

# TORAS AVIGDOR

AUTHENTIC TORAH THOUGHT FOR LIFE

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PARSHAS EMOR

WITH

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BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

## ANGER AND THE AFTERLIFE

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## Part I. The Gehenom of Anger

### Off the Subject

At the end of this week's *sedrah* we read the story of the *mekallel*, who committed one of the worst *aveiros* of all: וַיִּקְבֹּב בֶּן הָאִשָּׁה הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית אֶת ה' וַיִּקְלֵל – And the son of the Israelite woman cursed the Name of Hashem (Vayikra 24:11). It was a terrible thing, one of the most tragic events that took place in the Midbar – a Jew should curse Hashem?! A very unpleasant story.

If you're interested you can look in the Chumash and in the *mefarshim* to see exactly what happened there, what the details were. But for our purposes it's enough to know that this man was very upset about his station in life, and in his distress and his anger he blamed Hashem for his plight and uttered blasphemous words.

Now, at the end of the story there begins a list of transgressions which seem to have no connection at all to the previous subject of the *mekallel*. It says there that Hashem told the Bnei

Yisroel how to punish someone who 'curses the Name'. But then, before the story concludes with how they put the *mekallel* to death, it interrupts with various other sins that seem out of place: bloodshed (*ibid.* 17) and assault (18) and damaging someone's property (19) – various *aveiros* that a person might do. And only then after that list of sins, וַיֹּצִיאוּ אֶת הַמְּקַלֵּל ... וַיִּרְגְּמוּ אוֹתוֹ, אָבְרָם – the Bnei Yisroel took the *mekallel* out of the camp and stoned him to death.

Now, to us it seems that all these other sins don't belong here at all. They're out of place.

### The Common Denominator

And the explanation is as follows: The common factor in all of these subjects is the element of anger. How could it be that a person will do something as wild as cursing Hashem, *chas veshalom*? Because he's angry. And that's the lesson here: an angry person is a loose cannon who might do *anything*!

And so the Torah warns us here: 'Beware! Every kind of wickedness is on the table for

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someone unwilling to train himself to curb his anger. He'll curse Hashem! And even if he won't get so *meshuge*, but other things he'll do; he'll damage his fellow man's property or even assault and maim him. He might even shed the blood of a fellow Jew!

Don't think it's an exaggeration. We have Orthodox murderers today – and not in far-off places. In this neighborhood not so long ago a man murdered his wife. An Orthodox man who wouldn't think of eating *tarfus*, but *shefichas domim* he did. How could that be? A *frum* murderer?! It's because an angry person is bound to do anything.

*Kaas* is guaranteed to bring a person to very many sins, big and small, because אַפְלוֹ שְׂכִינָה אֵינָה (Nedarim 22b). He's too busy fulminating in his frustration and nothing else matters – *even the Shechinah means nothing to him now!* Hakadosh Baruch Hu can wait – what matters now is that his neighbor is parked in his driveway! And that means he might do anything – he'll be up to his nose in sins before he finally settles down.

### Prepared for Yom Hadin

That's what Shlomo Halelech said in Mishlei (29:22). בַּעַל הַמָּהָה – *A person of wrath*, רַב פְּשָׁע – *has many sins*. Rav means he has a majority of sins. A *majority!* כָּל הַבוֹעֵס – *Anybody who is an angry person*, בְּיָדוֹעַ שְׁעוֹנוֹתָיו מְרַבֵּין – *we know for certain that his sins are more than his merits* (*ibid.* 22a).

It means he doesn't have to wait for the Yom Hadin of Olam Haba to find out what's going to be with him. Even though he is a *frum* man who does *mitzvos* and gains many merits – and merits certainly are important for a person's final judgment – but if he's a *baal kaas* then he

can take it to the bank. He can know for certain that his merits will be outweighed by his sins.

