

## פרשת תצוה

Based on Harav Menachem Azoulay's "Ohr Ha'Emunah"

**"וְאַתָּה תִּצְוֶה אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ אֵלֵיךְ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת וְךָ כֶּתִיב לְמַאֲוֵר לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד." (כו, כ)**

The *Ben Ish Chai* wonders why the *Torah* specifically chooses olive oil. There are other oils whose light burns more clearly and more beautifully. Why didn't the *Torah* choose a finer oil? The answer lies in the nature of olive oil that is comparable to the light of *Torah* that protects a person. The olive, a bitter fruit, produces an oil that is sweet and enlightens the world. *Torah* often comes through difficulty, but its result is sweet and beautiful. It is specifically olive oil that the light of *Torah* is compared to and not some "better" oil derived from something sweet. Therefore, *Chazal* teach us that one who dreams of olive oil should expect to receive the light of *Torah*. Challenges and difficulties in life often bring the greatest achievements, successes and beauty in life.

**"וְאַתָּה תִּצְוֶה אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל..." (כו, כ)**

We were not placed in this world for the pursuit of worldly desires. We have a clear purpose in being here - to recognize Hashem and to draw close to Him and attach ourselves to Him.

The word "*tetzaveh*" is related to association, attachment. Attachment to our Heavenly Father. The very purpose of this world is for us to recognize Hashem from within this physical world. The greatest experience that one can encounter is the feeling of closeness to Hashem, a feeling of, 'אשפוך לפניי שיחי', "I will pour out my discourse before Him, I will tell Him my troubles." Our goal in life is to feel Hashem in our hearts, for the heart is the essence. The heart will bring redemption, the heart is where the battle is waged. We know that Hashem is present above, but we must constantly seek his presence in our own hearts. The greatest thing to fear is coldness. Often, a person begins forming a connection with Hashem and a fire burns in his heart. But, slowly he is subjugated to "reality," he cools off, he becomes complacent with his life, he feels as if everything is acceptable in his life. What happened to his heart? What happened to the fire?

Attachment is possible only through joy. Our mission in this world is to remain happy in every situation. But how?

People have difficulty accepting others who have full lives, are always in a good mood, are always smiling, seem to have much good, everything goes well for them, while they ... their home life is not so great, their career and income also aren't great, they could be learning better. A person thinks that his life is not so complete.

In truth, if we would stop looking at the neighbors, if we would stop jumping to conclusions that others have it better ... then we could accept the package that Hashem has designed for us. On balance, our lot in life is not so bad. Except when we look towards our neighbor ....

Happiness is primarily being happy with one's own lot in life. Happiness is knowing that every person receives exactly what he needs for his soul correction, for his purpose in life. Every soul is given talents and other gifts from Heaven specifically designed for what it needs to accomplish in this world. One

soul is given wealth to grapple with the challenges of wealth. A second soul, who may have already dealt with the challenge of wealth in a previous life, must struggle with the tribulation of poverty this time around. This is true with wealth and poverty and this is true with all of the talents, skills, strengths and weaknesses that a person is dealt. Each person receives what is needed for his specific purpose in life.

Hashem conducts the world in a wondrous and hidden manner, which we cannot fathom most of the time. "כי לא מחשבותי מחשבותיכם ולא דרכיכם דרכי נואם ה'. כי גבהו שמים מארץ כן גבהו דרכי מדרכיכם ומחשבותי" (ישעיה נ"ה) - "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says Hashem. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." When a person has questions regarding his situation, he must strengthen his *emunah* that everything is for the best. When a person acknowledges that that everything that happens to him, both good and bad, is for his best, he is fortunate to taste a semblance of the flavor of the next world currently, in this world. The main distinction between this world and the next is that in this world people think that negative events are negative, whereas in the next world it becomes clear that everything is for the absolute best. The *gemara* in *Pesachim* (50b) explains the *pasuk* "ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד" - "On that day Hashem will be one and His name will be one" - to mean that in this world we bless upon hearing good tidings with the accolade "הטוב והמיטיב" - "The Benevolent who does good" and upon hearing negative news with the tribute "דיין האמת" - "The True Judge." However, in the next world, we will use the praise "הטוב והמיטיב" for everything.

A true connection with Hashem can only be obtained through happiness and joy and we can only be truly happy if we have a connection with Hashem. To obtain happiness a person must meditate on the following thoughts:

"I am happy to be a simple Jew"

"I don't look at what others have, it's not relevant to me"

"I work on being content and feeling fortunate with my lot in life"

"I say unlimited thank Yous for everything that I do"

"I say unlimited thank Yous for every moment of peace in my life"

"I say unlimited thank Yous for everything that goes well without failure"

"I must appreciate every small thing because there is no such thing as natural order - everything is miraculous and from Hashem"

When a person hands everything over to Hashem's and recognizes that everything is under the full control and direction of the One who has boundless compassion and only desires to provide good and kindness, then, and only then, everything is balanced in his life. Everything that happens to him is okay. A person who is attached to Hashem is never in exile. Wherever he is in the world, he is connected to Hashem, he always has Hashem with him. To bond oneself to Hashem means to constantly search for the inner point, the G-dliness, that is within each and every one of us. At times that inner point becomes covered with depression, worries, anger and other contradictory traits. At those times, we must cleanse these empty emotions and reveal the diamond underneath.

