

במחשבות

# *The Way of Emunah*

Collected Thoughts  
on the Weekly Parshah

From

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Rosenbaum shlita**

**Vayikroh**

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## Parshas Vayikroh

The Small Aleph/Anavah Leads to Living with the Shechinah/Making a Small Opening/An Anav is Like One Who Brought a Korbanos/Like Bringing All Korbanos/All One Needs is a Broken Heart/Serving Hashem With Mundane Matters/Holy Words/Offering Oneself as a Korban/Blessings in the Merit of Tzadikim/Granting Wealth to a Rebbi/Three Ways to Connect to Hashem/Olah Atones for Haughtiness/Bringing a Korban to Lower the Haughty/It Will Lead to Destruction/Shabbos Atones Like Korbanos

וַיִּקְרָא אֶל מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֵלָיו מֵאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּגו' (א, א)

And Hashem called to Moshe and He spoke to him from the Ohel Moed. (1:1)

### The Small Aleph:

The word “*Vayikrah*” is written with a small “*aleph*”. The Baal Haturim writes that the reason the *aleph* is small is because Moshe was so humble that he wanted to write “*Vayakar*” (without an aleph at the end), which indicates that Hashem happened to meet him, rather than deliberately called him. This word is used for when Hashem speaks to a person in a

dream (such as when He spoke to Bilaam in Bamidbor 23:4), as opposed to when He spoke openly to Moshe.

Hashem, however, told Moshe to write the word “*Vayikrah*”, with an *aleph*. In his humility, Moshe wrote the aleph smaller than the other letters.

Thus, this Parshah teaches us the value of modesty, which is a *middah* that is greatly beloved

by Hashem, and the degradation of haughtiness, which is despised by Hashem.

the Shechinah if he is humble and lowly of spirit.

### Anavah Leads to Living with the Shechinah:

Sefer Divrei Shmuel adds that the letter *aleph* also can mean “*aluf*”, leader. **Accordingly, the small *aleph* hints to the fact that Hashem, the leader of the world, dwells together with a person who is small in his own eyes.**

This idea is stated in the verse (Yeshaya 57:15): “With the lofty and the holy ones I dwell.” We thus see from this *pasuk* that one can merit living together with

### Making a Small Opening:

Sefer Zera Kodesh explains why the letter *aleph* of the word *Vayikroh* is small by noting that “*aleph*” can be an acronym for “*pischu li achosi*” – “open for me my sister” (Shir Hashirim 5:2). This is a hint to Chazal’s statement (Shir Hashirim Rabbah 5:2): “Open for me an opening the size of the eye of a needle...”

Therefore, the *aleph* is written small as a hint that one only needs to make a small opening in order to connect to Hashem.

אָדָם כִּי יִקְרִיב מִמֶּם קָרְבָן לֵה' מִן הַבְּהֵמָה מִן הַבָּקָר וּמִן הַצֹּאן וְגו' (א, ב)

When a man from among you brings a sacrifice to Hashem; from animals, from cattle or from sheep... (1:2)

### An Anav is Like One Who Brought a Korbanos:

The second *pasuk* of this Parshah also can be understood as describing the greatness of humility.

Rav Zushe of Anipoli zy”a explains the words “*odom ki yakriv michem*” (when a man from among you brings) by stating the word “*odom*” is an acronym for “Avrohom, Dovid, Moshe.” All three of these men were tremendous *anavim*. Avrohom said about himself (Bereishis 18:27): “I am dust and ashes.” Dovid said (Tehillim 22:7): “I am a worm, not a man.” Moshe said (Shemos 16:7): “What am I?”

**This teaches us that one who is humble and modest is considered as if he brought a *korban* to Hashem.** The *pasuk* is saying that an “*odom*”, someone who is humble like Avrohom, Dovid and Moshe, is considered to have “brought from you a sacrifice to Hashem.”

