Cedarwood - Strength

Parasha Eazria-Metzora

לע"נ א"מ חנה בת אברהם דוד הכ"מ

ASHEM spoke to Moses, saying: 2 This shall be the law of the metzora on the day of his purification: He shall be brought to the Kohen. 3 The Kohen shall go forth to the outside of the camp; the Kohen shall look, and behold! — the tzaraas affliction had been healed from the metzora. 4 The Kohen shall command; and for the person being purified there shall be taken two live, clean birds, cedarwood, crimson thread, and hyssop. 5 The Kohen shall command and the one bird shall be slaughtered into an earthenware vessel over spring water. 6 As for the live bird: He shall take it with the cedarwood and the crimson thread and the hyssop, and he shall dip them and the live bird into the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the spring water. ⁷ Then he shall sprinkle seven times upon the person being purified from the tzaraas; he shall purify him, and he shall set the live bird free upon the open field. 8 The person being purified shall immerse his clothing, shave off all his hair, and immerse himself in the water and become pure. Thereafter he may enter the camp; but he shall dwell outside of his tent for seven daus.

Action Stop Ownersh-621 Atonement for sin requires that the erstwhile sinner purge himself of the moral flaw that caused his misdeeds. The underlying cause of slander and gossip — the sins that are punished by Izaraas — is haughtiness, because it breeds the contempt for others that lets one talk about them callously. The metzora's repentance entails a resolve to change himself, a change that is graphically symbolized by the following three items that accompany his offering.

וְעֵץ אֶרֶז — Cedarwood, Because it grows tall, imposing, and wide, the cedar symbolizes haughtiness (Rashi; Arachin 16a). ושני תולעת ואזב — Crimson thread and hyssop. The thread is wool, dyed with a pigment made from a lowly creature, a type of insect or snail, whose identity is unclear. Thus, it symbolizes the penitent's newfound humility. Hyssop, a lowly bush, symbolizes the same idea of humility (Rashi)

Mishmel

This is hard to understand. It is obvious that Rashi considers these offerings of the leper to be symbolic of his new, healed state. As such, the leper should bring the red-dyed wool and the hyssop, but why the cedar? This harks back to his old, arrogant mind-set. Surely it would be best if this was completely forgotten in his striving for rehabilitation?

This difficulty is further compounded by the fact that Rashi uses the phrase "so that he may be healed." This implies that the leper still needs to be healed and that the process described here will achieve that. But this seems to be contradicted by the fact that the verse tells us:

This is the law of the metzora on the day of his purification: He shall come to the kohen. The kohen shall go forth outside the camp, and the kohen shall see, and behold, the leprous plague is healed from the afflicted one. (Vavikra 14:2-3)

If the leper is healed, why does he need to be healed by the offerings? Additionally, Rashi says that the leper "should lower himself" to effect his rehabilitation. This implies that until now he has not done so. But this is also problematic, for how can the leper's illness have subsided if he had not already repented?

It is impossible that the disease would have healed without his having done teshuvah, for Chazal tell us elsewhere:

The leprosy effects his atonement; the offerings readmit him to the community. (Shevuos 8a) Parta Illuminations. R. Adler

The Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 17:3) itemizes ten sins which are punished by nega'im, but the substantive sin which the Torah highlights as the cause of this affliction is lashon hara (Arachin 15•). The term "metzora" (מצורע) is actually a composite of the words "motzi ra" (מוציא רע) — "issuing evil." For committing this anti-social act, the metzorah is banished from society. In fact, he is removed from all three machanos camps— as opposed to the tamei meis —one made ritually impure by contact with the dead—who is only removed from two machanos. The metzora must announce his condition when approached by others so that all will avoid him. During this period of isolation, the metzora is expected to regain his physical and spiritual equilibrium. (Similarly, the aveil - mourner - is expected to perform teshuvah during his seven days of isolation.) As long as the metzora is in this state, he is considered as if he were dead (Nedarim 64:). The reason for this is that by "issuing evil" he demonstrated animalistic use of his power of speech and thereby removed himself from the ranks of the "speaking creatures."

There is a statement in Sefer Yetzirah:

tzara'as.

