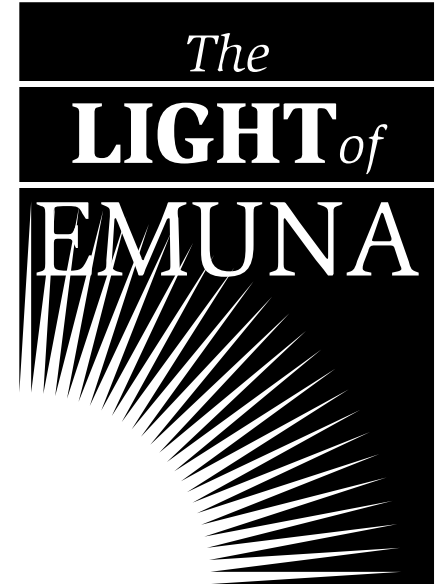


פרשת ויקרא

This week's adaptation is dedicated in honor of
our dear son, Eli אליהו יצחק נ"י
on his upcoming בר מצוה בר מצוה
!!! מזל טוב – We are so proud of you!



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

"ויקרא אל משה וידבר ד' אליו מאהל מועד" (א, א)
"And He called to Moshe, and the Lord
spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting..."

Moshe asked, "if Mount Sinai, which was only temporarily sanctified for the purpose of giving the Torah, and yet, I did not ascend without permission, as it says, 'and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying'¹ – the *Ohel Moed*, which was sanctified for generations – how can I possibly enter it without being summoned by the Holy One Blessed Be He?" Hashem concurred, as it says, "And He called to Moshe."²

so that I am inside and he remains outside?" Consequently, he invited him into the inner chamber. Similarly, when Hashem charged Moshe to build a *Mishkan* and Moshe followed every instruction to the letter, Hashem said that Moshe honored me so and I am inside while he remains outside? Accordingly, Hashem called Moshe inside – "And He called to Moshe."

Humility – certainty that all are more righteous than us, holier than us, wiser than us. We must view every Jew as so amazing, as so righteous.

When a person merits recognizing that he is so small, that he is less important than others – he receives such joy, such pleasure, such G-dly light illuminates his soul. When a person pursues honor, he has no vitality, no enthusiasm – all of his light dissipates. The more humility a person possesses, the more vibrancy he attains, the more diligence, and the more vigor. All vitality and joy stem from humility.

Humility and modesty mean knowing that alone we are incapable. We need Hashem. We cannot accomplish anything without Hashem. We cannot succeed at anything without Hashem. We cannot overcome our *yetzer hora* without Hashem. Therefore, before any undertaking, we preface it with *tefilla* and supplication. After any undertaking, we offer gratitude to Hashem for being with us, guarding us and assisting us. This is the singular truth. We cannot achieve

"ויקרא אל משה"

"And He called to Moshe"

Why was it necessary for Moshe to be beckoned? Why could he not enter on his own volition? After all, he himself constructed the *Mishkan* – why did he need authorization to enter the building that he built? Hashem commanded Moshe to erect the *Mishkan* and, as soon as Moshe completed his task and the *Shechina* rested upon it – he minimized himself and would not enter until Hashem called him – only then, he entered. The Torah is informing us of the humility and modesty of Moshe Rabbeinu. The Midrash provides a parable of a king who instructed his servant to build him a palace. When the king entered the palace, he noticed his name inscribed on every furnishing and ornament. The king said to himself, "it does not seem right that after my servant has honored me

