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DAF KESHER

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DVAR TORAH BE IT, DON'T JUST DO IT

The Piasezna Rebbe (Harav Kalonymos Kalmish Shapiro, זצ"ל, הי"ד, 1889-1943) shares personal experiences, advice and reflections about עבודת ה' – service of Hashem – in a work called צו וזירוז. In the twentieth essay of that work he discusses the topic of "might," being in true control of one's inner self: "גבורה."

He shares a particularly disturbing and depressing conversation he had with an elderly man. The man, in his mid-seventies, had grown up like the other men in his pious community, yet in his sixtieth year had fallen into some low, immoral behavior, sinning in ways the Rebbe cannot even mention. In his mid-seventies, the elderly man's same inclinations were tragically haunting him, drawing him away from holiness.

What advice can be given to younger people to avoid drifting into such a tragic old age?

גבורה – might, inner strength, self-control – can take two forms, he says. One can **act with might**, overcoming this or that temptation or inclination. But one can also **be mighty**, where one's inner self is transformed, not just acting with גבורה, but becoming a גבור, a mighty person. One who merely does acts of might runs the risk of spiritually deteriorating with age and ending up like the man who came to consult with the Rebbe.

But how does one become mighty and go beyond merely doing mighty acts? What can a person do in his or her youth in order to put his or her self on a trajectory for a truly spiritual old age? It is not sufficient, says the Rebbe, to overcome one's evil inclination towards sin, or even to exercise self-control with regards to the permissible pleasures of this world. He should go one step further. Every thought, word, and act should follow the dictates of his inner Self. He must become "אדון על עצמו ולבו ברוותו" – a master over himself and one whose heart is in his control." A person must direct himself to do things, not just fall into doing them.

"If he does this in his youth and gets used to this in the morning of his life, he will become a mighty person in his essence. His body will age and his physical strength will wane, but his essence will remain full of a spirit of might. Until ripe old age he will be crowned as a mighty warrior, successful in the Divinely mandated struggle, 'מלחמת ה'."

This is also the message of the opening line of Parshat Kedoshim. "קדושים תהיו – become holy," says Hashem, "because I, Hashem, your G-d, am holy" (Vayikra 19:2). It is not sufficient to do acts of holiness; one must transform his or her self into a holy person. One cannot merely act holy, one must be holy. As the Torah says near the end of Kedoshim: "והתקדשתם – make yourself holy – והייתם קדושים – and become holy" (Vayikra 20:7).

This is, perhaps, the content of the mitzvah of "והלכת בדרכיו – You should walk in His ways" (Devarim 28:7), as the Rambam describes it. "Thus they (the sages) learned the explanation of this mitzvah: Just as He is gracious, so you should be gracious; just as He is merciful, so you should be merciful; just as He is holy, so you should be holy." (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Dei'ot 1:6).

SOURCE GUIDE: 2 FOCAL POINTS

This week's Torah reading includes two expressions that are at the core of much (or perhaps even all) of the Torah: "קדושים תהיו" – Be holy," and "ואהבת לרעך כמוך" – Love your fellow as yourself." This source guide, through passages that appear in Sefer Hatanya and the Sfat Emet, explores how these two focal points of the Torah are essentially interrelated.

A. Holiness: Focal Point 1

Holiness is a central theme in the Book of Vayikra and this comes to a crescendo in Kedoshim:

<p>1. Vayikra 19:1-2 (1) Hashem said to Moshe, saying: (2) Speak to the entire congregation of the Children of Israel and say to them, 'Be holy, for I, Hashem your G-d, am holy.'</p>	<p>ויקרא יט:א-ב (א) וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: (ב) דַּבֵּר אֶל כָּל עַדְת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדוֹשִׁים תְּהִיוּ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.</p>
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According to the Ramban (Harav Moshe ben Nachman, זצ"ל, 1194–1270) in his commentary on Chumash, **קדושים תהיו** summarizes the theme underlying many areas of Torah:

<p>2. Ramban's Commentary on Vayikra 19:1-2 The matter is that the Torah warned against forbidden sexual relations and forbidden foods, but permitted relations between a husband and wife and permitted eating meat and wine. If so, the lustful person will find an opening to be swept away in lust after his wife or many wives, and to drink wine excessively and gluttonously eat meat. He will also speak in a despicable way, for this is not a prohibition specifically mentioned in the Torah. Therefore this verse comes, after the Torah listed those acts that are totally prohibited, and made a general command that we should separate ourselves from excess.</p>	<p>רמבן על ויקרא יט:ב והענין, כי התורה הזהירה בעריות ובמאכלים האסורים והתירה הביאה איש באשתו ואכילת הבשר והיין. אם כן ימצא בעל התאווה מקום להיות שטוף בזמת אשתו או נשיו הרבות, ולהיות בסוכאי יין בזוללי בשר למו, וידבר כרצונו בכל הנבלות, שלא הוזכר איסור זה בתורה. והנה יהיה נבל ברשות התורה. לפיכך בא הכתוב, אחרי שפרט האיסורים שאסר אותם לגמרי, וצוה בדבר כללי שנהיה פרושים מן המותרות.</p>
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A comment by the Midrash – not on **קדושים תהיו**, but on a line in the Torah's passage about tzitzit, goes one step further and says that we must become holy people through all of the mitzvot:

