



Now what in the world does that have to do? It's also a nice פסוק, talking apples and oranges. One

rabbi is telling you an important way to live with other people, and then he's telling me that we were created in the image of God. It's a nice פסוק also, but it's like—what's the connection?

Developing Inner Confidence



בן עזאי The Depth of

But the answer is, בן עזאי is saying something very, very deep.

You see, ואהבת לרעך כמוך רבי עקיבא — you should love your fellow like yourself. Problem is—what if I don't love myself?

If כמוך (*kamocho; like yourself*), then maybe I hate myself, so I should hate you too.

בן עזאי is saying כמוך is not enough.

And today we realize the depth of what בן עזאי is really teaching — what today modern psychology is confirming — that unfortunately people today validate themselves very, very little.

They value themselves very little.

The way we see ourselves today in our own eyes — says בן עזאי — כמוך — doesn't work.

If it's just the way I love myself — today how many people, the therapists' offices are flooded? Depression. Sadness. Stress. Low self-esteem. No confidence.

פסוק בן עזאי: I have a better

You shouldn't love your fellow like yourself. First you should realize:

כי בצלם אלוהים עשה את האדם (*ki b'tzelem Elokim asah et ha'adam; man was created in the image of God*)

The Dispute: What Is the Most Important פסוק?

There was once a big dispute between two big rabbis. And the dispute was as follows: What is the most important פסוק (*pasuk; verse*) in the תורה (*Torah*)?

So one rabbi, רבי עקיבא (*Rabbi Akiva*), we know him well, very famous rabbi, he said: ואהבת לרעך כמוך (*ve'ahavta l'recha kamocho; you shall love your fellow like yourself*). Very important פסוק, and until today it's in the תורה, we live by that פסוק. Love thy fellow like thyself, right?

אמר לו בן עזאי (*amar lo Ben Azzai; Ben Azzai said to him*), came along a rabbi, בן עזאי (*Ben Azzai*), and he said: I have a better פסוק.

Better than ואהבת? Better than love your neighbor like yourself? He said yes.

What's the פסוק?

כי בצלם אלוהים עשה את האדם (*ki b'tzelem Elokim asah et ha'adam; for God created man in His image*).



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

First you gotta realize what your worth is.

First you have to realize that you were created in the image of God.

Realizing Who You Are

Realize who you are.

Realize that you were created with something very powerful.

השם (*Hashem; God*) gave you something, and He put you in this world for a reason.

And it's your job to find out what that reason is.

בצלם אלקים (*b'tzelem Elokim; in the image of God*).

When we look in the mirror, when we walk down the street, we have to have a certain — not arrogance — we have to walk as if we are God's gift to the world.

You know who I am?

Know what I could achieve?

Know what I'm capable of?

And again, these are nice words — but most of us don't even believe it.

The Distraction: Watching Everyone Else

We're too busy watching other people's בצלם אלקים (*b'tzelem Elokim; divine image*).

We're too busy watching other people influence, other people crush it, other people succeed.

בצלם אלקים.

What about yours?

Do you believe you have one?

But we don't focus on that.

We're too busy following.
We're too busy noticing.

Who Is Truly Rich?

Our rabbis tell us:

איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו
(*eizehu ashir hasameach b'chelko; who is rich? One who is happy with his portion*)

Who is the rich man? He who is happy with what he has.

And maybe one day we'll talk about happiness — but I don't want to talk about happiness right now.

But our rabbis are telling us in this משנה (*Mishnah*), עשיר — to be wealthy — is not just שמח בחלקו.

It's not just being happy with what you have.

There's something much more important that you have to be happy with.

Who you are.

Being Happy With Yourself

שמח בחלקו!

You gotta be happy with what you have — with who you are as a person — with what השם created you.

Do you even know what that is?

Do we even know what our כוחות (*koachot; strengths*) are?



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

Do we even know,
if we're on a date
— why should this
person love me?

Why should this
person value me?

We're so caught up in the negative thoughts:

What if they say this?
What if they notice that?
What if they ask about this?

We're playing so much defense.

Dating With Confidence (and Humor)

But do you come to a date with an aura?

Like you know — you are lucky if you get to
marry me.

You should go to a date like that.

You'd be lucky to marry me.

Now I'm not talking about the *chesed* (act
of kindness) case — that the lady set you up
with thirty times and you finally said yes
because you just wanted to shut her up.

So obviously you'll be lucky if you marry me.

We all have that, you know.

“My aunt thirty-four times so I just said yes to
leave me alone.”

So I'm doing a *chesed* with you — just know that.

This is my *chesed* for the week.

And you better take me out for meat, you
know — at least I'm gonna get a good dinner
out of it.

I'm not talking about that.

True Confidence on a Date

I'm talking about even the guy that you think
is better than you.

You'll be lucky to get me.

You gotta live life like that.

We gotta walk around — we gotta know what
we are.

We gotta know what we bring to the table.

What are you bringing to this marriage?

Why should this guy want you?

If you don't know — if you don't value yourself
— how do you want him to value you?

If you don't think that you're a hot ticket, if
you don't think that you are amazing — why
should he think so?

You gotta believe in your product.

You gotta believe in what you have.

You gotta believe in who you are.

You gotta know what you're bringing to this
relationship.

You're lucky to get me.

The Danger of Not Knowing Yourself

Or else you know what's gonna happen?

You're gonna just be a chameleon to whatever
he wants you to be.

He wants a girl with no skirt — I don't wear
skirts.



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

He wants a girl
that wears skirts —
I do wear skirts.
He wants this — I
do.
He wants that — I
don't.

Yes I do, no I don't, yes I do.

Whatever people want — you're just going to
be flip-flopping for everyone around the
world.

What are you bringing?

You gotta have confidence in yourself.

בצלם אלקים — You Were Given Something

בצלם אלקים.

I was given something.

I have something very valuable.

I have something beautiful about me.

Because I said this many times — and I'll say it
again:

Everyone's a seven.

The "Everyone is a Seven" Theory

Did I ever tell you that? Everyone is a seven.

What does that mean?

Guy sees a girl — "Rabbi, could you set me up
with that girl? She's a 10."