¹ ויקרא אליו ד' מן ההר לאמור (שמות יט, ג)
² שמות רבה יט, ג

anything without Hashem. When a person lives this truth – and if he has a momentary lapse and thinks for a second that he accomplishes on his own, he immediately does *teshuva* and returns to the truth – if a person lives in this manner – he is uncompromisingly happy. For, he is attached to Hashem. Nothing conceals Hashem's light more than arrogance. Conceit is the pinnacle of distance from Hashem. A person who flees from pride, who seeks only Hashem's glory and not his own – lives better in this world, not to mention the reward waiting for him in the next world. Arrogance inspires the attitude and feeling that things are due us – we are owed honor, we are owed having things done our way – and when we don't get what we "deserve" we are pained, we are upset. We must always stop, consider and identify arrogant thoughts of grandeur that creep into our heads and to dismiss them. Why do we think so highly of ourselves? Why do we feel superior to others? Are we so righteous? Do we do everything for Hashem's honor, rather than for our own? This is how we must talk ourselves down. When we receive compliments, we immediately forget our true selves. We forget that there is nothing aside from Hashem. Chasing honor is its own form of *Gehinnom*. Korach and his assembly descended into the abyss alive. One who follows honor – every time that something does not go his way, whenever he observes someone who is better than he – is completely broken. His vitality is deflated. By contrast, one who lives with humility and unpretentiousness is always happy, he always feels content, and he merits such Divine light. That is his essential triumph – everything is for Hashem's glory. A person must understand that the greatest importance of a person is when he nullifies himself, lowers his head a bit. One who directs all honor towards Hashem, deserves admiration, not one who attempts to take it for himself. When we see ourselves as insignificant, we immediately realize that others are more notable. If we think we are important, others seem not to be. This requires constant reminder – that everything is Hashem and we must tirelessly scrutinize our motivations – for whose honor do we truly act.

There was a certain student in Brisk who was renowned for his piety and diligence in learning. All who knew him had no doubt that he was an elevated soul who was destined for greatness. He was known as being very precise with every *Halacha* of Shabbos, to the minutest detail. One day, the student met the Brisker Rav and asked him, "I wish to accept upon myself to begin Shabbos early and to cease doing *melacha* beginning at noon on Fridays – this will facilitate extending the holiness of the day and thereby I will merit the infinite pleasantness and abundance that is hidden in the holy day and I can sanctify my hours for the Torah." The Brisker Rav, who was known to be able to penetrate to the depths of a Jew's soul, responded, "It is a very nice idea and you may definitely usher in Shabbos at noon. But, only on one condition - when you accept Shabbos at this early time, you must never perceive your peers as being violators of Shabbos..." The student heard and received the *mussar*, analyzed himself and decided that he was not ready to start accepting Shabbos so much earlier.

Hashem created man in His G-dly image, and, in fact, that is what is necessary to bring the redemption, but it can also affect destruction. This Divine image gives a person the impression that he understands, that he knows, that he has intelligence. Where does all of the technology and wisdom in the world come from? They derive from the Divine-likeness. A person believes in his abilities, his talents, and his plans and he gives advice – he recognizes that he comprehends more than another, etc. Then, he receives a blow and in one minute he lowers his head and says "oy, I truly do not know."

There are influencers and recipients. Hashem is the provider and humans are the beneficiaries. Even though a person has a Divine image and can be a provider – vis-à-vis Hashem, we are all recipients. We must regularly remind ourselves of this. Every gain, every compliment, even self-bestowed every acknowledgement of good must be attributed to its source, Hashem. We must stop and thank Hashem. We must acknowledge that everything is from Hashem – from where

did I attain this knowledge, from where did I attain the intellect to comprehend, to speak, to do, to accomplish – it is from the Divine-likeness that Hashem furnished us with. Thank You Hashem. A minute later, we forget again, we think it was us. Endlessly zigzagging – it is me; it is not me; - me; not me. I am so delightful – I do not make the same mistakes that my friend does for I am so much more refined, I get it, I am not offensive, and thankfully I have peace in my home and I am successful in this or that area. But, in reality, it is not us – it is Hashem. Thank You Hashem – You brought me peace at home, You brought me success with my children, everything that I have is You. And repeatedly, persistently until we exhaust our egos – it is a one hundred and twenty year mission.³

A person who lives with humility and modesty, who is not fixated on himself – can relate to others with tenderness and love. A certain young man noticed other Jews talking during *davening* and knew that he himself did not share this *yetzer hora*. He approached them with great love and said, “gentlemen, I am but a lowly person and I am not worthy of admonishing anyone, I am so trivial – but I have heard that it is written in *sefarim* how serious it is to talk during *davening*. So, why speak?” Another person might have scolded them, but he spoke with love and they admitted that he was right and received it willingly. They recognized that he was speaking from a place of love and out of a real desire to help them. One who is unassuming worries about the Jewish people as a whole, he feels for his nation. A non-Jewish farmer in Radin once encountered two of the Chofetz Chaim’s students. He inquired as to how “Yisroel Meir” was. The students were surprised – who was this non-Jew who seemed to know their holy Rebbe on a first name basis. The farmer explained. One day he was leaving his farm and he heard the sound of howling. He immediately ran towards the sound, thinking it was a wolf attacking his sheep. When he reached the noise, he saw the Chofetz Chaim crying loudly. When he approached, the Chofetz Chaim immediately

