

The following is a series on the notes of HaRav Mattisyahu Salomon, Shlita, to the Sefer *Mesilas Yesharim*, as published in the Sefer *Matnas Chelko* by Rabbi Yechiel Bieberfeld, Shlita:

**Introduction:** HaRav Zundel Salanter, Z'tl, asked HaRav Chaim Volozhiner, Z'tl, what Sefer Mussar to study. HaRav Chaim responded: "All of the *Sifrei Mussar* are good to learn, but the Sefer *Mesilas Yesharim* should be *your guide*." HaRav Mattisyahu explains this to mean that one does not only get aroused by the *Mesilas Yesharim*, but that one can use this Sefer *as a handbook to lead one's life*--in order to attain *Ma'alos* in Avodas Hashem. In fact, HaRav Mattisyahu teaches, the Sefer is uniquely appropriate for *everyone* to find his way in Hashem's service.

1. The Gra would say that if the Ramchal had lived in his times, he would have traveled 50 *mil* (100,000 *amos*!) to hear Mussar from him. HaRav Mattisyahu teaches that this is not an exaggeration--and that with all of the Hasmada and Hakpada on time that the Gra had--this is what he actually would have done! HaRav Shach, on commenting on the statement of the Gra, explained that we see from here how important the study of Mussar really is.

2. The *Mesilas Yesharim* is based upon the *Braiysa* of Rebbi Pinchas Ben Ya'ir in which he teaches that Torah leads to Zehirus, Zehirus leads to Zerizus, Zerizus lead to Nekiyus.... There is a Chapter on each one of the Middos mentioned in the *Braiysa*--except for Torah. HaRav Mattisyahu explains that the Ramchal does not begin with Torah, because Torah is the beginning, the middle and the end--for each *Madreigah* that one attains must be accompanied by Torah in order to grow in Avodas Hashem.

3. The *Mesilas Yesharim* begins with the phrase: "*Yesod HaChassidus*--the foundation of Chassidus. What is Chassidus? HaRav Mattisyahu teaches that at the root of Chassidus is the teaching of Chazal: "*Ashrei Adam She'amalo BaTorah VeOseh Nachas Ruach LeYotzro*--a Chassid is one who toils in Torah and gives Nachas Ruach to Hashem. Just as true Nachas to a parent is when his child does more than what is otherwise expected--so too, our Nachas to Hashem is to go beyond our 'technical requirements', and demonstrate by our deeds our desire to give Him Nachas. In this regard every person is different-- for every person has his own Olam, his own world in which he relates to Hashem based upon his own facts, his own situations and his own circumstances. Hakhel Note: Each person gives his own *personal Nachas* to Hashem--in his very own way!

4. Just as a businessman has a plan on how he intends to become wealthy, so too, should one have a 'plan' as to how he is going to advance in Ruchniyus. A person who intends to learn Shas will show greater determination and dedication than someone without this goal. Likewise, a person with a drive towards the ultimate goal of Ruach HaKodesh (the highest level we can reach before Techiyas HaMeisim), will have a greater success than the person who takes matters as they come along.

5. An uninformed person may think: What purpose is there to this world, in which he has finite years of life, and during which time he may be beset with various and sundry difficulties? What does he have to thank Hashem for--should a person love a king because he puts him into a

beautiful jail? We know better-- we know that there is a Olam Haba, which is the true and everlasting world. Based upon this, we can appreciate that Hashem has taken this temporary world and has made it as comfortable for us as He deems and knows to be within our best interests. Picture one who is traveling to his son's wedding--and needs to run at full speed in order to catch the train, and then has to stand for hours sandwiched between people on the train--does he not realize that his destination is the great Simcha, which will put everything in its proper perspective? We thus owe Hakaras HaTov to Hashem for making our 'ride' in Olam Hazeh as doable as He can for us--in order to get to the final destination of Eternity!

6. HaRav Eliyahu Lopian, Z'tl, taught HaRav Mattisyahu (HaRav Mattisyahu refers to HaRav Lopian as his Rebbi), that whatever Middos a person has in this world, he will have in the next world. If, for example, a person is jealous in this world, he will feel jealousy in the next world--to those who are on a higher Madreiga than him. The Middos that one establishes and develops here are, very literally, the Middos that will be with him forever. Accordingly, one must undertake *all appropriate action to develop Middos Tovos now*. One should not view the concept of 'remembering the day of death' as something fearful, but should view it as a *Hisorerus* to repair and grow while one can. This can be compared to one who is working in the fields being told by his friend: "It will soon be dark outside, do whatever you can now." Will his response to his friend be: "Don't tell me that?!" Not at all, for his friend does not want to scare him--but to give him good advice for his betterment and benefit!

