

פרשת אחרי מות - קדושים

חלק ד' - גליון 25

ח' אייר תשפ"ג

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

Positive and negative commandments

you shall not stand over the blood of your friend, when you see your brothers blood about to be spilled – don't hold yourself back from trying to save him.

We find a similar type of פסוק in the תורה in *you shall try and save your brother.*

We find the תורה writing the same commandment,

"לא תעמד על דם" once in a negative way and "וחי אחיך עמך" once in a positive way.

Similarly, "לא תקפוץ ירך באחיך אביון" – don't close your hand from your אחיך אביון, and then on the other hand we find the positive term, "נתן תנתן" or "עשר תעשר".

We find "קדושים תהיו" in this weeks סדרה with רש"י explains that this means be פורש מן העריות, and yet elsewhere in the תורה we find, "ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם" – the negative term.

Why does the תורה sometimes give us the command in a positive way and sometimes in a negative way? What's the פשוט in this?

Addressing two components

We've mentioned in the past, the human being is the only part of creation which is comprised of completely two opposite

"It's not a no, it's not a negative instruction, it's an opportunity!"

components, each pulling in their own direction, each with their

own agenda; the נפש הטובה and the נפש הרעה, or it's called the נפש הבהמי against the נפש השמיה, or we simply call it the יצר הרע against the יצר הטוב, but these are two opposite components which comprise the human being.

This explains something we sometimes may wonder about ourselves, "Who am I really?! Who is the real me?"

On the one hand I want to smoke, and I want to eat a lot, and there is voice inside telling me to do so. And then I have another voice inside telling me, "Don't

eat so much! Don't smoke!" Who is the real me? The voice which tells the person to smoke and vape or the voice which tells the person not to smoke and vape?!"

And the answer is, we're not ה"ו dysfunctional or bipolar, we have two voices inside us and when we think we are thinking with these two components which are two opposites, the real me is the voice telling me to eat a lot and the voice telling me not to eat a lot, it's all the same person.

The תורה therefore sometimes addresses the נשמה, by making a מצוה which the נשמה wants to listen to, "עשר תעשר!" "קדושים תיהו! וחי אחיך עמך!" But on the other hand, the תורה also addresses separately the other voice, to the voice inside which says "Don't give צדקה!" to that the תורה says, "לא תקפוץ את ירך", to the voice within us which says to look, the תורה addresses and says, "לא תחורו", to the voice which says, "Ignore your friends blood being spilled!" says the תורה, "לא תעמד על דם רעך".

The תורה uses the two different types of לשונו, because the תורה is addressing the two חלקים of a person, because they both need addressing.

Why speak negative?

I would like to bring out a point which can be a חיזוק for us. Why do we need this negative command? Just speak about the positive! מכלל הן אתה שומע לאו – we could work it out ourselves, why does the תורה speak out the negative commands?! Why does the תורה give this negative *shbrach*?

The גמרא in פו. in teaches, "מי שיש – A person who made a חילול ה' בידו" "אין לו כח בתשובה לתלות ולא ביום, חילול ה' תשובה No, הכיפורים לכפר ולא ביסורין למרק" "No כיפור! No יסורים! It all doesn't help, "אלא כולן תולין ומיתה ממרקת", only death can clean a person from this עבירה. When we see such a גמרא we think, "Oy gevalt! It looks very bleak! What am I supposed to do?!" When we hear this גמרא we get a פחד and often we just try denying the existence of this גמרא for perhaps we think it's too much to cope with,

But if we look in the ספרים we see it's not as bleak as it sounds, there is HOPE, of course we need a קדמון whose name was רמ"ע מפאנו of the תלמיד מובהק ר' אליעזר נדרים who writes as follows: The גמרא in נדרים tells us, "סומא חשיב כמת" – a blind man is like a dead person.

Writes ר' אליעזר: If a blind person is חשוב then somebody who makes himself blind is certainly also חשוב, he can see and yet he chooses to close his eyes, he is חשוב כמת.

He writes: If at the time when one is עומד בנסיון, he closes his eyes or he turns away, if at the same time he is מתבונן in his mind to do תשובה for the עבירות which only מיתה is מכפר, not looking, being "עוצם עיניו מראות ברע", that in itself with חז"ל tell us how צדקה can be מכפר on עבירות which חז"ל tell us requires מיתה for a כפרה.

A *gevaldiga* opportunity – יש קונה עולמו – בשעה אחת.

We spoke a few weeks ago about being born in today's difficult and challenging generation¹, but today I want to add: we should't look at things happening to us as being a challenge, it's an opportunity, **it's not a challenge, it's an opportunity.** הקב"ה has given us opportunities!

Opportunities

When the תורה tells us, "לא תתרו", it's not just a negative commandment speaking to the נפש הבהמי or the גוף and the יצר הרע of a person, on the contrary, it's not negative! It's an opportunity!

The תורה is stressing here to us this message, "When you are "ולא תתרו" you can achieve so so much! At the time you can be עבירות מכפר which only מיתה can be מכפר! It's an opportunity!"

The same applies to every single לא in the תורה, they are all opportunities, just to mention a few examples, "לא תקפוץ" "לא תהיך אביון" it's sounds like a hard challenge! No! It's not! It's an opportunity, as חז"ל tell us how צדקה – giving צדקה saves a person from death!

"לא תעמוד על דם רעך" – it's not a no, it's not a negative instruction, it's an opportunity, as חז"ל teach us, "כל המקיים" if we look at every single seemingly negative instruction in the תורה in the right way, we will see how in fact what an opportunity it is, we should be happy with a שמחה גדולה when we are presented with a challenge – we have an opportunity to achieve *gevaldiga* things! Of course we never ask for challenges and we are מתפלל not to have נסיונות, but when we do have the נסיון we must appreciate what an opportunity we have, we must reframe our mindset that the

¹ See פרשת משפטים תשפ"ג

challenges we are experiencing are opportunities!

Let me share with you a *moridicker* מעשה which happened a few weeks ago. There was a *yungerman* who travelled in ירושלים every day on the אגד bus to go to his כולל, the buses at that time in the morning take their time just to cover a little distance, the stopping and starting together with the heavy morning traffic. Every day he would take the same bus, arriving in his כולל on time at nine o'clock when the כולל would start.

One day he comes in and exclaims, "I'm not trying to blow my trumpet... but I must tell the עולם the following מעשה... Every day I come here by bus and every day for the past few months it has been the same driver, this driver does this route every day.

Today I come on the bus and the driver tells me he wants to speak to me, he tells me, "I want to tell you something fascinating..."

"What happened?!" I asked him.

"By the time I pick you up I have already been driving my bus for twenty minutes passing between ten to fifteen bus stops. Let me tell you something fascinating, you always sit behind me when you

come on the bus, (the reason why he sat behind the driver was because of his שמירת עינים, even in ארץ ישראל there could be נסיונות on certain streets which the bus may pass). I can tell you, for the past few weeks I have been making a mental note that the person who sits behind me gets off the bus before your stop! Every day it's a different person sitting there, but by the time I reach your stop the seat somehow gets vacated and its always a full bus!"