started to apologize for disturbing him. The farmer asked him what was wrong and the Chofetz Chaim explained that he had just completed publishing his books on Jewish law and he came to the fields to pray to Hashem that there be no passages in his *sefer* that may be misconstrued and lead people to err. The farmer concluded that until that day he could not fully grasp the Chofetz Chaim’s concern and self-sacrifice for his people.⁴

Rav Eliezer Berland, Shlita: The key to earning resurrection of the dead, everlasting life and real bliss in the next world is humility.

The more humiliation that a person endures, the more humility he attains. The more one is degraded, the happier he should be. If we would know that someone was going to embarrass us in the street, it would be worthwhile to immerse in a *mikvah* beforehand because via shame great illumination appears. We should immerse in the *mikvah* so that we would be the vessels to receive this great light that is not imparted by any other *mitzvah*. Humiliation transforms a person into a nullity – by doing so, a person receives infinite G-dly light.

Embarrassment provides true *teshuva*. There are two levels of *teshuva* through humiliation. The first is when a person is embarrassed and he remains silent. He does not respond. But, there is an even higher level. This occurs when one is humiliated, degraded and he remains happy all day – he sings, hums – he receives all of the insults with joy, love, song – the shame is a salve for his wounds, a cure for his wounds. It is all pure water that purifies him.

One indignity is worth a million successes. After a single dishonor – the achievements do not cease and the abundance never ends – he can become a benefactor of an entire nation, with unlimited wealth. Yoseph Hatzaddik merited becoming the patron of the entire Egypt because he was sold into slavery and debased. His self was nullified and all treasures came through

him.

Sometimes when a person is mistreated, he thinks that it is happening because he is a *tzaddik* and people love to denigrate the righteous. That is arrogance. We must accept humiliation because we deserve it; we have not served Hashem properly. We must admit our imperfections and appreciate those who slight us for telling us the truth.

One who accepts indignities with love saves lives. *Tzaddikim* often look to receive such snubs because they realize that by doing so they are literally saving the lives of other Jews.

The holy brothers, R' Zushya and R' Elimelech,

once arrived at an inn. Some drunkards started to beat R' Zushya brutally because he went entered first. R' Elimelech protested to R' Zushya that it was not right of him not to share. "I too wish to earn merits for the next world." He begged him to switch places. No sooner than they switched places that the drunkards decided that the Jew inside had had enough and it was time to move on to the Jew outside, and so they went back to R' Zushya. R' Zushya smiled at R' Elimelech and remarked, "you see, these blows belong to me – no one can touch what rightfully belongs to another."

One insult can earn forgiveness for a myriad of sins; it can be worth thousands of fasts.

תפילה

Master of the World! Help me remember that every success, every victory is a gift from You. Nothing is earned. Instead of being satisfied with myself, help me be impressed and excited by the kindnesses that You do for me. And even when I recall that everything is from You, Father, do not allow me to believe that it is due to the fact that I am okay – therefore, You are satisfied with me. Help me remember that if something happens exactly as I had prayed for it to happen – it is all Your mercy. It is all from Your treasury of free gifts. Nothing is due me.

Master of the World! When I see others who things do not go smoothly for and they are not very successful – do not allow me to think that things are better for me because I am more prudent investor or more responsible or more serious or other such thoughts.

Help me remember that every person must traverse the corrections that were designed for him at the start. Even complete *tzaddikim* and eminent Rabbis have these and that must not diminish their worth and talents in our eyes.

Master of the World! Help me merit to never argue with any Jew, and certainly not with *tzaddikim* or prominent Rabbonim. That I constantly merit recognizing their greatness and qualities because there is always a moment when my ego springs forth and says, "They are not as great as you thought! They have made themselves seem great! You are no less than them!"

Rescue me from these types of thoughts; help me not forget all of my won deficiencies and to regularly be impressed by every Jew – to see the unique aspect in each one and to desire to receive from it. All, in order to draw close to You a bit more, my Father in Heaven.

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

Dov

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*.

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