

פרשת צו

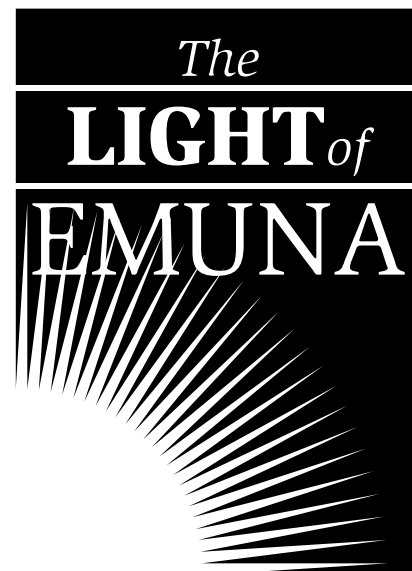
This week's adaptation is dedicated in honor of
our dear son, Eli אליהו יצחק נ"י
on his upcoming בר מצוה
!! מזל טוב - We are so proud of you!

"צו את אהרון ואת בניו לאמור זאת תורת העולה"
"Command Aaron and his sons, saying,
this is the law of the burnt offering" (ו.ב)

Whoever engages in the laws of the burnt offering is considered to have offered one – for when he connects himself to this topic with awe and love, he infuses new life into these matters.¹

"זאת התורה לעלה למנחה ולהטאת ולאשם
ולמלואים ולזבח השלמים" (ז.ז)
"This is the law for the burnt offering, for
the meal offering, and for the sin offering,
and for the guilt offering, and for the
investitures, and for the peace offering."

A Jew must constantly reinvigorate his relationship with Hashem. Every person must seek paths to reinforce that connection – with learning, with prayer, with good deeds, but, most importantly, with thought. Thought is unlimited, boundless. We can never claim to have no time for thought - reminding ourselves of Hashem is always possible. We are always occupied with our thoughts. We must guard them, sanctify them, and bolster them with warm words and kind acts – thereby building a *Mishkan* in our hearts and minds. That is what Hashem wants of us, it is what revitalizes us and gladdens us – our personal rapport with Hashem.



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

"זאת תורת העולה"
"This is the law of the burnt offering" (ו.ב)

We must constantly desire elevation (לעלות). Long for advancement. We must perpetually remember that we are mere tourists in this world. We act as if we are here for hundreds of years. There are opportunities at every moment to grab merits – grab Torah, *tefilla*, *chesed* – doing so testifies to our passion, it exhibits our connection to Hashem. Thankfully we have whom to learn from and whom to observe – for there is no shortage of *tzaddikim* in our environs who never abandon their *sefarim*, who never cease murmuring to Hashem, who never forego the smallest act of kindness that they can do for another.

We must desire. If we desire and fail, but we experience pain from that failure – if we did not accomplish everything that we wanted, but it hurts us – then, we are connected. The עולה is the most beloved before Hashem because it is not brought to atone for a sin, it is entirely voluntary. This is an allusion to us – we must continuously yearn, in everything that we do, to act for Hashem's honor, to fulfill his will. If we are unsure of what His will demands, we can concentrate on the desire to do His will and beg for the comprehension of what His will requires.

¹

בעל שם טוב

We must never allow others to dispirit us. If we are aware of something that weakens us - we must flee from it as if it were fire.

Our connection must be our main focus. If we do not have an opportunity to do a *mitzvah* at any given time - we can connect through thought. There is nothing other than looking to Hashem, getting closer to Him. We waste so much time chasing the silliness of this world - the time has come to begin pursuing the truth, our connection to Hashem. Only that is the essence of life. Only that cheers our souls. Everything else is temporary, incomplete, is incapable of satisfying the soul. We all know this, in the depths of our hearts, even those who still pursue the pleasures of this world, seeking crumbs of joy. We must seek paths to connect, awaken, and recall Hashem. Our nature is one of forgetfulness. Someone wronged us, hurt us, we were owed, our honor, we deserve - these are all amnesia driven. When we are cognizant of the fact that there is a higher world, we are less particular, less jealous, less concerned with our own honor.

