LESSONS IN OTOTIP

A TREATISE ON AHAVAS YISRAEL BY THE REBBE RASHAB לזכות הרוצה בעילום שמו



PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

Building on his comments in the previous chapter, the Rebbe Rashab explains that envy can have a positive effect in the realm of holiness, motivating a person to increase his study of the Torah, performance of good deeds, and Divine service. Envy touches a very deep point in one's soul and therefore can spur him to exert himself in these fields.

The Rebbe Rashab proceeds to explain that these positive effects are produced when a person's fundamental drive is directed towards holiness. However, if the inner reason for his envy is his *yeshus*, envy will have a very negative effect. If a person has not made an inner commitment sufficient enough to undertake the effort and struggle to truly refine himself, he will compare himself to others and feel challenged when confronted with a person who has actually advanced himself. He will feel jealous and that jealousy will lead to hatred, not only in his heart, but also in his conduct.

True, such a person may show love to ordinary people and join together with them. Such conduct can have a positive motivation, for vested in every Jew is an innate love for his fellow man, or it can stem from an undesirable motivation – the simple people give him an opportunity to express his *yeshus*.

As we come from Tishah BeAv when we mourn the loss of the *Beis HaMikdash* is a fit time to contemplate and apply the lessons emphasized by the Rebbe Rashab in this *maamar*. The exclamation, "How can it be! The city filled with people has become lonely!" came as a result of loneliness – the distance and separation created by the unwarranted hatred manifest by the Jews in that generation. Through our efforts to correct that fault by spreading unwarranted love, we can usher in the peace and unity that will accompany the Ultimate Redemption.

Sichos In English

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טו) להגם שיש מעלה בענין הקנאה ברוחניות, וכמ״ש קנאת סופרים תרבה חכ׳, וכדאי׳ במד״רי² ע״פ ותקנא רחל באחותה, שקנאתה במעשי׳ הטובים, וכמ״ש⁴ אל יקנא לבך בחטאים כ״א ביראת ה׳ כו׳, זהו כשהקנאה היא מצד שחפץ מאד במעשה הטוב או בחכמה וכדומה, לזאת מקנא במי שיש בו הרבה חכמה ומע״ט,

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The preceding chapter concluded by mentioning how *yeshus* can lead to strife and hatred, and that hatred can be compounded by envy. The Rebbe Rashab begins this chapter by explaining that although generally, envy is an undesirable quality, there are also positive expressions of envy.

עַלָה בְּעִנְיַן When **envy** is focused **on spiritual** attainments, **it** בּוְנְיָה בְּעִנְיַן can lead to **a virtue**,

זיְכְמוֹ שֶׁבְּתוּב קּנְאַת as our Sages state,¹ "Envy among scribes (i.e., schol-ars) increases knowledge,"

וְכְדְאִיתָא בְּמְדְרֶשׁ וַבָּה עֵל and as the *Midrash*² comments on the verse,³ "And בּמִדְרָשׁ וַבְּה עֵל "Rachel envied her sister,"

ישֶׁקְנְאַתָּה בְּמַעֲשֶׂיהָ "She envied her good deeds." הטובים,

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁבְּתוּב אַל יְקַנֵּא Similarly, Scripture states, "Let not your heart envy sinners, but rather [envy] the fear of G-d."
בּיַרְאַת ה׳ כוּ׳.

דוו הוּ בְּשֶׁהַקְּנְאָה הִיא מִצֵּד This positive dimension is manifest only when the wind manifest only when the envy arises when one strongly desires good deeds, אוֹ בְּחַכְמָה וְכַדּוֹמֶה, wisdom, and the like.

לְזֹאת מְקַנֵּא בְּמִי and therefore envies someone who possesses שֵׁיֵשׁ בּוֹ הַרְבֵּה חְכְמָה abundant wisdom and good deeds, וְמַצַשִּׁים טוֹבִים,

^{1.} Bava Basra 21a; see also Zohar, Vol. II, p. 126b. On the above and on the forthcoming passage, see also Or HaTorah of the Tzemach Tzedek, the maamar entitled Vatekaneh Rachel; the glosses there, p. 298ff; the end of Sefer HaGilgulim, the maamar beginning Sod Chibut HaKever; Likkutei HaShas of the AriZal on the teaching of the Sages, "Envy among scribes..."

