



The Path To Follow

CHAYEI SARAH

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GUARD YOUR TONGUE!

Worse Than a Dog

A person who speaks Lashon Harah descends from the level of a human being. In fact he becomes worse than a dog, as it is written: "Whoever speaks Lashon Harah...deserves to be cast to the dogs" (Pesachim 118a). The Torah states, "Lo tisa [Do not accept] a false report" (Exodus 23:1), which can be read as lo tasi ("do not remove"). This phrase occurs right after the expression, "Throw it to the dogs" (ibid. 22:30). The reason for this, as the Maharal of Prague explained, is simple: Dogs did not whet their tongues during the plague of the firstborn in Egypt, as it is written: "But against any of the Children of Israel, no dog shall whet its tongue" (ibid. 11:7). Yet a person who speaks Lashon Harah – a person to whom Hashem has given intelligence and discernment – cannot control his tongue? This is why he is worse than a dog. The Talmud quotes Rav Chisda as saying, "One who speaks Lashon Harah deserves to be stoned" (Arachin 15b), and cites two passages from Scripture: "He who slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I cut down" (Psalms 101:5) and, "They cut off my life in a pit and threw stones at me" (Lamentations 3:53).

– Shmirat HaLashon

EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON GOOD MIDDOT

(BY RABBI DAVID HANANIA PINTO SHLITA)

It is written, "Abraham said to his servant, the elder of his household, who controlled all that was his, '...I will make you swear by the L-RD, G-d of Heaven and G-d of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell. Rather, to my land and to my birthplace shall you go and take a wife for my son, for Isaac'" (Genesis 24:2-4).

The commentators ask why Abraham insisted that Eliezer not choose a wife for Isaac from among the wicked Canaanites (accepting a girl from among the daughters of his homeland instead), for the people of his homeland were also wicked, since they too were idolaters! As we say in the Passover Haggadah, "At first our ancestors were idol worshippers.... Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor.... I took your father Abraham from beyond the river and I led him through the whole land of Canaan." That being the case, why were they better than those from Canaan, concerning whom Abraham warned Eliezer and made him vow not to choose a wife for his son? The question becomes even more pronounced when we see which family Eliezer selected, the family of Bethuel and Laban! Were they tzaddikim? Laban was an idol worshipper! In fact when his daughter Rachel stole his idols, he was so lost that he searched through Jacob's things in the hope of finding them. The house of Bethuel was also filled with idolatry, as Rashi notes in regards to Laban's statement to Eliezer: "I have cleared the house" (Genesis 24:31). Rashi explains that he cleared the house of idols. Therefore why were these homes preferable to the homes of the Canaanites?

Furthermore, Abraham was allied with Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre. Therefore why didn't he select a wife for Isaac from among their households? Could he not have found an honest woman that would have suited Isaac from them?

There is another question that we need to answer. On the verse, "The souls they made in Haran" (Genesis 12:5), Rashi states: "Abraham would convert the men, and Sarah would convert the women." Hence Abraham could have found a wife for Isaac from among all the families that he had converted and brought under the wings of the Shechinah. Was there no suitable woman for Isaac among all those souls?

The answer to these questions is that there is a vast difference between the sins of those who lived beyond the river, Abraham's homeland, and those who lived in Canaan. Although the residents of Abraham's home beyond the river strayed by worshipping idols, theirs was an intellectual sin. That is, their characters remained pure. For example, take Laban the Aramean himself. Even though he was an idolater, he demonstrated hospitality with Eliezer and pushed himself to clear his home of idols for his sake. Similarly at a later time, many years afterwards, he welcomed Jacob to his home. From this we see that his character wasn't completely corrupt. Their main sin lay in a failure to recognize that the world is governed by a Creator, and they erred by worshipping idols. On the other hand, the people of Canaan were extremely wicked, and their characters were corrupt. It was there, in the land of Canaan, that Sodom developed, and it was there that men swallowed each other alive. The Midrash recounts that people stole and spilled blood without mercy (Tanhuma, Vayera 7). Their wickedness did not stem from erroneous concepts, but from fundamentally flawed characters. They possessed evil middot,

and to them we may apply the description that the spies gave when they returned from exploring the land of Canaan: "All the people that we saw in it were men of middot" (Numbers 13:32) – meaning bad middot. We also read that when the Jewish people entered the land of Israel, they were ordered to place a ban on all the seven peoples living there, and to leave none of them alive. From here we understand just how the depravity that reigned among the Canaanites was liable to have an influence on all who approached them. There was no reason to believe that they would improve, which is why they had to be completely destroyed.

