



פרשת ויקרא

WITH

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BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

Offering Up Your Ego

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Part I.

Offering The False Personality

Korbanos Nowadays

The beginning of Sefer Vayikra, to a very great extent, means the subject of *korbanos*. Now, because we don't have it today - we weren't *zocheh* yet - so it seems to be a subject far away from us. However, I'm going to show you now that we do have it - and in one sense we have the opportunity now, even more than when we had the *Beis Hamikdash*.

In *Mesichta Sanhedrin* (43b) we read as follows: *אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי - Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, כל הזוכה את יצרו - if a man slaughters his yetzer hara, ומתוודה עליו - and he speaks his confession over it; he speaks a viduy, מעלה עליו הכתוב - so the Scripture considers it for him, הוא ברוך הוא בשני עולמים - as if he honored Hakadosh Baruch Hu in two worlds, העולם הזה והעולם הבא - he honored Him in this world and in the World-to-Come, שנאמר -*

and he quotes a *possuk*, *זוכה תורה יכברנני* - he who slaughters an offering will honor Me. The word *יכברנני* is written with two *nuns* and it's taken as a hint that if you slaughter your *yetzer hara* it's considered as if you have done a great honor to the Almighty in both worlds.

Now we have to understand what is meant by *yitzro*, "a person's inclination." After all, there are all kinds of inclinations in a person, and even if we'll say that "*yitzro*" means the *yetzer hara*, the *evil* inclination, it still needs specification because there are all kinds of *evil* inclinations. And we understand that it doesn't mean that you're killing the *yetzer hara* for forbidden things, because such a thing is impossible. There's no such thing! The greatest *tzaddik*, as long as he is on this side of the grave, has to struggle with his *evil* inclination.

Struggling Only 120 Years

Many times young people come to me with problems with the *yetzer hara* and they ask how long they will have to struggle with it. So I say, "It's

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only the first 120 years.” What else could I say? That’s the plain truth. Just make up your mind that it’s a permanent feature of the landscape. It’s going to be around always. Of course, you shouldn’t yield to it; you can’t fail. Besides, those who give it more dominion over them, so they become more enslaved to it and they’ll have a bigger fight. But everybody, as long as he’s alive, will have this test in life. Because that’s what life is for, to be tested.

And so, it’s not possible for anybody to slaughter his *yetzer hara* while he’s alive. It just can’t be. That’s why Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi spoke not about *killing* the inclination; he didn’t say **ההורגו** – “If you slay it.” If he’s talking about getting rid of it *ingantzen* he should have spoken about someone who *slays* his *yetzer*. No, he said “sacrifice; to bring an offering.” Because he’s talking about something else entirely.

And so we have to go back now and understand what is this *yetzer*, what is this evil inclination that you can offer up as a *korban*? What is this sacrifice that is considered the most important offering?

Pride Is The Head

The Chovos Halevavos makes a statement: *haga'avah rosh kol chatas*, pride is the head of all sin. This means as follows: One's *self-importance* is the cause of all misdeeds. The true root of the evil inclination is the desire to do what “you” wish to do. Not the desire to have pleasure or the desire to acquire things. Not the desire to sin or eat forbidden things, to look in forbidden places. There are many different ways of exercising your will, but the *yetzer hara* means “you” desire to do “your” will.

That's the secret of the *yetzer hara* – there is an urge in mankind that we'll call the ego. Ego means “I” in Latin – the urge that the “I” of a person should express itself. That the *anochi* should be emphasized as much as possible, that's the great urge in man.

Actually, if you're a little bit experienced with human beings you'll know that many times that's all a person really desires – that his *anochi* should be expressed. That's what a person really wants most, to be recognized.

Does He Really Want Advice?

Let's say you deal with customers and they come with complaints or if you're a rabbi and you deal with many people and their complaints. What the people want more than anything is that you should recognize them as justified in bringing complaints. Whether you'll do anything about it or not is in most cases immaterial. People who come and enumerate their woes, they're most interested that somebody should recognize that their problems are problems.

And even though you'll give them advice, often they'll go away and they'll ignore your advice. They're satisfied that they expressed their personality. And even though they told you that the purpose of coming was to ask advice, if you'll show them that you recognize their personality, that's what counts. Whatever you do subsequently is secondary, because he is more interested in demonstrating his personality than actually getting advice.