Go, yeah, go out with her — you'll realize she's
not a 10.

Comes back:
"Wow Rabbi, she
is so annoying, I
couldn't stand it."

You're right —

she's not a 10.

Another girl — push a guy to go out with her:

"Nah Rabbi, she's a five."

Goes out:

"Wow she's amazing, this, that — she's
actually a seven."

Everyone is a seven.

Nobody's a 10.

You should just know that.

No One Is Perfect

Nobody's perfect.

There are 10s about you — and there are fives
about you.

And the girl next to you — there are 10s and
fives.

And if you don't know what your fives are, by
the way — just ask the person that you're
friends with.

They'll tell you all your fives.

They'll tell you your twos, your ones — they'll
tell you everything.

Ask your sister — you know, there's definitely
a ton of people in the world that do a good job
in telling you what your twos are.

We don't have a shortage of the twos.

The problem is — people around us don't
always tell us what our 10s are.



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

And it's true — everyone has threes.

I have threes.

Knowing Your Tens, Avoiding Illusions

Your Responsibility: See the "10s"

By the way, your job as a friend is not to tell your friend what her twos are. You should also do that, but more importantly, you gotta tell them what their 10s are.

בעזרת השם (*b'ezrat Hashem; with God's help*), when you have children, if you don't already — when you're married — you gotta tell your spouse what their 10s are.

חלקא דאורייתא (*chelka d'Oraita; a portion of Torah*), wow! You have a כח (*koach; strength*). You know you're a 10 when it comes to whatever.

"I love how you listen when people talk. You have such an art of listening. Wow, you listen with your face and your eyes and you're all into it when you listen. It's like you're praying when you listen. Wow, I love how you listen!"

"I love how you bring people together! You are a magnet! Wow! You could just throw anything — people will show up. You're social, hello! Unbelievable! I love that energy!"

"I love how you..."

You gotta tell people what their 10s are.

We don't do that.

Unfortunately, we don't do enough of a job of telling people.

We're always pointing out their threes.

Everyone that you will ever talk about — their threes — it's true. Those threes, they're really threes.

The Problem of לשון הרע

The problem of לשון הרע (*lashon hara; negative speech/gossip*) is that we're forgetting — they also have 10s.

Also your mom and your dad have threes, by the way — I'm sorry to tell you.

We don't talk about your mom and your dad because they're perfect? No.

Remember — everyone's a seven.

Even your mom is a seven.
And your dad is a seven.
Even you're a seven.

And everyone's a seven, six, seven — okay, everyone's a seven.

And that will mean different things in different stages of life.

That's like a little kid TikTok trend, okay, if you don't know what that is.

Sometimes when your head is big — you gotta remind yourself:

Take it easy. You're just a seven.

Don't get over your head.

But a lot of times — we gotta remind ourselves:

I'm a seven.

I'm not a nothing.



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

This guy's lucky to get me.

There are 10s about me.

He wishes.

Confidence in Real Life: Interviews, Dating, Life

You gotta know what you bring to an interview, to a company you're applying for a job.

You gotta have that confidence — you gotta walk in.

That's how you're going to be בשמחה (*b'simcha*; *with joy*) in life.

You gotta know what you bring to the table.

You gotta know what you're offering.

To the company, to the guy — you offer something.

And if you're focusing on what you're not good at — your twos and your threes — you're not going to be able to crush it on your 10s.

No one's a 10.

We all have our stuff.

It's okay.

You're not meant to be perfect.

Dating Reality: Stop Trying to Fix People

Dating — when you're looking for a guy — by the way, you're going to find a lot of 10s, you're going to find a lot of ones.

When you're dating — you ready?

My wife put it very simple, by the way.

When you're dating, your job is

to find what the ones are — what annoys the heck out of you.

Not — how am I going to change that one into a 10?

“How am I going to make him arts and crafts?”

“Rabbi, how do you make your boy, how do you make your husband...”

You know what the answer is?

You don't.

You don't make nobody in life do anything.

If you're not okay with them today — that's going to be a problem.

Dating — you gotta be okay with them however they are:

The good
The bad
The ugly
And everything in between

Because everyone's a seven.

The Illusion of Control

Everyone's a seven.

You like this guy how he is?

That one is there to stay.

If he's not organized, if he's — you know — doesn't... you know... if he's smelly...

That's it. The guy's going to be there to stay.



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

“No, I’m going to teach him — you give me two weeks with him Rabbi, I’ll show you. I’m going to turn him into a מענטש (*mentch; refined person*)...”

You’re not changing nobody.

Maybe you’re lucky if you can change yourself.

If you can change yourself after 120 years — you did a good job.

But I promise you — ה'שם (*Hashem; God*) is not going to ask you:

Did you change your husband?

You’re not here to change your husband.

You’re not here to change people in the world.

You’re not here to change people.

Your עבודה (*avodah; personal work/spiritual mission*) is here to change yourself.

What Dating Really Is

So you’re going out with someone — you gotta find out:

What don’t I like about them?

Can I live with that?

When you’re going out with someone — you gotta know:

What do you bring?

But everyone’s got their ones. Everyone’s got their tens.

Because if you’re looking for Mr. 10 — he doesn’t exist.

The Endless “Maybe I Can Do

Better” Trap

And this is a big problem.

A lot of people are going out and everything’s okay — but there’s like, you know, little things here and there.

And what happens?

They end it.

Why?

“I don’t know Rabbi... just wondering... maybe I could do better.”

So I’ll tell you the answer.

The answer is — you can.

You can do better.

There will always be someone:

- Richer
- Prettier
- Cooler
- Calmer
- More patient

There will always be someone better.

Because in one area this person’s better — in another area that person’s better.

There’ll always be someone better.

The Cost of That Thinking

So when you go out and you’re like:

“Yeah everything’s good... but I wonder... could I do better?”



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בס"ד

The answer is:

You can.

And you'll never get married.

Because you will always be able to ask yourself that question.

You will always be able to do better.

True שמחה בחלקו

So to be שמחה בחלקו (*sameach b'chelko; happy with one's portion*) means:

I gotta realize:

What am I bringing here?

What do I carry?