Hence Abraham did not want to select a wife for Isaac from among the daughters of Aner, Eshkol, or Mamre, nor among the souls that they had made in Haran, whom they had brought closer to G-d. In fact the environment in the land of Canaan was so detrimental to middot that Abraham was afraid it would harm even the best families, those of Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre, as well as the souls they had brought under the wings of the Shechinah. This is why he told Eliezer that the only place where he could be sure to find a woman with good character traits was in his land of his birth. There the people were immersed in error, even in idolatry, yet they could change if they learned the truth and opened their eyes to see the right path. In that case they would be on the path to the Tree of Life. A single ray of light is enough to reveal the truth in the midst of deep darkness. However people who possess profoundly harmful middot – jealousy, anger, cruelty, and rage – have a wicked heart, and it is very difficult to change them. It is extremely difficult for a person to improve his own character flaws.

We see this during the time of the prophet Eliyahu, for almost everyone followed the prophets of Baal, and idolatry was then rampant in the land of Israel. In fact Eliyahu had to assemble all the people on Mount Carmel and declare, "How long will you dance between two opinions? If the L-RD is G-d, go after Him! And if Baal, go after it!" (I Kings 18:21). At first the people did not say that Hashem is G-d, and the prophets of Baal continued to claim that their idolatry represented the truth. As Scripture states, they cut themselves and cried out, "O Baal, answer us!" (v.26). Then in one fell swoop, the situation suddenly reversed itself and all the people proclaimed, "The L-RD, He is G-d. The L-RD, He is G-d" (v.39), for a little light casts out great darkness.

The Sages teach that the generation of Ahab, even though it worshipped idols, was victorious in warfare because it did not speak slander or Lashon Harah. As for the generation of Saul, many of them died in battle because there were slanderers and traitors among them.

Therefore when Eliezer went to find a wife for Isaac, he first made sure that Rebecca was imbued with kindness. When he asked her for something to drink, she hastened to get it for him. In fact she fully understood the needs of guests, and she ran to draw water for all of Eliezer's camels. She spared no effort in demonstrating kindness to Eliezer, who was stunned when he saw the goodness of her heart. This is the great lesson of our parsha, for the main thing in the service of Hashem is to elevate ourselves in good middot.

MUSSAR FROM THE PARSHA

A Life of Joy

It is written, "The life of Sarah" (Genesis 23:1).

What a wonderful teaching is hidden within these words, the life of Sarah: Sarah lived! When we speak of people who experience tremendous suffering in life, we say that the life they live is no longer a life. As for our mother Sarah – who sat with her head lowered and did not have children up to her old age, having had no opportunity to bear children naturally – she is described as having lived! Yet was she really living during her 127 years, including 70 years of shattered hopes?

Not only do people describe a life of suffering as being "no longer a life" (an expression used by many, not just by those who want to "live life to the full") and consider periods of suffering as an absence of life, this expression is also used by our holy Sages! In fact they have said, "There are three whose life is not life: The compassionate, the hot-tempered, and the fastidious" (Pesachim 113b). Commenting on Shabbat 105b, Rashi explains: "When we spend our days in goodness, it is considered a long life." Only a life of joy is considered life, not one filled with worries and problems.

Actually, the Sages have explicitly stated: "Are there years that are years of life, and years that are not years of life? Rabbi Eleazar said, 'These are years... that have changed from evil to good'" (Yoma 71a). This is surprising, for were all of Sarah's 127 years considered as years of life?

The Netziv of Volozhin Zatzal clarifies this for us: Sarah was incredibly righteous, for she had an extremely powerful faith and confidence in G-d. In fact the Midrash tells us that she told Abraham, "You live by the promise, while I live by faith." This is why she was never saddened at any point in her life. Thus the verse states, "The years of the life of Sarah," for these were all years of joy for a lofty soul living a spiritual life. It was a life of joy that was lived in close proximity to Hashem, upon Whom she replied. From here the Netziv opens a window through which a great light illuminates the words of the Sages: " 'Hearken to her voice.' We learn from here that Abraham was inferior to Sarah in prophecy" (Rashi on Genesis 21:12). This is an astounding statement, for is it possible that our father Abraham, a spiritual giant with whom Hashem regularly spoke, was "inferior" to Sarah, with whom G-d only spoke once ("and He said, 'No, for you did laugh'" [Genesis 18:15])? How are we to understand this?