7. Since Torah is the *Tavlin* (the antidote) for the Yetzer Hara, if one properly studies Torah, why would he ever have to do a *Cheshbon HaNefesh*? Should not the study of Torah itself be enough, without one having to spend specific time on Yiras Shomayim and on learning Mussar? HaRav Yisroel Salanter, Z'tl, answers that Torah study itself can serve as the exclusive antidote if certain conditions are met--i. e., that one demonstrates his ***Chashivus HaTorah and Hasmadas HaTorah, and also additionally learns Torah Lishmah***. HaRav Yisroel adds that when Torah study acts as the exclusive antidote to the Yetzer Hara it does so as a *Segulah*, and **for a *Segulah* to work, it has to be undertaken completely, with all conditions fulfilled**. For instance, if one knows of a *Segulah* for Parnassah in which one must do something three days in a row, and he only does it two day in a row, it will simply not work. Since it is difficult for us to fulfill all of these conditions completely, we must also undertake acts of Yiras Shomayim, including Cheshbon HaNefesh and the study of Mussar, in order to fight the Yetzer Hara and reach our full potential. HaRav Mattisyahu adds that, in fact, if one engages in Cheshbon HaNefesh in order to supplement his Torah studies and fight the Yetzer Hara--**then the act of Cheshbon HaNefesh is considered as part of one's involvement in Torah as well!** He brings a Ma'aseh with his Rebbi who once found many Talmidei Chachomim who were studying a piece of leather very intently. His Rebbi asked them what they were doing--and they responded: "We are trying to ascertain how to make a *Chalitzah* shoe out of this leather." His Rebbi was enlightened and exclaimed: "If when studying a piece of leather one can fulfill the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah--so too when we contemplate words of Mussar (such as thinking about the Mitzvah of *VeAhavta LeRei'acha Kamocha*), do we also fulfill the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah!"

8. **Zerizus** means that when the moment comes to do a Mitzvah, or when an opportunity for Chesed or the like arises, or when *the thought* to perform a good deed enters one mind--one does not leave it, but rather one begins to undertake the Mitzvah or the Chesed. **One should**

**recognize that the thought itself comes from Hashem--and it is as if Hashem is telling him: "This Mitzvah is for you."** A person should view a *Machshava Tova* as a *Hisorirus* from Hashem--in which Hashem advises him that he now will have *Siyata D'Shmaya* to do this Mitzvah!

9. If a person would conduct a *Cheshbon HaNefesh*, he would note that most times that he does not do a Mitzvah or good deed, is because of *atzlus*, or laziness. A person will extend efforts to do an aveirah out of desire, but will hesitate to do a Mitzvah out of lethargy or languor. HaRav Salomon teaches that *atzlus* is a most sever Middah--for it brings about the Churban HaAdam and the Churban HaOlam, whereas *Zerizus* is so great--for it produces Shleimus HaAdom and Shleimus HaOlam. Indeed, it is for this very reason that one can run to do a Mitzvah on Shabbos, even though Shabbos is a day of Menucha--for by running, he is accomplishing Shleimus within himself--which is the greatest Menucha possible! (Maharal, *Nesiv HaTorah*, end of Chapter 17)

10. Each one of our actions really do count. Hashem has established exactly, for example, how many Tefillos would be necessary to rebuild the Beis HaMikdash. The Tzaddikim of prior generations have laid down the large stones of the walls with their Tefillos. We, in turn, are putting down the small stones with our Tefillos--the *Kosel HaMa'aravi* as seen today depicts exactly this picture! The more we daven for the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash, the faster we will be able to witness its full glory!

11. Chazal (Eruvin 65A) urge us to consider ourselves as '*Agirei D'Yoma*'--workers who are here to perform important tasks that the Ba'al HaBayis needs urgently. The similar analogy, explains HaRav Mattisyahu, is to that of a trustworthy soldier who listens to the instructions of his superior down to the finest detail--for the soldier recognizes that there is a greater, well-thought through plan for victory, and that every person has an exact role in that plan which he must properly perform as especially directed and requested.

