



## WAR IN ISRAEL

It is a difficult time for Jewish people. Israel is at war. What can we do to help? How can we deal with the fear and anxiety? And why is it so destructive to speak negatively about fellow Jews at this time?

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TEACHER'S MANUAL



# JEWISH INSIGHTS

A TASTE OF THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS



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Shluchim of the Rebbe to Mumbai India

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There's a famous saying in Chabad from the Tzemach Tzedek, "Think good and it will be good" (Source 1). The Rebbe explains that the source for this aphorism is the Zohar, which states that G-d relates to us from above in the same manner we act below. (Source 2)

The Tzemach Tzedek wrote in a letter that he was once praying with a melancholic tune and his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, instructed him to stop. The Alter Rebbe explained in the name of his teacher, the Maggid, that the way one acts below is the way they are treated from above (Source 3). He continues the letter with practical tips for avoiding fear and melancholy.

## B. The Biblical Source.....10

The Rebbe cites a Torah source for this: Moses killed an Egyptian who was tormenting a Jew, and buried him in the sand. The next day, someone tells him in the street: "Will you kill me like you killed the Egyptian?" Moses feared Pharaoh would find out, and indeed he did, so Moses fled to the land of Midian. (Source 4)

Why, asks the Rebbe, is it important to note that Moses was afraid? What's important to the narrative is that Pharaoh found out and Moses had to flee! The Rebbe explains: had Moses not feared that Pharaoh would be informed, Pharaoh indeed would not have known, for "Think good and it will be good." This is why the Torah mentions that Moses was afraid - that was the reason the matter reached Pharaoh's ears and Moses had to flee.

From this verse The Rebbe learns that Moses had a double problem: not only did he not think positively, he expressed his fear verbally, causing the latent evil in Datan and Aviram to be revealed, and causing them to actually inform Pharaoh.

## C. The Lesson.....16

Although there can be challenges in Torah and mitzvah observance, one must "think good," that they have the ability to fulfill them, and then, "it will be good," they will be successful.

The Midrash explains that one of the merits our ancestors had, for which G-d took them out of Egypt, was that they did not change their Jewish names: "they descended to Egypt as Reuven and Shimon, and they came out as Reuven and Shimon." (Source 6.) On a deeper level, the Rebbe explains, the moment Reuven and Shimon entered Egypt, they already knew that Reuven and Shimon would leave. This positive thinking is what gave them the strength to survive and reach the redemption.

Three days after the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, the Rebbe held a farbrengen. Speaking through his tears, The Rebbe opened with a question: Is it appropriate to hold a farbrengen while the Jewish people are at war? He answered that the Baal Shem Tov interpreted the verse "G-d is your shadow" that G-d is the shadow of a Jew: Just as a shadow of a person follows their movements, so too does G-d follow the way we act. Therefore, if we are joyous, we will be showered with more joy from Above, and ultimately prevail in the war.

## Introduction

How can we overcome fear? What happened when Moses was overcome by fear, and what did the Rebbe suggest to frightened people during the Yom Kippur war?

A class on a talk of the Rebbe relevant for exactly this difficult time.

### שיעור זה

משיחת שבת פרשת שמות ה'תשכ"ו, בלתי מוגה  
שיחות קודש, התשכ"ג, עמוד 150 ואילך  
[לשלימות הענין, עיין לקוטי שיחות חלק ל"ו שמות א']

ומשיחת י"ג תשרי, ה'תשל"ד  
תורת מנחם, כרך ע"ד, עמוד 74

# A. Think Good and it Will be Good

In Chabad there's a popular aphorism, on the tongues of Chassidim for generations: "Think good and it will be good." The Rebbe repeated this hundreds - if not thousands - of times to Chassidim who requested his counsel during difficult times, and also to the public during times of crisis.

The source of this saying is the Tzemach Tzedek, the third Chabad Rebbe.

Let's read the story:

## Source 1 Sichah Shavuot 1934, Likutei Diburim vol. 1-2, p. 228

Student's  
pg. 3

In the Tomchei Temimim yeshivah there was a mashpia named Rabbi Michoel. The older Chassidim remember who he was.

As a young man, one of his children fell very ill, G-d forbid. The doctors gave up, saying there was nothing to be done. Rabbi Michoel informed his fellow chassidim of the situation. They encouraged him and strengthened his spirits; G-d would certainly have mercy, but he must go to Lubavitch immediately.

Rabbi Michoel cried bitterly. He really wanted to go to the Rebbe, but the doctors said there was only hours left, what point was there in going?

One of the elder Chassidim thundered at him: "The Talmud says one must never give up hope for G-d's mercy. The interceding angels will certainly persuade G-d to hold the decision for after you return from the Rebbe."

One of his peers, a tailor, joined Rabbi Michoel on the journey to Lubavitch. On the way they found some cheap rides, so they didn't have to walk the entire way on foot.

Arriving in Lubavitch, Rabbi Michoel managed to get an immediate appointment with the Rebbe.

בישיבת תומכי תמימים בליובאוויטש, היה אהד המפשיעים – הרב הקסיד ר' מיכאל נשמתו עדין. זקני תלמידי התמימים שיחיו זוכרים מי היה ר' מיכאל.

בהיותו אברה, חלה אצלו קשות, לא עלינו, אהד מילדי. הרופאים התאשו מחיו, ואמרו שאין להם מה לעשות. ר' מיכאל הלך אל חברת הקסידים וספר על מצבו המר. הקסידים חזקו אותו שלא לפל ברוחו, השם יתברך בודאי ירחם, אלא שעליו ללכת מיד לליובאוויטש.

