

במחשבת

# *The Way of Emunah*

Collected Thoughts  
on the Weekly Parshah

From

**Rabbi Meir Isamar  
Rosenbaum shlita**

**Emor**

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Parshas Emor

**Tzadikei Hador Must Care for The Public/Tzadikim Are Careful With Their Words/The Holier One Is, The More He Must Take Care Not to Lose His Holiness/Fiery Enthusiasm Burns Away Imperfections/One Who Thinks He is Whole is Incomplete/Do Not Speak Badly of Klal Yisroel/Rectifying the Soul Through Tzedakah/Supporting Lomdei Torah Brings Parnassah/Through Achdus, Aveiros Tranform Into Zechuyos/Performing Mitzvos Completely/Full Hachanas Orchim/Ahavah Leads to Achdus/I Still Have One Kasha**

**אָמַר אֶל הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְגו' לִפְנֵי לֹא יִטְמָא בְּעַמִּי (כא א)**

Say to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon... not to become tamei to a person amongst your nation. (21:1)

**Tzadikei Hador Must Care for The Public:**

Rashi explains: “*Emor v’amarta*’ (say and you shall say), (this double expression comes to admonish the adult Kohanim to be responsible for the youngsters.”

Sefer Emunas Moshe (Alexander) explains these words with a story involving Rav Mordechai Rakower *zt”l*,

the “court *badchan*” of the Chozeh of Lublin *zy”a*. Rav Mordechai understood that the *tzadik hador*, who brought down an abundance of Heavenly goodness to the world, needed to be joyful in order to perform such feats; therefore, he would raise the Rebbe’s spirits with his humorous words.

Every day, R’ Mordechai would ask the Rebbe, “What’s

cooking today?” One day, the Chozeh was very busy with his holy work and when R’ Mordechai asked his standard question, he replied, “**As far as I’m concerned, you can cook stones!**”

R’ Mordechai jokingly replied, “That’s for the Rebbe. But what is for the *chasidim*?”

His intent was that *tzadikim* are able to manage with very little and suffer through affliction, but the general public cannot. They need Hashem to help them.

The Emunas Moshe uses this idea to explain the Gemara (Brachos 50B) that says that when morning came, the wise men of Yisroel approached Dovid Hamelech and said, “Our master, the king, your nation, Yisroel, needs *parnassah*...” It seems from the Gemara that they said this every morning and received the same answer. What

is the meaning of this? He answers that the wise men understood Dovid’s greatness, and knew that he got greater and greater every day. Every day, he was one step further removed from the physical world. Therefore, they were afraid that the day would come when he would forget about the physical needs of the public, who were not on his level. That is why they reminded him of their needs every day.

Accordingly, Rashi is saying that the *gedolim* have to be warned about the *ketanim*, meaning that the great men of the generation have to be reminded to worry about the small people, who are not on their level, and to be concerned about their physical and economic state.

After the Holocaust, the Belzer Rebbe *zy”a*, who had moved to Eretz Yisroel, expressed a desire

to open a yeshiva for the surviving *bochurim*. It was suggested that a certain distinguished *talmid chochom* should serve as the Rosh Yeshiva, but the Rebbe rejected this idea because this individual was known to be very strict. He said, **“Klal Yisroel has had enough pepper. What we need now is a lot of sugar.”** In other words, the *bochurim* needed kindness and love, not strictness.

### **Tzadikim are Careful With Their Words:**

Sefer Divrei Bina (Biala) states that this *pasuk* can be understood to be telling the Kohen Gadol and all other *tzadikim* how to rebuke Klal Yisroel. He explains that when a Jew complains to a *tzadik* that he lacks *parnassah*, children, etc., the *tzadik* may know that the source of this individual's problems is his own

sins. Since he was found lacking in his *ruchnius*, he is unable to receive the goodness he desires. The *tzadik* could chastise him for blaming Hashem for the problems he himself caused. However, if he would harshly criticize the man, the man would fall to despair and would give up hope.

Therefore, giving harsh *tochacha* at such a time is considered “*tamei*”, as it could lead the individual to engage in more impure actions since he has lost hope of ever improving himself.

The *pasuk* is saying that *kohanim*, i.e., leaders of the nation, should be told: “Do not make a *nefesh* in your nation impure” by saying such things to them. Instead, people should be spoken to gently and told that they can do *teshuva* and thereby merit Hashem's kindness and mercy.

