

תורת אביגדור

הגאון ר' אביגדור מיללער זצ"ל

SEFER SHEMOS - THE PENSON FAMILY EDITION

IN HONOR OF YEHOShUA MORDECHAI'S BAR MITZVAH

TORAS AVIGDOR

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"l

פרשת כי תשא

Excited Over Him

PARSHA SPONSOR:

לע"נ ישכר דוב ע"ה בן יואל נ"י

As a zechus for hatzlacha



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 | היים בן סוניה ע"ה | רחל בת ויקטוריה ע"ה | משה בן ליזא ע"ה | לינדא
בת ריינה 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 SHEMOS

THE **PENSON FAMILY** EDITON

IN HONOR OF YEHOShUA MORDECHAI'S BAR MITZVAH

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 at your local pickup location.

Available in over 60 cities - Call 732.844.3670 for a complete listing.

Get it in the mail, for just \$1.50 per week.

email subs@torasavigdor.org or call/text 862-800-7905

MAZEL TOV

Toras Avigdor wishes a heartfelt Mazel Tov to
YEHOShUA MORDECHAI PENSON & FAMILY

*May you grow up to be a wonderful source of pride
to your parents and community*

Sponsorship opportunities available

Help us spread over 30,000 copies worldwide

Easy-Print Edition.....	\$180	Full Parsha Sponsor.....	\$2,600
Q&A (back cover) Sponsor	\$360	Junior Full Sefer Sponsor.....	\$7,200
Junior Edition Sponsor.....	\$500	Full Sefer Sponsor	\$26,000
Email and Online Sponsor	\$1,000	City Sponsor	according to city size

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 21

© Copyright 2020 by: TorasAvigdor.org

Email: info@TorasAvigdor.org | **Telephone:** 732.844.3670

Address: 5014 16th Avenue, Suite 488, Brooklyn NY 11204

פרשת כי תשא

WITH

R' AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"l

Excited Over Him

Contents:

Part I. Excitement in the World - 3

Part II. Excitement is a Test - 8

Part III. Excitement Makes a Man - 13

Part I. Excitement in the World

A Sound Of Noise

When Moshe Rabbeinu and Yehoshua were coming down from Har Sinai, the Torah tells us that they heard an uproar; there were loud sounds of excitement coming from the camp. אֶת קוֹל הָעָם בִּרְעָה - *It was the voice of the people and they were shouting.* And so Moshe said to Yehoshua, "What is this kol, this noise of excitement, that they are making in the camp? אֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת גְּבוּרָה - *It's not the outcry of victory, וְאֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת חֲלוּשָׁה - and neither is it the outcry of defeat; קוֹל עֲנוֹת אֲנָכִי שָׁמַע - It's an outcry that I hear"* (32:18).

אֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת גְּבוּרָה - *It's not the sound of people shouting in gratitude to Hashem because they're winning a victory.* "That I could understand," said Moshe. If they were shouting to Hashem, "Hodu la'shem ki tov!" - thanking Hashem because of some success, and shouting about it too - that's very good, that's what shouting is for.

וְאֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת חֲלוּשָׁה - *And neither is it the sound of crying out to Hashem in weakness.* If a person is afraid of losing a battle and he cries

out to Hashem for help, that's also good. Not only war battles; when people are *chalilah* suffering any type of misfortune and they get excited; if they make an uproar shouting out to Hashem, that type of excitement is beloved by Him. It's fully justified because by appealing to Hakodosh Boruch Hu you demonstrate that He is the one who can help.

"But here," said Moshe Rabeinu, "it's not *kol anos gevurah* and it's not *kol anos chalusha*. It's just קוֹל עֲנוּת אֲנָכִי שְׁמִיעַ – All I hear is the sound of noise; empty excitement."

Your Career Depends on This

They were jumping up and down around the *eigel*, making noise about nothing. A noise about nothing?! That's a very big sin! The *eigel* wasn't *avodah zarah* by the way. The Kuzari and the Ramban explain that. But it was still nothing! They were making a big noise about nothing! In this world we get excited only about Hashem. If you're excited about anything else, that's being excited over nothing. To be excited over things in this world that aren't connected to Hakodosh Boruch Hu – that's already like *avodah zarah*. "I should bring down the Toras Hashem," thought Moshe Rabeinu, "to a people who don't know what to be excited about in this world?!"

With these few words, "*Kol anos anochi shomeia – I hear sounds of empty excitement,*" Moshe Rabeinu is teaching us an attitude that we're expected to acquire – we must be careful what we get excited about in this world. To be passionate about something requires justification – the emotion of enthusiasm is given to us solely to be employed in matters pertaining to *avodas Hashem*. And that means that a *kol anos*, a sound of excitement over nothing, is a severe error because your career in this world depends on what you're excited about.

What Does Hallel Mean?