This means that Abraham was inferior to Sarah in terms of the Divine Presence. In this regard, Sarah was even greater than Abraham, for the Divine Presence only dwells upon a person through the joy of the mitzvah (Shabbat 30b). Although Abraham was promised that he would have children, we know what the Sages said on the verse, "Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed" (Genesis 32:8). They said that Jacob was afraid that a sin on his part had annulled G-d's promise to him, since there are no promises for the righteous in this world (see Bereshith Rabba 76:2). Yet Sarah, whose faith did not require a promise in order to be strong, was never sad in her life, and she was completely infused with the Divine Presence. As Scripture tells us, "The humble will increase their joy in the L-RD, and the poorest among people will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 29:19). The poorest among people are those who are used to suffering, those whose life is not truly a life. They are the ones who will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel, in Whom their confidence rests, which is why they are filled with joy.

A Pearl From the Rav

It is written, "The life of Sarah was 127 years; shnei [the years] of Sarah's life" (Genesis 23:1).

The word shnei can be understood in the sense of "two," meaning that Sarah had two kinds of life: On one hand, at the age of 7 (which is still a young age, one without responsibilities) she served Hashem as if she were 20, the age at which one takes on responsibility. At the age of 20, she acted as if she were 100 years old, being as serious and responsible as the aged. As the Sages have said, "For scholars, the older they grow the more wisdom they acquire"

(Shabbat 152a; see also Kinim 3:6). Although none of this was easy, since these characteristics normally come with age, Sarah nevertheless demanded great maturity of herself at a very young age.

On the other hand, Sarah had another kind of life: At 100 years of age she was like 20, meaning that when she was old, she demanded of herself the same vitality in serving Hashem as a 20-year-old. At 20 years of age she was like a 7-year-old, meaning that at the age of 20 (when a person already has an evil inclination) she served Hashem like an innocent 7-year-old, whose faith is pure.

The Trial of Wealth and the Trial of Suffering

It is written, "The life of Sarah was 127 years; the years of Sarah's life" (Genesis 23:1).

Here Rashi states, "The years of Sarah's life. They were all equally good." All the years and experiences that she lived through had a good influence on her. For some people, experiencing abundance makes them forget their Creator, as we read: "Yeshurun grew fat and kicked" (Deuteronomy 32:15). For others, the suffering they endure in life leads them to forsake Hashem and His Torah. As for Sarah, she overcame both the trial of wealth and the trial of suffering, since all the years of her life had an equally good influence on her.

– Meged Yosef

Her Sons Rise and Praise Her

It is written, "Abraham came to eulogize Sarah" (Genesis 23:2).

Where did Abraham come from? The Midrash replies, "From Mount Moriah" (Bereshith Rabba 58:5). When Abraham eulogized Sarah and described her to others, he emphasized the sacrifice of Isaac, which took place on Mount Moriah. Abraham said, "If she raised such a son, who was ready to joyfully give up his life, we can understand just how great she was." The Midrash tells us this by asking, "From where did he come?" That is, from where in Sarah's life did Abraham begin to eulogize her? Which deed did he focus on in particular? The answer is: "From Mount Moriah" – from the events that transpired there. That was the subject of his eulogy.

– Hadrash Vehaiyun

There is Nothing Besides Him

It is written, "Hear us, my lord. You are a prince of G-d in our midst" (Genesis 23:6).

These pagans always addressed Abraham as "my lord," whereas Abraham never addressed them in this way. Abraham was the first to call the Creator "L-rd," as our Sages have said: "From the day that the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, there was no man who called the Holy One, blessed be He, 'L-rd' until Abraham came" (Berachot 7b). Therefore he could not bring himself to use the term "lord" with regards to people, even for reasons of politeness. Abraham connected everything dealing with this term to Hashem.