Even a little baby, he's not even aware of what he wants, but he has within him that ego, that urge to be recognized. He's standing in his crib or even lying in his diapers and he already has a personality; he wants attention because the “I” is already pressing him. “*Anochi*, I am here!”

Now, as he grows up and he becomes capable of knowing more, so he attaches this ego to certain objectives. He wants to be recognized for his wit or for his wisdom. He wants to have money. He wants pleasures. Whatever it is, the ego finds various objectives as he gets older. But as soon as he's born, the ego is already there. Only that he doesn't know how to exercise it. It's not geared to any particular goal but it's there; his personality, that's the *yetzer hara*.

The Fictional Personality

Now please don't misunderstand this word ego and translate it in the sense that everyone else does. We're talking now about what people call "personality", but we have to make an important distinction between your true personality and your fictional personality that we call the ego.

There is an intrinsic personality, a true personality, and that is something that won't be sacrificed no matter what you do. Your personality is who you are, absolutely, and that, Hakadosh Baruch Hu doesn't want you to forgo; your true personality will never be sacrificed. But there is another personality, an artificial personality that is fostered and encouraged by the *yetzer hara*, and that is the ego, the *anochi*.

I'll give an example just so that we should understand what we're talking about. Let's say you are living with a wife or she's living with her husband, either case, and one of the two did or said something exasperating. So what happens? The *yetzer hara*, the false personality, rises up in the thoughts of the other party – "I have to stand my ground. I must put my foot down. What? Am I going to just be a pushover?" That's the immediate reaction, the raw reaction that wells up in a person's thoughts. It's the *yetzer hara*, the false ego speaking.

Offering It Up

So what does Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi say? He tells us that the greatness of a person is when he or she takes that ego and offers it up to Hashem as a *korban*. Instead of letting the ego assert itself, you take that feeling, that raw emotion, and you sacrifice it to Hashem as a *korban*.

What do you do? You're thinking in your head, "I know what my ego is urging me to do, but I'm not going to be a fool this time. This time I'm going to sacrifice my "I", and instead of replying, I'm going to overlook it. I'm not going to stand my

ground at all." That's the *korban* that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi is talking about.

Now, many people blanch at such an idea. "What do you mean? I'll let people step on me? I should let them walk all over me?! I won't assert myself?!" Be careful! That's the false personality talking! The false personality pictures somebody who is powerful, who is domineering, who has to be victorious. That's his idea of a personality, but it's a false personality; it's the ego, the false "I", asserting itself.

Now, when you're *makriv* that false personality, what's the immediate result? That the true personality becomes thereby improved. It becomes so ennobled that it achieves a characteristic that is going to remain with it forever because that's the intrinsic personality.

Offering The Yetzer

Now, because a person's *yetzer hara*, his false personality, is always asserting itself – constantly, again and again it's pushing its way to the forefront of your emotions and your thoughts – it becomes one of the greatest opportunities in a person's life. It's the opportunity that we began the lecture with tonight, to be a person who is always bringing *korbanos* to Hashem – even more so than a person who lived in the ancient days of the Beis Hamikdash. And this brings us to the following statement in the Gemara there.

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי – *Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, בא וראה כמה גדולים נמוכי הרוח לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא* – *come and see how great are the humble of spirit. שבשעה שביית המקדש קיים אדם מקריב עולה* – *When a man brings a burnt offering, that's an offering that's burnt on the mizbeach to the Almighty. When it's burnt on the altar to the Almighty, it's the choicest kind of offering because everything is burned up. Nothing remains for the owners to eat or even for the kohanim to eat; it's the most unselfish kind of offering. So שכר עולה בידו* – *he receives a certain reward commensurate with bringing an olah. מנחה* – *And if he brings a minchah,*

that's a poor little offering, a little flour and oil, שכר מנחה בידו – he gets reward for bringing a minchah offering.

Whatever the specific reward is for that *korban*, that's what you're credited with. If it was an *olah* you'll get a certain reward for that; if it was a *minchah* you brought, so you'll get a certain *minchah* reward. But whatever it is, you only get the reward for the offering that you brought; you won't get more reward than for the offering that you gave.

