

פרשת ויקרא

This adaptation is dedicated in honor
of my dear wife, Devorah
and my dear daughter, Ariella.

ויקרא אל משה וידבר ד' אליו מאהל מועד לאמר
"He called to Moshe, and Hashem
spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting,
saying"

(א, א)

What was the purpose of this calling? Moshe Rabbeinu was afraid to enter the *Ohel Moed* for fear of the Creator. HKB"H asked: Is it fair that Moshe, who built the *Mishkan*, is standing outside and I am inside – I will call to him to enter. Therefore, it says, "He called to Moshe."¹

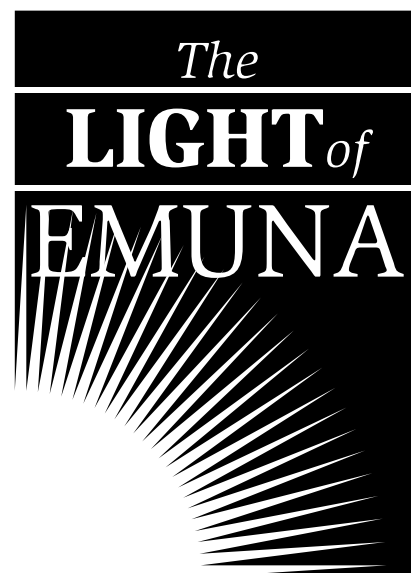
"ויקרא אל משה" (א, א)

"He called to Moshe"

A Jew must persistently seek ways to become connected to Hashem, at all costs. We must fight for it. The only way to traverse this life peacefully is to live with the Creator. That is the holy call that emanates from the *Mishkan*. Just as Hashem called to Moshe to enter, He also calls each and every one of us: "Call out to Me, beseech Me, I will shorten the route even if you are in such a low place. Seek Me, long for Me, yearn for Me." **In yiddishkeit, the search is the primary focus. If you are searching – you have already found! You are connected!**

A Jew must constantly crave Hashem - like a thirst, like someone who did not drink all day and can only think about cold water. A Jew must raise his head upwards as much as possible. **"Master of the World, help me, protect me, grant me proper counsel."** An animal receives its food already prepared – but we must prepare for ourselves. Everything is different if we preface it with a lot of prayer, if we do

¹ מדרש תנחומא



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

everything together with Hashem. The *pasuk* says about Yosef Hatzaddik, "Hashem was with him." He constantly remembered Hashem, untiringly spoke to Hashem. When a person has a difficulty - he asks for help. When he is confused, when he is unsure what to do - he seeks guidance. When he witnesses salvations - he says thank You. When he makes mistakes - he begs for forgiveness. When he is broken - he requests support and comfort. **Life is amazing when we learn to live with Hashem. "Master of the World, I am so fortunate to have You - how could I ever live without You."**

A Jew must be mindful that all of the mishaps, disruptions, obstacles and concealments are all part of the journey – our Father's journey. In whatever we endure – Hashem is with us, near us and by our side. There is no difficulty or challenge that is hidden from Hashem – Divine Providence escorts us at every step. When a Jew perceives that Hashem is with him in the midst of the darkness that suddenly envelopes him, in the midst of the suffering that falls upon him – and despite his having left the house with the thought of Hashem's accompanying him he continues with *emuna* that this is precisely what must happen, that it is part of the master plan, that life is a cycle of damage and repair, darkness and light, that all events are calculated, with a goal – everything is so much easier to endure.

When a Jew begins to work on himself to detach

himself from silliness, anger, sadness, complaints, guilt – when he fortifies himself to disconnect from his current station and reach for a slightly higher level – he begins to reveal Hashem. He begins to understand that there is no other shelter aside from Hashem Himself. He can approach Hashem in second-person, **“Hashem, I love You. Hashem, I long for You.”** Before this, when certain things occurred, he was broken – he attributed the causes to various triggers and people – his own fault or the fault of others. Slowly but surely, he begins to appreciate that everything is preordained - each person has his own unique challenges and his own restraints. Initially, if he did not know what to do with himself and he cried out to Hashem, the cry was not whole because the bitterness inside prevented him from fully screaming. Now, he can say thank You to Hashem – he can see the compassion within the suffering, constrictions and straits.