אין ברע למטה מנגע In the state of evil there is nothing lower than

The nadir of evil is a metzora, and his becoming a metzora is due to his speaking lashon hara. The Maharal (Gur Aryeh, Vayikra 14:2) explains that tzara'as is a living expression of death; it is the manifestation of death in a breathing creature, making the metzora the lowest form of human existence (see Kuzari III:60).

The Ibn Ezra (ibid.) notes that the cedar wood and the hyssop represent the tallest and the smallest in the species of vegetation. Thus the law of the leper, and the laws of the house stricken with leprosy (Vayikra 14:52), and the law of impurity conveyed by a corpse (Bamidbar 19:6,18) are all closely related in that in each of these cases the cedar wood and the hyssop are required ingredients in the process of purification. All the aforementioned resemble the Pesach of Mitzraim where the hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood of the karban Pesach upon the lentil and the two sideposts (as an indication to the Destroyer that he should not enter that Jewish home). The Ibn Ezra is suggesting a parallel between the two purification procedures. In Mitzraim, the hyssop was used to keep the Destroyer from the door, and it would serve the same purpose upon an affected person or house which was undergoing purification. The relationship between the state of leprosy, the state of impurity (or similarly aveilusmourning) and the state of Klal Yisrael at the time of the first karban Pesach must be understood.

The other rite involving the hyssop, was the blood of the karban Pesach at Yetzias Mitzraim. From time immemorial mankind has sought to identify itself with Hashem via an animal sacrifice. Kayin and Hevel brought offerings to Hashem (Bereishis 4:3-4), Adam brought karbanos (Avodah Zarah 8.), Noach offered a sweet savor to Hashem (Bereishis 8:20), and this was the custom of all mankind through all the generations. All their offerings were burnt offerings - an offering that was completely consumed by fire. When Klal Yisrael came onto the scene with their karban Pesach, they were instructed by Hashem to "eat the flesh" of the karban (Shemos 12:8). This is the first time in human history that a human being had the audacity to share with Hashem in His karban. Klal Yisrael became, so to speak, partners with Hashem in the karban. What was up to now totally consumed by fire, could now also be consumed by the corporeal bodies of Klal Yisrael, and it would be considered as if it were offered up on an altar completely consumed by fire.

This gives new dimension to the exclamation of Shlomo

Hamelech:

עורי צפון ובואי תימן

"Awake, O' north, and come you of the south"

(Shir Hashirim 4:16).

Traditionally, the nations of the world were referred to as the "north," while Klal Yisrael was referred to as the "south." Thus, the verse is actually saying, "Awake, you nations of the north, for Klal Yisrael of the south is now coming. Awake, you nations of the north — whose karbanos (the karban olah) were always restricted to the north side of the mizbei'ach. For now Klal Yisrael is emerging on the scene; they are not restricted to the north side of the mizbei'ach — they can also offer a karban shelamim (a karban Pesach is of the shelamim family) which is sacrificed on the south side of the mizbei'ach. Klal Yisrael will now partake of karbanos together with Hashem. Klal Yisrael is no longer just another nation like other nations of the world — Klal Yisrael is now elevated to the status of super-nation. There are the nations of the world, and then there is Klal Yisrael."

חביב אדם שנברא בצלם

10

Beloved is man, for he was created in the image of Hashem (Pirkei Avos 3:14).

Every human being is beloved by Hashem, whether Jew or non-Jew.

חביבים ישראל שנקראו בנים למקום

Most beloved is Yisrael, for they are called children of Hashem (ibid.).

It was an act of special favor that it was disclosed to Klal Yisrael that they are called the "children of Hashem." No other nation can share with Hashem in His sacrificial offerings; but a son may eat of his Father's table. The karban Pesach inaugurated a new era for mankind, an era in which Klal Yisrael were permitted to share with Hashem in eating certain karbanos.

In effect, the elevated status of Klal Yisrael was reflected in their superior Tzelem Elokim — Image of G-d. The Tiferes Yisrael (ibid.) discloses that certain individuals of the nations possess Tzelem Elokim, but on the whole, the other nations may have forfeited their Tzelem image due to their wickedness. Klal Yisrael will never entirely lose the Tzelem because of its special relationship with Hashem. This new status of Tzelem Elokim was expressed by the uniqueness of the karban Pesach offering.