ר' מיכאל פרץ בככי מר: הוא מאוד היה רוצה ללכת אל הרבי, אך הרופאים הרי אומרים שמדבר בשעות רחמנא לצלן, ולשם מה ילך?

אהד מזקני הקסידים התרעם עליו קשות, באמרו: "הגמרא אומרת אל ימנע אדם עצמו מן הרחמים. ובודאי יפעלו מליצי הישר אצל ה' יתברך לחפות בהחלטה עד שהיא יבוא אל הרבי".

אהד מאברכי הקסידים, בעל מלאכה חט וחרו של ר' מיכאל, הצטרף להליכתו של ר' מיכאל לליובאוויטש. בדרך הודמן להם כמה פעמים נסיעות זולות, כך שלא הצטרכו ללכת כל הדרך רגלי.

בבואם לליובאוויטש, הצליח ר' מיכאל להתקבל מיד ביחידות.

**Student's** pg. 3  
"When I went in to the Rebbe," Rabbi Michael recalled, "I gave him my prayer note for my child and a thought crossed my mind at that moment: 'Who knows what is happening with my son? The doctors gave him just hours!' I burst into tears ...

כְּשֶׁנִּכְנַסְתִּי אֶל הַרְבֵּי – סֵפֶר ר' מִיכָאֵל – וּמִסֵּרְתִי אֶת פְּדִיּוֹן הַנֶּפֶשׁ עֲבוּר הַיְלָד, עֶבֶר בִּי בְשַׁעַת מַעֲשֵׂה הַרְעָיוֹן, 'מִי יוֹדֵעַ מָה נַעֲשֶׂה עִם הַיְלָד? הַרוֹפְאִים הָרִי אָמְרוּ שְׂזוֹ שְׂאֵלָה שֶׁל שָׁעוֹת!' וּפְרָצְתִי בְּבִכִי מְר..

**Student's** pg. 4  
"The Rebbe read the note and told me, 'Don't cry. Think good and it will be good! Don't wail, you will be at the Bar Mitzvahs of your grandchildren!'

הַרְבֵּי קָרָא אֶת הַפְּתָק וְאָמַר לִי, "אַל תִּבְכֶּה, חָשׁוּב טוֹב וְיִהְיֶה טוֹב! אַל נָא תִזְעַק, עוֹד תִּהְיֶה בְּבָרִי הַמִּצְוָה שֶׁל הַנְּכָדִים!"

"Whenever things got difficult," said Rabbi Michael—and he did not have an easy time with his children—"I would picture the Rebbe saying this to me at that meeting, and my heart would feel better."

"בְּכָל שָׁעָה קֹשֶׁה", אָמַר ר' מִיכָאֵל – וּבְכִיתוֹ סָבְלוּ מַצְעֵר גִּידוּל בָּנִים – "הֵייתִי מְצִיר לְעֶצְמִי אֶת פְּנִי הַקְּדוּשִׁים שֶׁל הַרְבֵּי, וּמְלוֹת הַיְחִידוֹת הָאֲמוּרוֹת, וְנִהְיֶה לִי טוֹב עַל הַלֵּב"

At a Chassidic gathering in 1966 the Rebbe mentioned the above saying and devoted an entire talk to explain the sources that underpin it.

## >> The Rebbe

**Student's** pg. 4  
My father-in-law would respond to many questions with the saying of the Tzemach Tzedek, "think good and it will be good."

יש פתגם "חשוב טוב - יהיה טוב", וכן היה כבוד קדושת מורי וחמי עונה לכמה וכמה שאלות, וכידוע הסיפור עם אדמו"ר הצמח צדק בזה.

There are people that are always interested in finding the sources for every statement, including this one. In fact, this saying has a clear source in the Zohar, which teaches that the joy a person expresses down below is reflected back to them from Above.

והנה ישנם כאלו שרוצים בכל ענין לדעת מקור לזה, הנה באמת יש לזה מקור מזוהר מפורש: "כגוונא כו' חדווא דלמעלה" היינו שלפי אופן השמחה של האדם למטה הנה לפי אופן זה הוא למעלה.

## Source 2 Zohar, Tetzavah, p. 184b

**Student's** pg. 4  
Heaven reflects back to earth its own state. When we display joy down here, Heaven reflects joy back to us. When we are sad, Heaven responds in kind.

וְעוֹלָם הָעֶלְיוֹן לֹא נוֹתֵן לוֹ (לְעוֹלָם הַתַּחְתּוֹן), אֲלֵא כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא עוֹמֵד. אִם הוּא קָיָם בְּהָאֶרֶץ פָּנִים מְלֻמָּטָה, כְּמוֹ כֵּן מְאִירִים לוֹ מְלֻמְעָלָה. וְאִם הוּא עוֹמֵד בְּעֶצְבוֹת, נוֹתְנִים לוֹ 'דִּין' כְּנִגְדּוֹ.

The following letter was written by the Tzemach Tzedek to a chasid going through a difficult time. The Tzemach Tzedek encouraged him to avoid depressing thoughts and to try to think positively. He tells the chasid a story that happened with him and his illustrious grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, just hours before the latter's passing:

### Source 3 Igrot Kodesh, Tzemach Tzedek, p. 324ff

Student's  
pg. 3

I heard from the mouth of my saintly grandfather, in Pyena: "This is what the Maggid would say on the verse 'On the likeness of the throne was the likeness of a man above it ... ' What we show down below is reflected above."