12. One should recognize that it is one's personal desires that lead him to find *heterim*, or leniencies, which he can rely upon and by which he can conduct himself. In contrast, Chazal referred to the righteous people of Yerushalayim as the *Neki'ei HaDa'as SheB'Yerushalayim*, because it was truly their Da'as--their control over their desires--that made them righteous.

13. With this in mind, we should understand that when a person wants to steal or violate one of the Halachos involving *arayos*, it is almost never because he maliciously and wantonly wants to violate a Torah precept, but rather it is his desire in charge--as one convinces himself that 'this is not really stealing', or that 'this is not *arayos*'--using this excuse or that excuse, this *heter* or that *heter*. Temptation overcomes sound thinking, and covers up the *issur* with justifications, rationales and reasoning which are deceptive '*heterim*'--of the Yetzer Hara! Hakhel Note: Can you recall a '*heter*' that you used today--was it sound, and if so--why?

14. Reuven enters his home after a long trip in great heat, and to say that his throat is parched is an extreme understatement. He sees a large bottle of water and glass on the table--seemingly all ready for him! As he takes running strides towards the table--his friend Shimon advises him that the glass and water bottle have been on the table for quite some time, and that a while back he

saw Nimrod near the water with a small vial of poison in his hand. Shimon then relates that he was distracted for an important reason--and was unsure what Nimrod ended up doing with the vial of poison before he left the scene. Let us think for a moment--would a sane Reuven, no matter how thirsty he may be, drink the possibly poisoned water--even if it was *'batel b'shishim'*? This is how we must view a situation that presents itself before us of potentially forbidden foods. HaRav Mattisyahu teaches in the name of 'one of the Gedolim' that one who is not careful for his family with potentially forbidden foods subjects his children to a greater potential to *r'l* go off the derech. HaRav Mattisyahu also brings the *Chasam Sofer* (Parshas Kedoshim) who teaches that most apikorsus comes from eating forbidden foods. It is for this reason that the non-Jewish world cannot properly serve Hashem and perform Mitzvos--even though the 'forbidden foods' are not *assur* to them--it is simply a *metzi'us*--a *reality* that forbidden foods do not allow for Avodas Hashem!

15. Many people view the *issur* of *Ona'as Devarim* as applying directly to colleagues at work, acquaintances, and others--but not to close friends, and one's wife and children. This is not true at all, and the *issur* of *Ona'as Devarim* applies even to the most immediate of family members and to the closest of friends. Chazal (Bava Metziyah 59A) teach that all the gates are closed, except the gates for those who cry out because they have been hurt by words. This means that Hashem hears the cries of one who has been pained by words, and Hashem will personally punish the afflicter of the painful words. Do not allow yourself to fall into the terrible pit of *Ona'as Devarim*--even to family, and even to friends! Hakhel Note: This is one area in which a person can take the special trouble to check himself at the end of the day in order to ensure that he has not fallen prey to this dangerous deed, and if he has--to attempt to clear himself of it as quickly as possible!

16. We should recognize that nobody has the Yetzer Hara to cause or commit a Chilul Hashem. It is only by *Hesech HaDa'as*--not carefully paying attention to one's words and actions that Chilul Hashem is brought about. One is responsible to provide the proper attention that is needed to bring Kavod (and not *c'v* disgrace) to Hashem--just as when one drives a car, he must pay true attention to the road, and make sure that he does not veer, or become drowsy at the wheel. In a word, each one of us is personally responsible for Kavod Shomayim. Chazal (Yoma 86A) bring famous examples from the Amoraim as to what examples of Chilul Hashem would be for them [Rav not paying for his food immediately, Rabbi Yochanan walking four *amos* without learning and wearing his Tefillin...]. What we must learn from these Amoraim is how Chilul Hashem could come from situations that *we find ourselves in* and not only avoid them--but turn them into Kiddush Hashem!

17. The *S'mag* (*Mitzvas Asei* 74) brings the Pasuk (Tzefanya 3:13) of "*She'eiris Yisroel...the remnants of K'lal Yisroel [at the time of Moshiach] will be those who did not act perversely or speak deceitfully.*" Why will these people specifically survive? The answer is that a *Kiddush Sheim Shomayim* must take place through the final Geulah and the Bi'as HaMoshiach--in which the entire world recognizes Hashem, and that His people are a *Mamleches Kohanim* and a *Goy Kadosh*. How can the entire world realize this--after all they do not know whether the Jew put on Tefillin in the morning, or properly observed any of the other Mitzvos. **The other nations will only recognize us as a *Mamleches Kohanim* by our interactions with them--our honesty and integrity and our truthful speech.** So, when the Geulah comes, only those who were

reputable and truthful, those who 'left money on the table', those who display their truthfulness and uprightness--will be there to greet the Moshiach!