What do I bring?

What's my צלם אלוקים (*tzelem Elokim; divine image*)?

And when you are — when you're happy with what you have — by the way:

Not only are you שמחה בחלקו — not only are you happy with who you are — you end up being happy with חלקו — with what other people have.

Being Happy for Others

You can find out that your friend got a promotion — and you're actually happy for her.

That she's crushing it in business — and you could actually be happy for her.

That she met an amazing guy — and you could actually be happy for her.

That she went away on a program that's more expensive than yours — and you could actually

be happy for her.

That her diet is working — and you could be happy for her.

You could be שמחה בחלקו.

Not just for you — but you could be happy with the other guy.

Why We Can't Be Happy for Others

And that is what happens when you're first happy with who you are.

Because if you're not happy with where you are — if you don't feel good about yourself — you're not comfortable with yourself —

So how could I be happy for you?

I'm not happy for me.

Why We Speak לשון הרע

And not only are you not happy for you — but what ends up happening:

You do something very dangerous.

It's called לשון הרע (*lashon hara; negative speech/gossip*).

Why do we talk לשון הרע?

Why do we pull people down?

Why do we do that?

What do we gain?



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בס"ד

Because I'm not that bad.

The Stealing Analogy

I understand stealing.

I get it.

I like that purse — I want it — I steal it.

You know.

It's not nice, not allowed — but I get it.

But what's the allure in talking gossip?

The Real Reason: Emotional Survival

You know why we do it?

Because deep down — we're nervous.

I don't feel good about myself.

And it's a very cheap way of lifting myself up — is by putting you down.

If I could point out her threes — I'm actually not so bad anymore.

Because I don't do that.

"I'd never — Rabbi I love people — how could she do that? You saw what she did?"

"How do people... I'm a giver — how do they just use... who would do that?"

"I would never do that."

Right.

So you're picking on her threes.

Why?

Because it makes you feel good.

Lashon Hara, Jealousy, and the Illusion of Competition

A Shocking Teaching from חובות הלבבות

I want to read to you from the חובות הלבבות (Chovot HaLevavot; Duties of the Heart). Something wild.

He says:

אמר אחד החסידים (amar echad hachasidim; one of the righteous said):

הרבה בני אדם יבואו ליום השבון (harbeh bnei adam yavo'u l'yom cheshbon; many people will come to the Day of Judgment).

A lot of people are going to get to שמיים (Shamayim; Heaven) on the day of judgment.

After 120, they're going to get to the heavens.

And of course, we each think that we're going to have VIP.

"I'm Syrian, I'm Mashadi, Isfahani, Tehrani, whatever. I'm a Nazarian or Ian or whatever. I'm going straight — me and God, we're tight, we're besties."

"Rabbi, I'm going VIP — I'm going to cut the line in שמיים."



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

“God has a picture of me right behind His desk — ‘how you doing?’”

So a lot of people — they’re going to get there.

The Surprise in Heaven

וכשמראים להם מעשיהם
(*u’k’she’mar’im lahem ma’aseihem; when they show them their deeds*)

They’re going to show them all the good that they did.

ימצאו בספר זכויותיהם זכויות שלא עשו אותם
(*yimtze’u b’sefar zechuyoteihem zechuyot shelo asu otam; they will find merits recorded that they never did*)

All of a sudden they’re going to show you:

“What’s your name? Sarah? It says over here Sarah that you built these organizations.”

And what are you going to say?

“I think you got the wrong Sarah. I never built organizations.”

ויאמרו לא עשינו אותם
(*v’yomru lo asinu otam; they will say we didn’t do them*)

“I never did that. I wish I did that — I never did. I’m not an organization girl.”

“I saw you did a lot of תהילים (*Tehillim; Psalms*). You finished תהילים in your life? Wow — you almost have the record. You finished more than דוד המלך (*David HaMelech; King David*) himself. You did תהילים ten thousand times.”

“What? Me? I never did תהילים ten thousand times. I barely took one chapter when they did that whole one through ten thing — everyone took — I took one here and there. I didn’t even finish it. I’m not a תהילים girl.”

Where Did These Merits Come

From?

ויאמר להם
(*v’yomar lahem; they will say to them*):

עשה אותם אשר דיבר בכם
(*asa otam asher diber bachem; the one who spoke about you did them*)

“You’re right. You didn’t do it. But so-and-so spoke bad about you.”

“She did those good things.”

The Reverse: Taking on Others’ Sins

וכן כשיחסירו מספר זכויות
(*v’chen k’she’yachsiru mispar zechuyot; and similarly when merits are reduced*)

You’ll have a guy — they’re going to have in their עבירות (*aveirot; sins*):

“What’s this doing here? I never did this.”

“I’m always like יום כיפור (*Yom Kippur; Day of Atonement*) when we go through all the אלה בית (*aleph-bet; alphabetical confession*). There’s always like a lot of them that we never did.”

“It’s like — okay, maybe I ate out of the סוכה (*sukkah; ritual hut*), okay fine, I’m sorry about that.”

“I said a ברכה (*bracha; blessing*), I didn’t say a ברכה with כוונה (*kavanah; intention*), okay I did that one.”

There’s the ones that you did.

Then there’s ones you’re like:



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“Wait — who the hell is doing this one?”

You’re looking around — “who’s stepping over here? Shame on you!”

Like — who killed? Who did that?

Certain sins we don’t do.

The Shock Continues

All of a sudden you get to שמיים and they’re going to say:

“You did these עבירות.”

We say:

“Listen God, I did a lot of bad — but that I never did, I could guarantee.”

“You can play the footage — I never did that.”

What are they going to say?

They’re going to say:

בם ונוספו לכם בעבור פלוני שדיברתם במ
(v’nosfu lachem ba’avur ploni she’dibartem bam;
they were added to you because of the person you spoke about)

“It’s true — you never did them.”

“But we’re adding it to you — because of so-and-so that you spoke about.”

Why Does This Happen?

You know what’s going on over here?

Says the חובות הלכות:

When we talk gossip — we get the עבירות of that person — and they get our מצוות (mitzvot; good deeds).

Why?

Why should that be?