The driver added, "Sometimes I have even seen the person sitting there move to the back to speak to his friend before you come on the bus! For weeks I have been watching how every single day that place is cleared before you get on the bus!"

A true story which happened a few weeks ago, the *yungerman* also told the עולם how he is constantly מתפלל to be saved from being נכשול in שמירת עינים, which is an ענין on it's own how a חלק of ones בחירה can be through תפילה as well, בוחר בטוב is a חלק of being תפילה.

But it's a *moridicker* מעשה, we see how this *yungerman* had a *gevaldiga* סייעתא שלא כדרך הטבע דשמיא completely even the bus driver realised, day after

day the bus driver noticed something strange going on here, he came to כולל that day with a *gevaldiga* שמחת החיים, "I didn't even know myself that the *eibishter* was doing this for me..."

The עיקר נקודה I am bringing out today is that we need to train our brain to work on these lines, we have so many challenges and difficulties especially in today's day and age, but we must switch around and reprogramme our brain, we must turn to our challenges which are presented to us and proudly say, "This is an opportunity!"

We gave just one beautiful example, how the תלמיד of the רמ"ע מפאנו writes, if a person is עוצם עיניו – he closes his eyes, at that moment he is חשוב כמה, at that moment he can receive a כפרה for עבירות which only מיתה can be מכפר! It's not a challenge, it's an opportunity, it's a נקודה we must continuously be aware of.

I would like to mention just another point, we've spoken about this in the past², but this week on Wednesday, it was a big day of celebration for the

Israelis, the only reason I knew about it was because I was walking through the park where I saw them setting up tables, music, etc. together with the Israeli flags.

We have to have our השקפה clear, we mustn't get carried away ח"ו, this isn't a יום טוב for us whatsoever, the תורה never made a יום טוב for the day כלל ישראל came to ארץ ישראל, חז"ל never made a יום טוב on the day when כלל ישראל came back after the seventy years of גלות, חז"ל don't make such a יום טוב, the תורה doesn't make such a יום טוב, because that is not what defines us, that is not what we make a יום טוב for, for תורה we make a יום טוב, סוכות and פסח, מתן תורה, יום טוב, ארץ ישראל, of course ארץ ישראל has *gevaldiga* קדושה, it's a great מצוה to live there, but we don't make a יום טוב for reinhabiting ארץ ישראל.

I would just like to add: Who made this יום טוב?! People who were not keeping תורה ומצוות! Most of them were atheist and they want us to keep this יום טוב?! There is an entire תורה which they don't keep! Crackers! They don't even believe in תחיית המתים! I walked into the park and they were playing blaring music! What

² פרשת שלח לך תש"פ ותשפ"א

about music in the ספירת העומר?! What's going on here!? A few atheists and כופרים stood up and made a טוב!

We must know our השקפה very clear, we have no שייכות to such a טוב, we

shouldn't even know about it, we shouldn't feel in any way any connection to such a ענין, no connection whatsoever.

[Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)



פרשת אחרי מות

חלק ג' – גליון 31

כ"ט ניסן תשפ"ב

מדרגת אהרן

After the tragic passing of the two sons of אהרן הכהן, the תורה writes (י, ג) "וידם אהרון". Why did the תורה use this word and not simply "ושחק אהרון" like translation of the תרגום?

The מאיר עיני חכמים explains that this word is מלשון דומם ואדמה, which means an object or matter without any life, such as a rock or a piece of earth. Had the תורה used the term "ושחק", it would mean he kept quiet but nevertheless inside he was changed, he was broken, he wasn't the same as before.

The תורה is telling us "וידם אהרן", he was like דומם, just like when you smash a rock and break it, nothing has really changed, so too by nothing had changed, he was the same as before unaffected due to his great מדרגה. Smashing a rock is different than when you break a tree or a plant or something with real life in it, when smashing something with real life, it is completely different afterwards, the life has gone away.

The תורה is מרמז תחיית המתים in the first word of the שירה, as לז"ל teach us why the תורה uses a לשון of "אז ישיר משה" – *Then משה will sing*, in future tense, this is coming to teach us that not only did משה and כלל ישראל sing at that

שירה, but they "will sing" again after תחיית המתים. Why is this the place where the תורה is מרמז this important message?

after WW2 נחמה

After the Second World War many broken people approached the Belzer Rov זצ"ל, exclaiming, "How can we continue to live?! We have lost all our family!! Please give us some חיזוק..."

The Belzer Rov asked the above question and then said to them the following: "How could the שירה just after they had lost most of their family, as לז"ל tell us only one fifth left מצרים, the rest died in חשך?!"

"And the answer is," he continued, "because they focused on תחיית המתים when they will be reunited with their close family that had died, this removed the pain and enabled them to carry on and sing שירה after ים סוף." "קריעת ים סוף"

We say in עשרה a ברכה for תחיית המתים three times a day. This ברכה should always be a חיזוק for us when we suffer a loss or hear about someone else's loss or hear about a terrorist attack, the present physical life that we know is only a small fraction of our existence, our existence is eternal and we will be reunited again in the future.

פרשת קדושים

חלק ג' – גליון 32

ר' אייר תשפ"ב

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

תוכחה of מצוה

I would like to speak about a מצוה in the תורה which I believe is neglected, and obviously we want to be מקיים every חלק of תורה, so let us discuss it from a few different angels in order to be מקיים this מצוה of the תורה.

It's a פסוק in this weeks (י"ז, י"ט), פרשה

"הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך ולא תשא עליו חטא, you shall

rebuke your fellow..... This is the מצוה of תוכחה in the תורה.

Of course, as we learn earlier in the פרשה one must always be זכות לכה, for

example thinking that the person didn't realise that what he did was wrong before giving any תוכחה, the חיוב of being זכות לכה must always be taken into account.¹

ר' ישראל סלנטר זצ"ל asks, why does it say "הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך"? Couldn't the תורה have simply written "הוכח תוכיח עמיתך"?

"The מצוה gives no הגבלות to this מצוה, this כלל ישראל in איד

What's the "את" being מרבה?² ר' ישראל זצ"ל

– מרבה "עצמך" is coming to be "את" – it's coming to include oneself." There are those people who are all day giving מוסר to everyone else besides

¹ See פרשת קדושים תש"פ where we spoke about this מצוה in length.

² ר' חיים בריסק זצ"ל was once travelling on a train. At one of the stops a איד got onto the train. He asked the איד where he was coming from.

"I'm coming from the son of the Kotzker זצ"ל," was the response.

"What did you hear from the son of the Kotzker?" asked חיים ר'.

"It says in the פסוק "את ה' אלוקך תירא" to which חז"ל teach us that the "את" is coming to include תלמידי חכמים, besides for fearing תלמידי חכמים we must also have fear to the תלמידי חכמים." The איד continued, "The son of the

תלמיד Kotzker said, "לרבות תלמידי חכמים" – a תלמיד חכם also must have יראת שמים."