כְּמוֹ שֶׁשָּׂמַעְתִּי מִפֶּה קְדוֹשׁ שֶׁל כְּבוֹד אֲדוֹנֵי  
זְקֵנֵי מוֹרֵי וְרַבֵּי זְכוּרֵנוּ לְבָרְכָה נְשָׁמְתוּ עֲדָן,  
בְּפִייעֵנָא, שֶׁאָמַר בְּזֶה הַלְשׁוֹן: אֲשֶׁר כָּךְ  
הָיָה הָרַב הַמַּגִּיד אוֹמֵר עַל הַפְּסוּק "וְעַל  
דְּמוּת הַכִּסֵּא דְּמוּת כְּמֵרְאָה אָדָם עָלָיו  
מִלְמַעְלָה כו" שֶׁכִּפִּי הַמְדָּה שֶׁאָדָם מֵרְאָה  
מִלְמַטָּה – מֵרְאִין לוֹ מִלְמַעְלָה.

In Ezekiel, the prophet depicts the vision he saw of G-d. "The likeness of a man above it," he describes. Chassidut homiletically interprets this to mean that man above is a reflection of man below - what a person below demonstrates, that is what they receive above.

Therefore he enjoined me not to sing a sad tune. This occurred while I was praying the evening prayer on the night before he passed away. I was praying with a sad tune and he waited for me to finish and then told this to me.

וְלִכֵּן מָנַע אוֹתִי מִלְשׁוֹרֵר בְּגוֹן שִׁישׁ בּו  
מְרָה שְׁחֵרָה, כִּי הִתְפַּלְלֵתִי הַמַּעֲרִיב שֶׁקִּדְּמִי  
מֵיִתָּהּ בְּגוֹן שִׁישׁ בּו מְרָה שְׁחֵרָה, וְהִמְתִּין  
לִי עַד שֶׁסִּימַמְתִּי אֶת הַתְּפִלָּה וְאָמַר לִי זֹאת

In order to understand the magnitude of this story, we need to preface it with some context: In 1812, the Russian Empire fought a bloody war with the French. The Alter Rebbe supported a Russian victory, explaining that the Jews would be spiritually better off under Russian rule. At that time, Napoleon's armies were gaining on the battlefield, and the Alter Rebbe and his entourage were forced to leave their home, following the retreating Russian army. The French declared they were searching for the rabbi who supports Russia.

The voyage took weeks, the harsh Russian winter was at its apex, and the Rebbe fell very ill. Before Shabbat, they arrived at the remote village of Piena, where not even a single Jew lived, but they had to stop for Shabbat. After much effort, a gentile agreed to host them in his storehouse.

The situation was dire and hopeless. The Alter Rebbe's loyal grandson, the Tzemach Tzedek, the closest family member to him, prayed the evening prayers with a bitter, melancholic tune. His grandfather, lying on his sickbed, reprimanded him and enjoined him not to sing that way. Following the prayers, the Alter Rebbe shared a thought from his teacher, the Maggid, that above they give a person according to their attitude, thus one must be careful not to be melancholy.



Given the importance of these words, which almost appear to have been written for our times, we'll read another part of the letter:

## How Can We Not Fear?

Student's  
pg. 5

There are fears that people cause themselves, fears that they have the choice and ability to prevent. This is evident from the fact that we are commanded not to have fear during war, as the verse says: "Let your heart not be afraid." This seems inconceivable: What if people are still afraid, as they witness the scenes of war? It is known that all commandments can only be regarding things that we have the ability to choose to do or reject.

...יש גם כן פחד שהאדם גורם לעצמו, והבחירה ורשות נתונה לו למנוע עצמו מנגון. וראיה ברורה בזה הוא, מאשר נצטוינו בלאו, שלא לערץ ולפחד במלחמה, כמו שכתוב: "אל ירך לבבכם". ולכאורה זה פלאי, ומה יעשה אם מכל מקום, לבו הומה עליו ומפחד, בראותו דמי מלחמה?! וידוע שכל המצות אינן אלא בדבר שיש לאדם בחירה על זה לעשותו, או למנוע מלעשותו.

## Don't Think or Speak of Fear

Student's  
pg. 6

There are three "garments" of the human soul: Thought, speech and action. These are our primary behaviors, and we have free choice to think, speak and act as we wish. Even if the heart is afraid, one can draw their thoughts, speech and action away from that and not dwell on it altogether, but rather on uplifting matters. This is the commandment of "Let your heart not fear," not to dwell on the fear. A person who induces fear is in violation of a negative commandment. If one ignores it, the fear in their hearts will dissipate. At the very least, it will immediately become dormant, and over time it will completely dissipate and not return.

אך הענין, שיש לכל אדם שלש לבושי הנפש - מחשבה דבור ומעשה, והם עקר בהנהגת האדם, ובהם הבחירה ורשות נתונה לחשב ולדבר ולעשות כרצונו במוחו. ואף אם מפחד בלב, יוכל לסלק המחשבה דבור ומעשה, והעקר שלא לחשב ולדבר מזה כלל, אלא לצד ההפוך כנ"ל. ועל זה נצטוינו "אל ירך לבבכם", כלומר: לא תחשבו בענין הפחד<sup>2</sup> וכל המביהיל עצמו ומחשב מחשבות כו', עובר בלא תעשה. ומיד שלא יחשב בזה כלל, ממילא יתבטל גם הפחד שבלב. ועל כל פנים, מיד יהיה הפחד כאלו הוא ישן ואינו נרגש בגוף. ובמשך ימים אחדים יתבטל לגמרי, עד שלא יפל במוחו כלל, אפלו דרך מחשבות זרות.

## Think About Happy Matters

The primary method of distracting the mind from fear is to redirect it to other matters. These can be mundane happy matters, as well as Torah study which "gladdens the heart," by studying Torah every day, especially with a study partner, studying the areas of practical Jewish law—such as the laws of the morning blessings, Shema, prayer, etc.—as well as the esoteric parts of Torah.