I did a sin — I should get punished for doing a sin.

Leave the sin isolated.

Why all of a sudden — if I talk gossip — now I also get all of your עבירות?

Why does that happen?

The Deep Explanation

Like we said — gossip — when I speak gossip about you — why do I do that?

Because I grow from your mistakes.

I feel good.

I can’t wait for you to mess up.

I’m excited when you mess up.

Your mess-up — it fuels me.

I have what to talk about.

I have what to feel good about.

I could expose that at lunch, at the שבת (Shabbat; Sabbath) table, wherever.

I get to point out to everyone:

Look at her. Look at them.

And I get to sit there — and I feel great about myself.

You Become Built From Their Failures

You are only you because of her sins.

So says the חובות
הלבבות:

So it only makes
sense.

Your existence — you exist because of her
mess-ups.

Her mess-ups should go to you.

They're part of what make you — you.

You live off of that.

You feed off of that.

You need her mess-ups to live — so they
should go to your account.

You ate from that your whole life.

You fed off of those sins.

See what's going on?

Unbelievable concept.

Very deep.

The Cheap Way to Feel Good

So we have to realize:

Gossip is a very cheap way in life of growing.

Of feeling good about yourself.

Really — that's not how I should feel good
about myself.

My worth — my self-worth — should not come
from having to crush you.

My worth should come from me realizing:

What are my 10s?



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בס"ד

Confidence Removes the Need for Gossip

And when you have that — when you're
confident in who you are — you don't need to
go around talking bad about people.

I'm great.

I'm happy.

When I'm happy — by the way — you should
know:

Jealousy is really just an indicator about you.

What Jealousy Really Means

When we're jealous — it just means that we're
not happy in life.

Jealousy has very little to do with the other
guy.

"I'm so jealous — why them? Why this? Why
that?"

Really — it's an indicator:

I'm not happy with where I am.

The Engagement Example

If you were happy with where you were — if
we're happy in life — I'm happy for other
people.

If — use an example — if we're very wealthy —
we're not threatened if someone else is also
wealthy, right?

If I just got married — and then I find out
another girl just got engaged — what's my
response?



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

Amazing.

מזל טוב (mazal tov; congratulations).

Hello, beautiful.

And it's genuine.

It's not like a fake מברוק (mabrouk; congratulations) and deep down like "whoa I hate her."

It's real.

Why?

Happy for you.

Beautiful.

Because I'm also — I'm not threatened by that.

I'm married.

When It Hurts

If I wasn't married — it would be much harder for me to be happy for you.

It's like deep down I'm thinking:

Why her?

Why not me?

As if her guy was supposed to be your guy — and she took it from you.

Like — we don't think like that consciously.

But it's almost like we live with this.

The Zero-Sum Illusion

We live with this zero-sum game.

That if you're plus one — it means I'm at a minus one.

If you made money — it had to come at my cost.

If you got married — it's because I

didn't get married.

If you got ברכה (bracha; blessing) — it had to be — it should have been my ברכה.

You took it from me.

So I'm upset that you got it.

Right?

We live sometimes with that big mistake.

That you grow — that your success was at my expense.

That's how sometimes we think.

Breaking That Illusion

Your success is not at my expense.

That's not how the world works.

But if I feel like that — it means something deeper is going on inside me.

It means I'm not comfortable with where I am.

Pain, Expectations, and Becoming a "גדול"

The Question: What About the Pain?

Am I saying good שיינע (shayne; good points) or no? No? Okay.



Inspiring our Souls with the words of Torah

בס"ד

You hear what I'm saying tonight?

Am I — ladies — am I — I'm getting a lot of stares. No, it's good.

The "4 vs 8" Question (and Miscommunication)

"What if you are really like — you know — let's say a person is like a five... but they're aiming for a seven. Is that okay? They really want a seven."

No one's a five. Everyone's a seven.

"So let's say you are a four. Let's say overall — you average out the seven and the three — you come out to a four. But you're aiming for an eight. Is that okay?"

You should always try to grow. Right? We're always trying to grow. For sure.

But right now you want an eight — that's fine.

If you're a four — you should aim for five, by the way.

Eight's too high.

But you want an eight — get there.

You should want a ten also.

But there's big life goals — and then there's daily goals.

My daily goal — if I'm a four — I should want to be a 4.1.

But right now you want an eight — what are you talking about?

"In dating."

Oh — if you're a four and you want someone who's an eight?

Okay — we were completely on two different wavelengths on that one, by the way.

Our communication was a two — just saying.

Wanting to "Marry Up"

So if you're a four and you want an eight — that's life.

We all want to marry up.

I never met someone who's an eight that wants a four.

I have yet to meet them.

"No one's looking to do *chesed* (charity) — you know?"

Everyone wants to marry up.

Everyone wants to marry up.

The Hard Question: Would They Want You?

And I mean — we'll talk about it in another class — but what you have to really ask yourself is:

Why would the eight want to marry you if you're a four?

Because they're a servant of God?

Okay — so that's what we're talking about.

Very good.

So that's what I'm saying — you're not a four and he's not an eight.

You're both sevens.



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The Real Struggle: Confidence vs Reality

“But that wasn’t my question. The question is that you do have that confidence — and it’s a little bit like, you know — you feel like I can get an eight — so what if I am a four but I want an eight — is that okay?”

Because then you feel like you have ways to get the eight.

Again — how do you go about when you have that piece of desire too much — where you think too high of yourself — when in reality you’re only a four?

Is that okay?

The Reality Check

Look — there definitely are a lot of people that are not realistic when dating.

You know — guys — the guy’s forty-two and he wants an eighteen-year-old.

Alright אחי (*achi; my brother*) — not happening anytime soon.

You know — you have to be realistic also.

“I want a million dollars.”

You know — but you have to be realistic in life.

You have to try to.

And it’s hard to be realistic.

Back to Pain

So because then also it leads into what you were just saying:

Okay — so I’m not going to talk לשון הרע (*lashon hara; negative speech*) — and I’ll be happy for you — but the

pain is there.

So how do I address the pain?

I’m still not married.

Or I still don’t have money.

Or whatever is missing — whatever challenge — the challenge is there.

