

פרשת אחרי-קדושים

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

"וידבר ד' אל משה אחרי מות שני בני אהרן
בקרבתם לפני ד' וימתו" (טז, א)

**"And Hashem spoke to Moshe after the
death of Aharon's two sons, when they
drew near before Hashem, and they died."**

R' Eliezer Hamodai said: See how precious the death of Aharon's sons was before Hashem – for every place that their death is recalled, so is their sin. Why? To inform us that there were no other undesirable actions in their lives that would have caused their punishment. The Torah specifically repeats their sin – because it was their only one.¹

**"ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ד'" (יט, יח)
"You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
I am Hashem."**

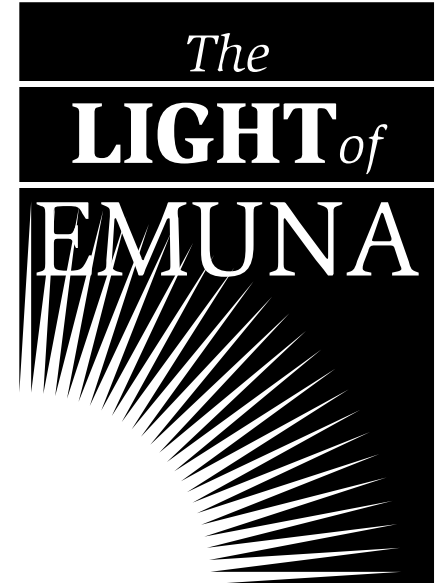
When a person makes peace with a friend, Hashem provides him with inner peace. Suddenly, he acquires closeness to Hashem and joy. When a person forgives, foregoes, when he overcomes his natural inclinations – until now he was so angry with a certain person who offended him – but after much *tefilla*, he managed to triumph over his rage, overcome his hatred – such a person is beloved in this world and whoever is beloved here is cherished above.

Parshas Achrei Mos is read on Yom Kippur. The primary service on that holy day is with regards to interpersonal relationships – for Yom Kippur does not provide atonement unless one appeases his fellow man.

This week's *parsha* commands us: "You shall

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ויקרא רבא כ'



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

not hate your brother in your heart."² Hatred often begins with jealousy and a begrudging attitude. We must battle envy when it is still but a gnawing thought before it grows to alarming proportions. When a person stumbles in this aspect it eats away at him – "but jealousy is the rot of the bones."³ What can help us in this war is the understanding that what others have is not due to their successes – it is all from above – all wealth and honor is Hashem's. The *Gemara* tells us that no one can touch anything that is prepared for another.⁴ Whatever we have and whatever others have is all from Hashem – everything is precisely calculated to bring each one to his unique purpose. We must fortify our happiness with our portion. This is the secret of the joy of the Jewish people throughout the generations – "things are good for me and I am content with what the Creator has provided to me." This does not mean that it is forbidden to desire more, but we must focus on what we have and be satisfied with it. If we are pleased with our lot, there is no reason to be envious of what others have because, in reality, what difference does it make what another has? Whether or not he has something does not affect what I have. Our assets and liabilities are tailor made to best lead us in our mission. His does the same for him. We must accustom ourselves to say, "True, I do not have everything – but, I do have plenty."

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לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך (יט, יז)

3

רקב עצמות קנאה (משלי יד, ל)

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ואין אדם נוגע במוכן לחברו (יומא לח:)

This week's *parsha* commands us: "You shall neither take revenge from nor bear a grudge against the members of your people."⁵ Even if he was unkind towards us, damaged us, hurt us – we cannot pay him back for his deeds – even reminding him of his offenses is forbidden. Forgive, forego, and remind ourselves what is truly important in life – that everything is from Hashem. It is true that that Hashem delivers good through those who are worthy and vice versa – but that is his (the person that hurt us) issue, to figure out why Hashem chose him to be the bearer of negativity. What happened to us is still Hashem's will for us.

This week's *parsha* commands us: "You shall not go around as a gossipmonger amidst your people."⁶ These four words encompass so much – all of the laws of guarding one's tongue and disparaging talk. Even if we speak truth, if it impacts someone else's honor – it is forbidden. This is *yiddishkeit* in its beauty. It is such a difficult temptation, so many stumble with this sin. We must learn from all those amazing figures who cultivated *yiddishkeit* throughout the generations, Jews of pure mind who were so meticulous during their entire lives not to utter a negative word about another and avoided listening to anything derogatory. Rather than speaking *loshon hora* they sought to give the benefit of the doubt, praised others, increased love of fellow Jews and drew hearts near.