And that's why the Gemara says that כָּל הַבוֹעֵס – *anyone who gets angry*, כָּל מִינֵי גֵיהֶנָם שׁוֹלְטִין בוֹ – *all the various treatments of Gehenom will have power over him* (Nedarim 22a). Not a treatment or some treatments; *kol minei* means *all the various treatments* that they have in Gehenom, the angry man can expect them.

### The Treatment Plan

Now, that word 'treatments' deserves an explanation and so we should take a few minutes before we start the subject, to talk about what it means. You know, we were not given the opportunity to take a peek into Gehenom. Nobody ever saw it and whatever it is, it's a thousand times or a million times more than we're capable of expressing in words anyhow. And therefore, it's only the teaching of our Sages, their traditions, that open our eyes to the truth of what it is. And they tell us that it's a place where the *neshamah* goes in order to be treated, to be remedied.

You know, our greatest expectation, the greatest happiness that we are all looking forward to, is the promise of כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ לָהֶם – *We are promised a happiness so great that even Hakadosh Baruch Hu couldn't give us greater joy.*

And yet a person who didn't prepare himself in this world, he won't be permitted to go to Gan Eden immediately – he must be processed in the clinic of Gehenom in order to be capable of enjoying the delights of the World to Come.

### The Choice is Ours

Of course, if you do *teshuvah* while you're still here, you're a smart man because you'll

avoid those treatments. You'll save yourself a lot of trouble.

It's the same as in this world; let's say a man who has ulcers. So there are two kinds of treatments. One way is before it gets to the stage where it's extreme; he could still change his habits. If he would live a reasonable, temperate life that would help him heal. He could go to sleep early every night instead of sitting up in front of the 'devil machine' and ruining his mind. Instead of reading magazines late at night or sitting and gabbing with the family, if he would hit the hay early, that's one way of healing an ulcer or preventing a future one.

But the other way is surgery. If he waits too long, the end result will be surgery. It's not the first choice of course because surgery is painful and it's dangerous too. But finally, the doctor will tell him that it's inflamed and abscessed and it has to be cut out with a knife.

### **The Only Alternative**

In the Next World however surgery is the only alternative; there it's *always* the answer and it's *always* painful. And so all of the questions and pleadings won't do much for you – if you come to the Next World with a cancer that you didn't treat with *teshuvah* while you were still in this world then it's going to require treatment in Gehenom before you can get into Gan Eden. And it's going to be H-E-L-L.

By the way, it's good you came here tonight to hear this. You know that in this place we like to talk about happy things, about how to live happy and successful lives. But included in that is knowing the truth. And so even though in other places they won't talk to you about Gehenom because they want you to keep

coming back but I'm not so interested in you coming back. I'm more interested that you should know the truth, that you should become better. And so I'm telling you once and for all what it really is.

### **The Clinic You Don't Want to Visit**

And so Gehenom is a place of treatments, all types of treatments. If a person comes there with a big ulcer, let's say, of jealousy, so it's too late to do anything about it except to operate. And the operation is very long. The surgeons there have all types of tools; everything they have – except anesthesia.

If you come in with a different sin, let's say, of *lashon hara*, so you need a different treatment; they have to work on the mouth. It's not pleasant to have your teeth fixed. They have to be ground and filled, drilled and filled. Maybe some teeth have to be pulled out. They pull with pliers. All types of tools to treat that problem to make you ready for the happiness of Gan Eden.

If he wasn't careful with what he ate, his stomach has to be treated. If he has lesions of *onaas devorim*, hurtful words, so it's a different kind of treatment. You didn't listen to your mother when she asked you to take out the garbage? A different treatment. There's no such thing as a sin that's not going to be treated. Every sin has a specific kind of treatment.

### **Anger is the All-In-One**

And so we come back now to the angry fellow. Anger, the Sages tell us, is something different altogether. If you're prone to anger, if you have a tendency to flare up, you have to expect a Gehenom where *all the treatments* will be given to you – כָּל מִינֵי גֵיהֶנוֹם שׁוֹלְטִין בוֹ. Why so

many? Because it's not one sickness. The 'angry person is filled with sin'.