## Like Bringing All Korbanos:

Not only is an *anav* considered to have brought a *korban*, he is actually considered to have brought every *korban*.

Rav Bunim of Premishlan zy”a writes in the name of his father, Rav Tzvi Hirsch, the Magid of Voidaslov, zy”a, an explanation of the Gemara (Sotah 5B) that says: “When one brings an *Olah*, he has the reward for an *Olah* in his hands. When one brings a *Shelamim*, he has the reward for a *Shelamim* in his hands. But if one has a broken spirit, it is considered by the Torah as if he brought all the *korbanos*, as is stated (Tehillim 51:19): ‘A broken spirit is like the offerings to Hashem.’”

He explains that when one brings an *Olah* or *Shelamim*, he may think he deserves a reward. But if one is humble and has a broken spirit, he feels like he deserves nothing and, in the merit of his *anavah*, it is

considered as if he brought every *korban*.

## All One Needs is a Broken Heart:

The Ruzhiner Rebbe z”a also learns this *pasuk* to be teaching a lesson about *anavah*. It says: “*Odom ki yakriv michem korban...*” The word “*michem*” can be an acronym for “*middah k’negged middah*”, which indicates that when one is in need of atonement, he must atone in a way that is measure-for-measure.

In earlier generations, this atonement was achieved through self-affliction. At that time, there was much joy in the world, and the way to atone for misdeeds was to deny oneself this joy. Measure-for-measure, one who engaged in frivolous pleasure had to afflict himself. In our times, however, we are too weak

to do this. Therefore, the way to atone is by “sacrificing one’s spirit” by making oneself humble and davening to Hashem with a broken heart. **That alone is enough to atone in our times.**

## Serving Hashem With Mundane Matters:

The Ruzhiner Rebbe adds that when a person eats, it is as if he brings all entities in the world – *domem* (inanimate objects), *tzomech* (plants), *chai* (animals), and *medaber* (human beings) - as a *korban* to Hashem. If one were to fast in our times, however, not only would he damage himself physically, he also could damage himself spiritually.

He explains by citing the *pasuk* in Tehillim (115:16) that says that “the Heavens are to Hashem and the earth is given to man.” *Tzadikim* explain that the earth

was given to man to make it into Heaven – meaning that we can uplift the earth and make it as sanctified as the Heavens, and everything will then be *Shomayim*. And when one does this, he attains the level of “*odom*”, a complete man.

Accordingly, the *pasuk* can be understood as saying: “*Odom ki yakriv michem*” - an “*odom*” must be *makriv* (sacrifice) from himself. He must give his body and soul to Hashem. This could be done through fasting and sacrificing oneself by minimizing earthly pleasures, but it also can be done through Torah and tefillah, as one who engages in this holy work gives his precious time to Hashem and, thereby, offers his most valuable asset to Him.

The Ruzhiner Rebbe *zy”a* related that when he was young, he used to fast frequently. He asked Rav Elimelech of Lizensk

*zy”a* if he was doing the right thing and Rav Elimelech told him, “If you are able to eat an entire quart of kasha after the fast, it is permitted for you to fast!”

He then said, “If I had two others to join me in annulling the concept of fasting, I would get rid of it completely!”

Rav Elimelech also said that just like it is a mitzvah to protect a Yid from doing an *aveirah*, it is also a mitzvah to protect a person who is somewhat weak and to stop him from fasting. He said that one can accomplish the same things through properly eating and drinking as he could with fasting because this will give a person strength to serve Hashem through Torah and *tefillah*.

It is also known that the Baal Shem Tov *zy”a* said that “a small hole in the body is like a small

hole in the *neshama*”, meaning that one must be very careful with his health in order to ensure that he can serve Hashem properly.

### **Holy Words:**

Sefer Tiferes Shlomo explains the words: “*Odom ki yakriv michem.*” A person from amongst you who draws close.