On the other hand, the Metzora seeks to destroy and break down the inherent Tzelem Elokim of his fellow human being. By belittling and embarrassing his peer, the metzora ignores and even attempts to dismiss another human being's Tzelem. Hence, as part of his purification rite, he must return to basics. The metzora is reintroduced to the hyssop which was used during Pesach Mitzraim to demonstrate the nobility

and aristocracy of each individual member of Klal Yisrael. As part of his re-assimilation into civil society, he must relearn the lesson of Pesach Mitzraim.

The Ch'sam Sofer (Derashos 594) points out that the hyssop specifically was used on Pesach (in Mitzraim) because it is the smallest of bushes. Its purpose was to remind Klal Yisrael:

> לא מרבכם מכל העמים חשק הי בכם, ויבחר בכם כי אתם המעט מכל העמים

> Not because you are a majority among the nations did Hashem love you. He choose you because you were the fewest of all people (Devarim 7:7).

13 Nevertheless, Hashem chose you. Not necessarily due to your own merit, but because:

> רק באבתיך חשק הי לאהבה אותם, ויבחר בזרעם אחריהם בכם מכל העמים

> Only that Hashem had a delight in your fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people (Devarim 10:15).

The bush, which is the smallest of vegetation, reminds the nation that is smallest in number to rejoice in their exalted status (See *Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:3). Traditionally, *Klal Yisrael* is aware of its exalted status, nevertheless their personal behavior is one of self-imposed minimization (*Chulin* 89•).

This attitude of minimization is a tenet of Torah life. Reconciling avowed national elitism with exacting personal deprecation is the mark of the Torah individual. The common thread of the state of leprosy, the state of impurity,

the state of aveilus and the karban Pesach is to teach this fundamental lesson.

15 "The Commity" - Raw Salawatchik

mentarity of the individuals belonging to the Knesset Israel. The individuals belonging to the community complement one another existentially. Each individual possesses something unique, rare, which is unknown to others; each individual has a unique message to communicate, a special color to add to the communal spectrum. Hence, when lonely man joins the community, he adds a new dimension to the community awareness. He contributes something which no one else could have contributed. He enriches the community existentially; he is irreplaceable. Judaism has always looked upon the individual as if he were a little world (microcosm), with the death of the individual, this little world comes to an end. A vacuum which other individuals cannot fill is left. The saying:

כל המקיים נפש אחת, כאלו קיים עולם מלא

Whoever saves one life, it is as if had saved the entire world.

should be understood in this way. The sensitive Halachic rules pertaining to mourning (אבלות) are rooted in the Halacha's perception of the tragic singleness of man, in the awareness that man as a natural being exists once in an eternity. Because of that singleness, individuals get together, complement each other, and attain ontological wholeness.

the Consoling The Wille - R. Pliskla

[3] INTERVIEWER: What positive trait should I master to help me eliminate loshon hora?

CHOFETZ CHAYIM: "Refraining from speaking negatively against others is dependent on the fulfillment of the commandment to love our fellow man as ourselves (Vayikra 19:18). When you sincerely love someone, you will not speak against him. Moreover, you will try with all your might to find some way to judge the person favorably. If you yourself did something that was not proper and you were aware that people were talking about the matter and you knew some way to judge yourself favorably, it would be your fervent desire that someone listening would speak up in your defense. What was done could have been done accidentally or there may have been some other mitigating circumstances.

- 5- 10-10 17.

"כבוד" הוא משורש "כבד", והפכו הקיצוני הוא "קללה" שהיא משורש "קל". כשאני מתיחס אל מישהו בכובד ראש אני מכבדו. אם "מקילים" בו מקללים אותו.

2. 12 The Kohen shall take the one lamb and bring it near for a guilt-offering, with the log of oil; and he shall wave them as a wave-service before HASHEM.

And the rest of the oil that is on the Kohen's palm, he shall place upon the head of the person being purified; and the Kohen shall provide him atonement before HASHEM. ¹⁹ The Kohen shall perform the sin-offering service and provide atonement for the person being purified from his contamination; after that he shall slaughter the elevation-offering. ²⁰ The Kohen shall bring the elevation-offering and the meal-offering up to the Altar; and the Kohen shall provide him atonement, and he becomes pure.

