broom or a strap, maybe she would kick him; *gam zeh ya'avor*, it'll pass by. She won't murder him after all.

No matter what – imagine you have a ring on your finger, and you look down at the ring. *Gam zeh ya'avor.* This too will pass. Don't worry about it. It could be that even by tomorrow things will be different already. You'll sleep it off and forget it by tomorrow. And even if not, then a few tomorrows later things will change.

Healthy Fear

And that's what it says פָּחֲדוּ בְצִיּוֹן חַטָּאִים – *The sinners in Tzion are afraid* (Yeshaya 33:14). If you're afraid you're already a sinner (Brachos 60a). But that has to be explained because those who learn *Perek Hanizakin* in *Mesichta Gittin* (55b), know that אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם מְפַחֵד תָּמִיד – *Fortunate is the one who is always afraid.* It always pays to be afraid. It's the same word – *pachadu*, *mifacheid.* Here it says it's good to be afraid always, and here it says you're a sinner if you're afraid.

So we say it depends for what. If you're afraid to do reckless things; you don't want to cross the street until the coast is perfectly clear. Maybe you want to wait till you have the light too. Alright; it pays to be afraid when it's a matter of safety. Constantly be afraid of danger. Don't let children lean out of windows. Don't leave your doors open even by day. Always leave your doors locked. If children want to go in and out, they have to knock. No open doors in America today! When the candles are burning on Chanukah there's no leaving any children in the room alone. Chase out the children — the mother should take all ten children out with her. You cannot leave a child in the same place where candles are burning.

And if you're afraid of doing sins, *ashrecha*, you're fortunate. Sins are dangerous too. הֱוֵי בּוֹרֵחַ מִן הָעֲבֵרָה כְּבוֹרֵחַ מִן הָאֵשׁ – *You should flee from a sin, just like you would flee from a fire.* When a fire breaks out you're not going to stand around. You'll flee as fast as you can. From an *aveirah* you flee as fast as you can. So it comes to avoiding *aveiros* or avoiding things that are dangerous, *ashrei adam mifacheid tamid* – it's good to be afraid always.

Unhealthy Fear

But פָּחֲדוּ בְּצִיּוֹן חַטָּאִים – *Those who are afraid are sinners*, means when you lose your head! Never lose your head! To become so discombobulated that you do something in haste, that's a *cheit*, it's a sin. Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants you to utilize always the *seichel* that He gave you. And once you surrender the *memsheles ha'seichel*, the rule of reason, then you're a *chotei*, you're no longer a servant of Hashem.

That's why כָּל הַכּוֹעֵס כְּאִלּוּ עוֹבֵד עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה – If you get angry, it's like worshipping an idol (Shabbos 105b). Because we're supposed to be thinking always, "What does Hashem want of me right now? What is my duty?" And when you're angry, so you're not thinking about that anymore. You're forgetting about Hashem – you're an idolater. And when you're confused, even if you're not angry, you're also losing your awareness of your duty as an *eved Hashem* and you're also an *oved avodah zarah*.

There was once a young man who used to come here to the lectures, he listened to the tapes. And now he's a *mishumad*, he's baptized. How did that happen? That man, of course, had an unsettled mind. But he never dreamed that he could travel so far. What happened? He worked for a certain *yeshiva*, and there was an argument over money. Now he was an American boy; he was very straight. The *rosh yeshiva* was also straight. But there was a difference of opinion how much was owed to him. And he was arguing, and the *yeshiva* couldn't pay. The *yeshiva* was in the red already – there was no money for him. And he was so upset by this incident, he became so angry, that he was knocked over. And not only did he become hostile to the *rosh yeshiva*, but he became an enemy not only of the orthodox Jews, an enemy of the Jewish people. He became an *oved avodah zarah* who hates the Jewish people. He ran away just like Esav did.

The First Ingredient

And that's one of the great lessons we learn from this story of Esav: That lack of peace of mind can lead to the most terrible results. We must train ourselves never to get shaken; we're always calm,

that's what we're learning – the great importance of gaining the quality of *menuchas hanefesh*, a calmness of mind, all the time.

It's the first ingredient for the service of Hashem — to be an *ish menucha*, a man of peace of mind, who is always calm. It's a very important principle – a man's *seichel* must be in control always if he's going to succeed as an *eved Hashem* in this world. And because Esav forgot that ingredient, he went lost from us.