A person may be living life without having any closeness or connection to Hashem. Such a person should learn a lesson from an animal that becomes holy when someone simply says, “This is a Korban Olah.” From a few words, the animal becomes sanctified. The animal is still the same animal. It hasn’t changed. But the person’s words have made it holy. This should teach a person a lesson about the holiness that is inside every man.

**This teaches us the incredible power of speech. And words of Torah and *tefillah* are, of course, even more powerful and valuable to Hashem.**

With this in mind, the *pasuk* can be understood to be saying that if a person draws close to Hashem, he should learn a lesson “*min habeheima*”, from the animal. From an animal, he should learn the power of speech and realize how holy a person can become through his words.

### **Offering Oneself as a Korban:**

Sefer Yesod Ha’avodah explains the *pasuk* to mean that one must offer himself as a sacrifice to Hashem. In other words, one must offer his body to Hashem by using it for Torah and mitzvos.

Accordingly, the *pasuk* is



saying that man should offer “*michem*”, from him. He should give a part of himself to Hashem and he will then be considered like a *korban*.

The *pasuk* continues: “*Min Habeheima*” – if one doesn’t offer anything from himself but, rather, suffices by giving an animal for Hashem, this is not a full “*korban* to Hashem.” The only way to fully give Him a *korban* is by offering oneself and dedicating oneself to serve Him completely.

### **Blessings in the Merit of Tzadikim:**

The Medrash Rabbah (1:1) puts together the *pasuk* of “*Vayikroh El Moshe*” with the *pasuk* in Tehillim (103:20): “Bless Hashem, His angels, those mighty in strength, who perform His word, to hearken to the voice of His word.”

Sefer Ach Pri Tevuah explains the connection between these two verses by stating that *tzadikim* who obey His will create a spiritual arousal in this world, and Hashem does the same in the Upper World. This is why Dovid Hamelech referred to Hashem as his “shadow” (Tehillim 121:5). **Just like one’s shadow mimics a person’s actions, Hashem mimics what a *tzadik* does in this world, so to speak. Therefore, when a *tzadik* does the will of Hashem, He does the *tzadik*’s will and fulfills his requests.** This is why a *tzadik*’s *tefillos* are so powerful.

When the *pasuk* in Tehillim says that Hashem blesses “His angels”, this is a reference to *tzadikim*, who obey Him like *malachim*. Because of them, Hashem provides the entire world with an abundance of *bracha*. The *pasuk* then says that the reason He fulfills their will is

because they “perform His word” completely and fully.

The Medrash juxtaposes the *pasuk* in Tehillim to the *pasuk* in Vayikroh because the reason Hashem called to Moshe was also because he obeyed His words, and He then spoke to Moshe and, in his merit, provided *brachos* for the world.

### Granting Wealth to a Rebbi:

The following story depicts how *tzadikim* provide great blessings for the world:

In the times of the Ruzhiner Rebbe *zy”a*, there lived a *melamed* named R’ Menashe who taught Torah to young children in a small village near Ruzhin. R’ Menashe was a devoted, wonderful *rebbe*, but he was also extremely poor. He was so impoverished that he didn’t

even have enough money to properly feed his growing family. As his children grew older and were nearing marriageable age, he began to worry how he would be able to marry them off.

R’ Menashe would travel to Ruzhin every year on Hoshana Rabba, and he would bask in the holy atmosphere until after Simchas Torah, when he would return home. This year, he decided that he wouldn’t leave Ruzhin until he got a *bracha* from the Rebbe for sufficient livelihood to cover his basic expenses and to marry off his children.

The Ruzhiner Rebbe was accustomed to daven in a private room on the side of the bais medrash, where he would seclude himself and engage in his holy *avodah*. The *chasidim* would gather near the door to his room, hoping to have the *zechus*

of hearing the Rebbe's *tefillos*.

On Hoshana Rabbah, R' Menashe was standing near the door during the recitation of Hoshanos when it suddenly opened a crack. The Rebbe looked at the *chasidim* standing there and, when he saw R' Menashe, he motioned for him to come closer.