The Humble Offering

But, says Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, מי שדעתו שפלה – a man who has a humble spirit, it means he offered up his *yetzer*, his ego; מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו – the Torah considers it as if he offered all of the offerings.

And he quotes a *possuk*, זבחי אלוקים רוח נשברה – the offerings of Hashem are a broken spirit (Tehillim 51:19). When a man breaks his spirit, when he *shechts* that false image of himself, it's considered as if he brought many offerings. זבחי אלוקים is plural; offerings to *Elokim* – it doesn't say how many, so Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says it means all the offerings. Because of his humility of spirit, he's given credit as if he brought all the offerings at once: an *olah* and a *minchah* and a *shelamim* and a *chatas* and all the other *korbanos* we read about in Sefer Vayikra.

Now, that's something that should grab our attention because it's an unequalled opportunity! To bring even one *korban* is a tremendous achievement of finding favor in the eyes of Hashem; but to bring many? To bring all of them? That's a closeness to Hakadosh Baruch Hu that can't be matched! And we're learning now that it all depends on this *middah* of humility that is acquired by means of crushing the false ego that constantly wells up in a person's emotions.

Paragon Of Humility

Everybody knows that our great master Moshe was called האיש משה עניו מאד – he was considered a very humble man, מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה – superior in humility to all of mankind. It means he was the paragon of humility.

Now this *anivus* – this humility of Moshe – has been explained here previously, but it's important to repeat it for our subject. Because the question is, was it really possible for Moshe Rabbeinu to consider himself inferior to others? Didn't he know that he was the greatest of all *nevi'im*? Didn't he know that no prophet would ever appear who could compare to him? The Torah says that. לא קם עור נביא בישראל כמשה – never again would there be a *navi* like Moshe.

We think of a humble person as a person who is meek, who has an inferiority complex and thinks that he's less than other people. But here we have a man who was surely aware of his superiority because in the Torah – the Torah that he brought down to the Am Yisrael – it's written so. It's emblazoned there so that forever and ever the world should read that there was no man ever who could equal Moshe Rabbeinu. So how was it possible for him to be humble?

Bullish Humility

So we understand that when Moshe Rabbeinu did it, it wasn't in the sense of somebody who persuades himself that he's a nobody, that he forces himself to think "I'm not important". No. That's the humility of a cow, an ox. You see sometimes in the country a little boy is leading a huge ox. That ox is humbled before that little boy. The ox could trample him, only that the ox doesn't know its power. He's not aware. He's a *beheimah*. That's not what we're talking about now.

Moshe Rabbeinu knew who he was; absolutely, he knew. Only that he trained himself not to yield

to this yetzer of putting his ego forward. He was two separate personalities. The true Moshe Rabbeinu is certainly unequaled and will never be equaled. And yet he was able to overcome the false Moshe which would have danced in front of his eyes as a figure that is domineering, a figure of power, to whom everyone should accord the greatest honor. No, no, that Moshe he was willing to yield; every opportunity that arose, in his home, on the street, he slaughtered that yetzer hara, the imaginary personality, and he remained the humble Moshe.

Now don't imagine it was simple. Moshe Rabbeinu was a human being too; he had an ego. So how did he do it? And now we come to the core of the subject. He did it because he knew what he was trying to accomplish! Every time he sacrificed his ego it was an offering to Hashem.

True Awareness

You know what the secret is? Moshe Rabbeinu, more than anybody else, knew always that he's standing *lifnei Hashem*, ותמונת השם יביט. As much as a human being could see Hashem, that's how much Moshe Rabbeinu saw Him. He achieved the summit of human awareness of Hashem.

And so Moshe Rabbeinu certainly knew he was the greatest man. Anyone who denied that would be called a *koifer*, including Moshe. He couldn't deny that. And yet, Moshe Rabbeinu was able to overcome that powerful drive to feel superior, to have *ga'avah* because he was more aware of Hakadosh Baruch Hu than anybody else. When you're aware of Hashem, that's a true *yiras Hashem*. You know that Hashem is looking at you. He's right there! And because of that great awareness Moshe Rabbeinu always was humble.

