

פרשת כי תבוא

This adaptation is dedicated
in honor of my wife, Devorah.

Dear Friends:

As many of you know, several of the friends and family of Avigdor Glaser, of blessed memory, formed an organization, in his memory, to financially assist widows and orphans. The organization, Avigdor's Helping Hand, is entering its eighth year of operation and, unfortunately, business is booming. Since our inception, we have distributed over \$3,000,000 in financial assistance.

We conduct one major fundraising effort each year. Please join us for an enjoyable evening of fine cuisine and relaxing music in support of Avigdor's Helping Hand, at our:

Eighth Annual Labor Day BBQ
Sunday, September 1, 2013 at 7:00 pm at the
Moradi Residence, 72 Muriel Avenue, Lawrence,
NY.

For more information about the BBQ or Avigdor's Helping Hand, visit: www.AvigdorsHelpingHand.org

If you cannot attend the BBQ, you can still help by making your tax-deductible donation online or by sending your contributions to: Avigdor's Helping Hand, 138-45 78th Drive, Flushing, NY 11367.

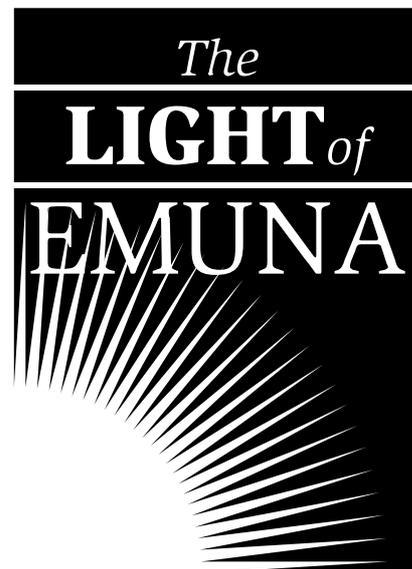
תזכרו למצוות and thank you,
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"והיה כי תבוא אל הארץ אשר ד' אלקיך נתן לך"
"It will be when you enter the Land
that Hashem, your G-d, gives you" (כ"א, א)

True joy derives when a person lives in our holy Land, a land that Hashem personally administers constantly – anyone who traverses four cubits of it is guaranteed a portion in the World to Come.¹

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תורת הפרשה



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

**"והיה כי תבוא אל הארץ ... ולקחת מראשית כל
פרי האדמה..."**

**"It will be when you enter the Land ...
that you shall take of the first of every
fruit of the ground"** (כ"א, א-ב)

When you arrive in the Land, when you finally arrive, you must immediately perform the *mitzvah* of *bikkurim*. How is it possible right away? First they had to inherit the Land, settle it, build homes, plant trees – a process of many years before there was to be any fruits.

Bikkurim represents renewal – we bring the new fruit to the *Beis Hamikdash* and approach the *Kohen*. The Torah is teaching us that renewal must precede all else. A Jew must constantly rejuvenate – never declining into rote (even though rote itself is not all negative and contains many positive attributes). We must serve Hashem filled with vitality, zest, joy, enthusiasm, vivacity and freshness. Joy and renewal is our most important vitamin. A person suddenly feels the onset of depression – it is a sign that he is detached and he must promptly find a way to reconnect. Joy is a sign of union with Hashem.

Every Jew has sufficient cause to go through life with joy and gladness. It does not happen automatically. In times of failure, confusion, doubt and worry – we completely lose our joy - it is so difficult to resuscitate it. Despite knowing

that there is no life without joy, that it is impossible to connect to Hashem – we are, nevertheless, not fully committed to it. We perceive joy to be something optional, even admirable - just not obligatory.

We must help ourselves protect joyfulness and revitalization – instilling vitality and zest into our service of Hashem. We accomplish this by, first and foremost, ceasing to haul around all of our past failures and future anxieties. We must begin to learn to live in the present, to be thrilled right now, to be delighted with every minute and every second – to experience the current moment, not to give the past or future a thought.

The *tzaddik* R' Zalman Brizel recounted that he had trained himself to focus only on the present moment and location. The moment he left his house, he forgot that he had a house; the moment he finished *davening*, he put *davening* out of his mind. As soon as present transformed into past, he no longer paid any attention to it.²

What has happened – happened. A person cannot wallow in the past – he must lift himself up and do when the present-day calls for.

