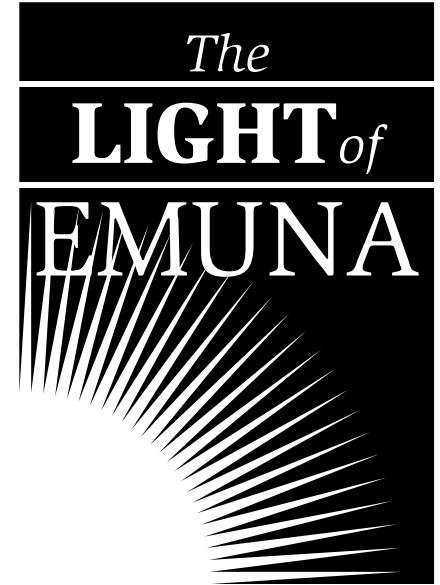


# פרשת ויקהל – פיקודי

This week's adaptation is dedicated in honor of:  
the wedding of Yossi & Aviva Zakutinsky



Based on Harav Menachem Azolai's "Ohr Ha'Emuna"

"אלה פקודי המשכן משכן העדות" (לח, כא)

**"These are the numbers of the Mishkan,  
the Mishkan of the Testimony"**

Why does the Torah repeat the word *Mishkan*? Chazal expound that the repetition refers to the Mishkan in its building and the Mishkan in its destruction. The primary erecting of the *Mishkan* was intended to impart the strength to the Jewish people to extend the holiness of the *Mishkan* and the holiness of the *Beis Hamikdash* after their destruction – via *shuls* and *batei midrash* that we build in the post-*churban* era – for they are like small sanctuaries.<sup>1</sup>

## The Joy of Renewal

Our principal task in this world is to be happy – to serve Hashem with joy. It is impossible to be cheerful if we carry around our failures of the past and our anxieties about the future. We must live in the present – to be delighted with today – to be ever elated. We must ponder the myriad kindnesses and favors that Hashem bestows upon us at every moment. Our eyes can see, our ears can hear, our mouths can speak – Hashem provides us with homes, children, livelihood, *sefarim* – what is lacking? If we would contemplate the quantity of gifts that we receive from Hashem for just fifteen minutes, with the volume of light that Hashem floods our lives with – we would arise full of vitality and joy, with an elated spirit and dance, sing and praise the One who provides all of these, the One who truly loves us – we would promptly recognize that it is

we who owe Hashem and not Hashem Who owes us. Consequently, we would have no grievances in our hearts ("how can it be that I prayed and was not answered"). When a person receives a gift from a friend – the first opportunity to return the kindness is by accepting it with a bright countenance, by exhibiting enjoyment in the gift. Similarly, when we proceed in life with a positive attitude, happy and satisfied – that is the greatest show of gratitude and praise that we can offer to the Master of the World.

Joy, love, vitality, bliss are only possible when we walk with Hashem, hand-in-hand. Without Him – we are left with what was and what will be – worries, tension, depression, anger, illusions, blame and disappointment. In one moment, all can be drastically different. We need only open our mouths and begin to converse with Hashem regarding every step and phase. We will be amazed by the miracles that Hashem performs on our behalf and we will never cease thanking. Without Hashem it cannot last because all good is finite – except for Hashem, Who is everlasting, He was, is and will be, constantly. Anytime that we feel down – we must pause and examine where we became disengaged. Our emotions are like a compass that guides us, signaling that we must return to the route, our path with Hashem.

**Rav Eliezer Berland, Shlita:** We must begin to learn to live in the here and now, to find joy now – to be happy at every moment, to experience the

<sup>1</sup>

ליקו"ה, חול המועד ד, י"ב

present and only the present and not to think about the past or the future. Right now we are alive, healthy, breathing – be grateful – content, without any thought about what was or what will be. That is the meaning of “who is rich – one who is happy with his lot.”<sup>2</sup> At present, no one is hitting us; we have a glass of tea – what more do we need? What are we missing? If we are thirsty we can drink, if we are hungry, we can enjoy a bite. We should feel great! We should be exuberant. This is how we receive everything – as soon as we manage to live in the present, we accomplish being happy with our lot and through that joy - we receive everything – all salvations and all positive qualities.