^{2.} Bereishis Rabbah 71:6.

^{3.} Bereishis 30:1.

^{4.} Mishlei 23:17.

וה"ז פועל עליו ג"כ להשתדל הרבה בזה, עד שבא ג"כ למעלה ומדרי' זו כו'. והיינו מפני שהקנאה מגיע בעומק מאד בפנימיות נפשו, ולזאת ה"ז מגלה ומביא את הכחות הנעלמים שבנפש, עד שיגיע למעלה ומדרי' עליונה מאד. וכמ"ש במ"א⁸⁵ בענין הכח דאו"ח, שמביא מהעלם אל הגילוי את הכחות הנעלמים ביתרון הרבה

וְהַבִי זֶה פּוֹעֵל עֶלָיו גַּם This envy affects him to exert himself as well, כֵּן לְהִשׁתַּדְל הַרְבָּה בַּזָה

עד שֶׁבָּא גַם כֵּן לְמַעְּלָה to the extent that he too attains similar levels. וּמַדְרֵגַה זוֹ כוּ׳.

דְהַיְנוּ מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהַקְּנְאָה מַגִּיעַ The rationale for this motivation is because envy reaches to the very depths of his soul.

וְלָּזֹאת הֲבֵי זֶה מְגַלֶּה Therefore, it can reveal and evoke the soul's המֵבִיא אֶת הַפֿחוֹת hidden strengths, הַנַּעַלְמִים שַׁבַּנָפַש

עד שְׁיַגִּיעַ לְמַעֲלָה enabling the person to reach very great heights. וּמַדְרָגָה עֵּלְיוֹנָה מָאֹר.

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב בְּמֶקוֹם אַחֵר A similar concept has been **explained elsewhere** in Chassidus,5

בּעְנְיַן הַכּּחַ דְאוֹר חוֹזֵר concerning the strength of *or chozair* (lit., "reflected light").

That type of light **brings** a person's **hidden powers** אָל הַגּּלוּי into revelation

to a much greater degree than the strength of or אוֹר יָשֶׁר כּוּ׳, אוֹר יָשֶׁר כּוּ׳, אוֹר יָשֶׁר כּוּ׳, אוֹר יָשֶׁר כּוּ׳,

As explained in *Chassidus*,⁵ *or yashar* reveals light according to the ordinary pattern of revelation. As such, the light descends and contracts itself as it extends outward, adapting itself to the existing structures of the realm in which it shines. *Or chozair*, by contrast, does not shine forth by nature. Instead, effort is necessary to evoke it. When it is called forth, it reflects energies that lie within the core of the source of

^{5.} See Sefer HaMaamarim 5659, pp. 6, 104-105, and the sources mentioned there, et al., which explain that or chozair touches very deep levels within the soul.

מכח או״י כו׳. וכמו״כ הוא בענין הקנאה בקדושה כו׳. וכ״ז הוא כשיחפץ את הטוב, אבל כאשר באמת אינו חפץ להיות במעלת הפרישות והטהרה וכדומה, רק שמקנא בחבירו למה הוא עומד במעלה ומדרי׳ זו, ומחמת זה הוא שונא אותו, זהו דבר קשה וגרוע מאד מאד כו׳. והיינו מצד הישות שלו כנ״ל, ולכן הוא שונא דוקא לעובדי וגרוע מאד מאד כו׳.

light and therefore are not bound by the ordinary patterns of revelation.⁶

דֹכְמוֹ כֵן הוּא בְּעִנְיַן The same applies to the envy in holy matters. It has the potential to call forth and motivate one's deepest energies.

וְכֶל זֶה הוּא כְּשֶׁיַחְפֿץ All this applies, however, only when one desires the good traits of his fellow and has a positive motivation.