Often a person learns תורה בהתמדה, he davens properly three times a day and he feels he's made it, he's doing well, he's okay in his עבודת השם, and he stops there, he no longer works on his שמים יראת; about such people the תורה is teaching us, "לרבות תלמידי חכמים" – even a תלמיד חכם must always work on improving his שמים יראת.

For the next few hours on the journey, ר' חיים זצ"ל was repeating the vort from the son of the Kotzker a few times, and they saw how agitated he was, he was being בודק himself, "Am I lacking in שמים יראת?!"

themselves, at the same time we must remember to also give מוסר to oneself, a person should look at oneself properly, be honest with oneself and find out what is missing, what is lacking and what he is doing wrong, as it says in "לב, משלי" – "a person knows his חסרונות".

Of course, as we've mentioned in the past, a person must know his good qualities the whole time, a person must have self-esteem, a person must feel good about himself, but we're speaking now about when a person is actually doing an איסור, he's not keeping a certain מצוה, or he's not doing something the way he should be and he needs to give himself מוסר.³

In fact, this is a תנאי in the מצוה of תוכחה, as the גמרא in (י"ט.ט.) סנהדרין teaches, "קשוט את עצמך ואחר כך קשוט את אחרים", *first sort yourself out before sorting out others*.

The big excuse

I believe this is one of the primary reasons which prevent people from keeping this מצוה. This is why people disregard giving תוכחה, people say to

themselves, "I should give תוכחה?! Who am I?! I have a clear גמרא that I am פטור from this מצוה, קשוט את עצמך ואחר כך קשוט את אחרים! I am not בסדר so how can I give תוכחה to somebody else?" Therefore, people conclude, "this מצוה in the תורה is not applicable to me, I am exempt."

In the כנסיה גדולה after the first world war in 1923, the חפץ היים spoke there, and one of the things he spoke about was how upset he was to see the רבנים in Europe who were not being מוכיח their קהילות and how these רבנים would use this excuse, they would use this exemption, קשוט את עצמך ואחר כך קשוט את אחרים.

The חפץ היים then said over the following משל: There was a Poritz who came to visit one of his villages and was hosted by one of the villagers. The villager served him tea.

The Poritz drank the tea where to his horror his tea had sand in it. "Where do you get this water from?!" the Poritz exclaimed. "I get it from the village well..." the villager replied.

"No wonder," said the Poritz, "you never ever use such water, go to the river a

³ See פרשת תצוה גליון 24 תש"פ and פרשת תולדות תשפ"א גליון 8 where we spoke about

self-esteem and feeling good about oneself in length.

mile away from the village and get your water from there where it's clean, pure and fresh without any sand."

A few weeks later there was a שריפה in the village, house after house was catching fire, quickly they started running to the river to bring water, but by the time they had come back, the entire village was destroyed, burnt to the ground.

When the Poritz came past his village, he asked, "What happened to my village?!" "There was a terrible שריפה..." they told him.

"Why didn't you put the fire out?!" he exclaimed.

"We tried... but you told us not to use water from the well and by the time we brought water from the river the place was already burnt..."

"Fools!!" the Poritz screamed, "for drinking you shouldn't use water from the well, but for a fire, when a שריפה happens it makes no difference what water you use!!..."

The חפץ חיים turned to the רבנים and told them, "There was a time בזמן הגמרא when there were great people with tremendous שמות on high מדריגות, then you needed to hear תוכחה from a great person

– תוכחה had to be heard from a pure person. But today, when there is a שריפה in Europe there is so much כפירה (all the more so this will apply in today's generation), you don't need this pure water, this pure תוכחה from a great צדיק, it's a חיוב on every person to give תוכחה even if he is not holding on a high מדריגה."

It's important that we know this חפץ חיים, because this is usually the תירוץ we give ourselves, "Who am I to give תוכחה?!" We think the מצוה is left for the great people. The חפץ חיים is teaching us that this excuse does not apply today.

Obviously, if in a certain ענין or מצוה one is really lacking, he can't give תוכחה to others about this, it simply makes no sense, the ח"ה meant when we are generally lacking it should not be an excuse.

Another excuse people give is they say, "This job to give תוכחה is for the רבנים out there, I'm not a Rov..." clearly, this is not an excuse, the תורה gives no הגבלות to this מצוה, this מצוה is said to every single איד in כולל ישראל.

Understanding people

How do we give תוכחה and get the person to be מקבל? Of course, as the פסוק itself

continues, "ולא תשא עליו חטא" – don't make him feel like a sinner, don't make him feel like a nothing, tell him for example, "...I also used to do it until I realised it was wrong... we all make such mistakes..." or "you probably didn't realise".....say it over in a nice way without making him feel bad, and this will make people accept the rebuke. There is another point we need to know which can get people to listen to us.

There is a famous line in English: "Before you teach me anything, show me how much you care." When giving תוכחה, usually the response you straight away get is, "No no... you don't understand..." We have to understand people, understand where they are coming from, understand their circumstances, every person wants to feel understood. If you want to be מקיים your חיוב to give תוכחה you have to work on trying to understand other people. **And it's not enough to understand them, they also must feel that you understand them.**

In order to achieve that he will accept your words, they must feel that you really care, really understand them properly, they feel you're giving the

because you care about them and want them to become better people.

This is why often the best person who can give תוכחה is a peer or a friend because people feel that their friends understand them.

Therefore, one shouldn't worry that his תוכחה won't accomplish anything, if one is מקיים the מצוה of תוכחה with following the תנאי of "ולא תשא עליו חטא" – not making him feel bad and making sure they actually feel that you care for them, they will be מקבל.

It's very important to understand other people. You may ask me, "Speak to anyone in his seventies or eighties and they will tell you, "When we grew up there was no such thing as understanding other people! When I was young do you think anyone understood me?! You had to live your life the way you were told to and that's it! Toady it's completely different, you have the therapists, the חיזוק events, in our days there was no such thing, we never asked people to try understand us! To be soft?! To care about us?!"

I've got two things to tell you: First, who said they were all happy people, who said it was good the way things were in

those days?! Maybe it would have been better for them the way it is today. Psychologists all say that Hitler y"m's work is still continuing, many children of holocaust survivors whose parents came out from Europe and the camps suffered with all different types of problems.

And as I once heard from a psychologist that today he is dealing with the grandchildren of holocaust survivors whose issues can be traced back to the Holocaust!

It was a difficult world then. If we feel we need to be understood there is nothing wrong with it, as the גמרא in סוטה quotes the פסוק, "דאגה ביד איש ישיחנו, פסוק – לאחרים" – if you have a דאגה go and speak it out to other people, let yourself be understood by others.

Secondly, fifty, sixty years ago after WW2 life was very tough, we are raised very softly, we're not lacking any food, we have beds to sleep in, we have houses over our heads, we're living a very luxurious life, we've been brought up much softer than previous generations, they were brought up with resiliency, we don't have much resiliency in our lives anymore.

The fact we are brought up in a softer atmosphere is more of a reason that we must be understood, we're weak people today, it's not our fault, that's the מציאות the רבש"ע has made for us today and therefore we must be understood more than the previous generations.