The challenge of a Jew is to be incessantly blissful. Everyone navigates ups and downs throughout their lives. The key fortification of joy is during the downfalls, during the challenges – to have *emuna* that we will emerge from the failure. In Kochvei Or, Rebbe Nachman tells a story of a villager who dug and found a diamond that was worth a fortune. Initially, he thought it was merely a nice piece of glass until his neighbors pointed out how valuable it was. However, there was no one in the village or even the country that could afford to buy it for its true worth. So, the villager decided to sail to London to sell his diamond. He sold his house, his ragged clothing, his decrepit furniture and scraped together just enough money to travel to the seaport. He did not have the funds to continue his journey, so he roamed around the port. One of the captains noticed him and asked him why he was wandering around aimlessly.

When he showed the captain the diamond, the captain was stunned. Not only did the captain agree to take villager on board, he gave him the ship's best suite with the most comfortable bed and three gourmet meals each day – compensation to be worked out later.

During his meals, the villager would often take the diamond out, place it on the table, and examine it. One day, the villager dozed off at the

table and the waiter cleared the table, shaking the garbage and breadcrumbs into the sea, unwittingly discarding the diamond too.

When the villager awoke and realized what happened – he was mortified, nearly fainting. He immediately thought that if the captain found out that he lost his diamond, he would throw him into the sea, right after his diamond. The villager decided to brace himself with every ounce of energy, with supernatural strength – to remain cheerful, to smile. A few minutes later, the captain came to visit. The villager greeted him with a huge grin, with laughter and dance – acting jolly and merry. The captain had never witnessed such good spirits. The villager knew he could only keep this up for a few minutes before his heart started pounding again. Appreciating that this was a content individual, the captain asked a kindness. The captain had undeservedly earned a reputation as a pirate. Accordingly, whenever he arrived at a new port, there was invariably suspicion of the origins of his merchandise. So, offered the captain, “please help me out and allow me to sign over to you the ship with all of its gold and diamonds. I see that you are a successful businessman, you are trustworthy, you have such a valuable stone that you don’t need what is mine.” The villager agreed and the paperwork was executed. As they reached the port, before they disembarked, the captain suffered a stroke and died. The ship’s entire fortune with vast amounts of gold, far exceeding the value of the lost diamond, was passed to the villager.

Rebbe Nachman taught a novel idea – there is no despair ever, there is no such thing – even in the midst of catastrophe, even in the greatest crisis – if a person remains steadfast for five minutes, with joy, dance and song – everything is transformed into good. We must always arrive home with a smile, enter the house delightedly. Our families need not know of our difficulties. If we cannot manage a smile, we should sit on the stoop for a few minutes before entering and practice smiling, imitate joyful mannerisms, work on our *emuna* and only then, enter with a radiant expression. This generates all of the

<sup>2</sup> איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו (אבות ד, א)

miracles in the world. We must invest all of abilities, with self-sacrifice, to constantly reiterate, “Everything is for the best.” That is our challenge. If we accustom ourselves to say, “This too is for the best” in every situation, we will emerge from all anguish, we will witness miracles and wonders. We must be happy, sing and thank Hashem relentlessly, before trouble befalls us – not wait until some woe transpires and then try to free ourselves of it. The *pasuk* in Tehillim says “every soul shall praise Hashem.”<sup>3</sup> If we add a י to the Hebrew word for soul (נשמה) we have the word for breath (נשימה). Read this way, the *pasuk* is telling us that “every breath shall praise Hashem.” If we can breathe, we must be grateful – for every breath we must sing, sing to Hashem, thank Hashem – and then sorrow will be held at bay.

Our main task is to avoid sadness entirely, because there is no reason for sadness. We must have *emuna* that every Jew is capable of receiving every good in both materialism and spirituality, every imaginable success. We can rejoice in the fact that Hashem created us as Jews – thank G-d we merit keeping Shabbos, donning *tefillin*, *davening* – it is akin to discovering a diamond worth millions of dollars. We must endlessly draw joy upon ourselves. If we can think of no cause to feel joy – we should take pleasure in the fact that Hashem created us in His image, in the fact that Hashem created us for His glory – that we can learn Torah and pray. Let all the nations behold that our weapons are Torah and *tefilla* – and when Hashem sees us truly ecstatic with Him – He will abolish all decrees and all suffering. Take pleasure in Hashem, only in Hashem. Hashem is infinite, Hashem loves us, Hashem created us, Hashem believes in us, Hashem believes in our *teshuvah*, He never forsakes us, He gives us everything.

This Shabbos is *Parshas Hachodesh*. We announce the arrival of the month of *Nissan*, which the Torah labels as the first month of the year. This is the time of the year that nature is renewed. Everything blossoms. Life renews.