So I’m not going to talk לשון הרע — I’ll be happy for you — but how do I address the pain?

Self-Inflicted Pain

So sometimes the pain is self-inflicted.

You want an eight.

I’m a four — but I want an eight.

Okay — right.

So I’m saying sometimes the pain is self-inflicted.

You want an eight — and you have to be willing to endure the pain that comes with that.

An eight is something very high.

You may get it.

You have to wait a while.

And if you’re okay with waiting — and the pain that comes with that — right?

These are personal choices that every person has to make.



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Becoming the Person You Want

A lot of people want gold.

They want ten.

And they're not ten.

And so part of dating is actually building yourself into becoming the person that you want to marry — would want to marry in return.

Would that guy want you?

It's a hard question to answer.

It hurts sometimes to answer.

The truth hurts.

Delusion vs אמונה

You want that — but would they want you?

Some people are delusional.

They're delusional.

They live in a fantasy.

They don't live in reality.

They say:

“No — it'll come if I have אמונה (*emunah*; faith).”

Alright — but that's not how אמונה works.

Compatibility: Values vs Personality

“Are there any topics — categories — where a girl can be a four and match with an eight?”

Almost always you'll find that you and your spouse are opposites.

Where you're weak — your spouse is strong — and vice versa.

Now when I speak about four and eight — I'm talking about personality.

Character.

Values — you should not be opposites.

I just want to be clear.

That's a very important point.

Values Must Align

In values — you have to be the same as your spouse.

You have to want the same things.

To have the same goals.

That's not a four or eight question.

That's not a number.

A value is — what do you want in life?

That you have to be on the same page.

If you're here and they're here — it's going to be very complicated.

Personality — it's okay to be different.

Jealousy Question — Emotional Honesty

“So going back to that jealousy aspect — I understand we shouldn't be jealous — but it's kind of natural... like a girl younger than me



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just got engaged —
it hurts. Ouch. I'm
not jealous — but
it still hurts."

Yeah.

And that's human.

There's nothing wrong.

We have feelings.

Feeling vs Escaping

And it's part of the process — we gotta talk
ourselves through it.

What hurts me about it?

Why does it hurt me?

What does that reveal to me about me — and
how I see myself?

These are the thoughts we have to have.

And it's okay — we're human.

We're not meant to be numb in life.

The Danger of Numbness

A lot of times we don't like the feelings of
being hurt — so we just become numb.

And we escape.

We run away.

We say:

"Nah — yeah — it's fine — I'm happy for her —
no problem."

"Yeah sure — what do I care."

And we just escape the feeling.

But no — really —
you have to be in
touch with your
feeling.

Transition to ניסן — What Is "גדול"?

So — you know — we enter ניסן (*Nissan; the
month of redemption*).

Leaving Egypt in two weeks from today בעזרת
השם.

יציאת מצרים (*Yetziat Mitzrayim; the Exodus from
Egypt*).

Guys are like:

"Rabbi, it's not יציאת מצרים — I'm with my
in-laws for פסח — I'm going to מצרים."

The Word "גדול"

Well, השם told אברהם (*Avraham*), that when
they leave — the Jewish people — they're
going to leave with רכוש גדול (*rechush gadol;
great wealth*).

What does that mean — גדול (*gadol; great*)?

I want to talk today — what is a גדול?

First Appearance of גדול

Anyone know where's the first time the word
גדול appears in the תורה?

The גאון מוילנא (*Vilna Gaon*) says — the first
time a word appears — it defines it.

Where does גדול appear first?

Day four.

השם created the sun and the moon.

How is the sun referred to?

המאור הגדול
(hama'or hagadol;
the great luminary).



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The "Moon"

Sun vs Moon — The Core Analogy

Unbelievable.

On day four, השם created:

המאור הגדול והמאור הקטן
(hama'or hagadol v'hama'or hakatan; the great
luminary and the small luminary)

Why is the sun called the גדול?

You'll say — because it's bigger.

But there's a much more important difference.

What is the difference between the sun and
the moon?

It's not just size.

The sun has its own light.

The moon doesn't shine.

The moon reflects off the sun.

Definition of a גדול

A גדול — you ready?

This is very important.

A גדול is someone who can generate their own
internal light from within.

A גדול is someone who can validate their own
experiences in life.

Their own worth.

I could see myself — and I could say:

I'm good enough.

Personality

Some people — they're like the moon.

They only shine if others tell them so.

There was a stage in my life — every time I
spoke — I would always ask my wife:

"Was I good? Was I good? Was I good? Was I
good? Was I good?"

You need people to חזק וברוך (chazak u'baruch;
encouragement and praise).

For every video — you're constantly looking
at:

Comments

Likes

"How many people are liking it?"

"Was it good? Was it good?"

I need you to shine on me.

Because you're a moon.

גדול vs קטן

That is a very big definition of a קטן (katan;
small person/immature person) in life.

A קטן needs other people to validate them.

Children are like that.

They're constantly turning around looking for
approval.

The Blessing at a Brit



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At a baby's ברית (brit; circumcision) — what do we tell them?

זה הקטן גדול יהיה
(zeh hakatan gadol yihiyeh; this small one shall become great)

What are you telling him?

You're telling the child:

Right now you're a moon.

Right now you're insecure.

You need others to shine on you.

I give you a blessing — that one day you should be like the sun.

That you should generate your own light.

Your own כוח (koach; strength).

True Adulthood

The גמרא (Gemara) says:

A קטן in הלכה (halacha; Jewish law) — when does a child become an adult?

As long as he's relying on his father's table — he's a קטן.

Not just economically.

As long as you still need your father.

As long as you still need other people to "thumbs up" you.

To pat you on the back.

As long as in life you're looking at other people:

"What are they going to say?"

You are a kid.

You are a child at best.

You're the moon.

You don't really have internal worth.

Becoming Self-Sufficient

A גדול is when I could say:

I'm self-sufficient.

It's a tough thing in life.

A lot of people like to mooch.

Which is why there's a lot of drama in families.

The sister
The brother-in-law
The this
The that

"Why are you taking? Why are you living in our house? You're married — get out!"

"Using our credit card..."