It is an amazing thing to connect to Hashem - that is what our souls yearn for. If we cling to Hashem, we need nothing else. When a person is distressed, feels as if things are too burdensome, not good for him - he suffocates. This is because he does not talk to Hashem. He must lower his head, open his mouth and begin to speak and he will immediately experience an alleviating of his load. If he is unable to speak, words do not come to him, he feels nothing - he should say that, "Master of the World, I do not feel Your presence, and when I do attempt to speak with You, I feel as if I am just talking to myself - if appropriate, help me to feel, help me to be able to converse with You, to seek Your counsel, that I too may experience the sweetness." Another attempt and another and slowly we learn to live with Hashem - and that type of life is entirely different.

A person must know that every positive thought is his treasure. Those he can take to the bank. It is so amazing, for in another hour or two he will

experience another constructive notion. Just thoughts, we are not even discussing words or prayers or actions - just good thoughts. If we want our thoughts to survive we begin by mumbling them with our lips. Hashem loves us, we want to perform His will, we acknowledge that we're here on a mission, we wish to break the silly things in our lives, our fantasies, our egos, our urges, Help us. Our imaginations that tell us that we simply do not have time are incorrect - for it is enough to sanctify our thoughts. We can think while doing other things. We can contemplate how we may have harmed others. Do we not have enough time for a phone call to ask forgiveness? Just think. Then, turn those thoughts into prayers. "I am sorry Hashem. We are small people. We have begrudging eyes, we suffer confusions, we have urges, we have difficulties, Hashem, we know we are insignificant and that You are so great - You are righteous in everything that befalls us."

While we travel, we can speak to Hashem, recite a few chapters of *Tehillim* that we know by heart. Speak simply - basic ideas. That is our success in life. If we are looking for a lost object and we turned over the house and finally found it - thank Hashem. "I know that You love me and You helped me find it." At that moment, we created a bond with Hashem. The process of *teshuvah* builds a personal union with Hashem. We thank Hashem for every little benefit, we apologize for every negative perception. It all comes down to two words - thanks and sorry. We say them in second-person, directly to Hashem. We realize that He is with us, that He provides for us, that He awaits our asking for absolution, that He pardons us and that He awaits our gratitude.²

"וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הַמִּנְחָה" (וי, ז)

"And this is the law for the meal offering"

A person proceeds with the notion that he alone matters. He walks in the street and feels like he owns it. "I am okay, I am fabulous" - a person lives mostly lies. He does not seek truth. Seeking the

²

באור פני מלך חיים

truth mean lowering our heads, being honest with ourselves. We are not so righteous. We are still ensconced in the indulgences of this world, serving our impulses. We act primarily for our own honor, not Hashem's honor. We do a small favor for someone and we start to feel as if everyone is impressed with us. Instead, we should consider how merciful Hashem is towards us in allowing us to perform such acts. Humility is a person's essential greatness. We must perceive every Jew as so amazing, so righteous, and so much greater than us. This is basic – every Jew who has not yet become observant is capable of attaining the level of R' Akiva, so it is unreasonable to think we are superior. We must not view ourselves as better than others – this is a constant battle. How is this connected to *Mincha* offering?

The *Mincha* offering is so insignificant – a little flour, a little frankincense and a bit of oil and only a small portion is actually burned on the *Mizbeach* – and yet it is so beloved to Hashem. It is the only *korban* that was commanded to be offered by all of the children of Aharon, not just an individual *Kohen*. It is a poor man's offering and Hashem considers it so precious that this poor man, with his limited resources, wishes to please Hashem, in whatever imperfect way that he can. Humility is the pinnacle of clinging to Hashem. Arrogance create the widest separation. When a person attains humility and self-nullification – he needs nothing else, for when a person negates himself, G-dliness blankets him and he is transformed into everything.

It is told of the holy Chida that he loved smelling tobacco. Once, when visiting a certain town, he had left his tobacco at his dinner host and wanted it in middle of the night. So, he trudged in the cold to his earlier host and awoke him to retrieve his tobacco. In the morning, he considered how he had allowed his base urges to rouse someone from his sleep and he regretted his actions. Despite how much he enjoyed his habit, he immediately accepted upon himself to never use smelling tobaccos again for this impulse had led him to momentarily be inconsiderate of others. He realized that his desires were too powerful

and needed to be entirely eradicated.

"וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת זֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים" (ז, יא)

"And this is the law for the peace offering"

This is gratitude towards Hashem for all of His kindness towards us – even when he conceals and withholds from us, for it is out of kindness and compassion that is only clear to Him.

Gratitude and acknowledgement is an amazing path to draw close to Hashem. When a person accustoms himself to thanking Hashem he begins to see so many beautiful and amazing gifts at every moment and every hour. Things that appear to be routine, daily occurrences are also kindnesses from Hashem – we must thank Hashem for them too, nothing happens automatically. One who trains himself to thank for every detail of his life will discover that there is no greater pleasure. This is the sweetness of life. We receive so many favors from Hashem constantly - our eyes see, our ears hear, our mouths speak, our legs walk; Hashem provides us with homes, livelihood, a warm coat in the winter, clean and folded clothing in our closets, water in the faucets, *tefillin*, a *tallis* with which to wrap ourselves and talk to Him even amongst people and a *shul* for holiness in the midst of the noisy and stormy sea of life. We have Torah, *mitzvos*, *sefarim* – how much we appreciate holiness. If we can manage to look outside ourselves we notice the sun, the moon, the stars, the wondrous heavens, oceans, rivers – so many phenomenal things that Hashem created – incredible trees, so many varieties of flowers, butterflies – beauty beyond description. And, at the apex of all is man himself – whom Hashem instilled with G-dliness – we must reveal it, be awestruck by it, be proud of it. Unending gratitude for all good deeds that we are able to perform, for all of the matters arranged exactly as we requested and even for the things that did not “go our way,” that went exactly opposite of how we asked – for those are also from You, Father, and are for the best.

Tefilla Established in Place of Korbanos

Nowadays, *tefilla* is in place of the sacrifices. Just as sacrifices brought us close to Hashem, so does prayer. Prayer is the “service of the heart and via prayer we draw near and our souls are cleansed and purified. When a person prays with connection he washes his soul.

Egypt, Hashem commanded them to tie a lamb to their bedposts in preparation for the upcoming Paschal sacrifice. The Egyptians were furious because they worshipped the lamb as a god. Hashem caused a miracle that they were unable to harm, prevent or even say anything to the Jewish people. This was a double miracle – both the fear that befell the Egyptians and the courage that the Jews attained in rebelling against their oppressors and slaughter their gods. In the merit of this self-sacrifice, the Jewish people earned leaving Egypt and the redemption.

שבת הגדול

This Shabbos is called the “Great Shabbos” because of the great miracle that occurred on it. On the last Shabbos before the Jewish people left

Shabbos is a great day in that it brings us close to Hashem. It proclaims, “There is a G-d in the Heavens.”

תפילה

Master of the World! Help me remember well that at every moment, I am dependent upon You, I am in Your hands. There are so many things that can happen at any second.

When I decide to do something, so much prayer and pleading is necessary because so many things can go wrong and impede my plans.

Help me understand that everything that I want to do requires Your assistance, Father, Your protection, Your Divine Providence.

Master of the World! Help me remember that there is judgment and a Judge. There is a concept of “measure for measure.” Most often, I know what I should do, I know what Your will is – but, it is not always agreeable to me, I do not always have the zest to do it. For example, when I see someone at the side of the road looking for a lift, or I want to say something that I shouldn’t say – help me Father to remember that my actions have consequences. Somehow, I have come to live with the complacency that these things are not that important.

Help me remember that it works both ways – when we do good things, like giving *tzedakah*, we receive double.

Master of the World! Help me remember that after something occurs, not to torture or blame myself or others – for what happened had to happen, with Divine Guidance, to teach me for the future, to atone for my sins, to remind me that nothing is possible without You or even to literally save me from something.

Help me, Father, to be happy for every incident, to calm myself with the knowledge that even if everything does not seem good – it is for the best. Help me be aware that everything that transpires brings me closer to You and that is my purpose and it is what I desire more than anything else.

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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