If we want to be משפיע on others we must be able to understand other people, because that is what people want today, they want to be understood.

It will get there eventually

The גמרא in בבא בתרא (ל"א.) tells us that one must give תוכחה אפילו מאה פעמים – *even one hundred times*. The famous question is: If he doesn't listen after ninety-nine times why would he listen after one hundred?!

There was once a *yungerman* who was traveling from בני ברק to ירושלים. In order to learn on the way, he brought with him a משנה ברורה. As he was sitting on the bus, he hears a voice next to him asking, "What book is that?!"

He looks up and he sees a secular teenager, who's obviously never seen a משנ"ב in his life.

The *yungerman* begins to explain what a משנ"ב is all about, he first speaks about the מחבר, then about the חפץ חיים, he

speaks about the various types of הלכות the משנ"ב discusses, etc. he put a lot of effort into explaining what the "book" was all about.

In middle of his דרשה, the fellow jumps up and says, "I have to get off... it's my bus stop... bye!..." and off he goes.

The *yungerman* thinks to himself, What did I bother explaining him this for? A waste of time! I could have told him it's a reading book... why did I waste twenty minutes of my time?"

He was a person who wouldn't waste his time and he felt very bad about what had happened.

A few weeks later he was by the Steipler זצ"ל and he mentioned to the Steipler what had happened, "Perhaps I shouldn't have bothered?" he exclaimed, "what affect did I have on him?"

The Steipler quoted this גמרא "אפילו מאה פעמים, even if it looks like it doesn't help, but the truth is every little helps, with all of it together it will reach to מאה פעמים.

The Steipler continued with quoting ז"ל about עקיבא ר' who received his inspiration from the hole in the rock, each drop looks like it is doing nothing, but the truth is, every single drop is

doing something, eventually collectively there is a hole in the stone.

Said the Steipler to this איד, "You did something great! Don't make a mistake thinking you did nothing! Something happened..."

Even if we are giving it over in a nice way and nevertheless, he still continues doing the wrong, he continues in his bad ways, however, this should never be a reason for us to give up and be exempt from continuing to give תוכחה, don't worry, eventually it will accomplish great things, drop after drop, he'll get there eventually, it's just a matter of time. The fact you said something, you've shown you cared, you put it down nicely, it's going to affect the person.

This is a חלק in תורה which mustn't be neglected. We too often say to ourselves, "I'll mind my own business..."

כל ישראל ערבים זה לזה – we all have an אחריות for each other, the way somebody else behaves affects us, it affects the נשמה of ישראל, we are all connected together, it's a responsibility for all of us, and we must understand that in our religion there is no such thing as, "I need to mind my own business..." on the

contrary, if I can help somebody, if I can change somebody I must try my best to influence them for the better.

Make sure to accept

There is another problem which arises when it comes to תוכחה. As we mentioned earlier, the תוכחה of מצוה also includes the "את" – it's coming to include תוכחה to oneself. A person must be prepared to be מקבל תוכחה. Today, it's become the new normal, you tell somebody off even in a nice way, and what happens? That's it! You've lost a friend... No one can ever be wrong!

We must learn to be מקבל תוכחה, the reason why people are not מקבל תוכחה is mainly because most people talk themselves into believing they are perfect and nothing is wrong with them, when somebody points out that they have done something wrong, they come up immediately with a תירוץ because in their mind they like to build the image of being perfect, and in order to continue their image of being perfect they come up with hundreds of excuses, "you don't understand the story... it wasn't my fault..."⁴

This is something we must work on. Think for a second! Perhaps he is right?! Maybe it's true what he is saying? Who said I always have to be right? Maybe he's got a point?! It's come to a situation today where you can't tell anyone anything! Even parents and מחנכים! It's a פחד! As soon as you say something, it enters into a hostile environment... it's become such a frame of mind today, it's ridiculous, we must try to work on this, remember to keep to the "את" of ר' ישראל – סלנטר זצ"ל, perhaps the first תוכחה we must give ourselves is to *taka* be מקבל תוכחה from others! How can we possibly grow otherwise? If we are מקבל תוכחה the way we should be, then people who are trying to help us and change us and enable us to grow will feel comfortable to do it a second time and a third time! Unfortunately, a lot of people build around themselves a wall saying, "You can't tell me anything! I'm not listening to you!" Don't straight away go into the defensive or play the *broiges* trick! One second! Perhaps I *taka* did something wrong? Stop and think and be מקבל. If we're not going to work in this area,

⁴ See פרשת וירא תשפ"א where we spoke about the dangers of perfectionism.

we're losing a big part of our growth and a חלק of תורה.

This is what we really must work on, because this is how we can grow, from constructive criticism.

This is one of the מצוות in this weeks פרשה, it can involve so many areas in our day, somebody comes to schmooze in סדר or in davening, somebody is doing something wrong, someone is being מזיק, if we say it in a nice way with "ולא תשא" with understanding them, we can have a gevaldiga השפעות and when

we are משפיע on others we receive זכותים *gevaldiga*.



[Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)

פרשת אחרי מות - קדושים

גליון 24

י"ב אייר תשפ"א

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

Be holy – be heilig

I would like to speak about an ענין which can be a message for all of us who are growing and trying to reach great levels in our עבודת השם.

The תורה commands us in this weeks פרשה: "דבר אל כל עדת בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם, קדושים תהיו כי קדוש אני ה' (י"ט, ב) *Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy.* The תורה is telling us a מצוה דאורייתא to be קדוש – to be holy, to be *heilig*. And the big question which many of the ask is: What does it mean? What

does it mean to be holy? What does one do and what must one need to be קדוש?

The רמב"ן explains: "והענין כי התורה הזהירה בעריות ובמאכלים האסורים והתירה *The idea of this commandment is that the תורה warned us against the forbidden foods, but it permitted correspondingly the*

"אם כן *consumption of meat and wine,* ימצא בעל התאווה מקום להיות שטוף בזמת אשתו או נשיו הרבות ולהיות בסובאי יין בזוללי בשר "למו", *accordingly, the sensual man could find room to be 'among the guzzlers of wine, among the gorgers of meat for themselves,* שלא, "וידבר ברצונו בכל הנבלות, *and to speak as he pleases about all the vile things, for the of such speech is not mentioned in the תורה,* "והנה יהיה נבל ברשות התורה", *and lo and behold he will be a degenerate within the parameters of what is permitted by the תורה,* בא הכתוב,

הזה, אחרי שפרט האיסורים שאסר אותם לגמרי, וצוה

והתעלות אל הזק ואל המעלה,
it will bring a person to purity and loftiness!"

בדבר כללי שנהיה פרושים מן המותרות. *therefore, this פסוק comes and it commands in a general statement that we shall be removed from the excesses of permissible acts.*

Under the palm tree

A person can go through life without doing any עבירות, he keeps all the מצוות, however, he is a נבל ברשות התורה, *he's a*

(lit.) animal within the boundaries of the תורה. A person can drink as much wine as he wants, a person can eat as much meat as he wants, a person can sleep as much as he wants with obviously just setting his alarm clock to catch קריאת שמע בזמנו. A person can stay within the boundaries of שלחון ערוך and nevertheless live a life of complete הפקירות, you can sit on the beech all day under a palm tree with a constant supply of coke, together with your feet dangling in the water. A person can live his life in such a way without transgressing עבירות שבתורה and at the same time he can still be מקיים all the מצוות שבתורה. What's wrong with such a life? He's doing every מצוה and he's not being עובר on any עבירה! Where does the תורה say a person can't live such a life?