It's something that Dovid Hamelech says over and over again, only that we don't notice it. We're saying it all the time too: *Halleluyah!* What does the word *Hallel* mean? It doesn't just mean like people think, "to give praise." There's a big difference between the word *hallel* and all the other words of praise: לְשׁוֹבַח לְפָאֵר לְרוֹמֵם לְהַדְר לְכַבֵּד לְעֵלָה וּלְקַלֵּם. Each one is a different form of praise, but *hallel* means something much more than that.

The word *holeil* means "wild." How do I know that? אָמַרְתִּי לְהוֹלְלִים אַל תְּהוֹלִי – "I said to those who are wild and enthusiastic, 'Don't be wild'" (Tehillim 75:5). *Hallel* is what you call an onomatopoeic word – a word that expresses itself through the sound of the word itself. The word itself is suited to shouting – it's a word of excitement! When people get

drunk they say "Hallel" – only that usually it's not to Hashem. They are shouting "HALLEL! HALLEL!" about all the wrong things. *Hallel* over music and *hallel* over wine and *hallel* over sports – other things too.

Wild Over What?

But when we say *hallel*, we say *hallelu-Yah*; it means to "go wild over Hashem." Dovid Hamelech says, "Yes, you have to shout in this world! But about what should you shout? *Hallelu-Yah! Shout out in wild simcha only to Hashem!* Be excited only about Hashem. HALLELU-YAH!! That's your job in this world! It's the first time you heard it?! Then you're lucky you came tonight! *Halleli nafshi* means, *my soul should go wild about Hashem*. Not merely you praise Hashem – you're enthusiastic!

In *Koheles* (2:2) we find the following statement: לְשׁוֹק אֶמְרָתִי מְהוֹלָל וּלְשִׂמְחָה מָה זֶה עֲשָׂה. *Koheles* says that when he considered the subject of gaiety, of laughter, he said that it's *meholal*, it's just a wildness. וּלְשִׂמְחָה – *And rejoicing*, מָה זֶה עֲשָׂה – *what are you accomplishing with it?* It means that to rejoice without good cause is nothing but foolishness. And what is considered without good cause? The *gemara* (*Shabbos* 30b) says that it's referring to *simcha she'einah shel mitzvah*, happiness that's not for *avodas Hashem*. But if it's a *simcha shel mitzvah*, that's what *simcha* is for; that's why this power, this emotion of gaiety was given to you. But otherwise, *mah zu osah*, what is it worth? What are you getting enthusiastic about?

Wild Over Borchu

And that's what Dovid said: *Haleli nafshi* – *About what should my soul be wild? Es Hashem – Only about Hashem*. Everything else is לְשִׂמְחָה לְשִׂמְחָה – *It's a waste of simcha*. Only when it's connected to Hakodosh Boruch Hu is there a reason to be enthusiastic.

And therefore, to be excited over what Hashem is excited about, certainly. *Simchas Torah*, when they're taking a *Sefer Torah* out of the *aron kodesh*, and everybody is leaping and shouting in honor of the *Torah*. Yes! As much as you have, all of your *kochos* you should put into it. Not only *Simchas Torah*. Why not every time you say *borchu*? Say it with excitement! All together we say, *Barchu es Hashem hamevorach* – Let's all bless Hashem together! And we don't merely do it as an obligation. We do it with enthusiasm; we do it *wildly*. You know, some places they do do it *wildly*. If you would walk in, you'd be amazed. You'd think maybe it's not proper; but for them that's the way to do it.

Rosh Hashana in Slabodka

I remember in my *yeshiva* days in Europe, when we said *borchu* on Rosh Hashana night, it was actually wild. The *shatz* got up and said

Borchu es Hashem hamevorach quietly – that’s how it was, there was no *niggun* – everything was done with *machshava*, in a calculated manner. But then the congregation answered; the *yeshiva* men began shouting. BORCHU! What a noise! They were raising the roof and stamping with their feet. They actually went wild over Hashem! We’re starting Rosh Hashana, the Day of Judgment, and we came in to speak to Hashem, to express our love of Him, our gratitude and our hope that maybe He’ll give us another year of life. And so we shouted to Him! Everybody shouted!

Now, I’m sure if a stranger would come into the *yeshiva* he would take one look around and say, “It’s a madhouse here – a lunatic asylum.” Of course, when he goes to the baseball field and they’re screaming over nothing, he won’t say that. Oh no; baseball – that’s important! When the pitcher throws the ball and the man at the base gives a whack with the bat, everybody goes crazy: “Whoooo!” They stamp their feet and they become ignited – their blood becomes ignited with excitement. A whole crowd of lunatics going wild with *kol anos* over nothing – *that* this man understands. But when he comes into the *yeshiva* where they’re excited about *borchu es Hashem hamivorach*, that’s too much; suddenly he’s the quiet intellectual; calm and composed. That’s where he says, “What is this? A crazy house?”