Now what's the story today? Where is Edom? The only place you'll find it is in archeology, in the history books. Yes, if you'll get a license from the king of *Ever Hayarden*, Trans-Jordan, so you could take some guides to make an expedition to the ruins of Petra. If you travel on a camel you can still still see the ruins of Petra today. It's interesting to look at but where are the people? Nobody's there anymore. All gone! All the people who were there, they disappeared entirely.

And we, the descendants of the *ish tam*, the brother with perfect character, are still here to tell the story. Yaakov's children are still around because we are the nation that doesn't lose its peace of mind. We don't move away from our ideals and we calmly make our way through life by means of utilizing our *seichel*. That's why we're still around and it looks like we'll be here for a long time. Like Yeshaya Hanavi said, we're the *Am Olam*, the everlasting nation.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

This week's booklet based on Tapes:

99 - Peace of Mind | 692 - Keeping Calm | 794 - Bitachon and the Calm Mind | 850 - Errors of Esav | E-263 - Lubrication of Life

Listen: 718.289.0899 Press 1 for English and 2 for Thursday Night Lectures

A Vort on the Parsha

Vayishlach

בְּמַקְלִי עָבַרְתִּי אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה וְעַתָּה הָיִיתִי לִשְׁנֵי מַחֲנוֹת

Twenty years ago, when I was leaving Eretz Canaan to go to Padan Aram, I crossed this same river with my walking stick; and now I have become two camps.

These were the words of Yaakov Avinu as he stood on the bank of the *Yardein* preparing to cross back into *Eretz Canaan* after his twenty year sojourn in the house of Lavan. As he prepared to ask Hashem for help in whatever he might face when he would enter the land, he first thanked Hashem for all the good that had been bestowed on him during his years in Padan Aram. Yaakov recalled how he then crossed the river with only a walking stick, penniless and alone, and yet now he was a wealthy man with wives and families.

Now, the question is, why did Yaakov mention this river that he once crossed and was about to cross again? What's it important if he crossed this river or that river, or even if he didn't cross any river at all? And why mention the old walking-staff that he had with him twenty years ago as he made his way across the river? With a stick, without a stick, who cares?

And the answer is like this: Years ago, Yaakov had passed over this same river, from the opposite side. "I remember passing through this area," thought Yaakov to himself. "I remember these large stones on the river edge! And right over there is the sycamore tree where I rested before crossing the river! *I've been here before*!"

And instead of wasting the opportunity with empty reminiscing and superficial feelings of deja-vu, the *possuk* is teaching us that Yaakov did much more than that. בְּמַקְלִי עָבַרְתִּי אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה – "With my

walking-staff I passed over *this* river," said Yaakov. As he made his way back across the *Yardein* he used these sights, and the memories that they awakened, to appreciate the *chesed Hashem* in his life.

Back then, he had crossed over alone - and now he was loaded down with wealth. "I remember this place; but this time however, my situation is very different than many years before. All I had then was *makli*, my walking-staff. Even what I had left my home with, had been taken away from me by Eliphaz; I was left penniless. And I was still a bachelor, with no wife, and no children – and I wasn't a young man either. I was lonely back then. And afraid. And I didn't know what would be!

And now look at me! וְעַתָּה הָיִיתִי לִשְׁנֵי מַחֲנוֹת – I have become two camps. I'm passing over this same river with a big family; wives, children, money, sheep – everything I have now! It's remarkable, Hashem, what You've done with me!" Yaakov Avinu utilized the familiar landmarks as an opportunity to recognize the change in his circumstances.

The Torah writes Yaakov's words here because he achieved perfection by means of this *avodah*. Utilizing the device of associating events with specific places, for the purpose of better remembering the kindness of Hashem, is a most important method for achieving the greatness of gratitude.