Keep a safe distance

"קדש עצמך במותר לך שלא תהא נבל ברשות" רמב"ן; this is what the תורה is telling us over here, "קדושים תהיו" – *Be holy*; how does one become holy? *Distance yourself from what is permitted.*

This is an extremely important יסוד for life: Not everything that is מותר and permitted should be done, separate

yourself from things which are מותר, this is the מצוה דאורייתא of "קדושים תהיו".

When people tell us, "What's wrong with this?! What's the problem with that? What's wrong with drinking and eating עד אין סוף" remember this רמב"ן, there's a מצוה in the תורה to be קדוש, don't do everything which is מותר.

Why don't we ...

According to this רמב"ן the following question arises: Seemingly, according to the רמב"ן we should be פורש and separate ourselves from גשמיות completely, like אומות העולם regarding the להבדיל which have in their religion of going to a little hut in the mountains, where these people live alone, sleep on the floor, voluntarily live-in little cells, dress very simply without even wearing socks – they walk around with simple sandals. All over the world we find these monasteries where these גוים live a life of complete פרישות, a complete detachment from the גשמיות of this world.

According to the רמב"ן, "קדש עצמך במותר לך", *distance yourself from what is מותר*, why are we not distancing ourselves from everything which is permitted?

On the face of it, we seemingly find a משנה in (ו', ד') which tells us to

live such a life, as the ר' יהושע בן לוי teaches, "כך היא דרכה של תורה, פת במלח, תאכל, ומים במשורה תשתה, ועל הארץ תישן, *This is the way of תורה, only bread with salt eat, water in small measure drink, upon the ground sleep, a life of deprivation live, and in תורה you toil!*

This is the way of תורה! Half a slice of bread, only water – no coke or fanta, sleep on the floor – not on the lino or laminate but rather sleep on the concrete floor, live a life of pain – perhaps only change your clothes once a week or only wash your hair once every two weeks if that will cause you some צער, and then after this, there's only one thing you should do, "ובתורה אתה עמל!" – go learn and toil in the סוגיות of the תורה!

"קדש עצמך במותר לך" – Live a life of separating yourself from that which is permitted, and like this we would believe would bring a person to the highest levels in עולם הבא, as the משנה concludes, "אם אתה עושה כן, אשריך וטוב לך, אשריך בעולם הזה, וטוב לך לעולם הבא." *if you do this, 'You are praiseworthy and it is well with you, you are praiseworthy in this world, and*

it will is well with you in the world to come.

Even in such a matzev

However, if we take a look at רש"י on the משנה, everything changes. As the *verrtel* goes, "כך היא דרכו של תורה!?", *Is this the way of one to live a life of תורה??* "פת במלח תאכל??" *Should a person just eat bread??* "ובמים במשורה תשתה??" *should a person just drink water??*

Or, in the words of רש"י, "לא על העשיר הוא אומר שיעמוד בחיי צער כדי ללמוד תורה, *the משנה is not referring to a person who is possessed with his needs of life and that he should let go of it all and live a basic and difficult life with sleeping on the floor in order to learn תורה* אלא הכי, *תורה* "אלא הכי, *תורה* *means to say,* "אפילו אין לאדם אלא פת במלח, *but rather this is what the משנה means to say,* "אפילו אין לאדם אלא פת במלח, *even when a person hasn't got a stable פרנסה and he only has bread and water etc, he should not withhold and refrain himself from toiling in the תורה,* and if a person still learns in such a situation, "סופו ללמוד *eventually the רבש"ע will bless the person and he will be able to learn the תורה with עושר.* (If רש"י writes, "סופו ללמוד מעושר", obviously this is not the primary way of life, the genuine and

true way of the תורה is not to live a life of (פת במלח תאכל, ומים במשורה תשתה וכו')
 Therefore, when the רמב"ן writes, "קדש"
 "עצמן במותר לך" he cannot mean to be
 telling us to live להבדיל like a hermit or
 priest out there in a monastery believing
 that he will become closer to God living
 such a life. No! That's not the השקפת
 התורה, that's not considered a life of
 תורה.

A world with a purpose

השקפת התורה is to eat properly, sleep
 properly and to drink properly, with at
 the same time, "קדש עצמך במותר לך" –
 don't go over the top, don't over do it.

The ראשונים teach us: If הקב"ה would
 have wanted us to live a life of complete
 גשמיות and separation of the פרישות
 of הזה, He wouldn't have created such
 a beautiful world with so many
 wonderful pleasures. Why did הקב"ה
 create so many delicious fruits and
 vegetables? Why didn't He simply make
 all food taste of dry and soggy
 cardboard?!

If we look around at the world around us,
 it's clear that הקב"ה put us here with the
 intention of wanting us to enjoy our time
 in this world.

Let us explain this with the words of the
 ספר דרך השם in רמח"ל, which we can
 take as a constant guideline to how to
 live our daily life. (Of course, there are
 those צדיקים יחידים who live on a
 completely different level, separating
 their lives from the גשמיות הזה on
 a totally different dimension. However,
 these words of the דרך השם are for us
 who are living on a completely different
 level.)

גשמיות of a world

The דרך השם bemoans the fact that when
 a person is born, he is גשמי, all a
 child wants to do is sleep, eat and *mach-*
meshuga – he's totally גשמי, he doesn't
 feel his נשמה at all.

"והמקום אשר הוא בתוכו גם הוא חמרי וחשוך,
 וכל הנמצאים שבו חמריים, והעסק של אדם
 ובמלואי אי אפשר שיהיה אלא עסק חמרי וגופני,
 כיון שכלם חומריים וגופנים. כי אי אפשר לו מבלי
 אכילה ושמיה ושאר כל הענינים הטבעיים, ואי
 אפשר לו מבלי הון וקנין לשיוכל להשיג צרכיו
 אלה."

The world is a גשמי מקום, and not only is
 the world a place of גשמיות, but it is
 impossible for a person to survive
 without גשמיות, a person has to eat and
 drink in order live and do many other
 physical actions. A person needs to also

have money in order to sustain himself. This is how הקב"ה created us, to live a life of a constant עסק in the עולם הגשמי. As he continues to write, "ונמצא שבין מצד גופו של אדם, בין מצד עולמו, ובין מצד עסקו...". In fact, "יצטרך לו להתעלות אל מצב זך מזה..." any involvement in גשמיות, whether regarding your body or whether regarding your business or occupation, this is required to **bring a person to a pure and clean state in his עבודת השם**, this is the way for a person to reach his שלימות in עולם הזה, "והתעלות אל הזך ואל המעלה", and a person will ascend to purity and to loftiness.