Coming Together at The Stadium

So we tell him! “Mister, you’re right. In this place we’re crazy about Hashem. And that’s why you come in here a lunatic and you go out sane.” Because what are you excited about?! It’s just a man who can take a bat and hit the ball so far that it flies over the wall into the bleachers. Does he have anything in his mind? Does he have any intelligence at all? Only that he can give the ball a smack. It’s excitement about nothing!

Imagine if all of that shouting, all that emotion of excitement, would be invested in shouting over Hashem. Imagine thousands of Jews would come together at a big athletic field, sitting on all the benches, and they’re all shouting about Hashem. That’s a different story! That’s what excitement is for!

Excitement Over Dinner

And the truth of the world is that there’s nothing to be excited about *except* Hashem. Imagine you go home tonight after the lecture and your wife made you a good supper, something you like very much. Of course you should thank your wife for that – you were sitting here in the shul and she was slaving away in the kitchen for you; of course you must thank her. You should praise the food too – and don’t be stingy about it. And then after eating supper, you should praise Hashem too.

Not merely out of habit – you should say *birchas hamazon* with thought, with enthusiasm and excitement.

But when you walk away from the table, don't smack your lips and say to yourself, "I loved that supper." No, you shouldn't get excited about a piece of chicken. No, no; that's already a *kol anos*. You don't want to love anything except Hashem. It was a very good supper, but you don't love the supper.

Don't Retire Just Yet

Now, I don't want you to get any wrong ideas – you can be excited over *Olam Hazei*; this world is a remarkable opportunity for kosher enthusiasm. When Dovid said, "I'm going to be wild only about You," it didn't mean that he was retiring to a cave with an iron door and saying goodbye to the world. By no means! Dovid was always singing in *this* world – but he sang only songs of Hakodosh Boruch Hu. So if you're excited over nature because you love to see Hashem's creations – if when you look at the trees and the clouds you become more and more enthusiastic about the *Borei*, by all means. But to fall in love with nature because of nature; to be excited about *nature* – forget about it. You can't get lost in this world.

Here's a man who is busy collecting coins and he has his own private collection of coins. When guests come to his house, he takes out the boxes and shows them. "Look at this coin from so and so many years ago from England!" He's excited! But we don't care about that. Nothing wrong with an old coin, but to be excited about it? What's to be excited about?

So if you have a stamp collection and a guest comes to your house and you want to show him your stamp collection and he looks but he doesn't say anything. So you think, "He doesn't appreciate things; he doesn't have a taste in good things." No, don't say that. Be *dan l'kaf zchus*. He trained himself to not be excited over zero. He has better things in life to be excited about. If someone asks his *chaver*, "Do you know what we learned in music appreciation class or in our literature class," and his friend looks at him with a deadpan face and doesn't show any interest, don't think he's lacking in intellectual development. On the contrary, he's super-developed. He doesn't waste his time on nothing.

A Jealous G-d

It's only the under-developed people who read the New York Times – because the New York Times is always excited about nothing. You'll see there whole pages devoted to where you can find the best restaurants to dine out. The best restaurants?! It shouldn't make any impression on

us at all. Pages devoted to the best wines - where you could get the best wines? It's excitement about nothing at all.

And excitement about nothing means that you're forgetting about Hakodosh Boruch Hu and He won't let that pass. He says, "You should know I am a *Keil kanah* - I'm a jealous G-d." What does it mean 'jealous'? It means, "I don't share my greatness with anybody." וְכִבְדוּרִי לְאַחֵר לֹא אֶתֶן - I won't give My glory to anyone else (Yeshaya 42:8). That's why it says you should love Hashem *b'chol lvavecha* - with all your heart. All your heart means all your emotions - not just a some of it. Extremity of emotion belongs only to Hashem! הָבוּ לְהַשֵּׁם כְּבוֹד וְעֹז - Only to Hashem do we give glory and power! Our excitement is only for Hashem.

Part II. Excitement Is a Test

According to His Praises

Now once we hear that, we begin to understand that often it's the excitement that someone shows that tells you very much about the person. The enthusiasm of a person is a very good test when you want to judge people. Actually, Shlomo Hamelech says that. There's a *possuk* in *Mishlei* (21:21), מִצְרֵף לְכֶסֶף וְכוּר לְזָהָב וְאִישׁ לְפִי מְהַלְלוֹ - A melting pot for silver, and a furnace for gold, and a man according to his praises. It means like this: There is a way to test silver to see how pure it is, and there is also a method of testing gold.

How did you test silver in the olden days? There are many ways but the best way is to melt it. There's a pot called a *מִצְרֵף* - it's a special pot for refining silver. What do they do? They put the *matzreif* over the fire to melt the silver, and the *psoles*, the dross, rises to the surface. And according to how much impurities float to the surface, you'll see how pure, how good the silver is. And for gold too there's a similar method for testing how genuine it is: וְכוּר לְזָהָב - Gold has a furnace, a hot furnace called the *kur* where they melt the gold. It's purified in the same way - the scum is separated from the gold, and you can determine how pure the gold really is.

