

LESSONS IN קונטרס  
החלוצ

A TREATISE ON AHAVAS YISRAEL  
BY THE REBBE RASHAB

לזכות

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## PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

At the beginning of the *maamar* entitled *Heichaltzu*, the Rebbe Rashab questioned the nature of the war against Midian and why waging it was described as taking “the revenge of G-d,” referring to Him with the name *Havayah*. He explained that Midian represents a core spiritual flaw, the quality of *yeshus* that leads to strife, friction, and baseless hatred. He developed that theme in the subsequent chapters, speaking in very practical terms, describing the type of discord and conflict that could arise when individuals manifest these qualities.

In this and the following chapter, he sums up these concepts, clarifying the negative qualities that are identified with Midian and the effects they lead to. From chapter 18 on, he describes the oneness and unity associated with G-d's name *Havayah* and how that name is both the opposite of the *yeshus* of Midian, and how its influence can correct the flaws associated with that negative quality.

In this chapter, the Rebbe Rashab explains that in contrast to specific character faults, the *yeshus* and baseless hatred associated with Midian is of a general nature. From it, come many other particular negative traits. For this reason, it is important to undergo introspection, searching for traces of these flaws in one's character.

Sichos In English

16 Av, 5780

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טז) וְהִנֵּה כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הַנִּלְיָם, יֵשׁ שֶׁהֵם בְּגִסּוֹת וּבִדְקוֹת, כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד לְפִי מַעַלְתּוֹ וּמִדְּרָגָתוֹ בַּעֲבוּדָה, עַד שִׁיכוּל לִהְיוֹת בְּדִקּוֹת כָּל כֶּךָ שְׂאִינוּ מְרַגִּישׁ אוֹתָם בַּעֲצָמוֹ כ"כ, אֲבָל יִשְׁנָם בְּהַעֲלֵם בְּנַפְשׁוֹ, דִּהְיִינוּ שְׁחוּשָׁב שְׂאִינוּ מְכַלֵּל הַדְּבָרִים הַנִּלְיָם, וּבִאֲמַת ה"ז ג"כ בְּכָלֵל הַנִּלְיָם. וּבִאֲשֶׁר הָעֵנִין הַזֶּה גְּרוּעַ מְאֹד יוֹתֵר מֵאִיזָה מְדָה רַעָה פְּרִטִית,

— 16 —

The previous chapter discussed a particular character flaw, envy. In this chapter, the Rebbe Rashab returns to the general discussion of baseless hatred and the *yeshus* from which it stems.

וְהִנֵּה כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הַנִּזְכָּרִים לְעֵיל  
All the matters discussed earlier – i.e., baseless hatred and *yeshus* –

יֵשׁ שֶׁהֵם בְּגִסּוֹת וּבִדְקוֹת  
כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד לְפִי מַעַלְתּוֹ  
וּמִדְּרָגָתוֹ בַּעֲבוּדָה,  
exist whether in a coarse or subtle form in each individual according to his own level of Divine service.

עַד שִׁיכוּל לִהְיוֹת  
בְּדִקּוֹת כָּל כֶּךָ  
At times, these character faults can be so subtle

שְׂאִינוּ מְרַגִּישׁ אוֹתָם  
בַּעֲצָמוֹ כָּל כֶּךָ  
that one is not fully conscious of them.

אֲבָל יִשְׁנָם בְּהַעֲלֵם בְּנַפְשׁוֹ,  
Nevertheless, they exist, hidden in his soul.

דִּהְיִינוּ שְׁחוּשָׁב שְׂאִינוּ מְכַלֵּל  
הַדְּבָרִים הַנִּזְכָּרִים לְעֵיל  
A person may think that the above-mentioned character faults are not at all relevant to him.

וּבִאֲמַת הַיָּדָה זֶה גַּם כֵּן  
בְּכָלֵל הַנִּזְכָּרִים לְעֵיל.  
However, in reality, this insensitivity to his shortcomings is also among the character faults resulting from *yeshus*.

וּבִאֲשֶׁר הָעֵנִין הַזֶּה  
גְּרוּעַ מְאֹד  
Indeed, this baseless hatred and *yeshus* are very serious flaws,

יוֹתֵר מֵאִיזָה מְדָה  
רַעָה פְּרִטִית  
indeed, more injurious than any particular negative character trait.

שהיא פרט א' מהסט"א, ופרט אינו דומה לכלל, שאינו בתוקף כ"כ, וגם להיותה רק פרט לבד, כשהוא באיזה מדה רעה, יכול להיות שלא יפול במדה רעה אחרת, שהיא פרט אחר כו', משא"כ שנאת חנם, שהוא כלל הכולל כללות הסט"א, שהוא ענין הפירוד וההתחלקות, והוא מקור וסיבת כל המדות רעות כו' כנ"ל, והוא ההיפך ומנגד לכללות

שְׁהִיא פֶּרֶט א'     A negative character trait is only **one specific** taint  
מִהֶסְטֵרָא אַחֲרָא     stemming) from the *sitra achra*.<sup>1</sup>

וּפֶרֶט אֵינוֹ דּוֹמֶה לְכָלֵּל     And a specific blemish, however serious, is **not the**  
same as a **general** and encompassing undesirable  
quality;

שְׁאִינוּ בְּתִקְוָה כָּל כָּד,     it is not as powerful.

וְגַם לִהְיוֹתָהּ רֶק פֶּרֶט לְבֶד     Furthermore, since it is only a specific blemish,

כְּשֶׁהוּא בְּאִיזָה מִדָּה רָעָה     existing in only one undesirable character trait,

יִכּוּל לִהְיוֹת שְׁלֹא יִפּוֹל     it will not necessarily affect or lead to another neg-  
בְּמִדָּה רָעָה אַחֲרָת     ative character trait

שְׁהִיא פֶּרֶט אַחֵר כו',     since that other trait is of a different type.

