

Segulot – Part 5 – The Very Best Segulot of all

There are actually numerous *segulot* that not only have no risks, but are the ones that our greatest Rabbis and sources have constantly urged us to utilize and practice. The book “*Eitzot l'z'chut b'din b'yamim hanora'im* – Advice to merit a [positive] judgment on the Days of Awe,” from Rav Chanoch Karrelenstein, discusses many of these exemplary practices that are virtually guaranteed to help us in so many different ways.

Chapter One – “*Kol Hama'avir al midotav – Ma'avirin lo al kol p'sha'av*”

“*Kol HaMa'avir al Midotav – Ma'avirin lo al kol P'sha'av* – All that overlook what happened to them – all of their own transgressions are [also] overlooked.” (*Rosh Hashanah* 17a).

Rashi explains that this person is not *medakdeik limdod midah l'metza'arin oto* – he is not particular to respond proportionally to someone that caused him pain.

Rabbeinu Chananeil wrote that one will have years added to their life because of this.

Based on the *Selichot*, we learn that through *s'virat hamiddot* (breaking or conquering our character traits) we will merit to *rachamei Shamayim* (mercy from Heaven). And one of the very greatest *s'virat hamiddot* would be to not respond even if someone degrades us. As it says in *Gemara Shabbat* 88b – One that is degraded but doesn't degrade back, one that is insulted but doesn't insult back, is viewed by the verse (*Shofetim* 5:31) as possessing incredible strength and power.

The Rambam points out in *Hilchot Teshuva* (7:3) that the obligation of *teshuva* (returning from negative behavior) certainly includes working on bad *middot*. This is very logical since *tikun hamiddot* (fixing one's character traits) is the *yesod* and *hakdamah* (foundation and introduction) to the entire Torah (*Rabeinu Yonah on Avot* 3:17 and *Sha'arei Kedusha* from Rav Chaim Vital 1:2).

Ideally, one should not even be *makpid* (particular or resentful) in one's heart, but rather accept this [degradation] with love, and forgive the other person with a full heart and a willing spirit. The *Arizal* said that if a person would know just how valuable this disgrace was for him, he would [actually] chase after these people in order for them to disparage him. This is [significantly] more beneficial for him than other types of afflictions or fasts.

Hashem establishes the world in the merit of those that hold themselves back in a time of conflict (based on *Chulin* 89a).

The *Zohar* (1:106b and 1:54a) wrote similarly that the world is only established in the merit of those that are *ma'avir al midotav* (overlook what happens to them). Furthermore, they will have a good life in the world to come, merit to be saved from difficulties in this world, and Hashem will relate to them with *middat harachamim* (the trait of mercy).

To help us to conquer our *middot* and to restrain ourselves from conflict, we should simply try to think ahead. In a conflict, we generally have two different possibilities. If we lash out at the other person, it may initially feel good but afterwards we will probably regret it. Or we can hold ourselves back, conquer our *middot* and anger, and keep quiet. While this will be extremely difficult to do initially; in the end, when we have overcome our anger, this will be very sweet. We will feel great that we kept control over ourselves. [Therefore,] by looking ahead it will be much easier to hold ourselves back.

Another insight to help us overlook what happened to us is what the *Sefer HaChinuch* wrote in terms of the prohibitions of *nakima* and *natira* (not to take revenge or bear a grudge). The prohibitions against *nakima* and *natira* help us to appreciate that whatever pain or difficulty people cause us, is actually coming to us from heaven; these people were merely the agents carrying it out. What is happening is, therefore, really a function of our own actions and choices, not theirs.

What is the logic of *ma'avir al midotav* (overlooking what happened to us) resulting in *ma'avirin lo al kol p'sha'av* (all of our transgressions then being overlooked)?

The **Chidah** says that this will cause a *kaparah* (spiritual cleansing) for our transgressions.

The **Rambam** (*Hilchot Teshuva* 1:4) explains that some *aveirot* will only be able to have a complete *kaparah* once one has undergone *yissurim* (painful afflictions). The pain of overlooking what happened to us can serve as these *yissurim*.

And the *sefer Torat Asham* says that one who is *ma'avir al midotav*, easily appeased, and neither takes revenge nor bears a grudge, will thereby merit to have miracles and wonders done for him, will be saved, will have his days and years lengthened, his prayers heard, the entire world will be established for him, and he will also merit to acquire Torah. Implied in his words is that this will also help him to deal with pain and *yissurim*.

Besides all of the help that this will give him in this world, this will also give him a treasure in *Olam Haba*. The *sefer Yesod HaAvodah* (3:3:4) wrote –

“A small amount of pain in this world is equal to a thousand times more pain in *Olam Haba*.”

The *yissurim* (pain and difficulty) that come from the struggle of *tikun v'hitgabrut hamiddot* (fixing and controlling our character traits) are considered *yissurim* that come from the Torah. Through [accepting] these types of *yissurim*, other *yissurim* will [then] be held back from us.

It is well known from the *Gra* (*Even Shleima* 1:62) that –

“The essential existence of a person is to constantly strengthen himself with *s'virat hamiddot* (breaking or conquering his character traits). And if not, what then is his life for?”