So there are ways of finding out how genuine these precious metals are. But now the question arises: That's good for metals; but how can you find out what a man is? How can you test him to see what he really is? So the *possuk* concludes: וְאִישׁ - How is a person tested? לְפִי מְהַלְלוֹ - According to his praises.

Shidduch Advice

Now there are a few *peirushim* on this *possuk* and we'll take one at a time: The first one is as follows: *Ish* – How can we know who a person is? *Lefti mahalalo* – By how much people are excited about him. Listen to what people are saying about him, how enthusiastic they are, and you'll learn a lot.

You should pay good attention to what I'm telling you now if you have daughters who are of marriageable age. I'm giving you good advice and I won't charge you for it. If you want to know who a young man really is, listen to *how* he is praised – pay attention to how much enthusiasm there is in the praise. So when you call the *mashgiach* of the *yeshiva* and you inquire about a certain *bochur* – somebody gave you his name for a *shidduch* for your daughter – and the *mashgiach* tells you in a calm tone of voice, "Yes, I know him. He's a nice *bochur*, a nice boy," then forget about it. He's not the one! Drop him!

It's good advice by the way. Because there are people who don't know this – they never learned *Mishlei* and so when they hang up the phone, the wife says, "What did the *mashgiach* say?" so the husband says, "He said he's a nice boy," and they think that settles it. "He's a good boy," so it's settled now. No, that's a serious error.

Math and the Mashgiach

Now if the *mashgiach* is excited about him, if you can hear the excitement in his voice when he speaks to you on the telephone, so now you know there's something there maybe. You should subtract about 60% and you can understand that he might be a very good boy. You have to subtract at least 60% because the *mashgiach* is a kind hearted man and he loves the boys – but no matter you can still judge the *bochur* according to the excitement you hear in his voice. So it's *Ish* - if you want to know what a man is, *lefi mahalalo* – listen to how much people are excited about him. If he's praised only faintly, you have a right to suspect that something is wrong. But if they are very excited about him, then that tells you a lot.

Same thing with the girls. Many times it happens that *bochurim* approach me and they have a *shidduch* in mind. They want my opinion but I don't know her. I didn't talk to her. How could I know? And therefore when they ask me these questions, I say, "Call up the teachers in the *Bais Yankev* school where she went. Some of the teachers will tell you something about her." You can learn a little bit if you keep your ears open. Listen for the enthusiasm. If the teacher will say that she's a very fine girl, so you can take off 60% and you know there's something there. She's 40% good. But if the teacher will say, 'Ooooh! That girl is an

extraordinary girl!’ so now you know that she’s a pretty good girl. She’s about 70%, 80% maybe.

There’s More Than One Truth

So again, the first *peirush* in the *possuk* is: How can you know a man? וְאִישׁ לְפִי מְהֵלָלוּ – The way people are excited about him; the way he’s praised by other people. That’s one *pshat*. But there’s another explanation – Rabbeinu Yonah in *Shaarei Teshuva* gives a different *pshat* entirely. Not that the first *pshat* is wrong.

Before I go on, I want to explain something. It took me many years to discover this so I’ll share it with you. When you see two *peirushim* – let’s say you’re learning Rabbeinu Yonah on *Mishlei*, and after he explains the *possuk* he says there: *V’yeish l’faresh* – “Or you could explain it like this,” so you get discouraged. If there are two ways of explaining it, so you don’t know which one is true – you’re left hanging in between. You want to learn some moral out of this *possuk*, and now you don’t know which one is true.

The answer is both of them are true! A *possuk* can mean more than one thing. Shlomo HaMelech was a wise man and he was able to have all the *perushim* in mind. And according to Rabbeinu Yonah he thought about this *peirush* too: How can you test a man? *Ish-What is a man? How can you know a man? Lefi mahalalo* – By listening to what he’s excited about. You can know a man according to what he’s enthusiastic about. Listen to what he’s excited about! That will tell you all about him.

Gemara or Cornflakes?

So let’s say you’re a *Beis Yaakov* girl and somebody arranged that you should go out with this boy and you want to know who he is – you want to know if he’s a real *ben Torah* – so you should listen very well to what he talks about and *how* he talks about it. Let’s say the boy is telling you all about his *yeshiva* and how he enjoys the *shiurim* and how they’re learning interesting *mesichtas* and how he wants to learn all the time, how he loves to learn. Now, it could be he’s putting on a good show, but at least he’s putting on a good show. If he talks about his *yeshiva*, he’s probably interested in the *yeshiva*. If he talks about his hopes to become a *talmid chacham*, about his *rebbe*, about the *mashgiach* and *rosh yeshiva*, and he’s enthusiastic about it, you can surmise that he’s the real thing.