How do we reveal our inner gem anew? By regularly speaking to Hashem. There are certain *tefillos* that ascend directly to Heaven. Those *tefillos* are the requests that a person whispers throughout the day, not at the prescribed times for *davening*, not from a *siddur*, but from the reality of his life. When a person turns to Hashem and says, "Hashem I cannot continue like this, Hashem please help me." At that moment, Hashem connects to that person.

## "(כז, כ) "אַתָּה תִּצְוֶה אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל..."

As we explained in the previous article, *tetzaveh* means to associate. We attach ourselves to Hashem but we must also attach ourselves to each other, to other Jews. One of our fundamental tasks is to connect to other Jews with love and friendship. We must foster peace and tranquility between Jews and thereby complete the purpose of the *Mishkan*. It is impossible for Hashem to rest His presence in our midst unless there is peace and love amongst the Jewish people. If there is hatred and strife, the *Shechinah* removes itself. Unity and teamwork have awesome power. Hashem wants unity for His people. He wants us to love one another and to honor each other.

The formula for happiness is concession, letting go. With this formula we guard peace in our homes, with this formula we solve neighborly disputes. It is an amazing and tremendous weapon that creates an air of sweetness and joy. That is what Hashem wants from us, that we submit our inclination and will to His. Hashem wants us to smile at another Jew, even when we don't have a smile within us. When I feel like I have something to say, a point to make, and I want everyone to know it, Hashem wants me to concede my will for the benefit of His will. Don't say it, let the insult pass.

We must love every single Jew and realize that Hashem takes pride in every Jew. We should not rebuke another Jew because we cannot do so properly. To rebuke another Jew we are required to do so like a father teaching his son, with endless love. Often, when people scold others they do so with self-righteousness, in a condescending manner, almost glad that they caught someone else's weakness. In such a manner, it cannot be received.

*Moshiach* cannot come until we truly connect to each other. Every Jewish soul is a part of the greater soul of the Jewish people. Hashem wants the greater soul to be complete, united. Each Jew has a unique piece that no other Jew has. We must believe each Jew is uniquely precious and if we had to face the challenges of another person, there is no doubt that we would have performed worse than he did.

Moshe Rabbeinu, our true shepherd, gave up of himself for the Jewish people. He willingly offered to have his name erased from the *Torah* to obtain forgiveness for the Jewish people. He gave up Hashem's offer to make Moshe into a great nation, it didn't interest him at all. As Rebbe Nachman said, Moshe Rabbeinu had true compassion for the Jewish people and was willing to give up everything for them, he did not consider himself at all.

Our objective in life is to acquire the trait of having a "good eye." To look for the good in each other. To find the good in the troublesome child, the lazy spouse, the annoying neighbor. There is no one in whom we cannot find something good.

When you seek and see the good in your wife, in your children, in your friends, in all those around you, you give *chizuk* with the very act of seeing the good. They feel that you love the good in them and they consequently strengthen those very same good traits and thereby negate their negative traits. For example, if a child is lazy and his father finds one area in which the child is diligent and praises that diligence incessantly, the child is encouraged to be diligent in other areas as well. Based on the *pasuk* in *Tehillim* (ועוד מעט ואין רשע והתבוננת על מקומו ואיננו), Rebbe Nachman taught that with a little bit of good a *rasha* can be transformed into a *tzaddik*. The "little bit of good" is the power of positive thoughts that

one Jew thinks about another. Those thoughts awaken the good and subdue the evil within the subject.

Our *parsha* described the long *Me'il* (like a robe) of the *Kohen Gadol*, that extended from his head to his feet, made entirely of *tcheiles* (blue wool). *Tcheiles* appears like the ocean, the ocean appears like the sky that extends from one horizon to the other. So must we look at each other, with expansiveness, like the heavens. If we take an inclusive view of another person, without focusing on his shortcomings, we will see greatness and the good within everyone.

Have an awesome and uplifting Shabbos,

Dov

NOTICE: The foregoing is based on my limited understanding of the parsha sheet disseminated by Harav Menachem Azoulay Shlita and should not necessarily be viewed as an exact translation of the sheet or even a reliable interpretation of the ideas presented. The sheet is published in Hebrew; in translation, accuracy is always compromised. Rav Azoulay has not reviewed this material and is not even aware of its existence. Any inaccuracies, omissions, or confusion should be attributed exclusively to me. I still hope you enjoy it.

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