That's what the Torah is telling us here at the end of our *sedrah*. A person might do the worst things. He might say the worst things. He might damage or maim or hurt or kill. There have been boys and girls who ran away because of *kaas* and they accepted a cult instead of the Jewish faith; people have bowed down to idols to spite their families because of *ka'as*!

### Talking to Ourselves

But we're not only talking about those extreme scenarios. We're talking now about ourselves, about people who learn Torah and perform *mitzvos*. And still when a person gets angry it brings him to be mean and to say hurtful words. People break other people's hearts in their anger. People say *lashon hara*; they slander others and ruin their lives. It brings *machlokes*. He fights with his neighbors and in-laws. He's unhappy and frustrated and he blames Hashem. *Kaas* is not only anger – every *middah raah* and every sin comes as a result.

And because he'll be coming to the Next World with all types of sins – all types of cancers and lesions and disorders and ulcers and sores – they all have to be treated before he can get into Gan Eden. The indescribable joy of Gan Eden is waiting for him but first he'll be treated and readied for that eternal happiness.

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## Part II. Worse Than Gehenom

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### Additional Suffering

Now the Gemara, after it tells us all this, it adds something else on to the subject. The Gemara says: not only are all the treatments of Gehenom going to have power over the angry

person; וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלָּא שְׂתַחַתְוִיּוֹת שׁוֹלְטוֹת בּוֹ – but even more so, he'll suffer from hemorrhoids.

Hemorrhoids? It seems so anticlimactic. We just got through saying how this angry man is going to be put through the wringer in the Next World and now he comes along and adds something new: He says such a man is even going to suffer the discomfort of hemorrhoids.

Now, I don't wish hemorrhoids on anyone – well, some people, yes – but it's not such a terrible disease. Certainly nobody wants it but it's a discomfort, that's all. It's not fatal.

And so it needs an explanation. After telling us the great threat of בְּכָל מִינֵי גֵיהֶנֶם שׁוֹלְטִין בּוֹ, which is the worst of all possible things, he comes along and he mentions hemorrhoids? It's a queer thing.

### Worse Than Gehenom

But we are learning now that there's something worse than suffering; there's something worse than pain and torture. And that is the loss of the opportunity to utilize one's life! Worse than suffering is when a person is sentenced to the loss of opportunity for *toiv*; to utilize life in achieving perfection.

Because that is *the* purpose of life. It's absolutely clear from many *seforim*, from many statements in the Torah and *Neviim* and *Kesuvim*; wherever we look, if we'll make a summary, a quintessence, of what we learn, we'll discover that *the purpose of life is to gain perfection*. And since we are created and put into this world in order to make out of ourselves the very best that we can, anything that interferes with this purpose, any hindrance to this purpose of life, is to be feared more than Gehenom.

## What Comes After Gehenom?

Now, we'll explain that a little more because it's so important. We mentioned before that in most cases Gehenom is a purification process; sooner or later it finally comes to an end. Of course people who despise their faith, who turn their backs on their people, who cast away their loyalty to Hashem and intermarry or become atheists, we're not talking about them; we're talking now about people who identify with the Am Yisroel.

These loyal Jews, even if they are sinners – and who doesn't sin sometimes? – they'll eventually find a way out of Gehenom. Even if a Jew is quite wicked and he'll have to go to Gehenom to be purified, he'll finally emerge from there – maybe a little pale, a little weakened, but he'll totter out of Gehenom and he'll be admitted to Olam Haba! At last! The great happiness and the great consolation: **כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לְיֵשׁ לְהֵם חֵלֶק לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא** – *All Yisroel have a share in the World to Come.*

### Achievements Are Forever

However, when he gets to the World to Come his worries are not over. Because it's not enough to be purified of sin. It's not enough to be freed of one's *aveiros*. Because Olam Haba requires positive merits, acts. You have to do something in order to qualify. It matters what you prepared for yourself in the World to Come.