There is another point that we take note of here. Yaakov was not merely reflecting on the happiness of a large family – he was using the burdens of that wealth to feel gratitude to Hashem. Yaakov had so much that he was forced to split his family into two camps because of the danger in the air. Esav was coming out to greet him and Yaakov knew what that meant! He had too much to leave as one camp. And so he reflected on the last time he had escaped from Esav when he had nothing and he was all alone – it was so easy then to cross the river. And now he was burdened down – he had to make many trips back and forth across the river ferrying his families and wealth. And he made use of those burdens to remind himself about the *chesed Hashem.*

Sign up and get a new Q&A every day:
signup@torasavigdor.org

Our Sponsors

***Sefer Bamidbar* - 5779**

THE **CHOPP HOLDINGS** EDITION

IN HONOR OF OUR
CHOPP AND STERN GRANDPARENTS

***Sefer Devarim* - 5779**

THE PENSON FAMILY

IN MEMORY OF
REBBITZEN ESTHER JUNGREIS

***Sefer Bereishis* - 5780**

THE **CHOPP HOLDINGS** EDITION

IN HONOR OF OUR CHOPP AND STERN GRANDPARENTS

***Sefer Shemos* - 5780**

- Available -

***Sefer Vayikra* - 5780**

- Available -

עץ חיים הוא למחזיקים בה - נריבי עם המתנדבים בקביעות

לזכות רפואת חיה מלכה בת בת-שבע

לזכות שושנה רייזא בת חיה מלכה

לע"נ רבינו אביגדור ב"ר ישראל זצ"ל **Mr. & Mrs. Moishy Wolhendler**

לזכות גאלדא בת דבורה, משה בן דבורה, שושנה רייזא בת דבורה

In honor of my father and his "Rebbe's Mussar Stories" (mussarstories.com)

לע"נ פסח בן גרשון ושרה בת משה

לזכות שאול בן חיה עלא

לזכות יוחנן בן שרה חיה ורחל בת מרים

In Appreciation
of our past and current Parsha Sponsors

ואתחנן
Dr. Baruch
and Chanie
Wolhendler

עקב
The
Safdeye
Family

ראה
לע"נ ר' חיים נפתלי שטרנבוך
בן ר' אליהו ע"ה

שופטים
Mind Management
System
732.430.5339

כי תצא
לעילוי נשמת
פיגא רבקה בת אריה לייביש

כי תבא
יצחק בן חיים הירש ע"ה
מרים בת לואיס ע"ה
צבי הירש בן יוסף ע"ה
פנינה בת לוי ע"ה

נצבים
Mel and Raquel
Urbach

וילך
The
Wahba Family

סוכות
הרוצה בעילום שמו
לעילוי נשמת אביו ע"ה

בראשית
The
Rosenberg Family

נח
The
Shama Family

לך לך
Yeshivat
Ohel Torah

וירא
The
Braha Family

חיי שרה
The
Shama Family

תולדות
Avraham Ben-Ishay
& Family

ויצא
LEW PIPING

וישלח
The
Pollack Family

וישב
Available

מקץ
Available

ויגש
Available

ויחי
Available

שמות
Available

וארא
Available

בא
Available

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך

Q:

The Rav mentioned the importance of speaking as little as possible in order to concentrate our energies on the business of life, which is *shleimus*, perfection. Making small talk with a friend for a few minutes, is that also forbidden?

A:

It depends. If that friend needs your words and you wish to cheer him up, then it's a *mitzvah*. המפייסו ברבים מתברך באחת עשרה – "If you comfort a poor person with kind words you'll be blessed with eleven *brachos*" (Bava Basra 9b). And so, of course, if you're trying to comfort a fellow Jew, that's what you have a mouth for, that's part of your *shleimus*.

Now suppose your friend doesn't need the words; but you need the words to cheer yourself up. That's already a weakness. In order to raise your spirits you have to talk?! Even that however, if it's necessary, it's also permissible. It's a weakness, but it's necessary so you can do it.

So now we are learning that everything depends on what the results are going to be. If the result will be that you'll be able to be more prepared to function properly, then you're justified in certain things that are ordinarily to be avoided. Because as a general rule it's better not to talk. לעולם ירבה אדם בשתיקה – "A person should try to produce silence" (Rambam Hilchos Dei'os 2:4). You hear that? To produce silence is an accomplishment! A man should talk as little as possible. But suppose that the other party needs your words, or, worse comes to worse, if you yourself need those words, so say a few words in order to restore your feelings, your equilibrium, and then you get back to the business of life.

[TAPE # E-13 (*June* 1995)

This week's Q&A sponsored by:

לע"נ חיים צבי בן פינחס ז"ל, נלב"ע י"ד כסלו תשע"ח

Rabbi Chaim Tzvi (Harry) Ruben, Denmark/Brooklyn/Ramot