



It's All About Perspective

לזכר נשמת
שיינא גאלדא ע"ה
בת יבלחט"א ר' מיכאל הלוי שיחי'
גוטלייזער
נלב"ע כ"ח אלול ה'תשע"ו
נדפס ע"י זקיניה
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר וזוגתו מרת לאה
ומשפחתם שיחי'
שפאלטר



In a fascinating farbrengen the Frierdiker Rebbe shares one story that leads to two more:

“Have you heard who was celebrating at the kever of Rashbi? It’s terrible! A group of non-religious individuals who don’t even lay tefillin... How could this be?”

Such was the report one Chossid brought to the Rebbe Rashab.

“You know if the Berditchiver was alive,” replied the Rebbe to his distraught Chossid, “he would find a way to see merit in this act. Even more than pointing out the positive approach to every situation, he would arouse the wrongdoer to do *teshuvah*. Looking at the good side of what happened means bringing out the

good that is hidden inside each Jew and putting it out in the open, in a revealed way.

There is a story of the Berdichiver that is repeated one way but his grandson tells it over in a different way:

The Berditchever once passed by an *apikoros* walking through the streets. Calling him by name he said, “I am jealous of you!”

Somewhat surprised, the man replied, “For what exactly?”

“Well,” explained the Berdichiver, “You have accumulated so many *averos* and with true *teshuvah* you will be able to transform them into mitzvos. *Teshuvah* has the power to turn willing sins into merits.”

With an arrogant and cynical grin the man called out, “Tomorrow you will

have even more to be jealous about!” (Meaning he intends to do more *aveiros*.)

That is the version of the story that is generally repeated, however, it is not accurate. This is what really took place:

Reb Levi Yitzchok was walking in the streets and found a heretic, a non-believer in Torah and mitzvos.

He encouraged him to do *teshuvah* saying, “Your *teshuvah* will be very lofty because you have a lot of sins and through repentance one’s willing sins are turned to merits.”

Reb Levi Yitzchak offered him an easy path to *teshuvah*, which included expressing remorse for his past actions, acceptance to do better in the future, learn Torah, do mitzvos,

lay tefillin and a few other areas he could improve in. The heretic responded that in a “few days” you will be jealous of me.

This meant that he had indeed been aroused to do *teshuvah* but wanted just another few days to enjoy his current lifestyle.

The Berditchiver told him, “This is referred to as ‘someone who says I will sin and then do *teshuvah*,’ regarding which *Chazal* tell us that he is not given the opportunity to repent. So keep this in mind!” he concluded.

The man left and after a while he became one of the greatest observers and Torah scholars in the city of Berditchev. ①

(Adapted from *Sefer Hasichos* 5699 p. 331)