The *Porat Yosef* (*Lech lecha*) also wrote –

“I heard in the name of *Rabeinu Sadya Gaon* that the essential existence of a person in this world is *s'virat hamiddot ra'ot* (breaking or conquering one's negative character traits).

Rav Yechezkel Levenstein told his students that *s'virat hamiddot* (breaking or conquering one's character traits) also helps for the *illuy neshama* (elevation of the soul) for one that had passed away. It is, therefore, clear that both *s'virat hamiddot* and being *ma'avir al midotav*, will be a [great] *zechut* (merit) for life and for all good.

Some *Rishonim* say that if one does not do *teshuva* for *aveirot bein adam l'chaveiro* (transgressions between a person and his friend) through requesting *selicha* (forgiveness), then he will not be able to gain a *kaparah* on *Yom Kippur* even for different *aveirot bein adam l'makom* (transgressions between a person and G-d). This is actually very logical – how is it possible that Hashem would be *ma'avir al midotav* (overlooking what this person did against Him) if this person, who is base and physical, will not himself be *ma'avir al midotav* (overlook what happened to him)?

Based on *Baba Metziah* 30b, we see that since the Jewish people did not act *lifnim m'r'shurat hadin* (beyond the letter of the law), *Yerushalayim* was destroyed. If, however, they would have acted *lifnim m'r'shurat hadin*, they would have merited to [great] prosperity in Israel.

All *s'virat hata'avot* (breaking or conquering one's desires) arouse *midat harachamim* (the trait of mercy) for a person. And this is even more true for *s'virat hamiddot* (breaking or conquering one's character traits), which is *s'virat hata'avot* of the *nefesh*, and much more difficult to accomplish.

Some other *segulot* discussed in *Eitzot I'z'chut b'din* that our greatest Rabbis and sources have constantly urged us to utilize and practice:

Kol hameracheim al habriot – merachamin alav min haShamayim – All that are merciful towards people – mercy is given to him from Heaven.

Rabim tzrichim lo – One that is needed by the community.

Chizuk amal haTorah – Strengthening toil in Torah.

Hevei dan es kol ha'adam l'chaf zechut – Judging everyone to the side of merit.

***Segulot* from Rabbi Dovid Winiarz:**

For wealth – Give *Maaser* (10% of your income to *tzedaka*). Hashem promises He will then open the windows of Heaven and shower blessings upon you.

The *Vilna Gaon* wrote that one who keeps his mouth shut in this world [i.e., from speaking negatively] will merit the hidden light of *Gan Eden* (i.e., **for insights in Torah**).

To protect you from punishment – Don't speak *lashon hara*. Just as you keep your mouth closed about the misdeeds of others, Hashem will force the Prosecuting Angel to keep his mouth closed about you too.

The most guaranteed *segulot* are what we say in the davening on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur – that *teshuva*, *tzedaka*, and *tefillah* (prayer) nullify negative decrees.

The Ger Rebbe said that the best *segulah* would be to fulfill the *possuk* in *Yitro* – to strive to be G-d's treasured people.

Segulah for *shalom bayit* – *ahavah*, *savlanut* (bearing challenges) and *vitur* (giving in) (*Sanhedrin* 7a, *Baba Metziah* 59a, *Vayikra Rabba* 9:9).

***Segulot* from Rav Aviner:**

Rav Chaim Kanievsky was once asked – “How do we know which *segulot* are true?” His response – “I only know that which is written in the *Shulchan Aruch*.” *Segulot Raboteinu* pg. 321.

Belzer Rebbe – Rav Aharon Rokeach – *Segulah* against traffic accidents – Follow the traffic laws with the strictness of the 10 Commandments, and also give rides to those who need them. In the merit of these kindnesses which he does on the road, he will be saved from bad occurrences (*Shut Shevet Ha-Kehati* 5:241).

One of the most well-known segulot for a long life is what the verse in *Tehillim* tells us – “Who is the man that desires life and loves days of seeing good? Let him guard his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking evil.” (*Tehillim* 34:13-14).

Rav Chaim Kanievski related that someone once came to the *Brisker Rav* and asked for a *bracha* that his son should be a Torah scholar and G-d-fearing. The *Rav* said that a boy will be a Torah scholar based on how much his father learns Torah with him, and he will be G-d-fearing based on how many tears his mother sheds while davening for him (*Minchat Todah* p. 89).

Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein wrote (*U-Piryo Matok – Bereshit*, p. 140) a *segulah* for *Shalom Bayit* – A husband should help his wife or, more precisely, the two of them should take care of the family's needs together, since theirs is a shared life. Once, on a Saturday night, the *Satmar Rebbe* saw that one of his *chasidim* was the last one still in the *Beit Midrash* and was folding his *talit* with great precision. The *Rebbe* asked him what he was doing. The *Chasid* said that he saw in various books that care in folding one's *talit* is a *segulah* for *shalom bayit*. The *Rebbe* responded – **A better segulah is to go home and help your wife wash the dishes.** (Others say this in the name of Rav Chaim Shmulevitz, *Rosh Yeshivat Mir*).

This should be *I'zechut ul'illuy nishmat Ruchama Rivka, a"h, bat Asher Zevulun*