19 Night of Watching-R. Kanalogstry

The general subject of metzora — the leper — from the point of view of the Hallacha is highly technical and complex. We shall concern ourselves exclusively with the process of purification of the metzora as it is outlined in the above text. Besides everything else involved in this process, he is to offer three sacrifices. One is the asham — a sacrifice offered for a transgression. The second is the hatat — again a sacrifice generally offered following a transgression. Finally, the olah — the burnt-offering unto G-d which is generally not associated with any specific transgression.

Classic commentaries have been concerned with the need or the purpose of the three sacrifices. More than that, they are particularly interested in the threefold atonement that is mentioned in our text. You will note that the priest "effects atonement before G-d for him"; then "effects atonement for him who is purifying himself" and finally "the priest shall atone for him and he becomes clean". One clearly needs to find some explanation for the repeated reference to atonement.

Ramban maintans that the asham is intended as an atonement for the original sin of slander — lashon hora — the transgression for which our Rabbis taught us that the punishment is the Divine visitation of some form of leprosy. The hatat is again an atonement for the possibility of a new transgression — namely, some form of verbal reaction on the part of the leper to his suffering. It is assumed that his suffering and subsequent isolation affected him to the degree that he spoke out against G-d and questioned his justice. The olah is not intended to atone for any transgression but merely to purify him so that he may return to his home and to normal life.

The olah, according to N'tziv, is always intended as an atonement for transgressions associated with thought processes, for thought is generally the precursor of action or speech. And the olah was to atone for that transgression.²

We will direct our attention to a text of Rambam in Mishne Torah. At the conclusion of the "Laws of Impurities of leprosy", Rambam, after stating the general principle that the punishment alluded to in this form of leprosy is related to the transgression of slander, and after exhorting against any form of slander, says, "And this is the nature of the council of evil people. First they indulge in nonsensical words that are completely meaningless. As a result of this they begin to talk against the righteous and speak of them shamefully. Then, they proceed to speak out against the prophets, casting doubts on their words. Finally, they are drawn into talking against G-d and even into denying His existence".3 This is a fairly free translation of Rambam's text, but one sees immediately that it is important to pin-point the element of lashon hara - slander - that is defined here. This should not be difficult.

7.3 I think it is quite clear that the characteristic element of slander is to be found in the second stage. When the Rambam says that the wicked begin to talk against the righteous, we are on the threshold of slander. In effect, the expression "righteous" could refer to anyone who is at the receiving end of the darts of slander. What is important is to note that the stage preceding this one is the cause of the whole process and the stage following it is the ultimate result. In other words, slander is caused by something and slander leads to something. The first stage is the

cause, the second, the "slander", the third the ultimate result. And all this should be explained in simple psychological terms. Slander against the righteous, as Rambam calls lashon hara, does not begin there. It begins with self-deprecation. When one Floses faith in one's own stature, one begins to strike out against others. This can be stated in many different ways. If I see nothing good, or nothing of value, in myself, it becomes highly improbable that I will see good in others. Conversely, my appreciation of the good in others, is predicated upon the recognition of some good in myself. Let us note two texts which appear to stress this notion.

The Mishna in Aboth which reads "who is honored, he who gives honor to others" 4 seems to express the notion that it is only the individual who recognizes his own honor, his own worth, and his own value, who can give honor and respect to others. One classic commentary suggests that only such an individual can afford to give honor to others.5 The one who does not recognize his own value slanders others.

25

The problem with "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" lies more in the phrase "as thyself" than in "thy neighbor". To legitimately "love thyself" is a prerequisite to loving one's neighbor.

26

In short, Rambam describes the group of individuals with no purpose in life, discussing divrei havai - words that are nonsense - not concerned with important matters and wasting their time on the ridiculous. This tends to an immeasurable lowering of one's estimate of oneself and eventually leads to slander. And it is quite understandable that even an element of jealousy creeps into this slander. After all, the righteous man is concerned with important matters — he is in the mainstream of life, involved in creative or productive activity. It follows therefore that the wicked man must resort to slander in order to depreciate the other person's value.

It is now only a step from the inferiority complex of the rasha to an overemphasized superiority complex to cover up his weaknesses. It is only a step from slander against the righteous to an attempt to build himself up; not in a meaningful, constructive manner, but rather in an unhealthy, cancerous access of pride which borders on arrogance. This in turn, is tantamount to setting up a form of idolatry or at least to denying the existence of G-d. Now the cycle has been completed. From self deprecation he has turned to slander and from slander to idolatry.