אִשָּׁה זֹנָה וְחִלְלָה לֹא יִקְחוּ וְאִשָּׁה גְרוּשָׁה מֵאִישׁ לֹא יִקְחוּ וְגו' (כא, ז)

They shall not take a woman who is a zonah or who is desecrated, and they shall not take a woman who is divorced from her husband... (21:7)

### The Holier One Is, The More He Must Take Care Not to Lose His Holiness:

Sefer Layesharim Tehilla (page 45) relates a story of a young man who became a *chasid* of Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk zy”a and began spending time in his presence. However, his father-in-law was opposed to *chasidus* and he would criticize him for “wasting his time”. He would say, “You are a *batlan*. You don’t want to learn so you make up an excuse about wanting to go to the Rebbe. If you want *yiras shomayim*, take a Sefer Reishis Chochmah or Chovos Halevavos. You’ll gain a lot more from that than from going to a Rebbe!”

This young man was also very careful about what he ate. He wouldn’t eat the meat of an

animal that had any *shailoh*, even if a Rov ruled that it was permitted. His father-in-law rebuked him for this as well and said, “If it is forbidden, it is forbidden for everyone. If it is permitted, why can’t you eat it? Do you think you’re a bigger *tzadik* than everyone else?”

One day the father-in-law said that he wanted to come with him to Lizhensk to ask all of his questions to the Rebbe. The son-in-law agreed, hoping that the Rebbe would change his father-in-law’s mind, and they set off to Lizhensk.

When they arrived, the father-in-law asked all of his questions, and Rav Elimelech answered them one by one.

Regarding the first question of why it is necessary to go to a

Rebbe, he quoted the *pasuk* (Shemos 18:1): “And Yisro heard.” Rashi states that he heard about the splitting of the Yam Suf and the war with Amalek. The Rebbe asked: Yisro was in his home when he heard these great things. Why did he have to travel to Moshe to hear about them again?

He answered that Rashi should be read as follows: What did Yisro hear that caused him to come? If he heard about the splitting of the Yam Suf, why did he have to come? Couldn't he stay at home and serve Hashem? Rather, he heard about the war with Amalek. He understood from this that even if someone recognizes Hashem's greatness, he still has to fight a war with the forces of evil and with his own *yeitzer hara*. One cannot do this alone. He must travel to a *tzadik* to get the strength he needs to win this war.

Regarding the question of why his son-in-law didn't eat meat that was technically permitted, the Rebbe explained that we see an example of this type of behavior in the Torah. The Torah forbids a widow to a Kohen Gadol but permits her for a regular *kohen*. A divorcee is forbidden for a *kohen hedyot* but permitted for a Yisroel. One may ask: If she is permitted, why isn't she permitted for everyone, and if she is forbidden, why isn't she forbidden for everyone? The answer is that when someone is on a higher level of *kedusha*, he must be more careful with himself in order to ensure that his holiness is not sullied. Therefore, he has to avoid certain things that may be permitted for others. The Rebbe concluded, “Your son-in-law is on a high level of *chasidus*, therefore he cannot eat things that may be permitted for others.”

וּבֵת אִישׁ פָּהָן כִּי תַחֲלֵל לְזָנוֹת אֶת אֲבִיהָ הִיא מִחֻלָּלֶת וּגו' (כא, ט)

If a kohen's daughter becomes desecrated through adultery she desecrates her father. (21:9)

### **Fierce Enthusiasm Burns Away Imperfections:**

Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov zy"l (Sefer Ilan D'Chaya) writes that the "kohen" in this pasuk can be understood as a reference to Hashem, who is called a *kohen* (Sanhedrin 39A). The daughter of the *kohen* in the verse is a reference to Klal

Yisroel. The *pasuk* is saying that when a Jewish soul strays from the proper path, he is desecrating his Father by dirtying his soul. The solution for this is to "burn it in fire", meaning to purify himself through fiery *avodas Hashem*. When one serves Hashem with burning passion, he can burn away his sins and make his *neshama* pure again.

כִּי כָל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ מוֹם לֹא יִקְרַב וּגו' (כא, יח)

Because every man who has a blemish cannot come close. (21:18)

### **One Who Thinks He is Whole is Incomplete:**

Rav Meir of Premishlan zy"l discerns from this *pasuk* that a person who considers himself as

a "kol ish" - a "whole" and perfect person - meaning that he thinks he knows everything and has no room for improvement, is a blemished person who cannot come close to Hashem.

וַיִּנְזְרוּ מִקִּדְשֵׁי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא יַחֲלִלוּ אֶת שְׁמִי קִדְשֵׁי וּגו' מִקִּדְשֵׁים לִי אֲנִי ה' (כב, ב)

And they shall separate themselves from the holy of the children of Yisroel...so as not to desecrate My Holy Name. I am Hashem. (22:2)



## Do Not Speak Badly of Klal Yisroel:

Rav Menachem Mendel of Llnsk zy”a (Sefer Likutei Maharam) explains that the *pasuk* is coming to teach us the importance of not speaking *lashon hara* about any Jew.