Now Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi tells us how great a *middah* that is, that this is an honor for Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Because why does a man actually feel that he can overcome this false personality? Only because he's aware of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. It's awareness; it's *emunah*. It's *reishis*

chachmah yiras Hashem. That's the greatest honor. The biggest honor you can do to Hashem is to be aware of Him. And if you're so aware then the false personality is never permitted to assert itself and only the true personality exists within you; because Hakadosh Baruch Hu is looking and all falsehood falls away! It's all *sheker*. What kind of a mastery can a little human being claim, who is here only for a short while and soon he'll return to the dust, and he stands before the *Melech Malchei Hamelachim*, Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

A Monument Forever

And because Moshe Rabbeinu constantly was aware of this, therefore he slaughtered the yetzer hara. He perfected himself and he remained like an offering. He was like a permanent offering. In this life he offered himself constantly to Hakadosh Baruch Hu because he was constantly aware. And because of that, the perfection of his soul is going to continue forever as a demonstration of a man who when he was in this world didn't deceive himself. He was able to see the truth. He honored Hashem and therefore Hakadosh Baruch Hu will keep him forever and ever as a monument to someone who lived successfully.

מעלה עליו הכתוב – Hakodosh Boruch Hu considers it, כאילו כברו להקדוש ברוך הוא בשני עולמים – as if you honored Him in two worlds, העולם הזה והעולם הבא – he honored Him in this world and in the World-to-Come. When the true "I" is willing to forgo, and he slaughters that imaginary picture of his ego because of his awareness of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, then his true personality acquires a perfection of such grandeur that it's going to be a permanent monument in both worlds. This person's *neshamah* is going to be considered as an eternal honor to Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

Now, what we see from this is that all of this greatness that we could achieve comes with one condition, however. You're doing it because of Hashem. Like we said, it's an offering to Hashem. When you're offering up your ego, it's because of

your awareness that you are standing in front of Hashem. It's not just a sacrifice, it's a sacrifice to Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

His Kindly Pious Ones

And that's why we find in the Tanach an expression in "*chassidav* – His pious ones." Now, *chossid* means somebody who is kind; he's willing to go beyond the line of duty to be kind. So why does it say *chassidav*, His kindly ones? It should say *chassidim*, the kindly ones. Why "Hashem's kindly ones"?

The answer is that it's emphasizing that it's not enough for a person to be a kind person and to be willing to let go of his ego. He has to do it because of Hashem. If a person is kind just because it pays then it's not *chassidav*. If he's kind because it's good for business and it's good for his health and because it makes his marriage successful and his life successful, that's not the success we're talking about.

Now, don't misunderstand me. Sacrificing your ego will accomplish all those things, no question about it. Not only will he be more successful but he'll be happier too. In this world it's an attitude that pays off because people who yield to this false ego they're always finding trouble. They're always unhappy. It's the person who learns to swallow his false pride and slaughter the *yetzzer hara*, that is living successfully.

Reeds and Cedars

You'll endure in this world because of this. The Gemara says that **לעולם יהא אדם רך כקנה** – *a man should be soft as a reed*, **ולא קשה כארז** – *and not hard like a cedar tree*. Here are two different plants; a reed is a soft plant that when the wind blows it bends with the wind. And here's a cedar tree that refuses to budge. It's strong; it won't bend. Along comes a hurricane and after the hurricane is over the cedar tree is lying stretched out on the ground uprooted and the reed is still there, still standing up.

The difference is that the reed comes and goes with the wind. It gives; it bends if you push it this way and then it bends in the other direction too. It doesn't break. The cedar tree won't bend and finally it breaks before the hurricane.

That's the *mashal* the Gemara gives for the man who is able to sacrifice, to let himself be bent this way and that way. That's the person who is going to endure. He'll endure in this world. He'll live long. There's no question about it that the one who's willing to be pushed this way and that way will endure in this world. He'll be successful.

Losing Out

But that's not what we're talking about here. Because when a person does all of that without intending it as a sacrifice to Hashem, he might become successful in this world but he's losing out on the most important thing: he's giving up greatness in the Next World. It's only when one does it with the consideration that he's standing before Hashem, that he's sacrificing the ego for Him, that's an entirely separate *madreigah* of greatness that has no equal.