It is told that when the Gerer Rebbe (the Imrei Emes) and Belzer Rebbe met after their miraculous rescue from the Holocaust, the Gerer Rebbe expounded Chazal's teaching that after Yoseph and his brother were reunited, Yoseph and Binyamin fell on each other's necks and cried for the future destructions that were going to occur in each other's portion of the Land of Israel (the two *Batei Mikdash* in Binyamin's portion and *Mishkan Shiloh* in Yoseph's). Why did they not each cry for their own future devastation? The Rebbe explained that we must react to our own ruin by restoring, not crying – just rebuild! We may only cry for the suffering of others, a sobbing of kindness.³

Moreinu Harav: We are here, now, living, healthy, breathing – so we must be cheerful – joy

² המודיע, חיים שיש בהם – סיון תשס"ז
³ בקדושתו של אהרון, חלק א'

without a second thought to what will be or what was – ecstatic for every moment and every second. No one is attacking us; we have a nice glass of tea – what more do we need? What are we lacking? If we are thirsty, we can drink – if we are hungry, we can have a bite to eat – feel good! Feel content! Feel satisfied! Do not agonize over the past or the future – experience the pinnacle of joy. That is how we merit receiving everything - by living in the here-and-now we fulfill “who is wealthy – one who is happy with his lot” – and that joy allows us to obtain everything – all salvation and ascents.

Joy and renewal are possible only when we proceed, hand-in-hand, with Hashem. Without Hashem we flail around in the past and future – filled with worry, tension, disappointment, guilt. Whenever we misplace our joy – we must stop and reassess how we became disconnected. Sadness is like a compass (or GPS) that points out the way, signaling when we need to reroute.

We must always be satisfied with our share, even with what does not go well for us. Occurrences that appear negative are part of our lot – everyone receives precisely what he needs to complete his correction.

Often, we have difficulty accepting the fact that a neighbor's life seems so perfect: he is perpetually good-humored, always smiling, everything seems to go smoothly – while, for us: the atmosphere in our home is unpleasant, our livelihood is inadequate, our learning could be better. In short, our lives seem far from perfect.

In truth, if we would not look in our neighbor's direction, if we would not conclude that other people live better than us – we would be content with the package that Hashem has prepared for us because, in the final analysis, it is a beautiful package. But, then we see our neighbor ...

True joy is primarily being satisfied with one's lot – knowing that everyone receives exactly what they need for their personal correction in this world. Every soul is provided the talents

and other Heavenly gifts that it needs to accomplish its task in this world. One is given wealth to contend with the challenges of affluence, while another is charged with resisting the trials of poverty. This is true of all of the gifts and vessels that a person merits – each one for his unique purpose and his rectification.⁴

When we contemplate our allotment, we notice its impressiveness – how many thousands of kindnesses and benevolences we receive from Hashem regularly. Our eyes see, our ears hear, our mouths speak; Hashem provides us with homes, children, income, books, etc. We were afforded mouths with which to thank Hashem incessantly – never missing an opportunity to acknowledge any favor that He bestows upon us.

If we seek renewal – we must accustom ourselves to talk to Hashem. Conversing with Hashem is the infinite source of joy and vitality. The spiritual pleasure that a person receives when he habitually communicates with Hashem is immeasurable. He forms a personal bond with Hashem - that is the essence of *teshuva*. When we condition ourselves to it, we cannot stop. It becomes the sweetest part of our lives. “Words have the greatest power to remind a person of Hashem and to fortify him relentlessly – even in those places that are distant from holiness ... for speech does not allow us to forget Hashem.”⁵

One of the most precious gifts we have received is the ability to talk to Hashem about every incident in our lives – *hisbodedus*. We take counsel in Hashem – consequently, we can never be alone, we receive guidance. Even greater is when one pleads for one thing only – to be close to Hashem. That literally cleanses the soul and provides true bliss. This should be the most natural desire – but the *yetzer hora* battles it terribly because it knows that if we achieve it, we can correct all else. The evil inclination knows that our only path to overcoming our base urges and negative attributes is via talking to Hashem.

Chazal teach us, “If one prays and is not answered, he should pray again.”⁶ Persistent *tefilla* and tears achieve everything.

