

# Gilyon Heichal Hakodesh

פ' אחרי קדושים  
תשפ"ה

Weekly Inspiration based on the Teachings of the Holy Breslever Rebbe

This week's Sedra Parshas Acharei Mois details the avodah of Yom Kippur and the actions that the Kohein Godol undertakes to be Mechaper (atone) for all the *aveiros* that K'lal Yisroel has accumulated throughout the year.

There is a well-known principle that "Keriah me'oirer ha'zman" – reading and Leining the subject matter of a particular Parsha not only evokes the thoughts and feelings associated with it, but actually draws down the inspiration and spiritual energies of that period. As we *lein* this week's Parsha, we are enacting a Yom Kippur cleansing - taharoh and forgiveness - kaporoh for our own aveiros. It is no coincidence that this takes place during the days that lead up to Shovuos and Kabbolas Hatorah.

The Yemei Hasefirah (days of the counting of the Omer) are the weeks in which we work on ourselves, doing Teshuvah and refining our *middos* so that we can receive the Torah in the best way possible.

As we all know, the main theme that runs through these days is that of rectifying our relationships *Bein odom lachaveiro* (between man and his fellow man) – the very same area where the talmidim of Rabbi Akiva

were found wanting (on their level), and were so tragically punished during this time. These days are imbued with special spiritual powers to rectify this. It is up to us to seize the opportunity and to utilize them to their fullest extent so that, when this year's Z'man Matan Toiroseinu comes around, we will once again be altogether "K'ish echod b'lev echod – As one person, with one heart", which is what made us worthy of Kabbolas Ha'torah.



The Rebbe, in his famous Torah called "Azamro" (Likutei Moharan 282), shows us how *Teshuvah Bein Odom Lachaveiro* is not just "one half of the equation", but is actually the catalyst for Teshuvah in all aspects. When we are *Don lechaf zechus*, when we make a point of seeking out the good – both in ourselves and in those around us –

we are not simply indulging in "mood enhancement" or "feel-good exercises". The Rebbe teaches us that by emphasizing and concentrating on the good within a person, we can actually engineer a practical change for the better. As the Rebbe explains the words in Tehillim, "*V'oid me'at v'ein Rosho*": When one focuses on the "*oid me'at*" – the tiny speck of good – that is to be found within even the lowest individual, then "*Ve'hisbonanto al mekoimo ve'einenu*" – this in itself has the power - *koyach* to change and transform him, so that he is no longer the Rosho that he was before.

The central element of the Yom Kippur Avodah, and the crux on which the *Kaporas Avonos* (forgiveness of sins) depended, was the smashing of the *So'ir le'azozel* at the foot of the "Azozel Mountain". The Zohar Hakodosh says that that particular hill was chosen, since that is the place of the Soton. The holy words of the Zohar add a layer of mystery to a subject that is already extremely hard to understand. Why was this goat not offered as a korban on the mizbei'ach, like all the other korbonos? And how can sending "presents" to the Soton bring a

kaporoh (atonement) for all of K'lal Yisroel?!

The Alshich Hakodosh explains:

In the case of a Korbon that was brought by an individual as atonement for an aveiroh, the heavenly fire that descended on the Mizbei'ach would consume the specific "koach ha'tumah – negative energy" generated by that particular aveiroh. When the Kohein Godol placed his hands on the head of the so'ir la'azozel, he transferred onto it all the negative energies and varied *klipos* that had been generated throughout the whole previous year by the entire Klal Yisroel. Such a vast amount of tumah, so many different *klipos*, was beyond the power of the heavenly fire of one individual Korbon. The only way to be rid of them all was to send them all back to their own place - to azozel, which is where the Soton and the Kochois Hatumoh usually dwell.

Now, how is all this relevant in a practical way to us and our own repentance?

The Rebbe teaches us that the worst of an aveiroh is not so much the act itself, but rather the bad feeling and "negative spiritual energies" that follow. Plagued by self-disgust and disillusionment, the "Baal Aveiroh" is most vulnerable to the real damage – the *klipos* and forces of tum'ah that gather around him, obscuring his perception of the Shechinah and of Hashem's continuous closeness and love. And obscuring how He values every Mitzvoh that we are doing and every, even the minutest, good point that we have. These mistaken and false thoughts are part and parcel of the Aveioroh itself.

Destroying the kochos ha'tumoh was not merely symbolic, but an

essential part of restoring K'lal Yisroel's connection with Hashem. The removal of these obstructions expunged not only the sinful act but, more importantly, the far-reaching spiritual consequences of it. Indeed, the Rebbe once declared, "Were I to commit the gravest possible aveiroh, it would not throw me down at all. After that I would be the same righteous person as before!"

The explanation is as follows:

The most damaging consequence of an aveiroh is not the act itself, but the distance from Hashem that results from it. The Rebbe had such a strong, unshakeable connection with Hashem – which he defines a person with such a connection, in his words, as a "righteous person" – he could confidently state that, were he to do an aveiroh, he would not let the resulting kochos hatum'ah obscure that connection. He would simply make a new start and carry on as before, his connection with Hashem as strong and clear as ever – thus: "The same righteous person as before"!

Now, how do we emulate this and extricate ourselves from our destructive habits? The Rebbe gives us the answer in the above mentioned Toreh "Azamroh". When we make a habit of finding the *nekudos toivos*, when we accustom ourselves to focusing on the good in ourselves and in others, we are not just "being nice" or "cheering ourselves up". We are actually involved in Teshuvah. We are rectifying the most intrinsically damaging component of our aveiros, those destructive negative thoughts that keep us apart from Hashem. By focusing only on the "oid me'at", the *nekudos toivos* – dood points, we do not allow the yetzer horah to gain entrance. Cleared from obstructions, our

connection with Hashem is restored and "Ve'hisbonanto al mekomo ve'einenu" – we are no longer trapped in the vicious circle. Cleansed and purified, if one looks for us at our previous level one will simply not find us there...

Once the *so'ir la'azozel* had plunged to its destruction, and the *klipos* and tum'ah returned to where they came from – similarly nowadays, when we read and *Lein* these words – we are then rid of the negative energies that make it difficult to think positively and to be close to Hashem. When we utilized this newfound freedom and Taharoh (purity), when we strengthened ourselves to think positive thoughts of Hashem's closeness to us and to our Mitzvohs and good points, then Hashem indicated His acceptance of our Teshuvah by turning the red string into white. We should make a point of focusing only on the good. Even when we see only "red" within ourselves and within other Yidden and even, *Chas Ve'sholom*, in Hashem and in His relationship with us, if we then look within the "red" and try to see the "white" and the positive hidden therein, then these positive thoughts have the power to enact real change. The "red" – the negative – actually becomes positive – "white".

May we all merit to seek and find the good within ourselves and in each other. Through this, may we achieve real Teshuvah, enjoying a strong, unimpeded connection with HaShem Yisborach and with all of Klal Yisroel, and so be ready *Ke'ish echod be'leiv echod* to receive the Torah anew at the upcoming *Zman Matan Toroseinu*!