אך עקר הסם הדעת והמחשבה הוא על ידי שישמור מחשבתו להלבישה בענינים אחרים, דהינו אפלו בענינים של העולם הזה הנצרכים ומשמחים, ובתורת ה' המשמחים לב, דבר יום ביום בקביעות עתים לתורה, ובפרט עם עוד אחד. הן בנגלה כמו בארח חיים, הלכות ברכות השחר, וקריאת שמע ותפלה, וכדומה, ובפנימיות התורה בכתיבים וכדומה.

1. כמו שכתוב בשמונה פרקים לרמב"ם פרק ב'.  
2. וכן פירש הרמב"ם פ"ה מהל' מלכים.



Student's  
pg. 6

You should certainly not discuss depressing matters. Act as if you are happy, completely happy, and even if you do not feel it now, you will ultimately become happy. This is because the heart follows a person's actions and deeds. As Maimonides writes, "He should repeatedly perform the acts which conform to the standards of the golden mean. He should do this constantly, until these acts are easy for him and do not present any difficulty. Then, these character traits will become a permanent part of his personality."

וגם עוד זאת שלא לדבר בענינים של מרה  
שחרה חס ושלום, רק אדרבה להראות  
בעצמו תמיד תנועות משמחות, כאלו הוא  
מלא שמחה בלב, אף על פי שאין בלבו  
כן בשעת מעשה, וסופו להיות כן. והטעם  
בזה הוא: כי לפי המעשים והפעלות אשר  
האדם עושה, נקבע אחר כך בלבו. וכמו  
שכתב הרמב"ם סוף פרק א' מהלכות  
דעות, וזה לשונו: "יעשה וישנה וישלש  
במעשיו שעשה על פי הדעת כו' ויקבעו  
המדות בנפשו". ואז יקבעו וככה יערה ה'  
רוח ממרום בשמחה ובטוב לבב.

# B. The Biblical Source

## >> The Rebbe

Student's  
pg. 7

While the esoteric Zohar isn't a legal authority, there is an additional source for this approach in the revealed dimension of Torah.

אמנם בהיות אשר אין פוסקים הלכה מהזהר, הנה יש לזה ראייה גם כן מנגלה, ובפרשה זו.

### Source 4 Exodus 2:11-15

#### Moses' Fear

Student's  
pg. 7

It came to pass in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his brothers and observed their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man of his brothers.

וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הֵהֵם, וַיִּגְדַּל מֹשֶׁה, וַיֵּצֵא אֶל אָחָיו וַיֵּרָא בְּסִבְלָתָם, וַיֵּרָא אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם מַכֶּה אִישׁ עִבְרָיִי מֵאֶחָיו.

Moses turned this way and that, and he saw that there was no one [watching]; so he struck the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

וַיִּפֶן כֹּה וְכֹה וַיֵּרָא כִּי אֵין אִישׁ, וַיִּךְ אֶת הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּטְמְנֵהוּ בַחֹל.

Rashi

**Striking a Hebrew man:** Hitting and whipping him. The victim was the husband of Shlomit bat Divri, whom the Egyptian had laid his eyes on. At night the Egyptian summoned Shlomit's husband from his house and entered and lay with his wife, who thought it was her husband. The husband came back and realized what happened. After the Egyptian realized that he had been exposed, he whipped and beat the husband all day.

מַכֶּה אִישׁ עִבְרָיִי. מְלַקְהוּ וְרוֹדְהוּ. וּבַעֲלָה שָׁל שְׁלוֹמִית בַּת דִּבְרֵי הָיָה וְנָתַן עֵינָיו בָּהּ, וּבַלַּיְלָה הִעֲמִידוּ וְהוֹצִיאוּ מִבֵּיתוֹ, וְהוּא חֹזֵר וְנִכְנָס לַבַּיִת וּבָא עַל אִשְׁתּוֹ, כְּסִבוּרָה שֶׁהוּא בַעֲלָה, וְחֹזֵר הָאִישׁ לְבֵיתוֹ וְהִרְגִישׁ בְּדָבָר, וּכְשֶׁרָאָה אוֹתוֹ מִצְרַיִם שֶׁהִרְגִישׁ בְּדָבָר, הִיָּה מִפְּהוֹ וְרוֹדְהוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם (בְּכוּוּנָה לְהוֹרְגוֹ).

Moses went out on the second day, and behold, two Hebrew men were quarreling. He said to the wicked one, "why are you going to strike your friend?"

וַיֵּצֵא בַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי, וְהִנֵּה שְׁנַיִם אַנְשִׁים עֹבְרִים נֹצִים, וַיֹּאמֶר לְרִשָׁע: לָמָּה תִּכֶּה רֵעִי.

He retorted, "Who made you a man, a prince, and a judge over us? Do you plan to slay me like you slayed the Egyptian?" Moses became afraid and said, "indeed, the matter has become known!"

וַיֹּאמֶר: מִי שָׂמָךְ לְאִישׁ שָׂר וְשֹׁפֵט עָלַינִי? הֲלֹהֲרַגְנִי אַתָּה אֲמֹר כְּאֲשֶׁר הִרְגַת אֶת הַמִּצְרַיִם?! וַיֵּרָא מֹשֶׁה, וַיֹּאמֶר: אַכֵּן גִּידַע הַדָּבָר.

**Student's** Pharaoh heard of this incident, and he sought to  
pg. 8 slay Moses; so Moses fled from before Pharaoh.  
He stayed in the land of Midian, and he sat down  
by the well.