We too must renew ourselves. How? We must entirely forget everything that happened until now and make a completely fresh start, as if we were born today – like a baby who is only aware of the present moment and is full of joy and vitality. One minute he cries and a minute later he laughs. He is filled with enthusiasm and investigates the world with curious eyes. Everything is new to him.

We must discover our spouses again each day. Each day during which there is peace and love in the home, we have rediscovered our soul mate. But, the reverse is also true, G-d forbid.

We count each day between Pesach and Shavuot individually – to teach us that each day is unique, with its own opportunities. It is not yesterday and it is not tomorrow. It is a new day, as if we were first born that day. We fell – we get up and start again. We must forget all the previous false starts and failed attempts. No matter what we have done before – it is irrelevant to today.

Rebbe Nachman taught that whatever happened in the past was done and gone and should not be thought about and should not be allowed to cause any confusion.

We cannot survive without holy desires and longings, without searching and yearning. If we do not seek closeness to Hashem, we quickly find ourselves bored and acting out of habit. We must be ever cognizant of Hashem’s infinite love for us and His desire to draw us higher, towards Him. Without the strength that Hashem implanted in us to strive for, to long for – the world would be an empty vessel. This power reveals the soul.

Parents must serve Hashem with joy. Children must feel as if their parents know a secret to be passed on. When the soul of a parent experiences the sweetness it is conveyed to the children beyond words.<sup>4</sup>

Rebbe Nosson teaches that Hashem’s greatest

<sup>3</sup> כל הנשמה תהלל י-ה (תהילים קג, ו)

<sup>4</sup> באור פני מלך חיים

pride in a Jew's service of Him is the will and longing that he has for Hashem – his stubbornness, his continuous desire to be close to Hashem. Our desire is the only part that is attributable to us. Everything else is from Hashem. Our talents and accomplishments are from Hashem. Our only contribution is our yearning.

A person can achieve awesome feats through force of will. The more he wants something, the more he begs Hashem for it. If he doesn't succeed, he realizes that he did not want it enough and he asks Hashem to help him yearn

for it even more. The more desire – the more hope. "I wish to pray with such connection." "I too want to feel You."

This is our task right now - to renew our desires. In this week's *parsha* it says "as Hashem commanded Moshe" eighteen times. The Jewish people performed exactly as Hashem commanded Moshe. That is the strongest bond to Hashem. Every time we do as Hashem commands, with each and every *mitzvah*, we connect anew. What a delight it is to do Hashem's will – to give back a little to the One who consistently does our will.

---

## תפילה

---

**Master of the World!** Help me make a fresh start. Help me be more faithful, Father. So often I expose a vast divide between what I say and how I act.

I often repeat, "Just *tefilla*, just *tefilla*" – meaning that one's primary exertion must be in the area of prayer. Yet, at the moment of truth, when I am in the midst of a difficulty, I do not have sufficient *emuna* and I undertake all sorts of alternatives.

I say, "It is all silliness" – meaning that one should not be overly moved by what others say to him and do to him. Yet, when people hurt me or mistreat me, I do not calm down so quickly.

I say, "There is nothing aside from Hashem." Yet, often I feel as if there is nothing aside from me, G-d forbid.

I tell myself, "It is not me, it is not me" – so that I do not become arrogant. Yet, when I succeed at something, I feel as if it was all me.

I believe greatly in love for friends. Yet I still cross the street when I notice someone from afar who I would rather not meet.

I tell myself, "I am owed nothing." Yet, when I do not receive something, I am so insulted.

I know that it is forbidden to criticize and I can even explain the concept well to others. Yet, I offer comments all the time.

I speak regularly about having a generous outlook. Yet, when things are better for someone else, I am jealous.

I say, "The world is not real." Yet, I am steeped in the world.

I say, "Everything is for the best." Yet I am crushed by anything that does not go my way.

**Master of the World!** I wish to make a truly fresh start. Help me!

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

דו

Notice: The foregoing is based on my limited understanding of the Parsha Sheet, *Ohr Ha'Emuna*, disseminated by Harav Menachem Azolai *Shlita* and is not a complete or exact adaptation of *Ohr Ha'Emuna* and is not necessarily even a reliable interpretation of the ideas presented therein. *Ohr Ha'Emuna* is published in Hebrew; in translation, accuracy is always compromised. Rav Azolai has not reviewed this material - any inaccuracies, omissions or confusion should be attributed exclusively to me. I still hope you enjoy and it provides some *chizuk*.

©Dov Elias 5773.

To receive this adaptation by weekly email, email me at [LightofEmuna@dovelias.com](mailto:LightofEmuna@dovelias.com)