– Madregat HaAdam

An Upside-Down World

It is written, "To his servant, the elder of his household, who controlled all that was his" (Genesis 24:2).

Usually when a person lends money to another, he first checks his honesty and ability to repay, and only then, when he has no doubts, does he lend him money. Yet in Jewish life, when a person purchases kosher meat, tefillin, or anything else related to a mitzvah, he will pay little attention to the issue and trust just about anyone.

This is not how Abraham acted. Although Eliezer was "the elder of his household, who controlled all that was his," meaning the person to whom he completely entrusted all his possessions and wealth, nevertheless when it came to matters of Jewish life, Abraham did not fully trust him. That is, when it came to finding a suitable wife for his son Isaac, he no longer trusted Eliezer's word, demanding instead that Eliezer take a serious oath, as we read: "Now place your hand under my thigh..." (Genesis 24:2).

– Yalkut HaDrush

Compliments Can Also Be Harmful

It is written, "Abraham said to his servant... 'You shall go and take a wife for my son, for Isaac' " (Genesis 24:2-4).

Later when Eliezer arrived in Haran, he said that Abraham had instructed him to "take a wife for my son" (v.38), omitting the words "for Isaac." We may explain this by means of a parable: A very wealthy man wanted to marry off his daughter to the son of a great Torah scholar, and he promised that he would provide a large dowry. This man went to a matchmaker, and she told him: "You want to provide such a large dowry for the son of a great Torah scholar? I'll find you someone who is a great Torah scholar in his own right!" The wealthy man, however, refused. "I don't want my daughter to be a rebbetzin," he said, "because I know how unhappy and restricted their lives are." The same applies here, for Abraham told Eliezer to find a wife "for my son, for Isaac," meaning that he was to stress that Abraham's son was a great tzaddik in his own right. Yet when Eliezer arrived in Haran and saw just what type of people he was dealing with, he was hesitant to describe Isaac in glowing terms. He was afraid of saying that Isaac was a great tzaddik, lest they wouldn't agree to the match. Hence he spoke only of Abraham, without mentioning the young man himself.

Nothing Can be Done Against Hashem

It is written, "They said to her, 'Will you go with this man?' And she said, 'I will go' " (Genesis 24:58).

Here Rashi comments: "I will go. Of my own accord, even if you do not want." Was it proper for Rebecca to speak to her parents in this way, a way that demonstrated a lack of modesty and a degree of insolence?

What Rebecca really said was: You saw for yourselves that my father Bethuel died because he did not want me to leave [see Rashi on v.55]. Therefore I'm obligated to leave, even if you don't want me to, for Heaven is forcing you to agree. It's therefore best if you don't prevent me from leaving.

– Be'er Maim Haim

Overview of the Parsha

Our parsha describes the end of Abraham's era, from the death of Sarah and the marriage of Isaac until Abraham's death. When Sarah died in the land of Canaan, Abraham purchased the cave of Machpelah as a gravesite. In his advanced years, Abraham made his servant Eliezer swear to journey to his homeland and find a wife for Isaac. He returned with Rebecca, who would become Isaac's wife. Isaac then went to live in the Negev. Abraham married Keturah and sent the sons of his concubines to the land of the east, after which he lived a good long life. At the end of Abraham's era, the Torah speaks of the generations of Ishmael and the places where his descendants dwelled, after which it continues with the generations of Isaac.

EISHET CHAYIL

The Ways of Modesty

Included among the ways of modesty is demonstrating generosity, welcoming friends with joy and friendliness, showing people affection, doing what they want, and sharing in their worries. As one Sage said, "Modesty only endures among one who is big-hearted." It is also written, "The beginning of modesty is to welcome your friend. Afterwards it is to show him affection. The third step is to do what he wants. The fourth is to share in his worries."

We should be discreet when eating and drinking, not to behave like gluttons. Even at home, a person must act discreetly around other members of the household. A Sage was once asked, "What is modesty?" to which he replied, "That a person should be ashamed of himself."

– Ma'alot HaMiddot

REASONS FOR THE MITZVOT

The Value of Each Word

It is written, "I will make you swear by the L-RD, the G-d of Heaven and the G-d of earth" (Genesis 24:3).