But let’s say he talks about traveling; he traveled on the subway over here, and he traveled in the car to this place. He knows all the roads; he explains how you can travel: “You can take this thruway or this parkway and then there’s a good exit over there with a shortcut!” Or he talks about business things, he talks about other things, so you know

that that's his interest in life. Let's say he talks about kosher things to eat – there are a lot of good kosher things to eat today; today you can get kosher cornflakes, and kosher ice cream, and kosher desserts. Paskesz candies and Lieber's chocolates! A blessing on the heads of all the *frum* Jews who have made life so pleasant now with kosher things to eat. But this young man is speaking about it and he's praising them. So she sits and listens – she has to listen very carefully. Because that's what he is. Like someone once translated the words in the *Hagadah: Chacham mah hu: omer* – What he is, he says. What he is excited about, that's the man. He's a food man.

Three Perspectives on Third Meal

As I told you more than once but I'll say it again – it's a famous story. Once at *shalosh seudos* in the *shul* three people were sitting near each other. And the *rebbe* was saying *divrei Torah* and people were singing *zemiros*. So after it was all over, right before *ma'ariv*, one of them said, "Ah! What a good piece of Torah the *rebbe* said. It was wonderful!" Another man praised the *zemiros*. The Torah he didn't talk about but he said "What sweet *zemiros* they sang." And the third man; he praised the herring!

And so, *ish- Who is a man? Lefi mahalalo* – According to what he's excited about. If he's excited about everything else except what he's supposed to be excited about, then that's who he is – it could be he's a herring person. How do you know what type of *ish* he is? *Lefi mahalalo* – according to what he is most excited about. That's the test. You can know him from the way he talks about things.

Shidduchim in The Olden Days

Same thing when you meet your prospective *kallah*. Listen to what she's excited about! It means you should speak to her and see what she talks about. Now, in the olden days, it was different. In the olden days, the grandmothers came together to make a *shidduch*. You didn't have to talk to the girl at all because you could rely on the grandmothers; they knew what they were talking about. And they weren't fooled by a curl in the hair or some paint on the lips. But today, there's a different *minhag* today; what can we do – it's the *minhag hamakom* today to not do it that way.

So you speak to her and see what she's excited about. Find out what she thinks about having a big family. Does she like the idea of a big family? Is she excited about setting up a Torah home, about being a homemaker? Is she enthusiastic about bringing up the children as *talmidei chachamim*, as *ovdei Hashem*?

Now, if she comes to these lectures so she knows how to fool you. But keep on asking – keep on asking questions. Sometimes she might ploppe. She might say something careless – she might stop bluffing you and you might hear the truth. Anyhow, talk. That's all – talk – what else can you do? Of course, sometimes a chance remark is not enough – you might have to collect a number of such remarks – but that's the way. That's the advice of Shlomo Hamelech. See what excites her. That's the way to know a person

You Are What You Speak

But now we come to a third pshat – Rabbeinu Yonah doesn't say it, but it's included in the words of the possuk and it's very important for our subject tonight. *Ish- How can you judge what's going to become of a man? Lefi mahalalo – According to what he's excited about now.* Not only that he is now what he's excited about, but that's what he'll become in the future. All the things he's excited about now, that's the direction where he's heading. If a man is excited about his rebbe in the yeshiva, if he's excited about tzadikim, if he's excited about gedolei Yisroel, he's excited let's say about certain sugyas in the gemara; why not? Why shouldn't he be excited about Abaye and Rava? What else is there to be excited about? If he's excited about yiras Shomayim and about middos tovos, that's a good sign of what's going to be with him. וְאִישׁ לְפִי מַהֲלָלוֹ – A person will become what he's excited about!

If a girl is excited about her home, she wants to have a nice home, she speaks about it with idealism; with a fire, she wants to have a home with many children. She doesn't say it in a quiet way, in a lazy way; she's enthusiastic about it – she wants to have a house that's a little Beis Hamikdosh, a holy home where there'll be kedusha and avodas Hashem. She wants beautiful children who will serve Hakodosh Boruch Hu and walk b'derech haTorah. It doesn't mean she has to be jumping up and down, but you can hear the way she talks. *Lefi mahalalo – That's how she'll become.* Not only does that tell you about who she is, but it tells you what she's going to become. She'll become that.

How To Become a Nothing

That's why Moshe Rabeinu was so distressed when he heard the kol anos, the shouting over nothing, that was coming from the camp. You're excited over nothing?! It means that you are a nothing and you're heading in that direction too – you'll become even more of a nothing!

Now, suppose people are all worked up about fighting with their relatives. And they are! You'd be surprised how many people are excited about that. It's remarkable! I myself was shocked. I didn't know until I got into the business a little more – when I entered the rabbanus that's

when I realized what's going on in the world. People are excited about fighting. People are busy fighting with their relatives. Daughters-in-law with their mother-in-law, brothers with brothers, they're talking all the time about each other. That's their main interest in life – that's what's bubbling in their minds always. So what happens? וְאִישׁ לְפִי מְהֻלָּל – *What excites them, that's what they become.* So they become *mushchasim* – they become people with ruined character.