Rashi

**Moses became afraid:** As its plain meaning would indicate. There is also a Midrashic interpretation, that Moses saw such lowly people among the Jews that he feared they weren't worthy of redemption.

**Indeed, the matter has become known:** As its plain meaning would indicate. There is also a Midrashic interpretation: I now know what I have pondered over, what sin did the Jews do to be deserving of such treatment? Now I see they deserve it.

וַיִּשְׁמַע פַּרְעֹה אֶת הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה,  
וַיִּבְקֹשׁ לְהַרְגֵּ אֶת מֹשֶׁה. וַיִּכְרַח  
מֹשֶׁה מִפְּנֵי פַרְעֹה, וַיָּשָׁב בְּאֶרֶץ  
מִדְיָן וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל הַבְּאֵר.

וַיִּירָא מֹשֶׁה. כְּפִשְׁוֹטוֹ. וּמִדְרָשׁוֹ:  
דָּאָג לוֹ עַל שְׂרָאָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל  
רְשָׁעִים דְּלְטוֹרִין, אָמַר, מַעֲתָה  
שָׁמָּא אֵינָם רְאוּיִין לְהַגְאָל

אָכֵן נוֹדַע הַדְּבָר. כְּמִשְׁמַעוֹ.  
וּמִדְרָשׁוֹ: נוֹדַע לִי הַדְּבָר  
שְׁהֵיִתִּי תַמְמָה עָלַי, מָה הִטָּאוּ  
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל שְׂבָעִים אַמּוֹת  
לְהִיֹּת נִרְדִּים בְּעַבְדוּת פְּרָה,  
אָבַל רוּאָה אָנִי שְׁהֵם רְאוּיִים  
לְכָה.

## >> The Rebbe

### What's The Insight?

**Student's** We need to understand why Rashi needs to  
pg. 8 comment, "as its plain meaning would indicate."  
The meaning seems self-understood, even to a  
beginner schoolchild. Before killing the Egyptian  
officer the previous day, Moses had looked to  
both sides to confirm that no one was watching.  
After killing the Egyptian, he buried the body  
in the sand. So it's very clear that when he now  
realizes that everyone knows what he did, he is  
afraid, and says "indeed, the matter has become  
known." So what is Rashi trying to explain here?

והנה לכאורה תמוה, למה צריך רש"י  
לפרש - "כפשוטו"? הרי זה דבר  
המובן בדרך ממילא, אשר גם ילד  
ב'חדר' יבין מדוע ירא משה. כי הרי  
אתמול כשהרג את המצרי הנה "ויפן  
כה וכה וירא כי אין איש כו'", ואז  
דוקא הרג את המצרי, וגם הטמינו  
בחול. ואם כן, הרי מובן ופשוט  
שעכשיו כשנודע לו אשר כבר יודעים  
מזה, הנה מובן שלכן היה ירא, ואמר  
"אכן נודע הדבר", ומה בא רש"י כאן  
לפרש?

*Upon reading the story every student understands that Moses took steps to conceal his actions and cover his tracks. So of course he was afraid when he realized that the word was out. What is Rashi contributing with his comment "as its plain meaning would indicate"?*

## The Reason for Moses' Fear

Student's  
pg. 9

Rashi here is addressing a different question. The commentators understand that the reason why Moses fled Egypt was because Pharaoh had heard what he had done and wanted to kill him. This raises the question of why the Torah tells us that Moses was afraid when he realized that word had gotten out - that wasn't what caused him to flee.

The reason why Moses fled was that he was afraid of Pharaoh, and he would have fled even if only Pharaoh had heard and the matter hadn't become public knowledge. And if it was the reverse, that the matter had become public knowledge but Pharaoh was unaware of it, Moses wouldn't have fled. His flight was because of Pharaoh. This raises the question of why the Torah sees it necessary to relate to us that Moses was afraid when he learned that word had gotten out.

*Moses fled for one reason only: Pharaoh had heard what had happened and wanted to kill him. So why is it necessary to relate that it had first become public knowledge and Moses had become afraid that Pharaoh would find out? The important information that the reader needs to know is that Pharaoh found out, and Moses fled as a result.*

## The Result of Fear

Student's  
pg. 9

The answer must be that had Moses not been afraid, Pharaoh would never have found out - "think good and it will be good."

והביאור בזה: רש"י בא לתרץ כאן קושי אחר. כי הרי פשטני המקרא לומדים שמכיון אשר "וישמע פרעה ויבקש להרג את משה" הנה לכן "ויברח משה מפני פרעה וגו'". ואם כן, הרי לפי זה יוקשה, מה נוגע לכתוב בתורה "ויירא משה ויאמר אכן נודע הדבר כו'", הרי זה לא פעל כלום שבשביל זה היה מוכרח לברוח?

כי הרי עיקר הטעם שמשה ברח היה מפני שהיה ירא מפרעה, וגם לולי נודע הדבר ורק פרעה בעצמו היה יודע מזה, הנה גם אז היה משה בורח! ועל דרך זה להיפך: אם פרעה לא היה יודע מזה, הגם שהסיפור נודע לאחרים, הנה אז הוא לא היה בורח, כי עיקר בריחתו היה רק מחמת פרעה. ואם כן, מה נוגע כאן בפשוטו של מקרא בסיפור המעשה, הענין של "ויירא משה ויאמר אכן נודע הדבר"?

והרי על כרחך צריך לומר, שהפירוש בזה הוא כנ"ל: "חשוב טוב - יהיה טוב". כי אם לא היה משה ירא, לא היה מתרחש - "וישמע פרעה", משום ש"חשוב טוב - יהיה טוב".