The Rebbe Rashab proceeds to speak about a person who lives in a setting where *avodah*, the service of G-d, is valued and therefore, fancies himself as one who seeks to advance in that realm. However, he has not made an inner commitment sufficient enough to undertake the effort and struggle to truly refine himself. Therefore, he is constantly comparing himself to others and feels challenged when confronted with a person who has truly advanced himself.

אַכָּל כַּאֲשֶׁר בֶּאֲשֶׁר בֶּאֲשֶׁר בֶּאֲשֶׁר בּאֲשֶׁר בּאֲשֶׁר בּאֲשֶׁר בּאֲשֶׁר בּאֲשֶׁר הוּ However, if, in truth, one does not desire to be חַפַּץ לִהְיוֹת בְּמַעֲלַת on a level of piety, purity, and the like, הַפּרִישׁוּת וְהַטַּהַרה וְכַדּוֹמה

בקברו הe will look at others involved in such service and envy מְמָה הוא עוֹמֵד a colleague for having elevated his spiritual standing and level;

this envy will cause him to hate the other. נְמְחַמַת זֶה הוּא שׁוֹנֵא אוֹתוֹ,

יָהוּ דְבֶר קְשֶׁה וְגָרוּעַ Such envy and the hate it produces are very severe מָאֹד מָאֹד כוּי. and difficult flaws.

רָהַיְנוּ מִצֵּד הַיֵּשׁוּת Their source is the person's *yeshus*, as previously mentioned. 7

^{6.} To give an example that is not exactly parallel, but can be used to illustrate the concept: Sunlight shines from above downward in a manner similar to *or yashar*. Using a mirror, one can concentrate and focus the sun's light and in that way cause its power to be intensified.

^{7.} Ch. 14.

ה', ויראה אהבתו והתחברותו לאנשים פשוטים דוקא. ויכול לדמות בנפשו ולרמות את עצמו שזהו מצד השפלות שלו, משום זה יתחבר ויאהב לאנשים פשוטים, אבל באמת זהו מצד הישות שלו דוקא, דלהיותו מכלל עובדי ה׳, לכן כל שנאתו הוא למי שהוא באיזה מעלה ומדרי׳ בעבודה, שזהו המנגד לישות שלו, אבל אנשים פשוטים

וְלָכֵן הוּא שׁוֹנֵא דַוְקָא לְעוֹבְדֵי ה׳,	Therefore, such a person will specifically hate people who devote themselves to Divine service.
וְיַרְאֶה אַהְבָתוֹ וְהִתְחַבְּרוּתוֹ לַאֲנָשִׁים פְּשׁוּטִים דַּוְקָא	Conversely, he will show affection and kinship only towards simple people.
וְיָכוֹל לְדַמּוֹת בְּנַפְשׁוֹ וּלְרַמּוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ	He may delude himself, tricking himself into thinking
שֶׁזֶּהוּ מִצֵּד הַשִּׁפְלוּת שֶׁלוֹ	that his love and connection with them springs from his humility –
מִשׁוּם זֶה יִתְחַבֵּר וְיֶאֶהַב לַאֲנָשִׁים פְּשׁוּטִים,	that this is what motivates him to lower himself to bond with simple people and show love to them.
אֲבָל בָּאֱמֶת זֶהוּ מִצֵּד הַיֵּשׁוּת שֶׁלוֹ דַּוְקָא.	However, in truth, the real source is his <i>yeshus</i> .
יְּלְהְיוֹתוֹ מִכְּלַל עוֹבְדֵי ה׳	Since he prides himself on being among the <i>ovdim</i> , those who serve G-d,
לָכֵן כָּל שִּׁנְאָתוֹ הוּא לְמִי שָׁהוּא בְּאֵיזֶה מַעֲלָה וּמַדְרֵגָה בַּעֲבוֹדָה	his hatred is focused entirely on those who have reached some level or rung of Divine service,
שֶׁזֶּהוּ הַמְנַגֵּד לְיֵשׁוּת שֶׁלּוֹ.	for this, challenges his yeshus. He feels jealous of

his own self sufficiently.