In Mishneh LaMelech, the Rambam is cited as asking a very interesting question (Hilchot Melachim, ch.5): Eliezer swore to Abraham that he would not select a wife for Isaac from among the women of Canaan, yet what value did this oath have? After all, the obligation to fulfill an oath stems from the Torah ("he shall not profane his word"), but the Torah was not yet given at that time! Therefore what prevented Eliezer from transgressing this oath?

We find an instructive answer to this question in the responsa Ohel Moshe: It is quite natural to think that a person who takes an oath is obligated to carry out what he has said, something that requires no warning from the Torah. If a person has made a promise to another, who trusts him to keep his word, then there exists a natural duty for him to keep his word. A person must fulfill his promises, for a word is a word, and what a person says is not null and void. This is a view that precedes the Torah, just as civilized behavior precedes the Torah.

The statements found in the Torah, namely "That which has gone out of your lips, you shall observe and do" (Deuteronomy 23:24) and, "He shall not profane his word" (Numbers 30:3) are mitzvot concerning what a person obligates himself to do or not to do. They do not obligate him to anyone else, not even to Hashem, for how can he know if the Holy One, blessed be He, wants him to undertake a certain commitment or prohibition? In such cases, the Torah has nevertheless commanded that a person must not desecrate his word. Rather, he must fulfill every word that comes from his mouth.

In the Talmud, the Sages rule upon the case of a person who gives someone money to buy something, but then changes his mind and wants his money back. They teach that, even if from a Halachic point of view he can annul his word (since the purchase has not yet occurred), he is still to be cursed if he changes his mind! The Beit Din will say to him, "He who punished the generations of the flood and the dispersion... and the Egyptians at the sea will exact vengeance on the one who does not stand by his word" (Bava Metzia 48a). Such a person enters the same category as the generation of the flood, the generation of the dispersion, and the Egyptians at the sea. In fact Jerusalem was destroyed in part because of this very sin, as the Sages say: "Jerusalem was destroyed only because men of faith ceased therein" (Shabbat 119b). A man of faith is one who keeps his word without exception.

YOUR EYES SHALL BEHOLD YOUR TEACHER

Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer – The Author of *Even HaEzel*

After the Russian Revolution (whose goals, among other things, was the complete elimination of religious belief), almost all the yeshivot of Russia moved to Poland. Young men fled from Russia through unimaginable terrain without passports or visas, risking their lives in fleeing from the Communist regime for the sake of the Torah. Many of them arrived in Kletzk, which was close to the border. Naturally, they had no legal permission to remain in the city, and if caught they could be imprisoned or exiled. Hence a committee was created in Kletzk with the goal of helping the young men arriving from these yeshivot. The idea was to provide them with food and a place to sleep, as well as getting them the proper documents to remain in town. A member of this committee spoke to the police chief and offered him a large sum of money to organize a border crossing of young men. However the police chief was a sworn enemy of the Jewish people, and not only did he refuse this offer, he accused the committee member of trying to bribe a member of the state into betraying his position. A date was fixed for the trial of this Jew, who was expecting a severe punishment, not to mention the fact that during the trial the arrival of young yeshiva students from Russia was going to be exposed to the public. Thus the government would no longer be able to close its eyes to the influx from Russia, meaning that it would soon take extreme measures to stop it. In light of this great danger, the leaders of the Kletzk yeshiva, Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer, his son-in-law the gaon Rabbi Aharon Kotler, and other talmidei chachamim gathered in the attic of the synagogue and read Psalms. They also prayed for the police chief to be stopped.

A few days later, the police chief was mounting his horse when it suddenly bolted and threw him to the ground, killing him instantly. The indictment against the Jewish committee member was naturally dropped, since the police chief was the only witness in the case. As it is written, "Thus may all Your enemies perish, O L-RD" (Judges 5:31).

– Shimusha Shel Torah

A TRUE STORY

The Height of Insolence

It is written, "Abraham rose up and bowed himself to the people of the land, to the children of Heth" (Genesis 23:7).