Special Note Four: We continue today our series on the notes of HaRav Mattisyahu Salomon, Shlita, to the Sefer *Mesilas Yesharim*, as published in the Sefer *Matnas Chelko* by Rabbi Yechezkel Bieberfeld, Shlita:

18. The Middah of ga'avah is that a person views himself as one deserving of honor and praise--because of the importance *he has personally achieved*. The opposite of ga'avah is anavah.

People sometimes misinterpret anavah. **Anavah means that a person *does* recognize himself and his strengths--but knows that all of his importance is attributable not to himself--but to Hashem.** The Chazon Ish would say: "I know that I am the Chazon Ish--but I am not deserving of anything for this, *Ki LeKach Notzarti*--because this is why I was created!"

19. A number of people can be standing on line in order to pay the proprietor. The first person gives him \$10, the second gives him a \$100, and the third \$20,000. To the bystander, it may appear that the last person is the richest--but in truth the last person may have only paid a small part of a much larger amount that he owed. Hashem gives each one of us his own strengths--spiritually and physically, and no one can or should compare himself to another. Instead, the Talmud Chochom must realize that it is Hashem Who is the *Chonen L'Adom Da'as*; the healthy person must realize that it is Hashem Who is the *Rofeh Ne'eman*; and the wealthy person must realize that it is Hashem Who is *Me'verech HaShanim*. It is truly Hashem Who is the Provider of our accomplishments!

20. Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest of all men, teaches (Mishlei 16:5) "*Toavas Hashem Kol Gevah Lev*--one who is haughty in his heart is an abomination to Hashem." The *Sefer HaChinuch* (Mitzvah 188) explains that when someone is an abomination to Hashem, it means that Hashem removes His Hashgacha from him. *What does Hashgacha mean?* A Mashgiach in Yeshiva closely supervises his students; a Mashgiach in a store closely supervises the food products. So, when Hashem views the haughty person as an abomination and removes His Hashgacha from him--it means that He distances Himself from the person. Hakhel Note: It would indeed seem that this is a Middah K'Neged Middah--for the person pushed away Hashem--as he credited himself for all of his talents and accomplishments!

21. A man is walking on the street on Shabbos and sees a bag full of cash. Understanding that it probably fell from a thief who was on the run, the person begins thinking of all kinds of ways and means of how and why it would be permissible for him to take the money on Shabbos (he will carry the bag backwards, it is only a *karmelis*, there is great loss involved, etc.). As he is concluding his thoughts, a passerby taps him on the shoulder and says: "Don't even bother looking at that bag--it is full of counterfeit money!" All of a sudden, all of the clever excuses fall by the wayside. When we begin feeling ga'avah, we should recognize that it is all counterfeit--not real at all and forget all of the misplaced designs, chicanery and illusions. One must recognize that whenever he gives misplaced Kavod to himself--he is detracting from Kavod Shomayim. It simply does not make sense!

22. If a Mitzvah is easily performed because the person has trained himself well in his Avodas Hashem--this does not mean that the person will not be rewarded as if it was truly difficult and

painstaking to accomplish the task. Rather, *Lefum Tza'ara Agra* means that even when one does a Mitzvah out of Ahava or out of Simcha--with pleasure and joy, he will get the same reward as if he struggled with it. Therefore, a person should not feel content when he struggles in the performance of Mitzvos because of the 'greater reward' he will receive from this difficulty. It is simply not so--for a Mitzvah performed with Ahava and Simcha will merit the very same reward--and one will enjoy the *Simcha Shel Mitzvah--which he will carry with him for ever and ever!*

23. In this week's Parsha, the Pasuk teaches, *VeLo Sasuru Acharei Levavechem V'Acharei Eineichem--*we should not be swayed by our desires, or by what we see. This means that our mindset should be that 'just because foods or fruits look beautiful and tasty, does not mean that they are not poisonous or dangerous to one's physical or spiritual health'. We are blessed with a mind behind our eyes which should make the final determination as to the benefits of what one sees and what one feels.

24. One of the great deceits of the Yetzer Hara is to make a person believe that he should earn money in order to attain *hana'os* in this world.