And it's the one who speaks about good things – he's excited about Hashem – he's the one who becomes more and more perfect. He's always talking about *avodas Hashem* – and he's enthusiastic about it too – and he becomes an *eved Hashem*. It's a great *yesod* of how to live in this world, how to be a success – you become what you're excited about.

Part III. Excitement Makes a Man

The Career of Speaking

Now, this brings us to the very big subject of what we should be talking about in this world. Because what does a person usually speak about? Whatever is important to him, whatever excites him, that's what he talks about. And we learned just now that the more you speak about something – *and the more you're excited about it* – that's what you become. Because when you say something, it's not only that you're thinking a thought – thinking is good – but when you hear it being said, it goes into your ear and it bounces back into your mind with much more force.

The *Chovos Halevavos* taught us that *hamachshava nimsheches achar hadibbur* – *a man's thoughts are drawn after the words that he says* (Sha'ar Cheshbon Hanefesh: Cheshbon 9). When you say something it goes into your head; the expression settles onto your mind and it has an effect. Now, you might not notice it at first. But as you keep repeating an idea over and over again, it makes an impression on your mind and on your personality. Trust me, it has an effect. It becomes part of you, part of your personality, and you're not the same person anymore. When your mind changes, you're a changed man.

How To Become a Tzadik

So, the people who are busy praising *tzaddikim*, they become *tzadikim*. You hear that? It's a great merit to praise *tzadikim* constantly in your home. To teach a child to be excited about *talmidei chachomim*, to talk in the home about the *tzadikim*, that's a neglected trade today. You have to speak of *bnei Torah* with love in the home. As much as you

can you look for opportunities for that. And the child catches onto the idea; he catches on to the idea that in a Jewish home *talmidei chachomim* are admired.

We love the *Bobover Rov*! We love Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky. We love Rav Moshe Feinstein! We love the *Satmerer Rov*. I was once present in front of the old *Satmerer Rav*, *zichrono livracha*, when he was saying *hoshanas*. Four hours he was saying *hoshanas*! He didn't make it one, two, three and hurry up. I was watching him – four hours – walking back and forth saying *hoshanas*. Four hours! It was a pleasure to see a *tzadik*. We love all the *gedolim*, all the *roshei yeshiva* and we speak of them with admiration and enthusiasm.

Praising the Little Tzadikim

Not only the famous *tzadikim*. If there's somebody who is a *ba'al chesed*, you should praise him. Be excited about him! Although he never did a favor to you, still *Hashem oheiv tzadikim* – Hashem loves *tzadikim*. Now, *tzadikim* don't do any favors to Hashem and He loves them anyway – He loves them because they're *tzadikim*. So we should love *tzadikim* too, not because they did us any favors. So if you know people who are *oisek* in *gemillas chassodim*, helping people, supporting poor people, collecting money for *tzedakah*, you should praise them. And not just praise – *halelu!* Go wild about them!

Now, while we're talking about that subject, it's also very important to keep in mind that being excited about Hashem includes that you shouldn't speak highly about anybody else. Excitement is not something you can hand out at your own will. Praise is only to be dispensed according to the will of Hakodosh Boruch Hu and therefore an ordinary person should never be praised exceedingly – unless maybe you're doing it for a purpose of trying to give him an incentive to change his ways. Maybe you see something good in him and you hope that by praising it he'll continue to do better, then it's *mutar*. Otherwise, you must be aware that praise is reserved only for those who deserve to be praised.

And therefore, when people honor those who don't deserve honor, they're making a very big mistake. Some people do that – they praise *reshaim*. Now, *frum* Jews in general don't praise *reshaim* but sometimes you find them going overboard with somebody who's not a *tzadik* – you find that sometimes. I don't like to give any examples, but it happens sometimes.

The Man of the Year

There was a "Jewish" organization that once made an annual banquet and they chose for the Man of the Year award, a man whose

wife was a *goya*. Not that she was a *giyoress*; she was a *goya* – she wasn't interested in becoming a *giyoress* at all. But they called him up and they gave him a big diploma in a glass case with a frame and all the *yiddelech* are clapping for him. He's the "Man of the Year!"

Now, that's an extreme example, but even if a person is not a *chotei*, even an orthodox Jew, but if he doesn't have good character, if he's not an *oived Hashem*, we shouldn't go all out for him. We don't get excited about people who are not *shomrei Torah*, who are not *tzaddikim*. עֲזִבִי טוֹרָה יִהְיֶה לְךָ רָשָׁע – If anybody is excited about a *rasha* – even a little bit excited – he should know he himself is an *oizev Torah*, he's forsook the Torah. He's forsaking the tremendous lesson Moshe Rabeinu taught us when he came down from Har Sinai to bring us the Torah.