This, it appears, is Rambam's analysis of lashon hara - its roots, the transgression, and the ultimate result. We turn now to the process of purification and we note with astonishment how it closely follows this structure of Rambam.

25 The Torah first insists that the leper, offer an asham - a sin-offering generally more demanding than the hatat. This is offered as an atonement for the ultimate result - the crime against G-d - the denial of the existence of G-d which follows, according to Rambam, upon the heels of slander. This is the reason why the text reads "atonement for him before G-d". It is the transgression against G-d which is stressed here and which requires atonement.

7 The Torah then stipulates that he bring the hatat — the usual sin offering. This is the sacrifice which is intended as an atonement for the expressed transgression of slander. For this reason the text now reads "atonement for him who is purifying himself from his impurity". This relates, of course, specifically to the het - to the transgression which stands at the center of the entire drama.

30 Now we approach the most significant element of the purification process. If the entire process is going to make any sense at all - and particularly if it is going to act, in some way, as a preventive against a recurrence of the same cycle - then the problem must be attacked at its roots. And the roots of slander, lie in the image the individual has of himself. Therefore it is now necessary to build up the individual - to teach him his own worth and his own value, to give him stature and a purpose. The third sacrifice, olah, has as its purpose the elevation of the individual. It is intended to impress the "leper" with the possibility that he can come close to G-d, close to Divinity, and give meaning and purpose to his own life. He is thus elevated unto G-d. This makes slander completely unnecessary and perhaps even impossible.

Significantly, the text now reads "the priest shall atone for him, and he shall be pure".

ארי שורי העבודה" המיוחס לרבינו יונה מתחיל: "הפתח הראשון הוא שידע האיש העובד ערך עצמו ויכיר מעלתו ומעלת אבותיו וגדולתם וחשיבותם וחבתם אצל הבורא ית׳. וישתדל ויתחזק תמיד להעמיד עצמו במעלה ההיא ולהתנהג בה תמיד כו׳. ואם חלילה וחס לא יכיר מעלתו ומעלת אבותיו, נקל יהיה בעיניו ללכת בדרכיו הפריצים, להגלות נגלות כאחד הנבלים למלאות תאותו בחיקו כאשר אמר המשל: כל מי שאינו מתבייש מנפשו אין לנפשו ערך

דורנו הצעירים. רק אחרי תקופה ממושכת של הרמת רוחם והשמשת ידיעת רוממות האדם יוכלו לעמוד בהכרת צד הפחיתות של האדם. מכל זה יוצאת מסקנה לגבי לימוד מוסר בדורנו: ראשית דרכו של הלומד מוסר היום צריך להיות: לימוד רוממות האדם!

המתחיל ללמוד מוסר צריך לעסוק תקופה ממושכת בלימוד מעלות. בלמדנו את סולמו של רפב"י שעליו מושתת המס"י. עלינו ראשית כל לשגן לעצמנו שישנן מעלות של זהירות. זריזות, נקיות. טהרה וכו׳, וכי מידות אלו הן בתחום השגתנו באשר אנחנו יהודים. וכל אדם מישראל יש לו הכנה נפשית

להגיע אליהן. בלי לימוד לא היינו יודעים כלל שישנן מידות כאלו, וכי בני אדם, קרוצי חומר, יכולים להשיג אותן בפועל. המתחיל ללמוד ספר מס"י במתכונת של לימוד מוסר, ייטיב בתקופה הראשונה שלא להתעכב בכל פרק לערוך חשבון נפשו על ליקוייו במידה שהוא עוסק בה. אלא ילמד את המידה בכל עומקה

ויתלמד להעריך אותה ולהשתוקק אליה. על דרך זה מצינו דברים נפלאים

באופן ברור: כבוד הוא הנהגה חיצונית המחויבת מהמציאות של קדושה פנימית ומתאימה לה. הרי יש בקרבך צלם אלקים קדוש — זה מחייב הגהגה בעניני גופך המתאימה לו, וזוהי הנהגה המושתתת על עדינות נפשי

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לפי דרכנו כאן ישנו מהלך בהבנת הדבר הנורא הזה - ישיבה של עשרים וארבע אלף תלמיד נחרבה "מפני שלא נהגו כבוד זה לזה": "כבוד" היא המידה של עדינות בנפש. המכובד מכבד גם אחרים. אם אין עדינות — אין גם עליה של אמת: קטנות היתה בתלמידים אלה. ובקטנות נשארו אף שרבם היה ר׳ עקיבא. מי שאין בו עדינות. ומהותו - קטנות. אינו מסוגל להתעלות בתורה גם אם רבו הוא הגדול שבגדולים! הרי חסר לו הכלי שעל־ידו מתעלים.