A lot of drama.

True Independence

But there's something beautiful in life about learning to be self-sufficient.

Economically.

Financially.

But also emotionally.

To reach a point where you're able to just be your own person.



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It's hard to be different.

Social

Pressure, Identity, and the Courage to Stand Alone

Why People Fail: The Power of Environment

רמח"ל (Ramchal; Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto), he says in פרק ד (perek daled; chapter four) of מסילת ישרים (Mesilat Yesharim; Path of the Just), that there are three reasons why people fail in life.

Maybe one day we'll talk about one and two.

But I want to share with you number three.

Why people fail in life.

You ready?

Because of their friends.

Because of the people around us.

And what will they say.

The Fear of "What Will They Say"

"Rabbi, I want to start dressing that way... or eating in these places... or stop... or start... I want to... but I can't because my friends."

It's hard.

When everyone around you is doing something different.

It's hard to be the outcast.

When Something

Becomes "Normal"

And until something becomes normalized — it's always difficult.

Right now you're all sitting in a class.

There was a time in the community where this was not normal.

I bet you if you told people that you were in a class tonight — they would say:

"Wow, that's beautiful."

I mean — I'm assuming that's how it is here.

I know Great Neck is unbelievable — it's growing tremendously.

In the Syrian community — class is like trending.

Normal.

Summer, Friday, מזל party? Class רב?

It's like — if you see a group of girls at a class — you don't blink twice.

Very normal.

No one says boo to you.

"Wow, you went to a class — רב could you come give me a class?"

Everyone wants a class.

It Wasn't Always Like This

There was a time in the community where class wasn't normal.



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It wasn't cool.

It wasn't trending.

It wasn't popular.

If you went — it was like:

“Oh my God, he's so religious.”

“Go to class?”

The Pioneers

So there's always in everything in life — there's the pioneers.

It's like the bell curve.

There are the pioneers — the people that have vision.

They can do something before it becomes normal or popular or done.

Whether it's investing in a company — whatever it is.

There's the pioneer.

The נחשון (*Nachshon; the one who jumps first*).

The guy who jumps in first.

The Pool Analogy

Everyone's standing by the pool.

Touching it with their toe.

“Oh — is it okay? Is it cold? Is it warm?”

And then there's the one guy — he jumps in.

First.

And then the rest follow.

Then the majority come.

“Okay — now I'll go in.”

Now it's proven.

Now it's safe.

The Trap: Living for Others

So רמה"ל says that unfortunately in life — the question that we always have is:

What will other people say?

How will it look?

That's how a קטן (*katan; immature person*) thinks.

Throwing Away Real Relationships

A קטן is thinking:

What will other people say?

What will they say about me?

If I bring home this type of guy.

There are a lot of people that break up with quality people.

Quality, quality person.

But because of external, superficial nonsense:

“Rabbi — this is what I'm going to bring home?”

“My family — I waited eight years to bring this?”

“What will they say?”

The Wedding vs Marriage Problem



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It's a crazy thing.

We throw away quality marriage material.

How many times parents get involved — forcing them to end it — because of silly things.

Things that don't really matter in a marriage.

But because of:

What will they say.

"No way I'm going to have you marry into that family."

"Everyone knows they don't have status."

"What will they say if we marry them?"

"We are the elite — we can't marry them."

4 Hours vs 40 Years

We throw away a quality guy.

Because we're more focused on what a four-hour wedding will look like...

Than a forty-year marriage.

Very sad.

Becoming a גדול Means Ignoring the Noise

And so part of becoming an adult — a גדול (*gadol*; *great person*) — is forgetting about:

What will people say?

אברהם אבינו — The Ultimate Trailblazer

אברהם אבינו (Avraham Avinu; Abraham our forefather) didn't care what people would say.

אברהם knew what was right.

"I don't care what they say."

"I'm going to do what's right."

The Hospice Regret

They ask people in a hospice — what's the number one regret?

People at the end of their life.

Top five regrets.

Number one:

"I didn't live the life that I wanted to live."

"I made the choices in my life because of what will they say."

What will my friends say.

I chose a college.

I chose a path.

A career.

Not what I wanted.

But what other people told me.

Or what I thought they would say.

Living Your Life

אברהם אבינו cared less what people would say.

אברהם אבינו was a trailblazer.

אברהם אבינו was called:

אברהם העברי
(Avraham HaIvri;
Abraham the one on
the other side)

You know what
העברי means?

עבר (*ever; the other side*).

הם was on the other side.

The whole world went one way.

The whole community did one thing.

הם said:

“I don’t care.”

“I know what’s right.”

“I’m going to live the right way.”

The Difficulty of Being Different

And it’s hard.

You gotta be a pioneer.

To be a נחשון.

To be a trailblazer.

You gotta be different.

You can’t care about what people are going to say about you.

Living With Criticism

You gotta be a גדול.

You gotta have inner confidence.

You gotta know you’re a ten.

It’s hard to live like that.

Rabbi Ariel Mizrahi 

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It’s hard when
you know
everyone’s staring
at you.

They’re making

remarks.

Comments.

“I was in the bathroom — they didn’t know I was there — and they said something — Rabbi, it hurts.”

Who Truly Supports You

But guess what?

At the end of the day:

The ones that love you — will respect you no matter what.

And if they won’t?

Then as the saying goes:

With friends like that — who needs enemies?

Lot: The People Pleaser

And ultimately אברהם אבינו became a prince.

His nephew לוט (*Lot*) was a little bit of a follower.

He was a people-pleaser.

Anyone know any people pleasers?

לוט was a people pleaser.

He needed everyone to like him.

Never ready to take a stance for anything.

“I need everyone to like me.”

That was לוט.

Chameleon.

The Outcome of People Pleasing

So when he goes to סדום (Sodom) — he lives like סדום.

He becomes like them.

And at the end of the day — what happens to לוט?

They laugh in his face.

A clown.

A buffoon.

When he warns them — they laugh:

“Get out of here — who are you?”

“Who am I? I’m a resident — I pay taxes — I’m a citizen — I got the passport!”

“לוט — get out of here — you’re a clown.”