And listen to these *moridiker* words, "ואדרבא! השפלתו תהיה הגבהתו", *On the contrary, his very lowliness will be the source of his elevation!*

All our involvement in עולם הזה, eating drinking and relieving ourselves – the lowliness that we are involved in is also the source of one's עליות in life, this is what makes a person great, "ומשם יקנה", *and from there a person can acquire nobility and honour!* "יהיה אותו הפועל הגופני וחמרי עצמו פועל שלימות", *That very physical interaction with the world of גשמיות will bring a person to perfection.*

When a person uses גשמיות with the right amount – with the right balance, and with the right כונה – doing it in order to sustain and serve הקב"ה properly, "וכשיהיה האדם משתמש מן העולם על דרך הזה", and when a person uses this world – the world of גשמיות on this path, "הנה ימצא התשמיש שהוא בעצמו פועל השלימות כמ"ש", ויקנה מעלה אמיתית כמו שיקנה המצות כולן", he will acquire true perfection and he can acquire true מעלות in his השם just as he can acquire through all the other מצוות שבתורה!

When a person is עוסק in גשמיות for the sake of רוחניות he can be שלימות just like when he shakes לולב and eats מצה. It's an עבודה of one's life, to turn ones גשמיות into רוחניות, to eat, drink and sleep for the sake of serving הקב"ה.

It's all to serve Hashem

The "ואותו תעבוד" of פסוק רמב"ן, *him you shall serve*, (ואתחנן ו', י"ג) writes, *Everything a person does can be considered serving Hashem.* A person can make his entire day and his entire life into his עבודת ה', and when a person lives his life in such a way, "אנחנו מתעלים", *we will be elevated and the world itself will be elevated!* The entire world will get an

elevation through the גשמיות a person does, because it's helping a איד serve Hashem.

This can be an important message to all of us: The שער פרישות in מסילת ישרים writes that if a person does פרישות from הזה more than he can actually do, he is considered a "חוטא" – a sinner, that's not the השקפת התורה. The השקפת התורה is to make sure to be עוסק in the גשמיות that we need, to make sure to do it in the right way with the right amount and the right purpose, and this alone will then be considered רוחניות, רוחניות הגבהתו, his lowliness will be the source of his elevation, as ר' חיים מוואלאז'ין זצ"ל writes in (ג', ג') about how much a person can grow in his השם and עבודת השם when eating השם to serve הקב"ה properly, just to say "I'm eating לשם שמים," can uplift the entire אכילה which can bring about many תיקונים. With bringing the little sparks of רוחניות into our גשמיות, this can then turn the גשמיות activities into complete רוחניות.

The two purifications!

On the one hand, a person must remember that one can not live a life על פי תורה with denying the usage of the basic necessities of הזה, and on the

other hand, a person must look after himself, to be עוסק in גשמיות with the right balance.

As the רמב"ן writes, "קדש עצמך במותר לך", *Refrain from the permissible actions – don't overdo it.* If you have ready eaten three portions no need to go for the fourth, or perhaps don't even eat three, and where there is meat and potatoes, don't just take a double portion of meat and leave behind the potatoes.

Perhaps, we can use the words of the רמב"ן to remember the second message as well, "קדש עצמך במותר לך" – Purify yourself with what is מותר to you! When you're being עוסק in the המותרים – when you're eating and when you're sleeping, "קדש עצמך" – purify yourself, do it לשם שמים, having the כונה to be able to sustain and be healthy to serve הקב"ה. A person can be מקדש himself with what's permitted, a person can purify himself with his הגוף and עסק גשמיות.

Everything has a purpose

ר' שלמה וולבה זצ"ל writes: These גוים who live out there in the mountains, perhaps somewhere in Tibet, living completely like hermits, they *mach-a-vek* the entire בריאה, they claim that the pleasures of הזה are irrelevant, useless, pointless,

created by mistake by the creator of the world.

We must remember the words of the דרך השם; this is not our השקפה for life, this is not the way we look at the world. We don't negate anything created in the world, everything is created for a purpose, and everything is created for us so that we can reach our תפקיד, everything in the בריאה is necessary. ה' created for us nice fruits because He wanted us to enjoy these nice fruits, **all of them** with all their textures. Everything ה' created in the בריאה is there for a תכלית, to bring the בריאה to it's תכלית.

We therefore mustn't *mach-a-vek* any part of the בריאה because every part of the בריאה is important and has it's unique and specific purpose.

And we must remember that we can use the עולם הגשמי in the correct manner, כמו שיקנה במעשה כל המצוות כולן, just like we can acquire שלימות and עליות when

performing the other מצוות in the תורה, והתעלות אל הזך ואל המעלה, it will bring a person to purity and loftiness!

Throughout the day we have plenty of opportunities to be מקיים these words of the רמב"ן, "קדש עצמך במותר לך", and we mustn't then take the words of the רמב"ן to the other extreme as we saw the explanation of רש"י in the משנה in אבות, a person must live a life of normality, taking care of his bodily needs, and if a person does it to serve ה' properly, that in itself is considered a מצוה, כמעשה, "כל המצוות כולן" – just like fulfilling all the other מצוות in the תורה!

May we *taka* be זוכה to become קדוש by fulfilling this מצוה of "קדושים תהיו".



[Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)

[All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.](#)

ברשת אחרי מות - קדושים

גליון 29

ה' אייר תש"פ

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

(י"ט, ט"ו) "לא תעשו עול במשפט... בצדק תשפט עמיתך." (*You shall not do wrong in justice... with righteousness shall you judge your fellow.*) The simple understanding to this פסוק is an instruction to the leaders and דיינים to judge with righteousness during a תורה, court case, etc.

famously explains – in his alternative פשוט – the understanding in this פסוק with the following explanation: "היה דן את חברו", *judge your friend*, "לכף זכות", *toward the scale of merit*. We learn from this פסוק to judge people זכות. When you see someone doing a questionable action, you must judge him favourably.

"Do not judge your friend until you reach his place."

Why was the מרמז of "דן לכף זכות" in a פסוק which is mainly speaking to the דיינים?

The ספרים הקדושים teach us: Just like we understand that a דין in a תורה has the obligation to judge correctly, so too, when we judge each other throughout the day – morning, afternoon and evening, we too have the obligation to judge others correctly, which means to judge favourably.

The תורה is being מחייב us to think good and too look at the positive side of others. We must think of a way to explain the actions of others.

The ספר החינוך writes: The reason of this מצוה is in order to create שלום, *peace*, in כלל ישראל.

We find a *moridiker* in גמרא which teaches: "הדן את חברו לכף זכות", *One who judges his friend favourably*, "דנין אותו לזכות", *judges him as well* – favourably.

The גמרא continues with bringing a story about a simple person who came from גליל and travelled to the דרום to work by a wealthy בית בעל for three years.

בעל הבית when the three years were complete, the worker turned to his בעל הבית asking for payment, "Please give my wages," he said.

"I'm sorry," replied the בעל הבית, "I haven't got anything to give you."

"Give me פירות," asked the worker.

"I'm afraid I haven't got," he replied.

"What about some בהמות or קרקע," he then asked.