Every Yid is called “*kodesh*”, as is stated (Yirmiyahu 2:3): “Yisroel is *kodesh* to Hashem.” Thus, the *pasuk* can be read as saying one must “separate himself from the holy children of Yisroel” by refraining from speaking badly about them.

The Divrei Yisroel of Modzhitz zy”a discerns the same idea from the later *pasuk* (22:9): “They shall keep My *mishmeres* (protected thing) and they shall not bear a sin on it.” What is Hashem’s *mishmeres*? This is a reference to Klal Yisroel, as the *pasuk* says that Hashem is their guardian (Tehillim 121:4),

which means that Klal Yisroel is His “protected thing”. Thus, the *pasuk* can be read as saying that one should be careful with Yidden and make sure not to speak badly about them because they are protected by Hashem.

The Rebbe of Kuzhmir zy”a says that when a Jew speaks well of his friend, not only does he benefit in the next world, **he also benefits and is granted a *tikkun* in this world. By doing this, one weakens the prosecuting forces more than Heavenly angels and thousands of *neshamos* of *tzadikim* can do in Gan Eden.**

The opposite is also true. If a person speaks badly of his friend in this world, he causes tremendous problems in the Upper Worlds. Therefore, one should always look at his own failings so that he can see others in a positive light and see their good qualities in comparison to

oneself. For this reason, when *tzadikim* would see simple Jews in the streets wearing *tzitzis*, they would run and hug them.

In this vein, Rav Boruch of

Mezhibuzh *zy" a* would say, **“When I look at the world, no one appeals to me. But when I look at myself, the rest of the world looks good.”**

וְכִתְּבוּ כִּי יִקְנֶה נַפְשׁ קִנְיָן כְּסָפוֹ הוּא יֹאכַל בּוֹ וְגו' (כב, יא)

And when a kohen acquires a person as an acquisition of his money, he will eat with him. (22:11)

### Rectifying the Soul Through Tzedakah:

Sefer Ohr L'Shodayim states that the mitzvah of giving *tzedakah* is so great that it can save one from death (Mishlei 10:2). He adds that it is the entranceway to *avodas Hashem*. But one must be careful not to be haughty about his *tzedakah* giving. The Medrash says (Vayikroh Rabbah 34:8) that the poor man does more for the giver than the giver does for him. In truth, the one giving the donation should thank the pauper for

taking it from him.

This is seen from this *pasuk*. “When a *kohen* acquires a person” – if a person wants to acquire his own soul and rectify himself. **“An acquisition through his money” – he can do this through the mitzvah of *tzedakah* because a person cannot serve Hashem unless he “pays for it”** (Zohar, Chelek 2, 128B). One must give *tzedakah* in order to fix his soul and be able to serve Hashem properly.

מִמּוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם תְּבִיאוּ לֶחֶם תְּנוּפֵה וְגו' תָּמִץ תֹּאפִינָה בַּפּוּרִים לֵה' (כג, יז)

From your dwelling places, you shall bring bread, set aside... they shall be baked leavened, the first offering to Hashem. (23:17)

## Supporting Lomdei Torah Brings Parnassah:

Rav Menachem Mendel of Linsk zy" a (Sefer Likutei Maharam) says that this *pasuk* hints to the importance of supporting those who study Torah, thereby allowing them to learn with serenity and peace of mind. It can be read as saying that if one provides dwelling places for *talmidei chochomim* to sit and learn, **he will be given "bread that is set aside", meaning that a good *parnassah***

will be set aside for him and he will have all that he needs.

## Through Achdus, Aveiros Transform Into Zechuyos:

Sefer Imrei Chaim explains the *pasuk* to mean that when Yidden sit together in their dwelling places and engage in *avodas Hashem*, even their "chometz" – their *aveiros* – are "baked" and transformed into merits, as if they are *bikkurim* – presents for Hashem.

וּבִקְצֹרְכֶם אֶת קְצִיר אֲרָצְכֶם לֹא תִקְלֶה פֶּאֶת שְׂדֶךְ וְגו' לְעֹנִי וְלִגֵּר תֵּעֲזֹב  
אַתֶּם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם (כג, כב)

And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not completely remove the corner of your field... You shall leave these for the poor person and for the stranger.

I am the Hashem, your G-d. (23:22)

## Performing Mitzvos Completely:

Rashi states: "You shall leave." Leave it before them and

let them gather it up. And you shall not help one of them. 'I am Hashem, your G-d.' Who is faithful to give reward."

Sefer Otzros Hatorah asks why the owner of the field is told not to help the poor man. If he wants to make things easier by helping his downtrodden brother, why isn't he allowed to do that mitzvah?

He answers that the Torah recognizes that if the owner would assist the poor man, he would feel, to some extent, that it is his field and he is being kind to the pauper by giving him charity. He would feel a bit haughty, as if he were the giver and the poor man is the taker. This also might cause the pauper to feel some embarrassment.