25. If one desires to experience a fleeting pleasure--he should recognize that in the end, even if it does not hurt him physically--it may hurt him spiritually.

26. The *Shelah HaKadosh* brings in the name of the *Sefer Chareidim* that a person should spend one day a week in *hisbodidus* and speak to Hashem as a son to his father. Even if we are unable to do this, we should attempt to do so even an hour a week, for without *hisbodidus* one cannot attain *Ma'alos* in Avodas Hashem.

27. The *Ikar Taharah* or purity of a person is not his *Taharas HaGuf*, but rather the *Taharah* of his Machshavos. The more we focus on mind over matter, the more we will be able to attain our life's purpose--which is not to attain the glimpses of our eyes and the desires of our heart--but to purify our thoughts and give Nachas Ruach to Hashem--as often as we can!

28. After a Nazir completes his nezirus and brings his Karbanos, the Pasuk (Bamidbar 6:20) teaches that "*VeAchar Yishte HaNazir Yayin--*and afterwards the Nazir may drink wine." The Ba'alei Mussar ask--what does it mean that afterwards *the Nazir will drink wine*. After all he is *no longer* a Nazir?! They explain that the Pasuk teaches us a great lesson--once the Nazir has gone through the process of Nezirus he will 'remain a Nazir'--for he will view all of the illusionary delights and pleasures of this world in their proper light. Whenever he drinks wine--it will be with the knowledge and awareness of what it is and why he is drinking it. We, too, with our own thorough reflection can attain a similar awareness!

29. One should take the lesson from attractive plants and foods which are indeed poisonous. It is not *what we see* that should determine the item's importance to us--but rather what is behind that which we see. Even the secular governments today recognize this, by requiring ingredient disclosure and nutritional value on food products that one may consume.

30. The daughter of Rebbi Chanina Ben Tradyon was praised by the way she walked. Chazal (Avodah Zara 18A) teach that when she heard the words of praise she was even more careful in the way she walked. The *Mesilas Yesharim* explains this to mean that she now walked with *even more Tznius* than she had walked with before--as her Tznius in the way she walked was what she had initially been praised for. If so, why was she punished? HaRav Mattisyahu explains that this was not Tznius at all--as Tznius means to conduct oneself in a manner in which people will not especially sense one's conduct and will not take another look at what he is doing. For instance, a Kallah under the Chupah has her face covered and one cannot see it. But, if she begins swaying her body back and forth as she davens, she becomes very noticeable and this is a lack of Tznius, as people notice her and the 'elevated manner' in which she davens....

31. Without doubt, there is a 'heter' for one to do *Mitzvos She'lo Lishma*--but before undertaking his *Mitzvos She'lo Lishma*, one should at least have Kavannah that through the *Lo Lishma* he will get to the level of *Lishma*! HaRav Chaim Volozhiner, Z'tl, provided the analogy of a king who told his servant to bring something up to the highest floor in the palace. As the servant goes from floor-to-floor he is fulfilling the words of the king in his endeavor to get to the top floor--even if he is stopped by others from making it to the top. However, if he takes the item from floor-to-floor and then brings it down to the bottom floor--then the servant is considered as one who has rebelled against the king--and was never involved in properly serving him.

32. The Rabbeinu Yonah (*Sha'arei Teshuvah* 3:17) teaches that if a person is in doubt as to whether something is prohibited and he avoids it, he fulfills the Mitzvas Asei of *U'Vacharta BaChayim*--and you shall choose life. One who is consistent in this approach--in recognizing that making the right decision *is a matter of choosing life*--has achieved a level of *Prishus* described in the *Mesilas Yesharim*!

33. A person should endeavor to reduce his *Nisyonos* in whatever way he can. When, for example, faced with something tempting, he should say to himself that it is 'not as geshmak' or not as good as it appears, or even try to find something *ma'us* about it in order to get it off his mind--so that the temptation weakens and hopefully disappears.

