

A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

Barricaded

IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT THAT DURING THE COMING weeks you were charged with a mission to capture Fort Knox. Over the next few days, you embark on a recon tour to study the fort and develop a strategic approach. As you begin your first sweep of the areas, your boss's dry voice echoes in your head: "Whatever you see, you must know—we will conquer it."


How long do you anticipate your confidence will hold up? One minute? One and a half? My inkling is that before you could say, "where's the gold," you've broken out in a cold sweat and begun trembling at the thought of trying to overpower one of the most heavily guarded places on this planet.

Hold that thought. Would you feel differently about this mission if the President told you he would be walking you into the fort, and you would have as long as you wanted to collect as much gold as you could, with any fleet of trucks and machinery at your disposal? I think you see where I'm going.

Here's the twist: The Chofetz Chaim says that this was the challenge *B'nei Yisroel* faced. They knew what Hashem had promised. They just felt they were undeserving. They

had just sinned with the Golden Calf and by yearning for meat. Their *yetzer hara* was telling them that everything that made the land incredible, like huge people, should terrify them, because in their lowly state they need a tremendous merit to capture the land. G-d's promise was no longer enough.

They were wrong. The Chofetz Chaim lays down a fundamental point of our belief system. "As long as a person is not rebelling against *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* to uproot His commandments intentionally, he can expect good." Now flip it. Everything that makes it seem impossible now serves only to indicate how incredible your imminent possession is. This process will be as easy as pie, literally. (For further understanding see the *sefer Shmiras Halashon, Cheilek Sheini*.)

Our perception has but one fallacy—we're missing G-d. This mistake is so understandable, so rational, so innately reasonable that we all are tempted to view life from this hopeless vantage point. But it's wrong. Wrong, wrong, wrong. We have been suffering for 3,500 years, because of that mistake. It would seem that it's time for us to reframe. 

RABBI
EZRA
STETTIN

THE RABBI WAS ASKED

ADAPTED BY RABBI DOVID TZVI MEISSNER
FROM *ME'AH SHE'ARIM*

BY RABBI YITZCHOK ZILBERSTEIN

Daniel approached his friend Yaakov, suggested a *shidduch* for him and told him "I will just present you the girl's name; I don't want to be the go-between, so you must find someone to be the go-between."

Yaakov did some research on the girl and thought she was befitting, and he decided to be his own *shadchan* (matchmaker). Yaakov was a talented fellow who knew how to change the inflections in his voice at will to sound like an older rabbi or a youngster. He proceeded to call


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Campaign Calling
with College Kids

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

EMILIYA WAS A 15-YEAR-OLD GIRL LIVING IN Russia. Emiliya had heard of a school for Russian girls in Israel where she could learn more about her Judaism that she was eager to attend. The problem was that she needed money to travel to Israel. After she contacted the school, the administration began to look for a sponsor. Eventually, one was found and Emiliya was brought to Israel. Unfortunately, Emiliya inadvertently fell in with the wrong crowd at the school and, one thing leading to

another, she was eventually asked to return home. Broken in spirit, she quarreled often with her mother and eventually moved out entirely. In the middle of this painful period she received a letter from Israel. Inside was an Israeli chocolate bar and a note from one of her former teachers. It read, "Emiliya, we miss you and hope you're doing well. Always remember that you are a special individual and can accomplish great things. Love, Nina." Emiliya's heart was warmed hearing that

someone was still thinking about her. Then, several weeks later, she received another letter from the same teacher along with another chocolate bar and another empowering message. And they kept on coming. Emiliya drew much needed strength from the letters, and eventually requested to return to the school. When another donor was found she was given another chance, which this time she did not waste. 

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED

CONTINUED

the girl's parents, changed to a deep voice, and told them about this excellent *bachur* Yaakov who would be perfect for their daughter. His words made an impression on them, whereupon, under pretense of *shadchan*, he arranged the dating and all the details, until they were finally engaged!

At the engagement party, the girl's father wanted to give the *shadchan* money for his work (the custom is that both the groom's and the bride's family pay a "shadchan fee" for his services), but he couldn't find him. He approached Yaakov, the prospective groom, and asked him to give the envelope with the money to the *shadchan*. Yaakov now wonders:

Q May he keep that money for being the *shadchan*? Also, must he repent for fooling the bride's family by pretending to be an outside *shadchan*, when it was he, the groom behind it all?

A The Vilna Gaon (commentary to *Choshen Mishpat*, 87:117) explains that a *shadchan* receives payment for his services as a worker for someone else. Here, however, Yaakov essentially worked for himself, so he doesn't deserve the money.

When the two parties do not need a go-between, all the money then goes to the person who suggested the names, i.e. Daniel. On the other hand, the girl's side wanted a go-between and thought they had one, so maybe they should only give part of their share to Daniel.

Regarding the second question, should Yaakov repent for his wily tactics, we may say that he doesn't have to, because he didn't profit from his actions, neither did he damage anyone. 🙏



A PARASHA Q 4 U

RABBI DOVID SPETNER

What agricultural law of the Torah might the spies have had to keep during their visit to Eretz Yisrael?

Bring this question to the Shabbos table and see who knows the answer! 🙏

TIDBITS OF CINCINNATI JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

In 5630 (1870), Charles and Max Fleischmann, Jews from Austria, together with a man named James Gaff, opened a yeast production facility in Cincinnati. Fleischmann's yeast would go on to become the world's largest producer of yeast. The Fleischmann brothers had experience as brewers and, therefore, in yeast making as a necessary ingredient in making beer, before they came to America in 1866. Yeast as a manufactured product was almost non-existent in America, and quality of bread in America lagged behind what was available in Europe. They soon followed with a gin distillery and a vinegar factory, both of which use yeast, and both became extremely profitable. The dry yeast with a long shelf life that is available today was not developed until 1940. Prior to that, yeast came as cake, had to be kept cold, and did not last very long. An interesting period in the company's history was during prohibition in the 1920's. With their distillery shut down and the rising popularity of commercially baked bread causing yeast sales to drop, they began to market their yeast cakes as a health item. By the time the Federal Trade Commission forced them to scale back their claims, yeast was advertised as helping everything from acne to constipation to causing an increase in skin's self-disinfecting power. 🙏

SOURCES: Klieger, P. Christiaan, *The Fleischmann Yeast Family*, Arcadia Publishing, 2004.
Catherine Price, 2015, *The Healing Power of Compressed Yeast*. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencehistory.org/distillations/magazine/the-healing-power-of-compressed-yeast>.

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