Student's  
pg. 9

Moses should have trusted that no Jew would report on him, word wouldn't spread, and Pharaoh wouldn't find out.

היה לו למשה להיות בביטחון שיהודי לא ילשין על משה רבינו שהרג כו', והיה צריך לחשוב אשר שום איש לא ידע מזה, וא לא היה מתרחש "וישמע פרעה"...

The Rebbe says something incredible: Had Moses thought positively and had no fear that Datan and Aviram would report on him then it wouldn't have happened and he wouldn't have needed to flee. Only because he was afraid did his fears come true.

## The Power of Speech

### Source 5 Talmud, Arachin 15b

Student's  
pg. 10

In Israel, evil speech (i.e., discussing the faults of others) was called "triple speech," because evil speech kills three: the one who shares it, the one who listens to it, and the subject of the speech.

בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל הָיוּ אוֹמְרִים לְשׁוֹן שְׁלִישִׁי – כְּלוּמַר, לְשׁוֹן הָרַע, הוֹרֵג שְׁלוֹשָׁה: הוֹרֵג לְמַסְפְּרוֹ, וְלְמַזְקְלוֹ, וְלְזֶה שְׂאוֹמְרִים עָלָיו.

### Source 6 Likutei Sichot, vol. 27, Emor 1

Student's  
pg. 10

It is understood how evil speech harms the speaker and the listener, because both participate in the sin. This is such a severe sin that the sages liken it to idolatry, adultery and murder combined. However, why is the subject of their conversation blameworthy? He did not participate in this sin, why should he suffer?

וְהָרִי לְכַאוֹרָה: מוֹכֵן שְׁלִשׁוֹן הָרַע פּוֹגַעַת בְּמַסְפְּרָה וּבְשׂוֹמְרָה, כִּינֵן שְׁשִׁנְיָהֶם מְשַׁתְּתָפִים בְּעֵבְרָה, וּבְעֵבְרָה חֲמוּרָה כָּל כָּהֵן, אֲשֶׁר חַז"ל<sup>3</sup> מְשׁוּיִם אֹתָהּ לְחֲמָרָה שֶׁל עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, גְּלוּי עֲרִיּוֹת וְשִׁפְיֵכוֹת דָּמִים בְּיַחַד. אֵךְ מַדּוּעַ אֲשֶׁם הָאָדָם שֶׁעָלָיו מְדַבְּרִים? הָרִי הוּא לֹא הִשְׁתַּתֵּף בְּעֵבְרָה, וּמַדּוּעַ עָלָיו לְסַבֵּל?

The explanation is that speech brings to the fore that which was concealed.

הַהֶסְכֵּר לְכָךְ הוּא: הַדְּבָר מְכַטֵּא כְּגִלּוּי עֲגִינֵן שֶׁהֵיָה בְּהַעֲלָם (מַחְשָׁבָה)

Thus, when speaking ill of another, we bring their ill to the fore and can cause them harm as a result. If it wouldn't have been spoken about, it may have remained hidden and not have negative effects.

וּלְפִיכָה, כְּאֲשֶׁר מְדַבְּרִים רְעוּת' עַל הַזּוּלָת, מְבִיאִים אֶת הָרַע לְיַדֵּי גְלוּי, וְעֲלוּלִים לְהַזְיק לְמְדַבְּרֵי<sup>5</sup>. אֵילוֹ לֹא הָיוּ מְדַבְּרִים עַל כָּךְ – יִתְכַּן שֶׁהָרַע הָיָה נִשְׂאָר בְּהַעֲלָם וְלֹא הָיָה מְבִיא לְתוֹצְאוֹת הַשְּׁלִילִיוֹת.

5. "וע"ד לעולם אל יפתח אדם פיו לשטן" (כתובות ה, ב ובחדא"ג מהרש"א שם). וראה שו"ע אדה"ז חו"מ הל' שמירת גוף כו' סי"ב. ולהעיר מזה"ב רסד, סע"ב ואילך. היום יום כט תשרי.

3. ערכין ט"ו ב, רמב"ם הלכות דעות פ"ו ה"ג.  
4. כידוע דלה"ר (משא"כ - מוציא שם רע) - הוא בדבר אמת (רמב"ם שם ה"ב. שו"ע אדה"ז תאו"ה סקנ"ו סי" (וש"ג).

## >> The Rebbe

### Don't Say It...

**Student's**  
pg. 10 The problem was compounded by the fact that Moses expressed his fear verbally, and didn't just leave it in the realm of thought.

**Student's**  
pg. 11 Hayom Yom quotes a teaching of the Baal Shem Tov on this theme. The Talmud says that evil speech harms three people: the speaker, the listener, and the subject. It's clear why the speaker and listener should be harmed by this - they could have avoided being parties to the evil speech. But why should it have a negative effect on the subject? They didn't play any role in the evil speech.

The Baal Shem Tov explains that when negative aspects of a person are discussed verbally this brings them to the fore and they can no longer be ignored. This is why evil speech affects the subject as well, because their negative aspects have been revealed.

Similarly in our case. Had Moses's fear remained in his mind, Pharaoh wouldn't have heard about his actions. But since Moses expressed his fear verbally, it eventually reached Pharaoh's ears.

This is what Rashi is teaching us with his comment "as its plain meaning would indicate." Moses should have thought positively, and it would have worked out positively. But he didn't do so, and even expressed his fear verbally, with the result that Pharaoh heard what had happened.

ובפרט שזה התבטא גם בדיבור - אשר "ויאמר משה אכן נודע הדבר". זה לא נשאר רק במחשבה בלבד, אלא בא גם כן בדיבור.