34. In the last Pasuk of Sefer *Koheles*, Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest of all men teaches: "*Sof Davar HaKol Nishma*--in the end all will be revealed." The famous Targum on these words explains to us that after 120 years our whole life is replayed and everything which one thought he was hiding from Hashem and everyone else becomes known to all. HaRav Eliyahu Lopian, Z'tl, asks: Being that this is the case--all of *Koheles* can be taught in one Pasuk: 'We will be brought to judgment for everything, for everything is known'. It simply does not pay to sin and if one does an aveirah, he should, for his own sake, do Teshuvah immediately. So, why do we need all of the recitations of '*Hevel Havalim*' and indeed all of Sefer *Koheles*--if in one Pasuk we understand it all?! HaRav Lopian answers that this too is to teach us that we must attempt to minimize each and every Nisayon, for it is much easier to do battle against the Yetzer Hara with this perspective. How? As the urge, desire or attraction presents itself, one should bring up the thought that this is *Hevel Havalim*--a mere lure of what is much vanity and emptiness!

35. How does one avoid Kavod when performing a Mitzvah--such a beautiful act of Gemilas Chesed in front of others? A person should avoid letting the praise sink in, and instead should think about the depth of what he is doing, before Whom he is doing it, and recognizing that it is Hashem Who is allowing him and empowering him to do the Mitzvah. With this in mind, one should realize that it is Hashem Who is the One Who deserves all of the praise--for giving him the Mitzvah and for allowing him to perform it--thereby fulfilling his *Shleimus* as a person!

36. One can speak to his friend on the telephone for several hours, although he does not see his friend at all. However, once one party hangs up, the connection has been broken and one cannot continue to speak--although both parties could continue to hold that same piece of plastic in their hand. How does one know that he should stop speaking? It is when he realizes that his friend is not on the other end anymore, listening to him. **This is our Avodas HaTefillah--to know that Hashem is listening to us, no matter who we are, and no matter what we have done.**

37. One of the requisites in Tefillah is our *Yiras HaRomimus*, our recognition of the Greatness of Hashem. HaRav Mattisyahu points out that when one entered into the Chofetz Chaim's presence, he would sense great fear and awe--not because he was afraid of punishment, as all knew the Chofetz Chaim was so full of pleasantness, compassion and Ahavas Yisroel. Rather, the fear and awe came solely from an appreciation of the greatness of the Chofetz Chaim. All the more so, when we are in the presence of Hashem--especially in Tefillah!

38. In our daily lives, we have an obligation to exhibit Kavod in various ways--Kavod Shomayim, Kavod HaTorah, Kavod Chachomim, Kavod Horim, and Kavod HaBriyos in general. HaRav Yeruchem Levovitz, Z'tl, teaches that the *yesod* of Kavod is that by our display of Kavod to Hashem, to the Torah, to another, we will accept upon ourselves the *Hashpa'ah*, from Hashem, from one's parents, from the Torah, etc. It is *we who grow* from the honor and respect we are bestowing! Just as our Mitzvos are privileges more than obligations, so too, is our display of Kavod to others intended to develop and enhance our own lives--and reach our potential by learning and growing from all those we are supposed to learn and grow from!

39. When a person has a fleeting thought to do an aveirah, he should immediately recognize that this is a test to him *Min HaShomayim*--in order for him to determine *what he will do with the thought*. If he allows the aveirah thought to *develop*--to go beyond that initial second--*that is where the aveirah sets in*. On the other hand, if he quashes the notion and clears his mind--such as by replacing it with a Torah or Mitzvah thought--he has succeeded. Indeed, the fleeting aveirah thought is to serve as a jolt to us--reminding us to put our minds back to the right place--Torah and Mitzvos! Hakhel Note: It is definitely advisable for one always to be working on a question or idea on the Parsha or on what he is learning--something which requires additional thought, that one could come back to until it is resolved, and then move on to the next Torah idea....

40. When someone does not reprimand those who are doing an aveirah, Chazal teach that if his words could have had an influence, he is actually deemed guilty of the aveirah as well. HaRav Mattisyahu explains that this is so because if he was not *mocheh*, then it is a sign that he too has some connection to the *cheit*--it is not so bad in his eyes. One truly hurt by a family member or



friend doing something wrong would stand up and take action--just as someone who saw his friend being embarrassed or disgraced would not simply let it go--but stand up and take action!

41. *Mishkal HaChassidus* involves an important determination on a case-by-case basis as to whether what one is about to do is an act of true piety, or misplaced piety. The way that one must make this determination, once again, on a case-by-case basis, is by truthfully considering which way will give Hashem more *Nachas Ruach*. If one cannot decide, he should take an *Eitzah* from those who are capable of giving one.