<p>3. Sifrei Parshat Shelach Section 9 "You should be holy to your G-d" (Bamidbar 15:40) – This refers to the holiness of the mitzvot. You say that this refers to the holiness of the mitzvot – but maybe it refers to the holiness of tzitzit? You can say as follows: What is the matter spoken about in this verse? It is the holiness of all of the mitzvot. Rabbi said that this verse refers to the holiness of tzitzit. You say this refers to the holiness of tzitzit – but maybe it refers to the holiness of the [entire] person? When the Torah says "Be holy" (Vayikra 19:2), it there mentions [the holiness] of all of the mitzvot. What is then taught by "Be holy to your G-d"? This tells us that tzitzit add holiness to Israel.</p>	<p>ספרי פרשת שלח פיסקא ט "והייתם קדושים לאלהיכם" – זו קדושת כל המצות. אתה אומר זו קדושת מצות או אינו אלא קדושת ציצית? אמרת: במה ענין מדבר? בקדושת כל המצות. רבי אומר זו קדושת ציצית. אתה אומר זו קדושת ציצית או אינו אלא קדושת הגוף? כשהוא אומר "קדושים תהיו" הרי כל המצות האמורות. הא מה תלמוד לומר "והייתם קדושים לאלהיכם"? זו קדושת ציצית מגיד שהציצית מוספת קדושה לישראל.</p>
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According to this Midrash, "Be holy" unites all of the mitzvot. Do all of the mitzvot, says Hashem, and become a holy person. According to the first opinion in the Midrash it is taught through the verse, "Be holy to your G-d" in the passage about tzitzit; and according to Rabbi it is derived from "קדושים תהיו" – but both agree that holiness is a guiding principle of mitzvot.

B. Love: Focal Point 2

"Love your fellow as yourself" is a second focal point of the Torah. In the Talmud Yerushalmi (and in a parallel passage in Bereishit Rabbah 24:7), Rabbi Akiva makes his famous statement:

4. Yerushalmi Nedarim 30b

“Love your fellow as yourself” – Rabbi Akivah says: This is a great principle of the Torah.

תלמוד ירושלמי נדרים ל:

“ואהבת לרעך כמוך” – רבי עקיבה אומר זהו כלל גדול בתורה.

These two focal points of the Torah that both appear in this week’s Torah reading: “ואהבת לרעך כמוך” – Love your fellow as yourself” – and “קדושים תהיו” - Be holy, separated, elevated” – are co-requisites – cannot exist without each other. They could be viewed as two great pillars supporting the vast tent of all of the mitzvot of the Torah. Both, together, are behind all of the mitzvot. How is that so? How are they interrelated?

C. True Love Demands Holiness

Harav Shneur Zalman of Liadi זצ”ל (1745-1812, the first Rebbe of the Chabad dynasty), teaches us in his Sefer Hatanya that we can’t have real love without kedushah. It is the spiritual inner connectedness uniting Klal Yisrael (the Collective of Israel) that enables love between all Jews. Physically, Klal Yisrael is a group of distinct beings; but on a spiritual level we are all united, with one great soul:

5. Sefer Hatanya – Part 1 – Chapter 32

Therefore all of Israel are called actual brothers, because the source of their soul is in the One G-d, only their bodies are separated. Therefore, those that make their bodies central and their souls secondary cannot have true love and brotherhood between them – only love that is dependent on some ulterior motive. This is what Hillel the Elder said about fulfilling this mitzvah (“Love your fellow as yourself”): “This is the entire Torah and the rest is commentary ...”

ספר התניא – חלק ראשון – פרק לב

ולכן נקראו כל ישראל אחים ממש מצד שורש נפשם בה' אחד, רק שהגופים מחולקים. ולכן העושים גופם עיקר ונפשם טפלה אי אפשר להיות אהבה ואחווה אמיתית ביניהם אלא התלויה בדבר לבדה. וזה שאמר הלל הזקן על קיום מצוה: “זו זהו כל התורה כולה ואידך פירושא הוא כו'.”

As long as we are preoccupied with the self-centered focus on physicality, our attempts at loving relationships will fall flat. Striving for kedushah, de-emphasizing our physical side and making it subservient to our spiritual side, is necessary in order for us to truly love others.