R' Menashe nervously approached the door and the Rebbe said to him, "*L'chaim*, R' Menashe. It has just been decreed that you will become very wealthy. The wealth will come to you in an unexpected way. *L'chaim*. I bless you that you should not forget your brethren even when you are rich!"

After davening, dozens of *chasidim* who had heard about the Rebbe's *bracha* came over to wish R' Menashe "*mazal tov*" on the wealth he was about to receive. None of them had any

doubt that the Rebbe's words would be fulfilled. Some businessmen offered to be his partner in business but he did not accept any offer. The Rebbe had told him that his wealth would come in an unexpected way, so he did not want to accept a standard business arrangement.

On Motzoei Simchas Torah, several wealthy men approached him and offered him a ride on their fancy carriages – as is befitting a wealthy man – but he also refused this offer. He began to walk home with his traveling bag slung over his shoulder, with a heart full of joy because of the good tidings he had received.

As he walked, it began to rain heavily. He looked for a place to seek shelter from the elements, and saw a small roadside inn, which he hurried to enter.

There were about 50 Russian soldiers staying in the inn at that

time. They playing cards and drinking whiskey when and one of them suggested they play a different game. He suggested a game where everyone would try to say the most outlandish lie, and the one with the best lie would get a 100-ruble prize, which they all would chip in for.

One of the soldiers said, "Yesterday, I saw a donkey with eight legs!"

A second soldier tried to outdo him and said, "A month ago, my neighbor's cow gave birth to a calf with two heads and a donkey with eight legs!"

This went on for a while, with each soldier trying to tell a lie that was more unbelievable than his friends' lies. However, the judge kept saying that none of the lies were outrageous enough, as all of them could possibly happen.

R' Menashe was standing on

the side and built up the nerve to step forward and say that he wanted to join the competition. The soldiers eyed him hatefully, enraged by the fact that a Jew dared to interrupt their conversation. The judge, however, told him, "You know what? Let's make a deal. If you win, you can take the 100 rubles. If you fail, however, we'll give you 100 lashes."

Menashe was unfazed and said he was ready to start. The judge quieted the crowd and told him to begin.

Menashe looked at the judge and said, "First of all, I want to tell you that I recognize the judge. Did you know that he is a Jew?"

These words caused a great commotion. Everyone began to scream, "That's a lie!" Suddenly, they realized that the Jew had succeeded in telling a lie that

none of them believed, and that they had to give him the 100 rubles.

The judge was very impressed by the Jew's wisdom. He gave him the money and asked him to come visit him in the army camp, where he was the commanding officer. He also handed him a pass, confirming that he had the right to visit him in the camp. He signed the pass with his name, Anatoli Ivanov.

Two weeks later, R' Menashe went to the camp and showed his pass to the guard. He was allowed in and shown to the commander's room.

Ivanov was happy to see him and said, "I know that Jews are not only smart, they are also trustworthy. I am in command of 5,000 soldiers who faithfully serve Czar Nicholai. Recently I noticed that the soldiers are getting weaker. It is clear to me

that the person in charge of providing them with food is a fraud and a swindler and does not buy good food for them. Therefore, I want to hire you to be in charge of buying the soldiers' food."

R' Menashe immediately thought that this must be what the Ruzhiner Rebbe had predicted, and he accepted the job.

From then on, R' Menashe's life totally changed. During the week, he lived in the army camp, where he was in charge of the food. Everyone saw how honest and trustworthy he was, and the soldiers regained their strength.

While he now had sufficient *parnassah*, he wondered why the Rebbe's blessing had not been fully fulfilled, as he still was far from wealthy.

A short while later, Czar Nikolai had a foolish idea enter

his head. He announced that all the soldiers of the army would need to train to march a long way with heavy loads because he eventually wanted to hold a big march in his presence, and everyone would march a long way with a heavy rucksack on their shoulders. Commander Ivanov took pity on the soldiers and, knowing that they would not be able to withstand it, decided to ignore the order and not to train them to do this. Indeed, all the soldiers in other camps got this training, but Ivanov's camp remained the only one that didn't do it.