42. Sefer Tehillim is a Sefer of Chassidus--for in it, one finds *Dveikus, Ahavah, Emunah, Bitachon* and *Middos Tovos*. If a person would study just a Pasuk of Tehillem a day--he could gain so much out of Dovid HaMelech's great work. HaRav Mattisyahu specifically adds that if one studies Kepitel 119 (the longest Chapter in Tehillim), *one Pasuk a day*, he will develop a strong love for Torah, for the entire Perek is full of Ahavas HaTorah!

43. At the end of Chapter 19, we find perhaps one of the most famous passages of the *Mesilas Yesharim*, in which the *Mesilas Yesharim* implores us to daven for the Geulah not only for our own sake, but for the sake of Kavod Shomayim, and to once and for all bring the splendor of Kiddush Shem Shomayim to and throughout the world. HaRav Mattisyahu adds that there is an additional, personal reason for one to daven for the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash. Chazal teach that *Kol HaMisabeil Al Yerushalayim Zoche V'Roeh BeNechemasah*--one who mourns for Yerushalayim will see it as it is comforted. How? There are really two stages to Techiyas HaMeisim--the first stage which will occur at the outset of the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash, and the second stage which will occur later--after the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash. Those who properly mourned over Yerushalayim and the Beis HaMikdash will be zoche to the *first stage* of Techiyas HaMeisim and *actually see* Yerushalayim in its rebuilding and in its comfort!

44. While we are in Galus, we must be careful to act as defense attorney for our people, to constantly be *Melamed Zechus* on them, and to plead to Hashem that our misdeeds are the result of the weight of Golus, and the pressures of the surrounding nations.

45. As part of our *Avodah*, Hashem wants us to withstand our daily *tirdos*, and act with *Menuchas HaNefesh*. In fact, it is our *Menuchas HaNefesh* that exhibits our true bitachon in Him. This means that although we must act with Hishtadlus in earning our Parnassah, we should not feel harried or pressured by it. The Hishtadlus itself that we must engage in should be viewed as a fine or tax. We know that no one wants to pay more taxes than he has to, and hires an accountant to help him fulfill his tax obligation, and yet achieve the greatest tax savings. We should always remember the Pasuk that teaches: "*LeMa'an Yevarechicha Hashem Elokecha Bechol Ma'asei Yodecha*--so that Hashem will bless the work of our hands." We are only working so that Hashem's Bracha--which is what really accomplishes everything for us--can rest upon us!

46. On Shabbos Kodesh, all of us reach the *Madreiga* of complete understanding that our Parnassah comes from the bracha of Hashem. We do not involve ourselves in Parnassah at all--and we know that Hashem's blessing will sustain us!

47. A person must recognize that he is not a *borei*, but a *nivrah*--not a creator, but one who is created. This is especially so in davening, if one is to make sincere requests from his Maker. A wise person will readily be reminded of the true source of his wisdom--when he makes a mistake or a misstatement, a child teaches him something, or someone reminds him of something he previously said that he now strongly disagrees with.

48. One should recognize his strengths as the means for fulfilling his obligations and his potential in this world. Just as a bird knows that he is to fly with his wings, and an eagle knows that he is to fly higher than other birds, so too, should one who studies Torah give its teachings to others, and a wealthy person be sure to give his money to others as well.

49. When HaRav Mattisyahu is asked whether someone has Yiras Shomayim, he responds that he does not know. What in reality is Yiras Shomayim? The term is actually not found in Tanach, where the term 'Yiras Hashem' is used, but finds its source in Chazal. HaRav Mattisyahu explains that Yiras Shomayim does *not* mean that one fears Hashem Who is in Shomayim, but rather *it means* the fear engendered by the recognition that *everything one does has its effects in the Heavens themselves--and will build or destroy worlds*. **If a person can properly fathom the importance and ramifications of his actions--then he has Yiras Shomayim!**

50. The penultimate Pasuk with which the Mesilas Yesharim concludes is: "*Yehi Chevod Hashem LeOlam Yismach Hashem BeMa'asav*--the honor of Hashem should continue and endure forever, let Hashem rejoice in His works." When is it that Hashem is honored? It is when we act to give Hashem **Nachas Ruach**. **Thus, the Pasuk of *Yehi Chevod* is really a Tefillah, a prayer, that we merit giving Hashem honor, doing His will properly and bringing Him Nachas Ruach**. The more one fulfills his Shleimus in this world--the more one brings Nachas to Hashem. When this happens-- *Yismach Hashem BeMa'asav*--Hashem rejoices together with us!