Dialogue is the key element of *teshuva*, which is also remarkable renewal. With one introspective reflection and person can completely transform reality. He hurts another person and then feels painful remorse, wondering how he could have been so callous –and, suddenly, he is reborn, reconnected. When he apologizes and seeks Hashem’s forgiveness – he experiences such joy and indescribable G-dly light.

Hashem created the world in such a way that *teshuva* as above all else – sin and destruction cannot touch *teshuva*. All of the negative things that a person ruins with *loshon hora*, silliness, turmoil, anger – cannot approach the power of *teshuva*. *Teshuva* anoints a person with a pure and clear light that shield him from transgression.⁷

If speech connects - singing binds. A holy melody has the power to draw a person to Hashem.⁸

Renewal is primarily in our desires. We are essentially composed of our desires. We must constantly yearn to be close to Hashem and not fall into routine. Proper desires lead to joy. When we do things out of obligation, we experience no joy - but we do when we want something, when we love. The word for will (רצון) comes from the word for run (רץ) – its strength transports us to our objective. If we do not feel the proper desire – we must pray and beg for it.

Hashem renews all of creation each day. Nature attempts to distract us from noticing - pretending to be automatic. Nature tries to convince us that our battle with the evil inclination is doomed from the start – we’ve lost before. Renewal is based on *emuna* that

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כי אתה עמדי ג
ליקו"מ עח'

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התפלל אדם ולא נענה יחזור ויתפלל (ברכות לב):

באור פני מלך חיים

ליקו"ה אפוטורפוס ג, י

everything is from Hashem and anything that happened up until this moment is irrelevant. Hashem recreates all of nature constantly and can do anything. Nothing is bound by yesterday. Nature is there to challenge us and obscure the truth.

Today is entirely unrelated to yesterday. A sick man can become healthy overnight. One who has difficulty in business can suddenly become successful. The very nature of Torah is based on novel Torah thoughts and ideas – **חידושי תורה**.⁹

This Shabbos is the birthday of the holy Baal Shem Tov (18 Elul), who instilled much joy, vitality, enthusiasm and revival in serving the Creator. He taught us the heights of an innocent heart, the greatness of doing a *mitzvah* with a pure heart, the power of sincere and hearty

tefilla emitted from a simple and wholesome heart.

Once, during an awful decree against the Jewish people, the Baal Shem Tov gathered the congregation to the *shul* to *daven*. Salvation remained out of reach until one woman cried out, “Master of the World, You are our Father and we are Your children. I have five children and when any one of them screams and cries, I cannot tolerate it. Father in Heaven, You too can certainly not bear our cries. Therefore, answer us.” And the decree was annulled.

That is the power of wholeheartedness – the beauty of a Jewish soul.

Rosh Hashanah is literally a fresh start. There is an air of beginnings.

תפילה

Master of the World! Teach me to be impressed by the little things in life that we take for granted – the powers of hearing, seeing, speaking –electricity, indoor plumbing, gas – for, I never ponder them – not even when I thank you for them in the morning blessings. Help me contemplate and feel the magnitude of the gifts that You provide. When one of these things is absent, when something goes wrong, G-d forbid, it is terrible. Help me thank You for every single matter, not just by paying lip service, but wholeheartedly.

Master of the World! Help me forget the past and not worry too much about the future, for so often my mind is so preoccupied with things that are not as I would like (even on Shabbos it is often difficult to free myself of the anxieties) – I must simply talk them through with You and I will feel so much better. And, when, G-d forbid, truly difficult episodes occur, help me Father, to, from the midst of the pain, worry, confusion and doubt – connect with You and return to happiness.

Master of the World! Help me free myself from the “convenience” of routine and to dare to do things that might even initially seem delusional. I have seen that despite the fact that beginnings frighten me and are difficult for me –if I venture on, I become so inspired towards You, Father, and am so happy that I overcame the obstacles.

Master of the World! Help me with my deficiencies, my challenges, my failures – despite having prayed for them for many years. Grant me the strength, Father, to continue and pray, beg, plead – to have *emuna* that my time will yet come – but, in the interim, to know and have *emuna* that it is for the best – that in the merit of what I am lacking I earn closeness to You, feeling great love towards You. When things are difficult, when I am lacking – I must never cease asking, praying, pleading, raising my head to You.

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

דוד

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*. Thank you Mordi Blass for your help with some of the Hebrew expressions.

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To receive this adaptation by weekly email, email me at LightofEmuna@doveliass.com