Intolerance in America

Now I don't care what you say. You'll say it's intolerant. Yes! We're intolerant of the *ozvei Torah*! You don't like it? Who cares?! שׂמְרֵי טוֹרָה יִתְגַּבְּרוּ בָם – A *shoimer Torah* is hostile to people who are *reshaim* (Mishlei 28:4). Now, this doesn't mean you have to insult the *rasha*. It doesn't mean you have to make fights with anybody – no. But you have to be careful in the honor that you accord to them – honor can't be handed out willy-nilly. Because what is honor? It means you're handing out excitement; it's the *kol anos anochi shomei'a*.

Therefore, in this world, we have to be careful what we praise. To praise people just because they can dance, just because they can make tricks or make noise, actors or people who can play the violin, to praise them for things that are unimportant is an *avlah*, it's wrong. It's an important point you're hearing now. We cannot praise indiscriminately. If it's a good person, yes, praise him. וְהִצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצְדִּיק – You should justify the just man. Always be excited about the *tzadik*. Be enthusiastic about the *tzadik* to no end!

The Tzadik Of The World

And if that's the case, then we have to remember that צְדִיק הַשָּׁם בְּכָל יְרֵכָיו – Hashem is the real *tzadik*. And people who are busy speaking about Hakodosh Boruch Hu, they're the ones who will be most successful in becoming *tzadikim*. That's why Dovid HaMelech said, אֶהְלֶה הַשָּׁם בְּחַיִּי – I'll go wild over Hashem as long as I'm alive! That's what we want too – we want to speak only about Hashem!

People won't listen to you? So talk to yourself! As much as you can, talk about Hakodosh Boruch Hu because you'll become *lefi mahalalo* – according to what you are praising. The *ish* who spends his life speaking about the greatness of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, that's the man he is.

Hashem looks down and He says, “That’s My man! A man who is excited about Me!” It’s a pretty good indication of who he is and also, just as important, it’ll change him and he’ll become better and better.

Chometz Cleaning Is Fun

Now praising *tzedek* is a different career, but it’s the same idea. We don’t only praise the *tzadikim*, we have to praise righteous acts too. Praise *tzedek*. It’s a very big achievement to praise *avodas Hashem*. So when you’re a father of a family, make up your mind when you’re sitting at the table, you won’t waste the opportunity. You’ll say some good words. Shabbos! What a wonderful thing it is to honor the Shabbos. What a big *mitzvah* it is! *Oneg Shabbos*! How important it is to eat the *ma’achalim* with the intention of *kovod Shabbos*. Eating the *Shabbos challah*! Shabbos is fun! It’s exciting!

And Pesach time we should be excited about cleaning for *chametz*. We should be excited about *bedikas chametz*; talk to your family about the pleasure in the *mitzvah* of eating *matzah*. Whatever *mitzvah* you’re talking about, make the people understand the happiness of the *mitzvah*, the importance of the *mitzvah*. Elevate it; be excited about it. Of course, we’re talking to good people here and therefore it’s unnecessary for me to admonish, but it’s very important for us to understand that’s what Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants – that’s called good in the eyes of Hashem.

Excited About Yeshiva

Let’s say you’re a *yeshiva* man. You come home from the *yeshiva*. You talk about something at the table so if you want to make the most of the opportunity that you have, praise your *yeshiva*. Say, “What nice boys there are in the *yeshiva*.” Say that. Let the family think that all the *bochurim* in the *yeshiva* are very nice boys. Praise your *rebbe*s. Praise everything about the *yeshiva*. Praise the cooking too – they give good meals in the *yeshiva*. How clean the *yeshiva* is! And you should try to make it clean! If you’re excited about the Torah so you don’t drop anything on the floor in the *yeshiva*!

Speak about how good it is to learn. Ah! What a pleasure it is! We’re sitting in *yeshiva* all day and we’re enjoying the *gemara*. When you come home tell your brothers and sisters that there’s no joy in the world like the pleasure of learning a piece of a *gemara*! Going through a *sugya* well, there’s no happiness in the world greater than that. And even though you yourself have not reached that *madreigeh* yet, say it anyhow – because it’s true. And the more you say it, the more it will come true in your own life. Like we say *v’haarev na Hashem Elokeinu es divrei sorascho b’finu* – *Make the words of the Torah become sweet in our mouths*. Try to make it sweet in your mouth.

Praise *davening*. Speak about how good it is to *daven* with *kavanah*. Ah! A *mechayeh*, a pleasure to *daven* with *kavanah*! Say, “This morning I *davened* such a good *shachris*! It was a pleasure! I remember when I was eleven years old, I was standing outside the shul and I heard a man – an old European Jew – he said, “Ahh! That was a *geshmake ma’ariv*.” With his hands he made motions of excitement: “It was a pleasure!” I was eleven years old and to this day I can’t forget it. I learned then that *ma’ariv* is fun!

The Career of Excitement

That’s your career in this world – to say *hallel* over everything connected to Hakodosh Boruch Hu. And that means that the more you’re excited about Hashem and the more you say *hallel* about the important things of this world, the more you’re preparing for the Next World. And that’s what Moshe Rabeinu was teaching us on that day when he was coming down from Har Sinai. This nation, chosen by Hashem to be His people forever, can’t be a nation of *kol anos*, a nation of shouting with enthusiasm over nothing.