Ultimately, the order came from the Czar that on a certain day everyone must report to a designated place.

The next day, when Menashe arrived at the gates of the camp, Ivanov greeted him with a sullen face. He told him, "I have to tell you goodbye."

Menashe asked him what happened, and the commander told him, "I did not listen to the Czar's order to train my soldiers to march a long way with heavy loads. When the Czar sees during the parade that the soldiers serving in my camp are dropping like flies at the very beginning of the parade, he will surely remove me from my post, and he might even execute me as punishment for not listening in him."

R' Menashe suggested to him that he fill the soldiers' bags with straw, which does not weigh much, so that they could easily walk on their feet the whole way. The commander was very happy to hear his suggestion. He immediately gathered all the officers and soldiers and made them swear a solemn oath that they would not tell anything about this idea.

When the big day arrived, Czar Nicholai arrived with a

large entourage of high-ranking officials. After the trumpets sounded, the soldiers began to march with heavy packs on their backs. After just a few minutes, they all began to fall down. The Czar face turned red with anger, and he decreed that they all be sent to a prison camp.

But when Commander Ivanov's unit started marching, they walked all the way with their heads held high.

The Czar was so happy to see that at least one commander obeyed him that he did not think

to check what they had put in their sacks. He promoted Ivanov to the position of general. As a sign of gratitude, Ivanov appointed R' Menashe to be in charge of providing all the food for all the soldiers in the Russian Army.

Now, he became extremely wealthy, as the Rebbe had promised. He did not forget the Rebbe's words, and he always remembered his poor brothers and gave *tzedakah* with an open hand.

וְשַׁחַט אֹתוֹ עַל יָרֵךְ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ צִפְנָהּ לְפָנֵי ה' וְגו' (א, יא)

And he shall slaughter it on the northern side of the Mizbeach, before Hashem....  
(1:11)

### Three Ways to Connect to Hashem:

The Ruzhiner Rebbe zy"va states that this *pasuk* hints to three ways to overcome the *yeitzer hara*.

The words "*al yerech*" (on the side/foundation) hint to the foundational concept of purifying and sanctifying one's ways. The word "Mizbeach" hints to the desire for food, as a person's table is compared to the

Mizbeach (Menachos 97A). The Gemara says that today, when we have no Bais Hamikdosh, our tables atone for us. The word “*tzafona*” (north) hints to the desire for money, which the *pasuk* (Iyov 37:22) says comes

from “the north”.

Thus, we see from this *pasuk* that one who sanctifies himself in these three areas can overcome the *yeitzer hara* and draw close to Hashem.

וְהַפְּשִׁיט וְגו' הָעֵלָה וְנָתַח אֹתָהּ לְנִתְחָיָהּ (א, ו)

And he shall skin... cut it into its sections. (1:6)

## Olah Atones for Haughtiness:

The Tzemach Dovid explains this *pasuk* by quoting the words of Chazal that a *Korban Olah* atones for haughtiness. He explains that haughtiness is called “*Olah*” because a haughty person thinks he is “high” and superior to others. Therefore, the atonement for this sin is to bring a *Korban Olah* to Hashem as a sign that the only One who is truly high and above all others is Him.

when one sins, it is clear that he has done wrong and needs to do *teshuva*. If one is a *baal gaivoh*, however, **it is unclear to him that he is doing anything wrong and he doesn't think he has anything to atone for.** Therefore, the Torah says that the *Olah* needs to be skinned, meaning that the first part of the *avodah* of removing *gaivoh* is to reveal that the sin exists. Once that is done, the sin can be “cut into pieces”, meaning that since it infected every part of the part, every portion needs to be rectified.

He goes on to say that usually



## Bringing a Korban to Lower the Haughty:

In truth, every aspect of bringing a korban is for the purpose of causing a person to lower himself and cease being haughty.

