

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

פרשת האזינו השמים ואדברה תשפ"ז – It's About Perspective!

הצור תמים פָּעֵלוּ כִּי כָל דְּרָכָיו מִשְׁפָּט קֵל אֱמוּנָה וְאֵין עוֹל צְדִיק וְיֵשֶׁר הוּא
The deeds of the Mighty Rock are perfect, for all His ways are just; a faithful G-d, without injustice, He is righteous and upright. (Devarim 34:4)

The Chofetz Chaim's son, Rav Aryeh Leib, related that when he was a child, the poverty in their house was very intense. The holy Chofetz Chaim spent his days and his nights immersed in Torah study, and his devoted wife eked out a few rubles from her "store", which barely covered the basic necessities needed for their family.

Once, related Rav Aryeh Leib, his mother expressed her pain to the Chofetz Chaim, saying "Look at our neighbor, Berel, he is a simpleton, totally unlearned, with children who display arrogant behavior and less-than-exemplary character traits, and they don't follow the path of the Torah, and they live with wealth and prosperity. Yet, you, who dedicate your every moment to Torah, and raise your children in the right way, are living in abject poverty. How is that יָשָׁר, how is that right?"

The holy Chofetz Chaim listened patiently as she unloaded her heart, then he responded softly, by asking her a question. "What, in your opinion, would be just? For our neighbor who was not blessed with such astute intellect, who was not blessed with the light of the Torah, who wasn't successful with his children's Chinuch, who has children with lackluster Midos, to also be punished with poverty and other physical discomforts?"

The Chofetz Chaim continued: "Hashem has blessed you with a husband who spends his days studying the holy Torah. Hashem has blessed you with sterling Midos and Ahavas HaTorah. Hashem has given you wonderful children who display Derech Eretz and follow the path of the Torah. Would it be just to also give you wealth on top of all that? Would that be יָשָׁר - that our home should be blessed with everything, while our neighbor's home would be totally lacking of any blessing?!"

What a perspective!

As the expression goes, "Some people are so poor, all they have is money".

Rav Shmuel Yeshya Keller, Rosh Yeshiva of Telshe Chicago recounts that when he was a young seven years old boy, he once accompanied his father, Rav Chaim Dov Keller Zatzal, on a visit to an affluent neighborhood to raise funds for the yeshiva. When his father when into one home, he stayed in the car, a beat-up station wagon, and was taking in the sights of all the magnificent homes with manicured landscaping, wrought-iron-security fences, brand new fancy cars in

the driveways and other obvious trimmings of Olam Hazeh at its "finest". When his father came out from the meeting, young Shmuel Yeshaya asked his father, "Papa, why can't we have all this too?", to which his father's instinctive, Torah-true response was, "Sure, we can have this; but then we cannot have what we have!"

What a perspective!

We focus too much on the things we don't have and we fail to adequately focus on the things we **do** have!

Here's a challenge to try: Take a blank piece of paper and make two columns; one column for the things that Hashem has blessed you with and another column for the things that you perceive are missing from your life. Anyone who honestly makes such a list will find his "blessing" column overflowing with endless gifts from Hashem, and the "lacking" column extremely sparse, despite the challenges, tribulations and hardships that do exist in life. Still, if we focus on the blessings, the difficulties will pale in comparison.



How sad it is if the benchmark for "success", "wealth" and "blessing" is measured by material "things", the way the media and the secular society of the 21st century portrays it. That is not the Torah's standard. The proper way to measure "success" is to focus on the things that truly matter, and those things are not "things" at all; they are our connection to Hashem, our Bitachon, our Tefilah, our Torah knowledge, our Midos, our

Chesed, the Chinuch of our children, our health, the way we treat others, and many other things that money cannot buy.

When we focus on the right things, and realize just how full our "blessing" column is, we realize how truly יָשָׁר our loving Father in Heaven is, and how much He does for us, non-stop.

Instead of filling our days with shallow sighs of "Why Me?" bemoaning the things we lack, we need to flip the script and fill our days with authentic expressions of "Thank You!" to Hashem for the bounty He gives us.

We need to open our eyes and recognize that whatever Hashem does is 100% for our benefit - הצור תמים פָּעֵלוּ - and everything He does is perfectly just - צְדִיק וְיֵשֶׁר הוּא -

Hashem does not make mistakes - קל אֱמוּנָה וְאֵין עוֹל - and living with any other perspective is the most tragic mistake of all.

Good Shabbos!