אַבַל אַנַשִים פּשׁוּטִים However, he will love simple people who have not at all begun to ascend the ladder of Divine service for they pose no threat to him. They do not threaten his self-esteem, so he shows them love

them because he also thinks of advancing in avodah, yet is challenged by them since he has not developed שאינם עומדים באיזה מדרי׳, יאהב אותם, מצד שצריכים לאהוב את ישראל כו׳. ומי שהוא גס ויש יותר, יכול להיות שאהבתו והתקרבותו אליהם הוא מצד ששם מתפשט ישותו, כי מכבדים אותו בעיניו, ומקבלים ומייקרים את דבריו כו׳.

קיצור. מעלת הקנאה דקדושה. ישות גורמת שנאה לבר מעלה, ויכול להיות באהבה לאנשים פשוטים. טעם הדבר.

מַצַּד שֶׁצְּרִיכִים לֶאֶהוֹב because one should love his fellow Jew. אָת יִשְׂרָאֵל כּוּ׳.

Ahavas Yisrael lies within the heart of every Jew. Therefore, even a person who has not refined himself has the potential to express this quality.

אני שֶׁהוּא גַס וְיֵשׁ יוֹתֵר Moreover, **someone who is even more coarse and** possesses **more** *yeshus*

יַכוֹל לְהְיוֹת שֶׁאַהֲּבְּתוֹ may show love and closeness to such people וְהַתְּקְרבוּתוֹ אֵלְיהֵם

הוא מְצֵּד שֶׁשֶּׁם merely **because** among them, he has the opportunity מְחָפַשֵּׁט יֵשׁוּתוֹּ, to **expand his** *yeshus*,

קי מְכַבְּדִים אוֹתוֹ בְּצֵינְיו for he feels they honor him

וּמְקַבְּלִים וּמְיַקְרִים and accept and cherish his words. אָת דְּבָרִיו כוּי.

In the first instance, the love is sincere and genuine, stemming from a Jew's fundamental nature. In the second instance, the love is merely an external matter, a means to promote one's own self.

קצור. Summary:

. מַעֲלַת הַקּנְאָה דְקְדַשָּׁה The positive qualities of the envy of holiness.

יֵשׁוּת גּוֹרֶכֶּת שִּׂנְאָה Yeshus prompts one to hate someone who has מְבַר מַצְלָה achieved a high level.

וְיָכוֹל לְהְיוֹת בְּאַהֲבָה However, such a person can still show love to . לְאַנָשִׁים פְּשׁוּטִים simple people.

יַשְׁעֵם הַּדְּבֶּה The reason for this: either because of the fundamental obligation to love another Jew, or – if a person is fundamentally oriented to *yeshus* – because the simple people enable him to express that *yeshus*.

- כה) קנאת סופרים: ב״ב כ״א, א״. ועד״ז זח״ב קכ״ו, ב״. וראה עד״ז וע״ד מ״ש לקמן באור התורה להצ״צ [ויצא] ד״ה ותקנא רחל [ריח, ב ואילך]. ובהגהות שם דרצ״ח ע״ב ואילך. ולהעיר ג״כ מסו״ס הגלגולים ד״ה סוד חיבוט הקבר. ובלקוטים שבסו״ס לקוטי הש״ס להאריז״ל על מארז״ל קנאת סופרים כו״.
 - .ו. ב״ר פע״א, ו
 - .83) ויצא ל, א
 - (84 משלי כג, יז.
 - .1 ראה סה"מ תרנ"ט ע' ו. וש"נ.

POINTS TO PONDER P

♦ Good Jealousy

Is there room for any jealousy in Avodas Hashem, and if yes, then how do I know which one I have?

♦ My Simple Friend

Could there be an ulterior motive for hanging around simple people?

♦ What insight can you glean from Heichaltzu chapter 15?