אסון זה אירע דווקא מפסח ועד עצרת. כשחז"ל קבעו זאת במפורש, כוונתם לרמו שהומן גרם. הביאור בזה הוא כך: ההארה שהאירה לישראל בעת יציאת מצרים ובעת מתן תורה חוזרת על עצמה מדי שנה בשנה. כידוע. כל מה שאירע אז, מתעורר תמיד שוב באותו פרק זמן. בחצות לילה של יציאת מצרים נתגלה הצלם הקדוש של האדם מישראל בכל שיעור קומתן. למחרת נעלם גילוי זה ן וחזרו לקטנות הקודמת. אך כיון שטעמו כבר את טעם הגדלות הנוראה של הצלם הקדוש בשלימותו. התאמצו בעבודתם לזכות אליו שוב- הרש"ז מקלם נ"ע כתב. כי בימים אלה קנו כל יום אחת מהמעלות שהתורה נקנית בהן; ביום המ״ח השלימו את קנין כל מ״ח המעלות, וביום המ״ט עשו ״חזרה״ על כולן ביחד, ובזה זכו שוב לגילוי הצלם הקדוש ביום החמשים, וכך ניגשו לקבלת התורה, וכזה נתעלו עוד בתוספת מעלה עצומה.

סדר זה חוזר על עצמו מדי שנה בשנה. הזוכה בליל הסדר לראות עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים. מאירה גם לו הארה מעין זו שהאירה לכלל ישראל בחצות לילה של יציאת מצרים. והיא נעלמת אחר כך. שבעת השבועות של ספירת העומר הם זמן העבודה להגיע שוב אל הארה זו, והמתאמץ בזה בעבודתו במשך שבועות אלה. זוכה אליה שוב לקראת חג מתן תורתנו. (כשהרש"ז זללה"ה אמר מה שאמר. אין ספק כי זאת היתה העבודה שלו בימים אלה.) כל זה הוא באדם מישראל שיש לו חוש בגדלות אמיתית ומשתדל להתרומם מעל הקטנות שלו. אך אדם שאין לו לא השגה ולא חפץ בגדלות וכולו אומר קטנות — הַוא משולל ח"ו מההליכה לקראת מתן תורה. וזוהי צרה גדולה עבורו, במובן זה הרי הזמן שבין פסח ועצרת הוא זמן של דין: מתאמצים או לא מתאמצים להגיע לשיעור הקומה האמיתי של אדם מישראל ?

תלמידי ר״ע לא נהגו כבוד זה לזה — זהו הסימן המובהק לקטנות: חוסר עדינות וחוסר חשיבות. מי שאינו מכבד, מופקע הוא גם מנכבדות וחשיבות של עצמו. בזה נחרץ משפטם של כל עשרים וארבע אלף למות. ודווקא בפרק זמן זה, בין פסח לעצרת.

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ונראה דהנה ענין המתגאה לא נוכל לומר שזה רע בהחלט. שהרי מצינו (סנהדרין ל"ז.) כל אחד ואחד חייב לומר בשבילי נברא העולם, וכתיב (דבהי"ב י"ז) ויגבה לבו בדרכי ה׳, ובאכות (פ״ה) יהודה בן תימא אומר הוי עַז כנמר וקל כנשר רץ כצבי וגבור כארי לעשות רצון אביך שבשמים. שכל אלה הם היפוך מדת השפלות וההכנעה, וכ"כ מובן שהכנעה ושפלות אין זו מדה טובה בהחלט. שהרי מציבו כנ"ל שהוזהר להיות תקיף בדעתו עז כנמר וגבור כארי, וידוע שממדת הכנעה ושפלות יכול לבוא לידי יאוש הנורא ח"ו והוא גרוע מהכל. וע"כ שכל אלה המדות הן הגבהת הלב והן הכניעה והשפלות כשהן בטהרתן כל אחת במקומה הראוי והצריך הוא טוב, ושלא במקומו הוא רע. והנה מצורע זה שהיתה בו מתחילה גסות הרוח ונתנגע. ובשביל היסורין והבדלתו חוץ למחנה נשפל נפשו. ודכא לארץ