"I haven't got..." was the response.

The worker knew his owner, after all he worked by him for THREE solid years! He was one of the wealthiest men in ארץ ישראל! Moreover, He knew his בעל הבית's estates and accounts inside out back to front... and now the בעל הבית says he has nothing...??

He gave another try, "How about some furniture?"

"I haven't got," was the response once again.

"How about some cushions," he pleaded, "please! give me something to feed my wife and children!"

However, once again, his request failed. With nothing more to say, the worker picked up his bag, put them onto his back and returned home – empty handed.

After סוכות his employer the בעל הבית took the wages in his hand together with three camels laden with food and travelled to his worker.

The גמרא teaches, "אחר שאכלו ושתו" – after they ate and drank the בעל הבית began to speak. [A פלא! The worker could have slammed the door in his face! He's the last person the worker wants to see! He didn't do that. On the contrary, he let him in. They sat down. They ate and drank together and only then did the בעל הבית speak!]

After they ate and drank, the בעל הבית handed over the wages. "Now tell me something," the בעל הבית said, "when I said I had no wages what did you think? You knew very well how much money I had?"

"I thought you suddenly came across a big deal and you used all your cash you had for the purchase of the deal," the worker replied.

"And when I said I had no בהמות or קרקע what did you think? You saw how many בהמות I possessed? You worked on my lands for three years!"

"Well that was very simple, I thought you hired them all out," he replied.

"When I said I haven't got any פירות what did you think?"

"I thought you hadn't taken מעשר from them and they were still טבל."

"And when I said I had no pillows what did you think? You saw the cushions and pillows in my house?!"

"Well, I thought you were מקדיש all your נכסים to the רבש"ע," the worker responded.

"אמר לו" – The בעל הבית said to him, "Yes! Exactly was the case, I was מקדיש all of my נכסים to the רבש"ע so that my son should not inherit any of my vast wealth since he was not learning תורה! Later I regretted my decision, so I was מבטל my נדר in בית דין and therefore now I come to pay the wages I owe you."

"And just like you judged me לכף זכות the רבש"ע should judge you as well לכף זכות," the בעל הבית concluded. [Later according to some opinions, when this worker reached the age of 40, he began his new career, becoming none other than the רבי עקיבא!]

What is *taka* the understanding that if we judge others לכף זכות, correspondingly the רבש"ע as well will judge us favourably? הקב"ה knows the truth! He knows what we're thinking deep down in our hearts? How can we then say that הקב"ה should judge us לכף זכות? He knows our thoughts and intentions; NOTHING is hidden from הקב"ה?

"כי אין צדיק בארץ אשר יעשה טוב ולא יחטא" teaches a *moridicker* vort: "There is no such thing as a צדיק who only does good and never sins. What exactly is the פסוק coming to teach us? Of course there are people who live their lives without sinning? (עיין בראשונים בשבת דף נ"ה:)

The ספר נפש החיים in his מוואלאזין זצ"ל and אלשיך הקדוש both write the following "אין צדיק בארץ אשר יעשה טוב ולא יחטא" means: "There is no person doing "טוב" in this world בשלימות, but rather the "טוב" is done with a "חטא" – it's lacking or it's not complete (except for the four people mentioned in the גמרא שבת)."

A persons מצוות that he does are often not שלימות. There is often a פגם in a person's מצוות. Sometimes we do מצוות because others are doing the מצוה. Sometimes we just don't want to feel like the odd one out. Often, we preform our מצוות without כוונה. Sometimes our מצוות become robotic, we eat breakfast and we put on תפילין. We may be "יעשה טוב" – doing the מצוה, however, it includes a "יחטא" – the מצוה is not בשלימות.

A person came to the חפץ חיים with his אתרוג, “Rebbe! Look how beautiful my אתרוג is!”

“the money which you used to purchase the אתרוג should be as beautiful as the אתרוג!” said the חפץ חיים.

We do מצוות, however sometimes they are not perfect. It was a beautiful אתרוג, on the other hand, the אתרוג was bought with questionable money.

once related the following: During the early 1950’s in England there was a very contagious flu known as the red flu which spread across England. It wasn’t too dangerous, however, people who caught it lay in bed for four days. You couldn’t leave the house. That year ראש השנה in Gateshead they just about managed to make minyan, the whole town was in their beds with the red flu.

four, five days later when most of the own already recovered, at the שבת שובה – שבת שובה – the shul was packed, everyone flocked in to hear the words of the Rov - הרה"ג ר' נפתלי שקוביץקי זצ"ל.

Said the Rov, “The way you davened your ראש השנה שמו"ע in your pyjamas should show you all where you really are in your davening. Very nice – every other year you come to shul together with the nice atmosphere, however, in reality you’re davening the same as you davened with your pyjamas. The עולם in shul with all the noise inspires us. However, if we want to know where we are really up to, we must look the way we davened in our bedroom with closed windows.”

[Today we can say the exact same. In lockdown now is the time to work to really find ourselves and put tremendous amount of effort into our תפילות, to understand who we really are.]

With this in mind, ר' חיים שמואלביץ זצ"ל explains with a *moridicker* פשט: We do many מצוות. We daven three times a day. However, תפילה requires כונה. Do we have genuine כונה throughout our תפילות? It’s not so easy to daven with כונה. Do we always think what we are doing when putting on תפילין or ציצית?

Often, when we do our מצוות we don’t do them properly. Therefore, says ר' חיים שמואלביץ זצ"ל: “If we want our מצוות to be considered complete before others דן be הקב"ה

If we look at others with the positive and judge them favourably, similarly, הקב"ה will judge our מצוות favourably even though they are often incomplete."

הקב"ה will not scrutinize us. He won't look at them as incomplete מצוות with a פגם, but rather He will look at them positively, just like we look at others with a positive eye by being לכה זכות. This is the מידה of הקב"ה.

When we are לכה זכות דן all our מצוות become *complete*.

We get from being לכה זכות דן more than just a מצוה. It all goes far deeper than that: it makes דן לכה זכות be לכה זכות דן us as well. We gain so so much by being לכה זכות דן.

The ספרים write: דן לכה זכות דן is the יסוד of all the לחבירו בין אדם לטובות. If we begin with דן לכה זכות דן all other מדות are taken into consideration. You won't hate your fellow איד. You won't speak הרע לשון הרע. You won't take revenge, etc.

Hatred, לשון הרע, revenge, are all a result of not being לכה זכות דן.

The בא: מדרש שחור טוב (תהלים) quotes the following חפץ חיים (בתחילת שער זכירה פרק ז') "*Come and see the bitterness of this sin... it damages all the hard work that he's put into his מצוות, it destroys even the little bit of תורה he has in his hand, i.e. he will lose his שכר.*"

According to שמואלביץ ר' חיים we understand this very well. When a person speaks לשון הרע he's not judging the person לכה זכות. If he's not judging לכה זכות then הקב"ה won't judge him לכה זכות. If הקב"ה is going to scrutinize a person, he's not going to be left with much; or in the words of the מדרש, **"וחבל את מעשה ידיך והוא מאבד את מעט תורה שיש בידו!"**

When not judging לכה זכות דן a person loses so many of his מצוות! הקב"ה will scrutinize him! Only, when a person is לכה זכות דן will he come to שמים with so many מצוות waiting for him. That is פשט in the מדרש. If you're speaking הרע לשון הרע and thereby not being דן לכה זכות דן you're ultimately ruining your שכר in שמים.