It's only the Torah and *mitzvos* and *middos tovos* and perfection of the Torah mind that a person achieves in this world, that's what bestows on him the happiness of Olam Haba. And so it's not purifying your sins that's most important; it's your achievements that matter most. Because even though there's no end to the reward of Next World, you have to come

there with the IOU notes in order to collect on that happiness.

So what do we see? *Aveiros* are a terrible thing. Every sin is a great misfortune and we should be very afraid of them because there is nothing as terrible as Gehenom. But eventually the sin is going to be removed. Eventually you're cleaned. The punishment has a limit; it's not forever.

But a *mitzvah* is forever. Achievements continue forever and ever. And therefore when a person loses opportunities to accomplish *tov* in this world it's worse than the punishment of Gehenom! Because **גִּיהֵנָם כְּלָה** – *Gehenom comes to an end* (Rosh Hashanah 17a) but achievements never come to an end.

### The Hemorrhoid Problem

And now we come to what the Chachomim are telling us here. **וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלָּא שְׂתַחַתּוּנֵיּוֹת שׁוֹלְטוֹת בּוֹ** – *Even more than Gehenom he'll even suffer also from hemorrhoids in this world.* It means that not only is there a Gehenom waiting for this angry man but even worse he'll even be visited with hemorrhoids, with pains of illness while he's still alive.

Illness? While he's alive? That's all? And it's not even the most serious illness. It doesn't say that he'll be a heart patient or he'll be stricken blind – that could happen too if he lives an angry life but even before that happens he'll suffer from hemorrhoids.

The answer is that it means that he'll be harassed frequently. And it'll be a harassment that makes his mind little – a person is not able to think big when he's always bothered. And this angry, frustrated fellow, he'll be punished by being constantly weighed down by his little

day-to-day worries. And that's the worst punishment of all because he won't be able to soar to the heights of perfection.

When he sits down, he experiences pain. Many times when he lies down the pain still accompanies him. And this constant pain, even though it's not a terrible thing in life but it grinds away his opportunities. It hampers him.

### **The Big Little Problems**

Hemorrhoids is only an example because if it won't be that it'll be something else. That's why the Gemara quotes a *possuk* on this: 'וַיִּתֵּן ה' לִי לֵב רָגִזָּה – Hashem will give you a heart of excitement. It means that the angry person is going to have all kinds of anxieties, וְכִלְיוֹן עֵינַיִם – and your eyes will be worn out, וְרֵאבֹן נַפְשׁ – and aching of the soul (Devarim 28:65).

So the Gemara asks, what is such a thing that wears out the eyes and hurts the soul? And so they say it means hemorrhoids. The constant pains are a drag on life. But it might be anything. He'll have eye problems or headaches or other discomforts. Poor health, even in a minor matter, is the greatest misfortune that there could be – much worse than Gehenom – because they hamper him from greatness. He is fettered to the small nothings of life because of all the vexations and irritants.

### **A Distracted Mind**

And even if he's perfectly healthy he'll always be frustrated because of his *middah* of anger that he never quashed. He'll always be racking his brains, thinking why this, why that. Why didn't she do that? Why did he do such and such? That's the life of a person who angers easily – he's frustrated and irritated and annoyed. And a person like that is not able to

accomplish all the greatness that life holds for him. And that's the worst thing that could be; because if there's anything that discourages a person from the ambition needed for going ahead and accomplishing, that's worse than any other punishment you can imagine.

Let's say he could go ahead and *daven*. He could pray with all his heart. What a big achievement that is! Every man and woman should aspire to become great in *tefillah* because the perfection in awareness of Hashem, in *bitachon*, in *ahavas Hashem*, that comes from *davening* is something you'll take with you forever in the Next World.

But if there's a pain nagging you all the time, even a minor ailment but it bothers you and you're in a hurry. You want to get out of the *shul*. You can't stand Shemoneh Esrei that long because you're suffering.