Respect Comes From Self-Respect

The world respects people who respect themselves.

If we’re going to try to be like the גויים (goyim; non-Jews):

“We should be like them — then they’ll respect us — then they’ll like us — we just gotta blend in a little bit...”

The exact opposite.

If you don’t respect yourself — if you don’t respect your religion — if you don’t respect your values — why should I?



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The Honor of אברהם

It was אברהם אבינו that they bowed

to.

נשיא אלקים אתה בתוכנו
(nasi Elokim ata b'tocheinu; you are a prince of God among us)

“Avraham — you’re a legend.”

“Whatever you want — you want land? It’s yours, אחי.”

“We love you.”

“We respect you — because you respect yourself.”

Wall vs Door

אברהם wouldn’t budge.

The פסוק says in שיר השירים (Shir HaShirim; Song of Songs):

אם חומה היא נבנה עליה טירת כסף
ואם דלת היא
(im chomah hi nivneh עליה tirat kesef, v'im delet hi;
if she is a wall we will build upon her a palace of silver, but if she is a door...)

What’s the difference between a wall and a door?

The door moves.

Which way?

Whichever way people want it to.

The Doorknob Personality

Some people in life — they’re like a door.

Like a doorknob.



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Whichever way they want me to go — I go.

You want me here?

You want me there?

Politicians Example

Some politicians today — many politicians today — they're like a doorknob.

Whatever's trending.

Whatever the polls indicate.

"Abortion's in — I'm pro-abortion."

"No — I'm not — חס ושלום."

Their values flip-flop.

They change for people.

You can't build anything in life on that.

Leadership Requires Stability

You want to build?

You gotta be a leader.

You want to build your home one day?

Imagine a parent who just did whatever the kid wanted.

"Alright son — you want to smoke? Here you go."

"No problem — I love you."

You gotta be a parent.

Teacher Analogy

A teacher can't give in to kids.

Imagine a teacher starts talking like the kids:

"I don't know — I saw them using these words — I saw them playing cards — I played with them..."

"I just wanted to be like the kids."

You're a teacher.

You fire that teacher.

We hired you to teach the kids — not to become like them.

Stand for Something

In life — when you know something to be true — you gotta be confident in that.

You can't worry about what people are going to say.

"How will it look?"

And we rationalize it.

"No — but if I do it — then they'll like me — and then I could bring them closer to השם (Hashem; God)."

Yeah, okay.

You don't believe in yourself.

Know, Go, Show

You gotta know the way.

You gotta go the way.

And you gotta show the way.



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And you can't worry about what they're going to say.

There'll always be people saying.

You Can't Please Everyone, and You Don't Need To

The Donkey Story — Trying to Please Everyone

It's like the joke of the dad and his son — and they're with the donkey.

So the dad is walking, and the son is riding the donkey.

And they pass by a few old men — and they overhear the old men saying:

"Look at this generation."

"The kid lets his old man walk?"

"The kid is young — he's strong."

"What kind of kid? Where's the respect these days?"

They turn the corner — the dad says:

"Alright kid — let's switch. It doesn't look good if you're on the donkey. I'll go on the donkey."

So they switch places.

Now the dad is on the donkey — the kid is walking.

They pass by another group of old men — and they overhear them saying:

"What kind of men do we have these days?"

"Guy's making his little kid walk?"

"You're a big guy — you should be walking."

"You're the dad — let your kid ride the donkey."

The dad's like — oh gosh.

Trying Every Option

They turn the corner — he says:

"Alright son — get on the donkey."

They both ride the donkey.

They pass by another group of old men.

The dad overhears them saying:

"What kind of people are these?"

"Have some רחמנות (*rachmanut*; *compassion*) on the donkey!"

"Two at a time?"

"At least take turns — something!"

"What kind of people are these?"

The Punchline

So finally they turn the corner — he says:

"Alright son — we're both walking."

They walk by a fourth group of old men.

And the dad overhears the guy saying:

“Look John —
three חמורים
(chamorim;
donkeys).”



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What Does That Mean?

The Lesson

In life — you're never going to make everyone happy.

There will always be people talking about you.

If you're going to change for them — and for them — and for them — you're going to always change.

You gotta have the confidence.

You gotta know what's right.

You gotta know what's deep down — what's true.

And you gotta just do it — like an אברהם אבינו (Avraham Avinu; Abraham our forefather).

Don't worry about anyone.

The Face of the Generation — Like Dogs

The גמרא (Gemara) says — at the end of time — the faces of the people will be like dogs.

The סוטה in גמרא (Sotah) — the last page — it gives like ten signs that משיח (Mashiach; Messiah) is coming.

Today there's an obsession with משיח.

When is משיח coming?

What to think?

Well the גמרא gives signs.

One of the signs:

The face of the people will be like dogs.

So the חפץ חיים (Chafetz Chaim) says:

I always thought it meant something else.

The other day my niece was FaceTiming my mom — she was playing with the phone — she put the dog emoji on her face — so she was talking with the dog.

I said — oh, that's what it means — the face of the people will be like the face of dogs.

The Real Meaning

The חפץ חיים says — this is what it means:

When a dog walks — who's in front?

The dog or the owner?

The dog's in front.

If you didn't know any better — you would think the dog is in charge.

The dog looks like he's leading.

Right?

But what does the dog do every few seconds?

He looks back.

To make sure he's being followed.

The Leadership Illusion

When משיח is approaching — everyone's going to be like a dog.

They're going to look like they're leading.

Even leaders.



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צניעות — A

But they're constantly looking back:

For approval
For validation

“Am I good?”

“I’m good?”

“That was a good speech?”

“How many likes?”

“Was it good?”

“You like my ring? How’s my ring?”

“Nice ring?”

If 35 people say it was nice — then it’s nice.

Otherwise — it’s not a nice ring.

“How was my trip?”

“How’s my dress?”

“I don’t know what I think — what do you think?”

You need to think — or else I don’t know.

I’m a moon.

The מדה of ניסן — Becoming a Sun

So this is the מדה (*middah; trait*) of גדלות (*gadlut; greatness*) of ניסן (*Nissan; the month of redemption*).