A tremendous bond of friendship existed between two famous gaonim: Rabbi Akiva Eiger, the Rav of Posen, and Rabbi Yaakov, the Rav of Lissa and author of *Netivot HaMishpat*. They would correspond with one another and discuss words of Torah with great affection. One day as they were walking along the street and speaking of Torah matters, as they normally did, they passed several young men who were sitting on a bench. Rabbi Yaakov of Lissa realized that these young men had noticed them, but had failed to rise in their honor. He said to Rabbi Akiva Eiger, "Here we see with our own eyes what the Sages have said about the time preceding the arrival of Mashiach: Insolence will increase, and the young will shame the old. We are elderly men, yet these youngsters felt no need to honor our gray hairs." Rabbi Akiva Eiger replied, "Although it is true that this comprises insolence, you should realize that we are still far from the degree of insolence that the text is referring to. This was not the only thing that the Sages meant when they said that at the end of our exile, as it reaches its height, insolence will also reach its height. The day will come when we, the elderly, will be sitting on a bench and youngsters will approach and bully us to give them our seats! In their anger they will say, 'See how insolence has reached its height! Look at how these old men don't even stand up in our presence!'"

– Shimusha Shel Torah

THE DEEDS OF THE GREAT

The Animals of the Tzaddikim

The righteousness of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa spread to all around him, not only to people, but to animals as well. In fact Rabbi Chanina's donkey did not eat grain if it had not been properly tithed. One day some thieves stole Rabbi Chanina's donkey and brought it to their home. They tied it up in the yard so that it couldn't escape, and they placed barley, straw, and water in abundance before the animal. Yet since none of the grain was tithed, the donkey refused to eat anything. The same thing occurred on the next day and the day after that.

When the thieves saw this, they said: "If the donkey isn't going to eat or drink anything, why should we leave it here to die and stink up the yard?" What did they do? They untied the donkey and let it go, and with what little strength it had left, it walked along braying until it reached the home of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa. His son heard the sound of the donkey and said to him, "Father, that sounds like our animal." Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa replied, "Open the door, my son, for it has nearly died of hunger." The lad quickly opened the door and gave it straw, barley and water, which it ate and drank. – *Avot D'Rabbi Nathan 8:8*

There was once a pious Jew who fell upon hard times and was forced to sell his ox to a non-Jew. This non-Jew wanted to work the ox on Shabbat, but it refused to move. He even beat it, but it still refused. The man returned to the Jew and said to him, "The ox that you sold me is lazy." The Jew then went to the ox and whispered into its ear, "My dear ox, you know that when I owned you, you ploughed during the week and rested on Shabbat. But now you're owned by a non-Jew, so you have to work on Shabbat as well." At that point, the ox immediately began to plough. When the non-Jew saw this wonder, he was so amazed that he converted to Judaism and was known as Yochanan ben Torta (literally "son of the ox").

– *Pesikta Rabbati 14:2*

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HAFTORAH

Why Have You Done This?

It is written, "All his days his father had never atzavo [saddened him] by saying, 'Why have you done this?' Moreover, he was very handsome and was born after Absalom" (I Kings 1:6).

In reality the text should have stated, "All his days his father had never he'atzivo [made him sad]," using the Hiphil conjugation in Hebrew rather than the Kal. This can be compared to the son of an important and respected figure, who takes a wrong turn in life and plays some nasty tricks on others. His father reprimands him several times, but to no avail. His teachers relate a great deal of Mussar to him, instructing him to come back to the right path and act properly. Yet their advice doesn't sink in. Each time that his father hears about the tricks that his son has played, he gets so upset that he becomes red with shame and doesn't know where to turn. One day a man was walking in the street when he saw the respected man's son lying in a garbage bin, with only his head sticking out. He had apparently gotten inside to look for some things. The man could not contain his emotions, and a reprimand escaped his lips: "You took all your father's honor and threw it into the garbage!" Unexpectedly, these words raised an emotional storm in the heart of the son, who suddenly understood just how much shame his behavior had brought to his father. Influenced by this reprimand, he resolved to change his ways. It sometimes happens that the most intense rebuke for a person to endure is realizing that his actions have brought tremendous shame upon his respected father. Thus by the mitzvah of honoring one's father, a person refrains from acting improperly.

That being said, the verse is telling us: "All his days [the fact that King David was] his father had never saddened him" – Adonijah was never concerned that his father, the great King David of Israel, was an important figure – "by [Adonijah's conscience] saying, 'Why have you done this?'" This fact never made Adonijah feel remorse, which could have restrained his actions by raising the question: "Why have you done this?" Unfortunately, he paid absolutely no attention to this.