Isn't it a pity? There are a lot of nice people in the world and many have trained themselves to sacrifice their egos by keeping quiet. There are mothers who wanted to buy something for themselves but they had to sacrifice their will for the sake of *shalom bayis*. Or maybe she wanted a new dress but she sacrificed her *ratzon* because she needs to buy the children new shoes.

Many wives have trained themselves to be quiet; they know there's no other way to deal with a difficult husband. There are husbands who have learned to be patient. They trained themselves to avoid quarrels with a nervous and excitable wife. Or when they're in the office there are some customers who have to be treated with silk gloves and so they learned to sacrifice their ego – even if the customer insults them, what can they do? They want to make the sale so they trained themselves to sacrifice their ego.

But that's not what we're talking about. That's sacrificing for the sake of *parnasah*. It's sacrificing for the sake of *shalom bayis* and for the sake of happy children. Wonderful! But we're talking about sacrificing for something bigger; we're talking about bringing *korbanos* to Hashem. Isn't it a pity that all this perfection is wasted and not applied in the way that it could have been an offering to Hashem?

Strengthening The Spirit

It's the offering of a *ruach nishbarah*, a broken spirit, that is the choicest of offerings. Of course, like we said, it doesn't mean that the true spirit is broken. When a brother or a sister, a mother or father, a spouse, a neighbor, sacrifices that false spirit on the *mizbeiach* to Hashem, the true spirit becomes stronger than ever before. The true spirit that is strong enough to overcome this false temptation, this false "I" of answering back, of asserting yourself, of being the winner, becomes stronger and stronger. The true personality is strengthened and endures even in the Next World.

That's the great lesson of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi. The *yetzer hara* - that's the "I". But it's a false *yetzer hara*. It's not really you. Who is the real you? You are the one who won't answer. You are the one who will give in. The real you is going to slaughter this false image of yourself that you think of yourself as some grand personality, a Napoleon who wants to step forward with his sword to slay all your opponents. That's a failure in life. That's the wrong kind of *anochi*. But when a person sacrifices that *anochi*, then the true personality becomes so much more successful; and that's why he came into this world.

Part III. Offering and Confessing

The Confession

Now, I would like you to pay attention because there's one more element however that shouldn't be overlooked. We're going to see now that there's

an even higher *madreigah* than the one we spoke about until now. It's a higher level but it's included in this attitude that we are trying to acquire: the humility of spirit.

Let's go back and study the words of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi that we quoted in the beginning of the lecture. כל הזוכה את יצרו – *He who slaughters this inclination of ego*, that false "I", ומתוודה עליו – *and he also confesses!* That's something we haven't spoken about until now. In addition to giving up this false personality of his, the imaginary "I", in addition to that *he makes a confession to Hakadosh Baruch Hu*.

Let's take the same example we spoke about before. The wife is home; she is also tired. She had a hard day with the children and she's still having a hard time with them. In comes the husband, irritated from his encounters with customers and competitors, employers or employees. And he opens his big mouth – he sins against his wife.

Or vice versa, it doesn't matter. Maybe his wife had told him she'd have supper ready because he hadn't eaten all day. And she forgot, or she was too busy.

Am I Deserving?

What happens? Well, let's forget about what happens; let's talk about what Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi tells us *should* happen. Not only does the other party sacrifice the ego but he's thinking too, "I'm confessing to You Hashem." Just like the one who brings a *korban*, leans on the *korban* and confesses his sins, that's what you're doing. כל הזוכה את יצרו – *He slaughters this inclination of ego*, that false "I", ומתוודה עליו – *and he also confesses!*

Now what does that mean? It means this. A man thinks, "Do I deserve to be the winner in every altercation? Haven't I been wrong so many times? Haven't I given my word to do something and then forgotten about it? Many times. Haven't I said unkind words in my life? How many instances have there been when I was disloyal not only to my

family, but I was disloyal to Hakadosh Baruch Hu?" People who say unkind words are being disloyal. Many times parents neglect the welfare of their children. Many times a husband was inconsiderate about his wife. Many times she was careless about her husband's wishes or his comfort or his feelings.