Our entire focus in life is to draw close to Hashem. A person must know that Heaven is testing him to see whether he will maintain simple *emuna*. Therefore, they send him downfalls, confusions, tribulations and challenges - to see where he runs. Praised is he who does not become confused and knows, with simple *emuna*, that whatever happens is from Hashem and no one can affect him negatively. He has simple *emuna* that Hashem administers the world with justice, with amazing and wondrous providence. **One who successfully comprehends this lives a great life.** “There is no greater anarchy than not considering one’s responsibility and purpose and what his lot will be in the next world and, instead, pursues the passions of his heart – divesting himself of everlasting life. Not following the path of Hashem is the ultimate folly - it deprives real and eternal good in favor of fleeting pleasures of this world. All of this world’s pleasures are filled with bitterness, anger, grief and pain. **No one who chases this world attains gratification and contentment.**”²

So many trials and tribulations affect every person – only when one is attached to Hashem, does he have the strength to handle them. When this connection is absent, G-d forbid, it is such a terrible pity. Therefore, we cry for those that have not merited to form a bond with Hashem – we cry for ourselves too when we, G-d forbid, lose that relationship.

We want You, Father. We do not want disguises, we want to experience You, we wish to fully experience *tefilla*, to feel empathy for each other. **We want generous eyes, good hearts – we wish for joyful hearts, closeness to You.** When a person merits living with attachment to Hashem – it is the greatest success one can achieve – only then can he truly claim accomplishment. If it is difficult, if there are obstacles – crave. “I want, I want, I want.” We must never abandon our desire.

If a person hears a *shiur*, learns from a *sefer*, hears a talk from a *tzaddik* – he starts to think: “Can I really sustain this? I cannot ... my wife will not allow me, my father won’t agree, I do not have enough money ...” Every time he is inspired, he analyzes and determines that he cannot actualize his potential...

It may be true that we are not capable – but we can definitely want to be. That is the secret of free-will: DESIRE. *Tzaddikim* know this secret and they use its power to attain what they do!

One who knows this and lives this way – that what is expected of us is our desire and that we may never give up on our desire – attains all of the elevated levels in the world. If we encounter obstacles, difficulties and we see no way out of our predicament – we must never give up on our desires. We must *daven* for this: “Master of the World! I want! I want!” **If we *daven* – we will succeed.**

When a person truly wants something, what indication is there of his desire? He prays for it and he asks others to pray for him as well. If a person merely pines for something and does not

² ליקו"ה הפקר ונכסי הגר ג, א

daven for it – he does not truly want it.³

When a person prays for everything and realizes that whatever he has is due to his *tefillos* – he attains humility, he recognizes that he is incapable without Hashem. He then attains love of others because he does not feel superior to any other Jew.

Once, the administrator of a *Kollel* in Yerushalayim sent his assistant to ask a Mrs. Rosenfeld to come to the office to collect some money that they had for her and to sign a receipt. In his hurried confusion, the assistant mistakenly summoned Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the Rav of Yerushalayim, to appear in the administrator's office. Immediately, Rav Yosef Chaim appeared in the office. The administrator, not expecting the Rav, asked if he needed something. "Your assistant summoned me," responded the Rav. The mistake quickly came to light and the administrator wanted to rebuke the assistant – one does not summon the Rav. R' Yosef Chaim stopped him, "It could happen to anyone – no harm done." The Rav left, but, instead of heading directly home, he stopped by the Rosenfeld residence to let Mrs. Rosenfeld know that the *Kollel* administrator wanted to see her and had some money for her.

Moreinu Harav: Our entire task is *Ahavas Yisroel* – loving each other – as one person! **We must feel the pain of others, not do anything that can cause anguish to others – we must love every Jew with our hearts and souls – never to talk negatively about any Jew!** Even if a particular person caused us terrible agony – we must not stumble! We must not open our mouths! The Jewish nation is a single unit – one body! If we were to hurt ourselves, G-d forbid, would we hate the limb that caused the injury to the other limb? Certainly not. We must realize that each Jew is a diamond in Hashem's crown. **Know that anything someone might have said about us – is only to sweeten judgments from upon us! It atones for all sins!** It comes to prepare us to be proper vessels for Torah.

The moment we lack love for others, we cannot attain any heights – we lack the vessels to receive Torah. A person has the strength to work around the clock to put food on his family's table – that is evidence that a person has the ability to sacrifice for others. He views his family as part of himself – one soul – never alone. No one is an island. All of our service, all Torah and *mitzvos*, is only to give to the community! To give to everyone. **When we think about and worry about only ourselves – we do not exist!** By contrast, when we forget about ourselves and worry about others, loving everyone and not speaking negatively about anyone, thinking about the *klal* and Hashem – then we thrive!