וכמבואר ב'היום יום' פתגם הבעל שם טוב אודות לשון הרע, שזהו ענין שהורג שלשה - המדבר, השומע, והמדובר. ולכאורה צריך להבין: בשלמא על המדבר והשומע, מובן מדוע זה פועל עליהם, מכיון שהיה בידם שלא לדבר ולא לשמוע. אך האיך זה פועל על המדובר? הרי לא היה בידיו לעשות כלום! מה הוא כבר יכל לעשות? ומבואר בזה, אשר כל זמן שהרע של הזולת לא בא עדיין בדיבור של השני, הנה אז אין הרע בגילוי עדיין... אמנם כשבא כבר בדיבור של שני, זה מוציא את הרע בגילוי... וזהו ההסבר לכך שלשון הרע הורגת שלשה - כי זה פועל גם כן על המדובר.

ועל דרך זה בנוגע לעניינינו: אם 'ויירא משה' היה מתרחש רק במחשבתו של משה, הנה אזי לא היה קורה "וישמע פרעה"... (כיצד ידע פרעה מה שמתרוצץ במחשבתו של משה רבינו?). אמנם כשויאמר - היינו שבא בדיבור בגילוי - הנה זה פעל שוישמע פרעה כו'.

וזה מפרש רש"י בפשוטו. היינו שמשה היה ירא כפשוטו. אף שבאמת היה צריך להיות "חשוב טוב - יהיה טוב", לפועל הוא לא חשב טוב, וזה התבטא גם בדיבור "ויאמר אכן נודע הדבר כו'", וכל זה פעל ש"וישמע פרעה".

*Here the Rebbe adds another twist to the story. Moses's problem was twofold: not only didn't he think positively, he also said it. When we speak negatively about someone we express and reinforce their negativity. By expressing his fear verbally Moses strengthened Datan and Aviram's negative tendencies, and they indeed went ahead and reported on him.*

*Perhaps we can illustrate this point through the example of the different theories of psychology advanced by Sigmund Freud and Victor Frankl. Freud maintained that humans are driven by carnal instincts, and these are what motivate us to survive, pursue pleasure, etc. Frankl, on the other hand, maintained that humans are driven by a search for meaning, and are willing to sacrifice for this, Frankl often argued that when we tell a person that their life has meaning and believe in them that they are a moral person who wants to do the right thing, we inspire them to live up to it. But if we constantly tell people that they are driven by carnal instincts that seek only survival and pleasure then they will indeed steer in that direction.*

*This is the same point we discussed earlier. When two people talk about the negative traits of a third person, they highlight and reinforce those inclinations, subconsciously guiding the person to act on them. This is why it is so important to be careful not to speak negatively about others.*



# C. The Lesson

## >> The Rebbe

### The Effect of Positive Thought

Student's  
pg. 12

There's a lesson we can learn from this: The soul we each have descended into this world where it faces various impediments to the observance of Torah and mitzvot. We shouldn't think that we lack the ability to overcome these difficulties, we need to think good and it will be good! We need to be confident that we have the power to overcome the obstructions and then we will be able to! When we think good, it will be good.

וההוראה בזה היא: הנשמה ירדה למטה, ובעולם הזה ישנם כמה וכמה מניעות על קיום התורה והמצוות. הנה, אל לו לחשוב שלא יוכל להתגבר על המניעות כו', אלא עליו לחשוב טוב ואז יהיה טוב! צריכים לחשוב אשר בודאי יוכל לעשות זה ויש לו את הכח לזה, וזה יפעל! מכיון שכאשר "חושבים טוב - אכן יהיה טוב".

### Source 6 Vayikra Rabah 35:5

The Midrash lists four things in which merit our ancestors were liberated from Egypt. One is that they didn't change their names; they kept their Jewish names and didn't adopt local names.

Student's  
pg. 12

On account of four things our ancestors were freed from Egypt: 1. They did not change their names, 2. They did not change their language, 3. They did not speak evil speech, 4. None of them engaged in licentious activity.

They did not change their names: "they descended to Egypt as Reuven and Shimon, and they came out as Reuven and Shimon. Yehudah was not called Ruffa and Reuven was not called Lolyani; Yosef was not called Listyes and Binyamin was not called Alexandri.

בשביל ארבעה דברים נגאלו ישראל ממצרים: 1. שלא שנו את שמם 2. ואת לשונם 3. ולא אמרו לשון הרע, 4. ולא נמצא ביניהם אחד מהן פרוץ בערוה.

לא שנו את שמן: ראובן ושמעון ירדו, ראובן ושמעון עלו, לא היו קורין ליהודה רופא, ולא לראובן לוליאני, ולא ליוסף ליסטיס, ולא לבנימין אלכסנדר.

The simple understanding of the Midrash is that in the merit of not changing their Jewish names, the Jewish people were redeemed. They came to Egypt with Jewish names, like Reuven and Shimon, and 210 years later they left with those same names.

## >> The Rebbe

### Another Lesson

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The Midrash comments on the names of the tribes “they descended to Egypt as Reuven and Shimon, and they came out as Reuven and Shimon.” The point the Midrash is trying to make is that they left Egypt as Reuven and Shimon, so why does it also mention the fact that they went down as Reuven and Shimon?

The answer is that as soon as “they descended to Egypt as Reuven and Shimon” it was immediately clear to them that they would “come out as Reuven and Shimon.” Immediately upon descending into exile we need to be fully confident that we will come out intact, we have been given the power to achieve this. When G-d sends us into exile we know that we have this power, because if we didn't, we wouldn't have been sent there. We certainly have the ability to overcome exile, and no Jew will be left behind when Mashiach comes and redeems us all, young and old, in the true and complete redemption, very soon in our time.