You didn't sin today? You said today all of the *pesukei dezimrah* and you were thinking about all the great ideals in Dovid's words? You said *brachos* with *kavanah*? You greeted everyone בסבר פנים יפות? We have a lot of responsibilities and אין צדיק בארץ אשר לא יחטא. No one, not even the biggest *baal gaavah* will claim to be perfect.

Anger And Teshuvah

So how can a person ignore all the past wrongs that he committed and despite everything attempt to assert his ego? And therefore what does this person do? Not only he slaughters his *yetzer hara* - the inclination of ego, the personality that says "I want to domineer; I won't let that person get away with it" - but he does it with the awareness that he is far from perfect.

Moshe Rabbeinu knew he was far from perfect. How could we say such a thing? Because he knew what perfection meant. Moshe Rabbeinu thought, "Who am I to show anger against those who disobey me? Am I perfect? I'm only a human being. Don't I know my faults?"

And therefore the one who slaughters his *yetzer hara* confesses and says "Hakadosh Baruch Hu: I know that I am a weakling, I am nothing but a poor human subject to whims, subject to emotions, subject to foolish errors," that's the one bringing a perfect *korban* to Hashem.

He admits to Hashem that he is wrong. You hear that? When there is an argument you're willing to give in, to ignore and forget, and you say to Hashem: "I see that I'm entirely not right. I'm never entirely right - there's some justice in the other man's argument too". That's the *korban* Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi was speaking about.

Opportunities In Human Relations

Now, once we understand this subject properly, we begin to see that human relations - the contact with the people around us - that's our great opportunity to succeed and to create from ourselves a permanent honor to Hakadosh Boruch Hu in both *Olam Hazeh* and *Olam Haba*.

Our biggest opportunity in life is our dealings with human beings. That's our success in this world. If we can get along with people by means of sacrificing our false personality that is always telling us that *anochi* is what matters, that's how we become successful *ovdei Hashem*.

Always in your dealings with your family, with your wife, your neighbors, in your dealings in the business world, with the community, in the *beis haknesses* - you're always aware of Hakadosh Baruch Hu and humble to people. This man is constantly bringing offerings and is considered as if he brought all the *korbanos* because the offering of humility, not only is it the most important of all, but it's always available to bring.

There are always opportunities for somebody to be *zocheh* without any expense to live a life of bringing offerings and honoring Hakadosh Baruch Hu: by not answering back, by swallowing your pride and making way for someone else, by means of *shechting* the ego that is always trying to trip you up.

Business Competition On Shabbos

Here's a man and he has, let's say, a competitor, a *frum* Jew. And he's angry at him because he's losing business to this competitor. Even if he's not angry but it bothers him; it rankles in his heart. And still when he passes by and he sees him on Shabbos on the street, he gives him a nice, big "Good Shabbos!"

It's not easy. It hurts you when you see a competitor succeeding at your expense. But you remember this subject; you remember that you're standing in front of Hashem and that He's waiting

for your *korban*. And you're *misvadeh* too. "Have I always been a straight businessman? Wasn't I sometimes lenient when I shouldn't have been? Am I following the details of Choshen Mishpat in all of my business dealings? Do I give *tzedakah* the way I should? *Chatasi la'Hashem!*"

And so you sacrifice your ego and you say, "I wish that man should become wealthier and wealthier. Of course, I also should become wealthier and wealthier but I wish it more for him. I wish for him he should live long. He should enjoy the *cholent* today. He should sleep *oneg Shabbos*. I wish him all good things."

"Oh", Hakadosh Baruch Hu says, "You're slaughtering that ego! That's what I want from you. And you're doing it because of My honor!"

And therefore Hakadosh Baruch Hu says I consider it, *ma'aleh alav hakasuv ke'eilu kibdani*, this man has honored Me. And not only in this world he's giving Me honor by showing he recognizes My presence, but he has honored Me in both worlds.

A Beautiful Program

Now that's a beautiful program if people will keep it in mind even a little bit once in a while. Once in a while make up your mind you won't answer back. You didn't get your way? Someone went ahead of you in the line? Someone put his car in your place? And now the *anochi* is rising up, so you'll just swallow that false pride. You'll slaughter the *yetzer hara* even for that one time. It's a beautiful offering. And if you'll add one more consideration, you're doing it *leshem shomayim*, you're sacrificing it because you want to honor Hashem, that's the real success in life.