And therefore we sing, אֲשֶׁרִי הָעָם שֶׁכָּבָה לוֹ – Praiseworthy is the nation that thus is its lot, אֲשֶׁרִי הָעָם שֶׁהֵיָם אֱלֹהֵינוּ – Praiseworthy is the nation that has Hakodosh Boruch Hu as its God. Because the nation that is excited about Hakodosh Boruch Hu, that’s the nation that will be with Hashem forever in this world and the next.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

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

— This week's booklet is based on tapes: —

R-37 - The Honor of Hashem | 5 - A Man According to His Praise | 215 - In David's Footsteps | 845 - Praise the Righteous | 981 - What Is Important | E-43 - Be Excited Over Me

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

OUR SPONSORS

Sefer Devarim - 5779

THE PENSON FAMILY

IN MEMORY OF
REBBITZEN ESTHER JUNGREISH

Sefer Bereishis - 5780

THE CHOPP HOLDINGS EDITION

IN HONOR OF OUR
CHOPP AND STERN GRANDPARENTS

Sefer Shemos - 5780

THE PENSON FAMILY EDITION

IN HONOR OF YEHOSHUA MORDECHAI'S BAR MITZVAH

Sefer Vayikra - 5780

- Available -

Sefer Bamidbar - 5780

- Available -

עץ חיים הוא למחזיקים בה - נדיבי עם המתנדבים בקביעות

Available

לזכות שושנה רייזא בת חיה מלכה

לזכות נתן יוסף בן תמר חיה ודבורה בת מלכה

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

תולדות

Avraham Ben-Ishay
& Family

חיי שרה

The
Shama Family

וירא

The
Braha Family

וישב

לע"נ חיה רחל ריילא
בת ר' יצחק משה ע"ה

וישלח

The
Pollack Family

ויצא


LEW PIPING

ויחי

לז"נ הרב ר' יצחק אהרן
בן הרב ר' אליהו ז"ל

ויגש

Moishy and Ornella
Wolhendler

מקץ

The
Rahmani Family

בא

Mishpachat
Mevorach

וארא

In honor of
Rabbi Yoshi
Wolhendler

שמות

Menachem & Leah
Adelman

משפטים

David Assil

יתרו

The
Lipnitsky Family

בשלח

The
Freedman Family

כי תשא

לע"נ ישכר דוב ע"ה
בן יואל נ"י

תצוה

Anonymous

תרומה

The
Rahmani Family

צו - פסח

Available

ויקרא

Available

ויקהל-פקודי

Anonymous

אחרי-קרושים

Available

תזריע-מצורע

Available

שמיני

In honor of Rabbi
Miller's Yahrtzeit

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך

Q:

Now that Purim is over, what are we supposed to think?

A:

Ahh, the age old question: What will be left after Purim? What packages are we taking with us after Purim? On Purim, over here, we sang “*Ah gantz yahr freilich*” and we added in the words “*Ah gantz yahr Purim*.” Because the wise man uses his Purim, he puts his mind to all the lessons of Purim, and the day of Purim makes his whole year *freilich*. His whole year becomes a Purim. Not only *ah gantz yahr freilich*, but all your life becomes *Purimdik*.

And one of the biggest *simchos* is the recognition that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is *Oheiv amo Yisroel*. That’s the second *yesod*, the second foundation, of the whole Torah. The first *yesod* is *Bereishis bara Elokim es hHashomayim v’es ha’aretz*, that Hashem made the world. The whole world is nothing but the *dvar Hashem*. That’s the first *yesod* of the Torah. But the second *yesod*, right on the heels of the first one, is *Oheiv amo Yisroel* – Hashem loves His people.

The whole Torah, the whole Tanach talks only about *Amo Yisroel*. And that’s a great happiness when you know that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is thinking about you. Not only the *Am Yisroel* in general – He’s thinking about you! You see this man sitting here? Hakodosh Boruch Hu is thinking about him. Hakodosh Boruch Hu says, “That’s My son!” Hakodosh Boruch Hu loves us more than parents love their children. The love that a mother has for her children is nothing compared to the way Hashem loves each one of us.

And since Hashem loves us so much, that’s the happiness in life. There’s no happiness like that. The greatest *simcha* is that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is *Oheiv amo Yisroel*. That’s the true *simcha*, and that happiness remains all year round. And that’s the lesson that you study all day on Purim and then you take it with you all year long.

So let’s think about that for a minute before we say goodbye to Purim. Hashem is looking at us right now, and He’s thinking, “Ah, I have *nachas* from you, My children. I love you *My tyierah kinderlach*.”

From the last moments of the Rav’s Purim Mesibah – March 23, 1997

This week’s Q&A sponsored:

In honor of the Penson Family