*The fact that they descended into Egypt with the confidence that they would leave unscathed is what gave them the power to withstand everything on the way to the promised redemption. The positive thought ensured that everything indeed worked out well.*

משיחת שבת פרשת שמות ה'תשכ"ו  
בלתי מוגה  
שיחות קודש, התשכ"ג, עמוד 150 ואילך

מבואר במדרש על 'ואלה שמות' ש'ראובן ושמעון ירדו - וראובן ושמעון עלו'. ולכאורה תמוה: מה החידוש כאן ש'ראובן ושמעון' ירדו? הרי ההדגשה היא על כך ש'ראובן ושמעון' עלו! ואם כן, המדרש היה צריך להדגיש זאת על היציאה ממצרים ולא על הירידה למצרים.

והביאור בזה הוא כנ"ל: מיד כאשר 'ראובן ושמעון ירדו' הנה מיד הם ידעו ש'ראובן ושמעון עלו'. היינו: מיד כשירדו לגלות הנה כבר הוא צריך לדעת ש'ראובן ושמעון עלו' - היינו שיש לו נתינת כח שיוכל לצאת מהגלות. וכאשר הקב"ה שולח יהודי לגלות, יודע היהודי שיש לו את הכח לכך, כי באם לא היה לו את הכח לזה - לא היו שולחים אותו! ולכן הנה בוודאי יש לו כח על זה, והרי לפועל יהיה "כי לא ידח ממנו נדח", בביאת משיח צדקינו, "בנערינו ובזקנינו" עד ש"לא תשאר פרסה", בגאולה האמיתית והשלימה בקרוב ממש.

## D. The Yom Kippur War

Exactly fifty years ago, in 1973, the Yom Kippur War broke out. It took Israel by surprise, and the enemy was able to penetrate into Israel, kill a large number of soldiers, and take many captives. Israel's security forces were caught unprepared, and the streets of Israel and the Jewish world were panic stricken.

The third day of the war was the most difficult. The government and military leaders were despondent, and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan suggested to the security cabinet that they hand out firearms to the residents of Tel Aviv so they could protect themselves.

In 770 in New York, the Chassidim beseeched G-d for the Jewish people in Israel.

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### Chassidic Farbrengen During a War?

On the 13th of Tishrei in 1973, three days after the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, the Rebbe held a Chassidic gathering. The Rebbe began with a question:

We must first address the question: how can we be holding a Chassidic farbrengen while Jews are at war?

לכאורה יש צורך בהסברה: בשעה שיש מקום שיהודים עומדים במלחמה - מה מקום לערוך כאן התוועדות?

When the Rebbe asked this question he cried profusely. He then continued and said:

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev writes that the Baal Shem Tov would constantly teach publicly that the verse "G-d is your shadow" means that G-d acts like our shadow, reflecting the moves we make. The way we conduct ourselves dictates how G-d acts towards us.

ר' לוי יצחק מבארדיטשוב כותב<sup>6</sup> שהבעש"ט היה תמיד חוזר לפני הקהל - על הפסוק<sup>8</sup> "ה' צלך", שהקב"ה הוא כמו "צל" של יהודי: כשם שה"צל" עושה אותם תנועות שעושה האדם (שממנו נעשה הצל), כך גם "ה' צלך", שכפי שיהודי מתנהג למטה, כך עושה גם הקב"ה כביכול.

8. תהלים קכא, ה.

6. הכוונה ל"מלחמת יום הכיפורים" שהיתה אז בעיצומה.  
7. קדושת לוי פ' נשא. וראה גם תו"מ חס"א ע' 200 הערה 58.  
יש"נ.

This is also taught in the Zohar: "The way we present our face here is the way G-d presents Himself to us from above. When we exhibit a joyful countenance, G-d shows us a joyful countenance from above." The Zohar continues on theme in further detail.

It is therefore clear that the way we can be of help at this time is by exhibiting joy, as joy has the power to break through all boundaries.

*Over the course of the farbrengen and the following days the Rebbe encouraged his Chassidim to increase their joy despite the situation, explaining that this will generate Divine joy towards us and provide assistance in winning the war.*

## Life Lessons

We can learn two key lessons for this current time:

A. Think positive. As the Rebbe said explicitly during the Yom Kippur war, and on hundreds or even thousands of occasions, thinking positive isn't just a psychological exercise, it actually affects what we receive from G-d. When we are joyous and optimistic, G-d gives us accordingly.

B. Take care not to speak negatively of another Jew, because this can reinforce that negative trait in that person and bring it to the fore. This is what happened with Moses when he spoke ill of Datan and Aviram, fearing they would inform on him, and that caused them to inform on him.

Nowadays, when the social fabric is so frayed and people lob harsh words against each other, we need to remember that words have destructive power. If we write negatively about a person or community, we can cause that negative trait to further metastasize and worsen.

On the contrary, we must applaud one another and speak only positively of others. That way we will help each other realize the positive potential inherent in us all, and together, we will be victorious.

וזהו גם מה שכתוב בזהר<sup>9</sup>: "בא וראה - כפי שיהודי מראה פניו מלמטה, כך מראים לו גם מלמעלה, וכאשר יהודי מראה פנים של חדוה, מראים לו חדוה מלמעלה (כפי שהזהר מאריך בזה בפרטיות).

ומובן, שהדרך לסייע בימים אלו היא על ידי אופן של שמחה, ששמחה פורץ גדר<sup>10</sup>.