This month — we got:

החודש הזה לכם
(*hachodesh hazeh lachem; this month is for you*)

It’s ultimately the מדה of אמנו (*Rachel Imeinu; Rachel our matriarch*), by the way.

Misunderstood Concept

רחל אמנו — she’s known to be צנוע (*tzanua; modest*).

And unfortunately — צניעות (*tzniut; modesty*) today became just a matter of inches.

“Are you צנוע?”

“I’m צנוע.”

“How long is your... I wear it till here... till there...”

But really — צניעות has nothing to do — not nothing to do — but it’s not only to do with clothes.

It has a lot to do with value.

What Modesty Really Means

Modest means:

I don’t need to be loud.
I don’t need to be heard by everyone.
I don’t need to be seen by everyone.
I don’t need to make public what I do.

That’s what צנוע means.

The Story of רחל אמנו

רחל — she did a great act when she saved her sister — when she gave her the signs.

But the greatness of רחל is that she didn’t tell anyone.

Why would she do that?

Why would she not tell anyone?



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When you do **חסד** (chesed; kindness) — you tell people, right?

Why didn't she tell anyone?

Internal Validation

The answer is:

Because if I'm a someone — then I know.

I told myself.

And I know.

Is that enough — that you know?

Well — depends.

Are you a someone?

Do you value your own validation?

The fact that you know — is that enough?

For **רחל** — it was very much enough.

No one needs to know.

I know.

True Confidence

I'm a somebody.

I'm a very important somebody.

I'm **צלם אלקים** (tzelem Elokim; created in God's image).

And I know.

And for me — that's enough.

No one else needs to know.

I don't have to flex it.

I don't have to show it off.

I don't have to flaunt it.

I know.

Why People Need to Show Off

The people that need to show — it's because they don't value themselves.

It's very sad.

Modesty = Confidence

Modesty is actually the biggest expression of confidence.

We often think that a person who's modest is hiding — because they have nothing to show.

It's the exact opposite.

Modesty means:

I'm so confident in who I am — I don't need to show it.

The Inner World

כל כבודא בת מלך פנימה (kol kevudah bat melech פנימה; the honor of a princess is within)

The real honor of a Jewish woman — she generates from within her own **גדלות**.

Her own shine.

She's a leader.

She's a builder.

She has her values.

She knows what she's worth.

Building From Within

And she goes and she builds:

She builds a home
She builds her house
Her family
Her community

She builds.

That starts with פנימה (*penima*; *within*).

That starts with:

If I respect myself
If I validate myself

Then I can start shining that light outward.

Humility vs Confidence

“How do you balance the line between humility and confidence?”

Because how can you be confident — without being overly confident?

You want to project confidence — but not show off too much.

What Is Humility?

What does humility mean?

Humility means:

Not thinking you're better than other people.

Where Confidence Leads



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But the truth is:

When you know what you are
And what you have

And you remember that it's because it's a צלם אלקים
(*tzelem Elokim*; *divine image*)

And you realize:

I am who I am because God gave it to me —

So actually it leads to more humility — not less.

משה רבינו — The Model

משה רבינו (*Moshe Rabbeinu*; *Moses our teacher*) was the greatest.

And because of that — he was the humblest.

When you know how much power you were given...

How much talent you were given...

How much — whatever in life — השם (*Hashem*; *God*) gave you...

It actually causes you to be more humble than other people.

Redefining Humility

What is humility?

Humility means:

I haven't done enough.

I have to do more.

Arrogance is:

“I'm better than you.”
“I deserve praise.”

That's arrogance.

The Wealth Analogy

If a person has a million dollars — and he gives fifty thousand —

And you have another guy who has a billion — and he gives fifty thousand —

Really — the guy with the billion should be ashamed of himself.

Even if he gives a hundred thousand — he should be ashamed.

The Truth About Being Blessed

The fact that I gave more — is not a reason for me to be arrogant.

Opposite.

I should be ashamed.

I should have given more צדקה (*tzedakah; charity*).

I only gave a hundred?

That's not even my ten percent.

Humility Through Responsibility

When a person realizes they were blessed —

They realize how great they are —

That should actually cause them to be more humble.

Because I look at what I've done — and I say:

Wow.



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That's so little compared to what I was given.

Seeing

Others Differently

And actually I look at you — and I say:

If הַשֵּׁם gave you what He gave me —

You'd probably achieve ten times more than what I achieved so far.

It's true I did X, Y, and Z —

But actually I bet if הַשֵּׁם gave you what I had —

You would do A, B, C, D, E, F, G —

Ten times more than me.

That's humility.

Final Blessing

Okay — great question.

Is that clear?

Any questions?

Okay.

חזק וברוך (*chazak u'baruch; strength and blessing*).

חודש טוב (*chodesh tov; a good month*) everyone.

Have a wonderful evening.

Takeaway from the Lecture

The foundation of a person's life is not how others see them, but how they see themselves. Before loving others, before building relationships, before achieving anything



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externally, a person must internalize כי בצלם אלוהים עשה את האדם (ki b'tzelem Elokim asah et ha'adam;

man was created in the image of God). True confidence comes from recognizing one's own value, strengths, and purpose. When a person depends on external validation, they become like the moon – reflecting others. But when they develop inner confidence, they become like the sun – generating their own light. From that place, jealousy fades, gossip becomes unnecessary, decisions become clearer, and life is lived with direction rather than reaction. A person who knows their worth can build, can stand alone like אברהם אבינו (Avraham Avinu; Abraham our forefather), and can live authentically without being controlled by “what will people say.”

Five Shabbat Table Discussion Questions

1. If loving others depends on loving ourselves, how do we practically develop a healthy sense of self-worth rooted in כי בצלם אלוהים (ki b'tzelem Elokim; *being created in God's image*)?
2. Where in our lives are we acting like the “moon,” relying on validation from others instead of generating our own internal confidence?
3. How can we distinguish between healthy ambition (wanting to grow) and unrealistic expectations that create unnecessary pain?
4. In what ways does concern for “what will people say” influence our major life decisions, and how can we begin to break that pattern?
5. What is one area in our lives where we can shift from external validation to internal validation – and what would that change look like practically?