Let us share a few stories which can perhaps help us to be לכה זכות דן, to often think of the most wildest case which took place.

As a בחור in הזמנים בין I once went to עמוקה to daven at the קבר of עוזיאל בן יונתן בן עוזיאל. When I finished, I realized it would be too hot to walk back. After waiting half an hour for someone to offer a lift, a car drove down the road. Now this wasn't just any car, this

was a Volvo worth over \$100,000 dollars because of the Israeli taxes at those times. which was very rare to be seen over ארץ ישראל. Only the prime minister and the government ministers would drive such a car, paid for by the government.

Driving the car was a single man without any private escort. Obviously, he was a wealthy man. He goes out his car, davens at the קבר and heads back to his car.

When he finished davening, I asked him "Can I have a lift back to צפת?"

"No problem," he said, "come in the car."

I sit down in his car, a luxury car. He puts on the air-conditioning full blast and after about two minutes of driving he turns to me and says, "This ride is going to cost you three shekels (£2 in those days)."

You can imagine what I thought to myself, "What a miser! He drives a \$100,000 car and wants me to pay him three shekel?!?"

I didn't want to start arguing, so I took out three shekel and put it on his dashboard and I politely said, "Thank you!"

After a few minutes he says to me, "Hey...! You think I'm a rich man? Huh? Well let me tell you something: I was in the army belonging to a unit that cleared minefields. The commander once made a mistake and sent me to a field that was not cleared from mines. A mine exploded and I was rushed into hospital where I remained for six months until they gave me a wooden leg... here look at my wooden leg," he told me.

"As a compensation," he continued, "the army gave me this car. You can't eat a car!" he told me! "I have no פרנסה, I'm still weak, so I try to go around and offer my service as a taxi driver. These three shekels is my פרנסה."

One of our fond memories of יום כיפור night is when the אור פסוק, "אור פסוק, "אור פסוק" begins with the "אור פסוק" – Why do we begin יום כיפור night with such a פסוק?

The תרגום on the words, "ולישרי לב" writes "תריצי לב". We all want to be happy people. Often when we don't find happiness it's because somebody *cheapered* us or did something not nice against us. That disturbs our happiness. However, if we have "answers in our heart" why the person acted the way he did, i.e. to be לכה זכות, then "ולישרי לב שמחה" – those answers will bring שמחה and true happiness to a person.

When we have answers in our heart to other people's actions it brings a tremendous שמחת החיים. We can now also understand the beginning of this פסוק: "אור זרוע לצדיק" – a צדיק finds the hidden light in other people, "ולישרי לב" – and a person who finds answers in other people actions brings "שמחה".

We begin the יום כיפור davening with this פסוק because most of our הטאים that we try to rectify on יום כיפור is our ones בנוגע to להבירו. And then again, the מקור of our בין depends on our לכה זכות our "answers we have in our heart about others." On יום כיפור night we begin with finding these answers, to judge everyone לכה זכות.

There was a very poor man living in בני ברק who was supported very kindly by his neighbours in his block. They helped him manage financially.

When he married off his daughter, he made a lavish wedding.

Of course, his neighbours were very upset, and after a few weeks he began to realize that his neighbours were stopping to talk to him and weren't so friendly as how they used to be.

He asked them, "What's wrong? What's been going on?"

"It's very simple," he was told, "we helped you all these years, we thought you were a poor man and now you go make a lavish hand!"

"I'm so happy you told me the reason," the poor man replied. "Let me tell you what happened... I went to the Mr. Wagshal (the owner of the hall) and told him, "Please organize for me the simplest and cheapest חתונה."

He took out his notebook and took down my name and details. As I told him my name, Mr. Wagshal screamed, "I don't believe it! I've been looking for a family member of this family for all these years! What is your father's name?"

"My father was so and so," I replied.

"Your father before the war saved the life of me and my entire family. How can I repay you?! You don't worry. Leave everything to me, I will organise the חתונה and pay for everything...."

The משנה in אבות teaches, "אל דן את חברו עד שתגיע למקומו", *Do not judge your friend until you reach his place*. They say a *verrtel*: "עד שתגיע למקומו" – Don't judge your friend until you literally reach his place; meaning: literally stand next to him and perhaps ask for an

explanation! Go to his place and ask what's going wrong! Go ask him why he behaved the way he did. Go discuss it with them.

A Rebbe once walked into a classroom a bit late and one of the children stood up and began showing/shaking his watch in front of his Rebbe! The Rebbe thought to himself, *"What a חוצפה! How dare he tell me the time showing that I was late!!"*

The Rebbe ב"ה didn't do anything. After lesson he told the boy to wait behind.

"What were you trying to tell me when you were showing me the watch?" asked the Rebbe.

"Rebbe!" the boy said, "I was always the only one in the class without a watch. Last night my father bought me a watch!"

Imagine if the Rebbe would have told the boy off in front of the entire class?!

Let me just conclude with another story which took place here in ישיבה. There was a בחור in ישיבה who had a phone. They weren't allowed to have phones and nor was it common to have a phone. I also figured out that it wasn't such a kosher mobile either.

I offered the בחור to buy it off him.

The בחור agreed with the deal, and the next day he handed over the phone.

I took the phone home and I put it on, however, I saw that there was no reception. I opened up the phone and saw that there was no sim card inside! *'What a חוצפה! That wasn't the understanding in our agreement?!'*

That evening I phoned up to tell him that he had not given the sim card.

"Of course there is a sim card in the phone," said the בחור, "I never took it out."

"Listen," I said, "I got the phone without the sim card. I'm going to London for שבת. Please make sure that by Sunday morning you have posted the sim card in an envelope through my letter box."

I come back from London and there is no sim card.

It didn't seem right. When I phoned him up, he suggested that perhaps it fell out. However, even ten years ago phones were sophisticated enough to make sure a sim card doesn't fall out!

I didn't say anything to the בחור and life continued as normal.

About six weeks later I was at a חתונה in Jewish high and this בחור's father comes over to me and asks, "Did you buy my sons phone off him?!"

"YES!" I told him.

"Did you notice that there was no sim card in the phone? Well... let me tell you what happened. My son never told me he had a phone. However, one evening I found out he had a phone. The next morning when my son went to שיבה I decided to take out the sim card to see what he's been up to.

My son later came home in dinner time. However, later when I went to put the sim back, the phone was gone.

When he came back that evening, I began schmoozing with my son, until he actually told me he had a phone but gave it up that very day!

I never told him that I took out the sim card."

We must often think of the most bizarre scenario to be לך זכות in order to explain people's actions. And you just never know that that actually might be the truth!

[Transcribed by אברהם דוב הכהן כהן - Avrohom Dov Kohn.](#)