It doesn't mean you yield to *deos kozvos*, to wrong opinions, no. If a person *chalilah* is an enemy of the Torah, you're not going to yield to him. But among the *frummeh* so many opportunities arise every day to deal with difficult people and it's

a very great gift that Hashem is giving to you in order to perfect yourself.

I want to conclude now by reading to you a brief selection from the Shir HaYichud (Yom Rishon). He's talking there about his yearning to serve Hakadosh Baruch Hu. And he says, "Ribono Shel Olam, You didn't request of me any offerings. You didn't demand of me sacrifices. *לעבר בשמחה ובלבב טוב* – You only requested of me I should serve You with a true heart."

What's the truest heart? What's the heart that Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants more than anything else?

Building An Altar

He continues, "*לב נשבר* – a broken heart, *ממנחה זבחי טהורה* – is better than a pure *minchah* offering, *אלקים רוח נשברה* – the offerings of Elokim are a broken spirit. And so, *מזבח אבנה בשברון לבי* – I'll build for You an altar through the breaking of my heart, *ואשברה אף רוחי בקרבי* – and I'll break my spirit within me."

You want to build an altar, a *mizbeiach* to Hakadosh Baruch Hu? You want to bring there the choicest of *korbanos*? This is the way to do it. Learn to break your passions for the service of Hashem. It's not easy. No, it's not always easy but good things don't come with ease.

Now, I have to tell you something; I'll confess something to you. I'm preaching to you people not because I want to preach to you – the truth is that all I want is to talk to myself. Only that if people come to listen me so I'm forced to talk and if I talk all night about it so maybe I'll also hear something; maybe I'll talk a little bit into myself too. So I'm speaking to myself, only that I'm letting you listen in while I talk to myself.

Getting Closer

And that's the whole purpose of this, that by talking and listening we are trying to make ourselves a little bit closer to this attitude of the mind that Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants from us.

The great ideal of humility of spirit before Hakadosh Baruch Hu that we can acquire by means of sacrificing our false ego on the *mizbeiach* of Hashem. And so it's worth the time to listen to these ideas and to review them too. Play this tape over again and again. Let the ideas be dinned into your head. It's worth the effort we invest in it because a person like that becomes the closest to Hashem possible.

And the more a person learns to do that, the more he'll be successful and happy and healthy in this world; but that's nothing compared to what you're creating forever. The more a person builds that *mizbeiach* in his heart and sacrifices his ego on it, the greater Hakadosh Baruch Hu will have regard for him. Hakadosh Baruch Hu considers him as a man who has served Him sincerely and in a great way, and he'll be remembered forever in both worlds!

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Overcoming the Ego

Every day at the end of Shemoneh Esrei we ask Hakadosh Baruch Hu for *siyata dishmaya* in fulfilling the perfection of character that is equal to bringing all of the *korbanos*: ונפשי כעפר לכל תהיה - Hashem please help me that my false ego should be like dust for everyone else to walk on. This week by Shacharis I will *bli neder* stop for thirty seconds to focus on these words and I will accept upon myself to *shecht* my false ego three times during the day by giving in or keeping my mouth closed.

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

277 - Service of The Heart | 303 - The Yetzer Hara
649 - Be Selfish | 858 - I Am Important | Q&A : M-001

Listen: 718.289.0899 Press 1 for English and 2 for Thursday Night Lectures



How much time should one spend on Mesillas Yesharim every day?



Someone asked me that question and I said ten minutes. Now, if I had answered an hour, or two hours or three hours, he would have thought there's no use talking; it's a waste of time, just to study the subject.

If a person would study Mesilas Yesharim ten minutes a day I *guarantee you his life will be transformed*. I say it without any exaggeration, it'll transform his life. So it means every day ten minutes, there's no question after a while his eyes will open up and he'll begin to see what he never dreamed existed in the world.

However, I'll settle for five minutes too. Because it's so valuable that no matter how little it is, it's a precious achievement.

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