D. Holiness Demands True Love

The author of the Sfat Emet (Harav Yehudah Aryeh Leib Alter, זצ”ל, the Gerrer Rebbe, 1847-1905) teaches us that we cannot have kedushah without love. When Klal Yisrael stands united, when all of our relationships are full of love, when we fulfill לרעך כמוך – ואהבת לרעך כמוך – then Hashem bestows His gift of kedushah upon our people. When we are united, the forces of negativity have no power over us; we can stand as a unique and separate nation; and we are then blessed with kedushah:

6. Sfat Emet – Parshat Kedoshim - 5643

“Be holy” – This passage was said when all of Israel was gathered together. For a person can only merit holiness through negating himself to the Collective of Israel. As it is written, “The entire congregation, all of them, are holy” (Bamidbar 16:3). Meaning, when they are united as one they are holy. Therefore, most of the laws of this passage are interpersonal laws. Furthermore, when the Children of Israel are one, the hands of the evil ones have no control over them and are separated from them. Through unity holiness rests upon Israel.

שפת אמת – פרשת קדושים - שנת תרמ"ג

“קדושים תהיו” – פרשה זו נאמרה בהקהל. שאינו יכול לזכות להקדושה רק על ידי הביטול לכלל ישראל. דכתיב, “כל העדה כולם קדושים” (במדבר טז:ג). פירוש, כשהם באחדות א'. לכן רוב דיני פרשה זו שבין אדם לחבירו. וגם כשבני ישראל הם א' אין יד הרשעים שולטת בהם ונבדלין מהם ועל ידי זה שורה קדושה בישראל.

The Alter Rebbe's and the Sfat Emes' statements do not contradict. Rather, they coexist. Loving relationships do not get off the ground at all without basic kedushah, without basic spirituality. And when we build a nation united by love, we are blessed with the powerful kedushah Hashem bestows upon us. Without holiness there is no love and without love there is no holiness.

REEXAMINING REBUKE BY RABBI ELIE SILVERBERG

In Parshat Kedoshim, the Torah says, “הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך” (Vayikra 19:17): You should surely rebuke your fellow Jew. Included in this command is the idea that if you see your fellow man doing things that are against Torah, against the Will of Hashem, you must not be apathetic, and think to yourself, “It’s not my problem.” Rather, if you think there is a chance that he will listen to you, you must rebuke him for his misdeeds and try to help him get back onto the correct path.

However, when one applies this mitzvah of תוכחה, of rebuke, one must realize he is tip-toeing into a mine field of potential violations of בין אדם להביירו – of one’s obligations towards his fellow Jew.

Prior to rebuke it says “לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך” – Do not hate your brother in your heart. Says the author of the Avnei Nezer (Harav Avraham of Sochotchov, זצ”ל, 1838-1910, Poland): If there is any element of hatred in your heart towards the one you are rebuking, the rebuke will not be effective.

The words right after the command to rebuke are “ולא תשא עליו חטא” – You must not sin towards the one being rebuked.” The Gemara (Erchin 16b) understands this as a warning that the rebuke must not embarrass the one being rebuked.

The next verse continues, “לא תקום ולא תטור” – There must not be any element of vengeance in your rebuke.

And following this is the well-known positive command, “ואהבת לרעך כמוך” – You must love your fellow Jew as yourself.”

Is there no point where one can bear ill feelings towards a Jew who does not follow in the ways of Hashem? Technically the answer is yes. If the one being rebuked repeatedly does not accept the rebuke and continues to go against Torah.

However, according to the author of the Chazon Ish (Harav Avraham Yishayahu Karelitz, זצ”ל, 1878-1953), this situation is only theoretical in our times.

The Chazon Ish brings halachic sources that show that the Jew who sins before he gets proper rebuke is in the category of רע, as in the expression ואהבת לרעך כמוך. We must still show love for him. This, combined with the statement of the Tanna Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, quoted in the same passage (Erchin 16b), that the people of his time did not know how to rebuke properly – and how much more so in our times – led the Chazon Ish to give halachic ruling that even after we rebuke someone, halachically he remains in the category of pre-rebuke. Hence, ואהבת לרעך כמוך still fully applies to him.

When rebuking is needed, do so. But tread very softly. Even if the rebuke is not effective, we must still love that Jew. If we wish to rebuke more effectively, the place to look is within ourselves.

שבת שלום ומבורך

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דרכיה דרכי נעם

The following digital Torah resources have been extremely helpful in researching and preparing the Shapell's Daf Keshet:
DBS – Hataklitor Hatorani, Otzar Hachochmah, the Bar Ilan Responsa Project, and Hebrewbooks.org.

We pray for a refuah shleimah, a complete healing, for all those wounded in the attacks against our People.