Therefore, the owner is told to simply abandon the peah and leave them for the poor man to take on his own, as this clearly shows that his field does not really belong to him. Rather, it belongs to Hashem, and He provides both for the owner and the poor man.

## Full Hachanas Orchim:

The Otzros Hatorah continues by relating the following story:

The Vilna Gaon zy" a had a student named Rav Yeshaya of Zochovitz, who was known as a tremendous *machnis orech*. One Friday afternoon, a few merchants arrived in town. They were passing through on their way home from a large fair in one of the big cities. R' Yeshaya went out to greet them and invite them to be his guests for Shabbos. Since they didn't know him, they thought he probably wanted to be paid well for the accommodations, so they refused.

R' Yeshaya pleaded with them, "It is already Friday afternoon and you have a long way to go to get home. Stay by me and I will give you very good meals and a room to sleep in. Why should you keep traveling so close to

Shabbos?”

The merchants still refused to stay and went on their way. However, a short time later, a wheel on their carriage broke and they could not continue. The wagon driver had to walk back to R' Yeshaya to tell him what happened, who told him to quickly bring the merchants to his home, as they now certainly didn't have to time to make it to their city for Shabbos.

The men came to his house, and R' Yeshaya greeted them warmly. He put their horses in his barn and told his servant to feed them. He then turned to the merchants and said, “This is my inn. I will tell you the price upfront. The cost of three Shabbos meals and Melava Malka, plus beds to sleep in for two nights, will be 50 gold coins each.”

The merchants said to each

other, “That’s what I thought. He wants to make money off of us.” However, since they had no other choice, they agreed to his price.

Since they knew they were paying good money for the accommodations, they ate as much as they could and ordered R' Yeshaya to serve them. He was only too happy to do so.

On Sunday morning, the men prepared to leave. Each one of them took 50 gold coins out of their pockets and offered the money to R' Yeshaya but, to their surprise, he refused to take it. He said, “*Chas v'shalom!* I would never take even one penny from you. I am simple man and I don't know how much reward I will get for my mitzvos, but I do know one thing. I once was in Vilna and saw the Gaon learning with his students. He quoted the Gemara (Shabbos 127A) that says that *hachnasas*

*orchim* is greater than greeting the face of the Shechinah. He then said, ‘We say in Kiddush Levana that if Yisroel would merit to greet their father in Heaven once a month, it would be enough for them. **However, we can do the mitzvah of *hachnasas orchim* at any time of day or night. We can do something even better than greeting Hashem at any time of day!**’

“Now that I merited doing this great mitzvah, how could I

exchange it for money? I only want to make one request of you: From now on, don’t travel on Friday afternoon.”

The men asked him, “Why did you tell us that it would cost money to stay by you?”

He answered, “I wanted you to eat as much as you wanted and to make yourselves at home with no restraints. I knew you would do this if you thought you were paying for it.”

**This is real *chesed*!**

בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֶשָׁה לֵה' עֶצְרַת הוּא וְגו'  
(כג, לו')

On the eighth day, it shall be a holy occasion for you, and you shall bring a fire offering to Hashem. It is a day of detention... (23:36)

### **Ahavah Leads to Achdus:**

Rashi quotes the Medrash that says that Hashem tells Klal Yisroel: “I have detained you with Me.” Rashi continues: “This is analogous to a king who invited his sons to feast with him

for a certain number of days, and when the time came for them to leave, he said: ‘My sons! Please, stay with me just one more day, it is difficult for me to part with you!’”

Sefer Ahavas Shalom explains

by saying that most fathers want their sons to get along and love each other. If they get into a fight, it pains their father. If he wants to make peace between them, a good strategy is to arrange a large feast and to use it as forum to discuss their disagreement. The gathering will create feelings of comradery, which the father can use to bring back their love for each other.

So too, Hashem wants His children to be united and to love each other. Therefore, he asks us to remain with Him for one more feast because “*kasha ailei p’reidaschem*” – it is difficult for Him when we are apart from each other, and He wants us to be united as one.

## I Still Have One Kasha:

Sefer Nifla'im Maasecha quotes the Payer Rebbe zy”a as relating the following story:

The Sanzer Rov zy”a and the Tzemach Dovid of Dinov zy”a shared a close friendship. The Dinover Rebbe once was traveling and he stopped in Sanz to visit the Sanzer Rov. The two *tzadikim* spoke for a long time and when the Dinover was about to depart, he said, “Sanzer Rov, I have a *kasha*.”

The Sanzer Rov asked him what his *kasha* was and he replied, “My *kasha* is ‘*kasha aeilei preidaschem*. It is hard for me to part with you.”



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