Or your mind is somewhere else because of your anger. It's still back in the kitchen chewing on what your wife said to you this morning. Or it's at the office angering at your boss for keeping you late in the office again. So you're losing opportunities which are more precious than anything else.

### **True Freedom**

But *davening* is only an example. A person who has *menuchas hanefesh* – nothing angers him, he doesn't get irritated – that person's life in this world is wide open for him. His mind is unchained. He can learn Torah. He can make *cheshbon hanefesh*. He can do *teshuvah*; he can make amends for his *aveiros* and save himself a lot of trouble.

He can think about Hakadosh Baruch Hu. He can walk down the avenue and practice that

Hashem is looking at Him. An unfettered mind can practice that! He can walk in the street and think about the *nissim* that Hashem did for us. זָכְרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה – Remember always the miracles that Hashem did for us (Tehillim 105:5). It means it's a mitzvah to think about Yetzias Mitzrayim. It's a mitzvah, a perfection, to think about the *mann* and about Kriyas Yam Suf and other miracles.

But if he suffers from *tachtoniyos* and other ailments, and everything else that comes along with anger and frustration, so that's the great misfortune of life. Because he's too busy with his little irritations to achieve the greatness that this life has to offer him; instead of utilizing the opportunity of life that Hakadosh Baruch Hu gives him to collect all the precious coins that are going to be his admission to the World to Come and his happiness forever and ever, he's busy with his *tachtoniyos* and everything else.

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## Part III. Anger Management

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### Problem Solving

So you'll say, "Well, Rabbi Miller, you're good at describing the problem but what are we to do about it? We're human beings after all. We get frustrated, angry, irritated all the time; so what's the solution?"

And it's a good question actually because there's no magic wand that I can wave over you. It takes work; it takes thinking. But if we had to look for one thing; if you were cornered and had to come up with one solution how to overcome this problem of *kaas*, frustration, that keeps cropping up, so listen now in the few minutes we have left.

You know, there's a *sefer* called *Orchos Tzaddikim* and the author there talks about *middos*; about a *middah* and its opposite. He talks, for example, about *gaavah*, arrogance, and he talks about the opposite – *anavah*, humility. And that's how he goes through all the traits of character, each *middah* and its opposite.

But when he comes to the quality of *kaas*, anger, we're surprised to see that he doesn't say that the opposite of *kaas* is to be calm, to control yourself; no, he doesn't say that. The *Orchos Tzaddikim* says the opposite of *kaas* is *ratzon*, satisfaction. It means to willingly accept, to be satisfied with what happens, that's the other side of the coin of anger.

### Anger Is Opposition

Anger is an emotional-physical response to opposition. It's a natural process of the body that is intended to be used where it's needed; it can help you overcome dangerous opponents.

However, our problem is that we have trained our emotions to react even when there's no danger, no actual opposition. Even imaginary opposition can induce the same effects emotionally and physically.

So here is a man who is angry. But it's not that he's fighting against the wicked; there's no big gentile following him down a dark street. He's not afraid for his life – he's angry because he expected when he came home tonight that there should be a *fleishige* supper and his wife tells him the good news there's fish tonight. Ooh, right away those glands begin to operate!

Now, it doesn't mean he's going to turn red or holler. Sometimes you have a *meshugene* husband who will do that too but I'm talking now about even healthy people. He's not going

to throw the dish on the floor; he might even say thank you. But still, he senses that his will was thwarted and because he takes his will seriously so his emotions and his physical reactions begin to operate.

### **Always Opposition**

And it's going to happen always, again and again, because there's always opposition to your will. Sometimes it's big opposition so it's a bigger frustration. Sometimes it's only the wrong supper so it's less frustration.

Whatever it is, he's always being opposed by circumstances. There's no such thing as everything going smoothly. Maybe his wife asks him to do something and he thinks he's too busy for that. Or he lost some money because of someone else's carelessness. Maybe someone embarrassed him or he didn't get a certain *kavod* that was coming his way. Whatever it is, there's some opposition to his will; he's dissatisfied with the circumstances that are confronting him and so he's frustrated. Whatever it is, it's *kaas*. Frustration is merely a coverup word; it's a way of covering up your *kaas* with an English word.