الرادير ما ام - والمؤ

מותרות, שדייך במה שאסרה תורה, בכל הציוויים המפורשים שנאמרו בתורה עונשים עליהם, ומה לו להתייגע בעניני מדות שלא ציותה עליהם התורה. ומה עוד שהוא כבר חטא כה הרבה ונתרחק, ומה לו ולמדרגות גבוהות במדות, החשוב ביותר בשבילן לשמור עצמו מאיסור והיתר. וכנגד זה מקדימים את המשנה כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא שנאמר ועמך כולם צדיקים וגו' נצר מטעי מעשה ידי להתפאר, שיהודי ידע שהוא נצר מטעי של הקב"ה, בנים אתם לה' אלקיכם, וכל יהודי יש לו חלק לעולם הבא שאליו הוא צריך להגיע. וכשם שדנים ומענישים בב"ד של מעלה על חטאים

כשאנחנו מדברים על "הכרת עצמנו" אנו מתכוונים בעיקר להכרת היצרים

דבר גדול קבע בזה האבן־עזרא באמרו: "ולא יוכל לדעת השם אם לא ידע

השפלים והמידות הגרועות שלנו, ובודאי יש לזה מקום, אבל לפני הכרת

נפשו ונשמתו וגופו. וכל מי שלא ידע מהות נפשו — חכמת מה לו!" (כי תשא.

לחילת שני.) והנה כווגת הראב"ע היא לידיעת מעלות הנפש הנשמה והגוף

השפלות חייבים ומוכרתים להכיר את הצד הנעלה שבאדם בהכרה ברורה.

ועבירות כך גם ידונו אותו על עניני מדות. כל העונשים תכליתם לצרף יהודי ולזככו כדי שיהא מוכשר לנחול את חלקו לעולם הבא, ואף עניני מדות בכלל זה. שבתחלה מנקים אותו מן החטאים

> והנה כמו שאין שבה בגסות הרוח שמקודם כן נמי אין שבח בשפלות של עכשיו. ולא זה הדרך ישכון אור אלקי. ואדרבה אין השכינה שורה אלא מתוך שמחת ואין עומדין להתפלל אלא מתוך שמחה של מצוה וכתיב עבדו את ה' בשמחה. והכניעה הנרצית היא כמ״ש הרמב״ם (פ״ב מה׳ יְסוה״ת) בשעה שיתבונן האדם במעשיו וברואיו הנפלאים הגדולים ויראה מהם חכמתו שאין לה ערך ולא קץ וכו' וכשמחשב בדברים האלו עצמן מיד הוא נרתע לאחוריו ויפחד וידע שהוא ברי׳ שפלה אפילה עומדת בדעת קלה ומעוטה לפני תמים דעות וכו', וע"כ הן גסות הרוח שמקודם והן הכניעה והשפלות של עכשיו צריכין טהרה, וכשיטהרו פיינו גסות הרוח להגביה לבו בדרכי ה' ולהיות עז כנמר וגבור כארי, והכניעה להיות נכנע להש"י, לא מהמת דכאותו ויסוריו והבדלתו מחוץ למחגה שכניעה זו היא רק מחמת זולתו שהוא רואה כל העולם בריוח והוא בצער, אין זה נחשב לכלום. שאלמלא הי׳ כל העולם כמותו לא הי׳ נכנע כלל. אבל הכניעה להש״י מצד עדלות ה' שהוא רואה א"ע עם כל העולם יהד כאפם ואין. היא כניעה בעצם ולא מפאת זולתו, והיא כניעה הנרצית, וכניעה זו אינה סותרת את הגבהת לבו בדרכי ה'. ויכולות להיות לו שתיהן יחד, לעומת אשר גסות הרוח הקודמת וכניזותו ע"י הנגע היו סותרות זו את זו. וכניעה זו יצדק לומר עלי׳ כאזוב ותולעת. שהתולעת היא כניעה עצמית ולא מפאת זולתו