The bond with Hashem is boundless. There is no such thing as being one way in *shul* and another way at home. Our homes must be like *shul* – we are always with Hashem, in every circumstance, even the lowest ones. Our problem is that we tell HKB"Y to wait, we will be there soon, we are busy now, we will learn soon, we will *daven* soon. But being connected to Hashem is not merely while we are learning – it is also when we walk, when we sit, when we eat, when we drink, wherever we are, whatever we do - in every place, in the street, in *yeshiva*, in the fruit store, in the office – in every word exchanged with our children, in every situation – we walk with Hashem, Hashem is with us, we are a part of Hashem, our souls are part G-dliness from above. If we are feeling badly, it is because we have abandoned Hashem a bit. **If we experience *emuna* in Hashem, we feel good.**

A wealthy person who is honored and things go well for – is in danger. Do not be too jealous of him because, without even realizing it, he can become arrogant, he starts to feel overly confident – if he feels like he has everything, he has no need to cry to Hashem.

We must find joy in our difficulties. They are a sign that Hashem is occupied with us. We have good reason to be happy – we have Hashem. We are never alone. Hashem loves us, Hashem guides us, Hashem extends a hand, leads us. We must say thank You,

³ המברך את עמו ישראל בשלום

repeatedly. There are so many reasons to express our gratitude to Hashem. We must yearn for each new day, a fresh opportunity to sing and praise Hashem for all the amazing miracles of the previous twenty-four hours.

Hashem is like a loving Father – when we say thank You and we are excited by what He does for us – He wants to give us more and more.

We must be ecstatic – we are children of Hashem. Just as children contain the powers of their father hidden within them – so too, within every Jew there is hidden a holy, unique and Jewish soul – a G-dly soul.

If we cannot do great things at the moment – we must do small things. *Daven* that we should be able to accomplish tomorrow – a new day of renewed strength – to be happy. A person must be happy with the little bit that he does have – *tzitzis*, *yarmulke*, learning a little, *davening* a little. Appreciate and thank.

We must be happy that we walk in the King's world, a beautiful world – blossoming, growing, forests, soaring mountains, rivers of pure water, chirping birds singing to their Creator – “Lift your eyes and see Who created all.”

If we are happy, if we smile, if we speak nicely – those who see us will realize that there is a secret here and maybe they will take their first small steps back towards Hashem.

“He called to Moshe” – why did Moshe need to wait to be called? He built the *Mishkan*, why did he wait to be called? The *pasuk* is teaching us the humility of Moshe. Moshe - the master of all prophets, who brought the Jewish people out of Egypt, brought the ten plagues, split the sea, spoke to Hashem face-to-face, brought the Torah down from Heaven – thought, “I did it? Who am I? Hashem did it – I did nothing.”

That was Moshe's opinion – just as everyone else waited outside the *Mishkan* – so did he. **He did not feel any superior to anyone else.**

תפילה

Master of the World! Strengthen my desire – to constantly utter: “I want, I want, I want.” It is not that I have given up hope; it is just that so many things happen that I simply forget and move on to other matters. Every time that I read these ideas about desire, it gives me such a craving to repeat that I want, over and over again. I want to overcome the urge for food – that my joy from overcoming should be greater than the pleasure of the food. Master of the World, I feel like the “I want” is a powerful thing and jolts me towards You – why do I not persist with it, Father? Help me!

Master of World! Help me taste, even a little, of the flavor of “like the World to Come.” Grant me to hear, even for a second, the melody that is above and the source of all melodies, that fills all of Creation – that when I hear it, I want nothing else, just You! Help me meet, even momentarily, righteous people, who leave a lasting impact on our lives. Master of the World, You instilled such inclinations, such powerful urges – grant us hope to persist and triumph, let us taste of Your flavor, give us more moments of devotion, of floating on air, of walking arm-in-arm with You, and to feel that we need nothing more.

Master of the World! It is so pleasurable to serve You, to cling to You. It seems impossible to live without You, G-d forbid. How do we convey that to others who want *chizuk*? Teach me, Father, to get straight to the point. **There is no pleasure in the world that compares to the pleasure of standing at the Kotel and hugging You, wishing it never to end.** Or, standing under a tree at night and lifting my head to You and feeling no desire to even utter a word – just to be with You.

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

Dov Elias

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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