### **Satisfaction Guaranteed**

And so if anger is really dissatisfaction, it makes sense therefore that the opposite of anger is *ratzon*, satisfaction. It's a *chiddush* of the *Orchos Tzaddikim*, a novel thing that we don't find in other *seforim* but it makes a lot of sense: To learn to be satisfied with whatever circumstances come your way is a *middah* that the *frum* Jew has to work on in order to overcome *kaas*.

I'm not saying to be satisfied with wickedness, satisfied with sins that people do; but everyone

has to learn to be satisfied with 'injustices' that are done to him. You have to be satisfied with insults that are offered to you, satisfied with slights.

You're satisfied when you don't get the honor that you would like to get. Not only you don't complain; it doesn't even bother you. You accept it *b'ratzon*. And – and this is the punchline of our whole talk – it's all based on your understanding that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is in control!

### **The Puppet Show**

This world is under control; we are all puppets. Hakadosh Baruch Hu is standing behind the scenes and He's pulling wires. Even when people do things to us, it's not them. It's Hakadosh Baruch Hu. He's pulling the wire this way and that way, causing the puppets behavior to us.

And therefore we shouldn't become so excited and flustered. It's Hakadosh Baruch Hu at the wheel and you can be sure that He's driving perfectly. You can be satisfied with whatever He does. Very satisfied.

Now, when a person has satisfaction, he is confident in the way Hakadosh Baruch Hu is conducting the world, so therefore he will not so easily fall a victim to *kaas*. He learns how to be satisfied with Hashem's ways. He desires what Hashem does; he accepts what Hashem sends.

### **A Program for Life**

Now this doesn't mean a man shouldn't try to better his conditions. Go all out! Do whatever is needed! But no matter what the result is, get into the habit of saying, **צְדִיקָהּ בְּכָל דְרָבָיו** – Hashem is righteous in all of His ways, **וְחַסִּיד בְּכָל מַעֲשָׂיו** – and He's kindly in all of His deeds.

I'm not saying it's an easy program. I'm talking to myself too. It's not easy but if you're serious about it you'll see results. And that *possuk* – צַדִּיק ה' בְּכָל דְרָבָיו וְחָסִיד בְּכָל מַעֲשָׂיו – if you keep on repeating it, it finally becomes your way in life. It ends up becoming an attitude of satisfaction, of *ratzon*, with everything.

It doesn't mean you'll do it right away: שֶׁבַע יָפֹל צַדִּיק וְקָם – *Seven times a tzaddik falls but he stands up again* (Mishlei 24:16). There's a certain Rebbe, the Breslover and in one of his *seforim* he writes as follows. He writes this about himself. He says, "When I was younger, I tried to serve Hashem. I tried and fell, and sometimes I fell down not seven times; sometimes a hundred times I fell down. But each time I got up again and I tried again." A hundred times he was *nichshal*. "But I got up," he says, "and in the end, I remained standing!"

And that's the career of all good people. They fall and they fall, but in the end, they are going to conquer. They get frustrated, angry, but they remind themselves, "It's all Hakadosh Baruch Hu! צַדִּיק ה' בְּכָל דְרָבָיו וְחָסִיד בְּכָל מַעֲשָׂיו. Even if it bothers me, I'm telling myself that it shouldn't bother me. And next time, it won't bother me." And at the end it will be קָם; *at the end you will remain standing*.

### Kol Minei Gan Eden

Now, we have to know that the more a person practices this, the more he keeps getting up and saying again and again, 'Hashem is right and just in all of His actions, and He's kind in all of His ways;' so he's going to gain very many good things because of this in the Next World. Because just like in Gehenom there are various treatments for every kind of *aveirah* and bad

*middah*, the same is in Gan Eden; there are all types of reward.