The Apta Rov zy" a once revealed to his students that in a previous *gilgal*, he was member of a group of *kohanim* who served in the Bais Hamikdosh.

He related a story that occurred when he was a member of that group of *kohanim*: There was a distinguished resident of Yerushalaim named R' Groinem who accidentally committed a sin and needed to bring a *Korban Chatas*. He went to the marketplace to purchase an animal for the korban. Since all the cattle sellers knew that male animals are used for *Korban Olah* and females are used for *Chatas*, when R' Groinem asked

for a female, they realized that it was meant to be a *Korban Chatas* and asked, "How could it be that a man like you, R' Groinem, has to bring a *Chatas*?"

He then had to lead the animal through the streets of Yerushalaim to the Bais Hamikdosh, and everyone he met asked the same question. This was all extremely embarrassing for him. When he finally arrived at the entrance to the Bais Hamikdosh, the animal ran away. He had to chase it through the streets until he caught it, which caused him even more embarrassment.

After all of this, no kohen wanted to be the one to offer his *korban*. The rule is that the *kohanim* eat the *korban* and the owner receives his atonement, but no kohen wanted to eat the meat of a *korban* that was brought for a sin. It took much convincing until he found one

kohen who agreed to offer the *korban*.

The sign they had to know if the *korban* was accepted by Hashem was if the smoke formed the shape of a lion. If it formed the shape of a dog, it was a sign that it had not been accepted. When R' Groinem's *korban* was placed on the fire, the smoke formed the shape of a dog. He

began to cry bitterly and he said, "If my *teshuva* was not complete, I ask to include in my *korban* all the embarrassment I endured on the way, from the time I purchased the sheep until I actually offered it as a *korban*."

He continued to cry until the smoke changed to the shape of a lion, as a sign that his *teshuva* had been accepted.

וְאֵת שְׁתֵּי הַכְּלָיִת וְאֵת הַחֵלֶב וְגו' עַל הַכְּבֵד עַל הַכְּלָיִת וְסִירְנָה (ג, ד)

And he shall remove the diaphragm with the liver, along with the kidneys. (3:4)

### It Will Lead to Destruction:

My grandfather, Rav Mordchele of Nadvorna zy"l, in his Sefer Maamar Mordechai, writes a piece of advice for a person who has desires for luxuries and honor and wants to get rid of this obsession. He writes that such a person should think about where this will lead. Chazal say (Avos 4:21) that jealousy, desires and honor

remove a person from the world. When a person thinks about this, the desire for honor will leave him.

This is hinted to in this *pasuk*. The "yoseres" is a hint to the desire for "extras", i.e., luxury and honor. "Klayos" is a hint to "kilyon", destruction. This means that **the way to cut away this desire is to remember that it will lead to destruction.**

וְכִפֵּר עָלָיו הַכֹּהֵן וְגו' מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לְאַשְׁמָה בָּהּ (ה, כו)

And the kohen shall make atonement for him... from any one of all cases whereby one may commit a sin, incurring guilt through it. (5:26)

## Shabbos Atones Like Korbanos:

Sefer Tiferes Shlomo writes that the first of the words “*l’ashama bah*”, whereby one may commit a sin, can be an acronym for “*l’Keil asher Shabbos m’kol hamaasim b’yom hashvi’i*”, to the G-d who rested from all actions on the seventh day.

Chazal say (Shabbos 118B) that anyone who keeps Shabbos has all his sins forgiven. This means that Shabbos atones for a person like a *korban*. Therefore, the concept of Shabbos is hinted to in the portion of *korbanos*. This teaches us that even in times when we cannot bring a *korban*, **we can still receive atonement through keeping Shabbos.**

The Rambam Writes About Those Who  
Bring Joy to Widdows and Orphans

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Joy to These Unfortunate  
Souls Is Comparable to  
the Holy Shechinah!”**

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