The entire Torah is contained within this week's *parsha*, for the *pasuk* states, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." That is the primary principle of the Torah. It encompasses the entire Torah. Hashem wants our unity – to remember that we are children of one Father.

We must *daven* that we be able to see the beauty in others – that will bring peace and love amongst us and that is what Hashem desires more than anything else. Hashem pleads, "What do I ask of you? That you love each other,

respect each other and be in awe of each other."⁷

If we want a relationship with Hashem, we must love each other. We cannot love Hashem without loving His children. Smile – do not calculate that you will smile only after someone else smiles first. Be first – we have no concept of how many people we enliven when we walk with a smile. The reverse is also true, G-d forbid. Hashem gave us a face with which to smile at others. We never know what someone may be going through and how our smile can do so much for them. Sometimes people hear a kind word and it changes them instantly. Enemies become friends.

Loving one's fellow is a commandment. We cannot begin to pray without opening by quoting this *pasuk*. It precedes everything and brings people closer to Hashem. It is the greatest kindness we can do for another.

When a person develops a Torah idea, he feels as if Hashem has given him a gift. He cannot just tell his friends to read a passage from a *sefer* – he must convey it directly. Essentially, every *shiur* is a collection of ideas from different *sefarim* – but when a person delivers a *shiur* it is not just a repetition of what is written in various sources – he puts it together with his soul. That is what Hashem instructs him to do – to bring his soul to light. Anyone who has any talent is obligated to give lectures, to teach – if he fails to do so he is stealing the light that Hashem gave him, he stifles the light. Rebbe Nachman taught that one must reveal treasures to the treasured nation. The treasure is a concept that a person receives. When a person speaks, even if he is not a genius or wise enough to author *sefarim* – the very fact that he stands before a crowd and speaks causes Hashem to lower a special light upon him and he suddenly experiences something special, something burns within him. Hashem lights this fire within him and if he does not share it – it is as if he extinguished Hashem's fire. We must expose our inner light, otherwise it will harm

⁵ לא תיקום ולא תיטור את בני עמך (יט, יח)
⁶ לא תלך רכיל בעמך (יט, טז)

⁷ תנא דבי אליהו

We must always endeavor to understand another's point of view. People are unique and rather than resent others for their differences, we must try to understand them and savor their distinctiveness. We must take care never to humiliate someone because they think differently than we do. This is especially true for our spouses, our children, our neighbors and our friends.

Love is an obligation. Unconditional love will bring the redemption. We are one people, all children of Hashem. We cannot elect to dislike each other. By nature, human beings feel

entitled to everything and resent others who have more. To accept others despite their failings is a high level – higher yet is one who does not see failings in others at all.

The students of great Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizensk once asked him how a Jew could really be expected to bless for the bad as he blesses for the good. Reb Elimelech sent them to ask his brother, the Rebbe Reb Zushya. They found Reb Zushya living in a dilapidated hut, with emaciated children running around, barely enough food to eat. They posed their question but Reb Zushya responded, "My brother must be mistaken, I have never experienced anything bad in my life."

תפילה

Master of the World! Teach me to add to my every request of You, "only if it is good for me (or for the one for whom I pray)." For, when I really want something, when I am so desperate for salvation, I have no strength to add this addition. It simply does not escape my lips.

So often I beg with such fervor for something that I desire so strongly, and, when I do not receive it I am so disappointed and it takes me time to return to You. Help me, Father, to remember that I do not really know what is good for me and what is not. If I become accustomed to saying "only if it good for me," it will be easier in the future to accept a *tefilla* that seems to have been unanswered.

Master of the World! Help me to accept the difficulties in my life with more *emuna*. To have *emuna* that everything that happens has to happen - that nothing was not planned, even the most inconsequential matter. For example, when I arrive home after an especially busy and exhausting day and somehow manage to put up my feet and then I suddenly remember that I forgot something important and I have to go back to the office. "Oy vey! I can't believe this happened to me. Hashem, why?"

And even greater matters, all sorts of obstacles in life that we never thought would occur to us – especially after all of the self-sacrifices that we have made. Master of the World – why do we deserve this?

Help me accept everything joyously, to know that if this is the way that You wish me to serve You – to accept it with love, even though it is difficult for me, even though it hurts me – help me be happy with whatever transpires in my life and to remember at every moment that whatever it is, it is for my very best.

Master of the World! Help me begin each day with a short prayer that I may merit proceeding through the entire day with joy and remembering that whatever happens throughout the day is completely from Hashem and for the best.

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

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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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