In the World to Come, a person is rewarded not in a general way, but he's rewarded for each achievement in a specific way; each *mitzvah*, each achievement, is a specific kind of reward. The World to Come is composed of various colored gems, different kinds of pleasures, all delights, each one according to the type of deed he did in this world.

Now, because this *middah* of *ratzon* is the opposite of *kaas*, so you have to know that just like *kaas* brings in Gehenom a great many forms of treatment, so the *middah* of *ratzon*, being satisfied with what comes to you, will bring you a great many forms of compensation in Gan Eden; *kol minei Gan Eden* will be given to him.

There is no end to the good results that will come from this quality of accepting Hashem's deeds with a heart full of trust in the ways of Hashem. A man who trains himself in that way he is becoming more and more perfect in character. Every time that he replaces the feeling of frustration, of anger, with accepting the Will of Hashem, he's perfecting his character more and more. He becomes an *ish emunah*, an *ish bitachon*, an *ish* of *menuchas hanefesh* because he's aware of Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

### Big Mind, Big Rewards

And that attitude means that his mind is open now to great things. Because he lives with the attitude of , צַדִּיק ה' בְּכָל דְרָבָיו – *Hashem is righteous in all of His ways*, וְחָסִיד בְּכָל מַעֲשָׂיו – *and He's kindly in all of His deeds*, he lives with this *middah* of trusting Hashem, and he's not bothered by constant consternations and frustrations and therefore his mind is not small; it's not fettered.



**QUESTION**

**You said that having money can help a person serve Hashem. So how come it appears that when Jews acquire money, they seem to move from Orthodoxy to Conservative, to Reform?**

**ANSWER**

Why is it that people who become wealthy tend to forsake the principles of their fathers?

Now this is something that's a well known phenomenon. It's constantly reiterated in the Scriptures, in the Tanach. **וַיִּשְׁמֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּבְעַט** – *The righteous nation became fat and began kicking.*

It's like a cow. A cow, if you don't feed it too much, it's docile. But once you give it too much food, then if you come to milk it, it'll give you a kick in the face.

And that's how children are too, by the way. They're overfed today with too much candy and ice cream. And that's why they're so fresh. If they had to go to work in order to support themselves, then you'd see it would be a much more decent population.

Money is a great test.

Now, for good people money is a glorious opportunity. They become more grateful to Hashem and they utilize their wealth for the support of the Torah causes. And they become like Rabbi Akiva or like Raban Gamliel or like Rabbi Tarfon or like Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, all the great people of our history who knew how to live with money.

But those who are not trained, those who are not prepared for wealth, are ruined by wealth. Like Shlomo HaMelech said: **רָאשׁ וְעֶשֶׂר אֶל תִּתֶּן לִי** – *Don't give me extreme wealth or extreme poverty, הַטְרִיפֵנִי לְחָם חֻקִּי* – *Give me just enough.*

And therefore, it's a great test and very many people have stumbled and have fallen because of this test.

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Instead his mind is big; it's wide open to the great expanse of opportunities and he accomplishes many forms of *avodas Hashem* in this world. He's capable of thinking in all of the great ideals that make a Torah Jew great. And so the person who overcomes the frustrations of life and becomes an *ish ratzon* instead of an *ish kaas*, he's capable of achieving all the great accomplishments and attitudes of Torah living, and he achieves so much that on him we say, **כָּל מִינֵי גֶן עֵדֶן שׁוֹלְטִין בּוֹ** – *every form of reward is waiting for him in Gan Eden!*

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In our *sedra*, we learn about the grave sin of anger and how it incurs all forms of Gehinnom for the angry person. The opposite of being angry is accepting. When we learn to accept that everything in this world is Hashem's doing, for our benefit, we go from all forms of Gehinnom to earning all forms of Gan Eden. This week I will *bli neder* take thirty seconds every morning to review this concept and reflect on how I can apply it in my life. At night, I will take another thirty seconds to review how I did during the day and whether I succeeded in applying this lesson or not.

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