מֶה שְׂאִין בֵּן שְׁנֵאת     Baseless hatred, on the other hand, is a general  
חֲנָם שֶׁהוּא כָּלֵּל     and inclusive fault,

הַכּוֹלֵל כְּלָלוֹת     encompassing the *sitra achra* as a whole,  
הֶסְטֵרָא אַחֲרָא

שֶׁהוּא עֲנֵן הַפִּירוּד     which is characterized by division and separation.  
וְהִתְחַלְקוּת,

וְהוּא מְקוֹר וְסִבָּת     This – *yeshus* and baseless hatred – is the source of  
כָּל הַמִּדּוֹת רָעוֹת     all one's negative character traits as mentioned  
כו' כְּנֻזָּכָר לְעֵיל,     previously.<sup>2</sup>

וְהוּא הֶהְפֵּךְ וּמִנְגֵּד     It is the antithesis and opponent of G-d's name  
לְכָלֵּלוֹת שֵׁם הו"י     *Havayah* as a whole,

1. See chs. 3 and 4, above.

2. See ch. 4, above.

ש' הוי' כנ"ל וכמשי"ת. לזאת, מי שחש לנפשו שלא תהי' בתוך הקלי' והסט"א, ולא יפול במדות רעות ח"ו, כ"א יעשה את מלאכתו לעבוד את ה' כדבעי למהוי, ויברר ויזכך מדותיו הטבעיים כו', צריך לחפש<sup>5</sup> בחיפוש אחר חיפוש לאור הנר, נר ה' נשמת אדם<sup>6</sup>, ולברוק בחורין ובסדקים, למצוא כל חלקי פרטי הרע הנ"ל (שהם המונעים אותו

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פְּנֹזֶכֶר לְעִיל וְכִמּוֹ שִׁיתְבָּאֵר. as has been mentioned above,<sup>3</sup> and as will be further explained in later chapters.<sup>4</sup>

לְזֹאת מִי שֶׁחָשׁ לְנַפְשׁוֹ Therefore, one who cares for his soul,  
שֶׁלֹא תִהְיֶה בְּתוֹךְ הַקְּלִפּוֹת and does not want it to be immersed in *kelipah* and  
וְהַסְטָרָא אַחֲרָא the *sitra achra*

וְלֹא יִפּוֹל בְּמִדּוֹת and/or develop bad character traits,  
רְעוֹת חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם, רעות חס ושלום,

כִּי אִם יַעֲשֶׂה אֶת מְלַאכְתּוֹ but rather, desires to carry out his task of  
לְעִבּוֹד אֶת ה' כְּדִבְעֵי לְמַהוּי serving G-d as befitting for him,<sup>5</sup>

וְיִבְרַר וְיִזְכָּךְ מִדּוֹתָיו refining and improving his natural character  
הַטְּבָעִים כו', traits should undergo thorough introspection.

צָרִיךְ לְחַפֵּשׁ בְּחִפּוּשׁ אַחֲרֵי חִפּוּשׁ He should search<sup>6</sup> time and again,

לְאוֹר הַנֵּר נֵר ה' נִשְׁמַת אָדָם using the light of “the lamp of G-d, the soul of man,”<sup>7</sup>

The Rebbe Rashab appears to be alluding to the search for *chametz*. Torah law requires that search to be conducted by candlelight. As explained,<sup>8</sup> “candlelight”

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3. See ch. 2, above.

4. See ch. 18ff. below.

5. “As befitting for him” is used as a translation of the Talmudic phrase (*Ketubos* 67a, et al.), כְּדִבְעֵי לֵיהּ. The meaning of that phrase is evident from the story related in that source – that Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai chanced upon the daughter of Nakdimon ben Gurion who was living in a state of abject poverty. Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai was amazed because her father was renowned for his prodigious wealth. The Talmud explains that his daughter was reduced to this state because her father did not donate to charity. The Talmud then questions that statement because it is known that Nakdimon gave charity profusely. In resolution, it explains that although he gave, he did not give לְמַעַבְד לֵיהּ, כְּדִבְעֵי לֵיהּ, as befitting to his vast wealth. Similarly, each person is required to employ the potentials he has been granted in proportion to the extent he has been endowed with them.

6. Cf. *Pesachim* 7b; see also *Siddur Kol Yaakov*, *Kavanos Biur Chametz*.

7. *Mishlei* 20:27.

8. See the teaching of the Alter Rebbe quoted by the Rebbe Rayatz, *Sichos Chag HaPesach*, 5698.

מעבודה אמיתית, ואינו מברר ומזכך מדותיו כו' כנ"ל), ולבערם לגמרי מנפשו, ואז ילך לבטח דרכו בעבודה בתפלה בבחי' ביטול וזיכוך המדות וקיום התו"מ כדבעי כו'.  
**קיצור.** שנאת חנם להיותה כלל ומקור לכל מדות רעות צריכה חיפוש ביותר וביעור לגמרי.

refers to the light of the soul. *Chametz* is identified with *yeshus*. It is the light of our souls that enables us to find hidden traces of *yeshus* within our characters.

וּלְבַדּוֹק בְּחוּרֵי וּבְסַדְקִים checking in every nook and cranny,  
 לְמַצּוֹא כָּל חֵלְקֵי פְּרָטִי to find all particular dimensions of this above-  
 הָרַע הַנִּזְכָּר לְעֵיל mentioned evil  
 (שֶׁהֵם הַמוֹנְעִים אוֹתוֹ) – for this is what prevents him from truly serving  
 מַעֲבֹדָה אֱמֵתִית G-d  
 וְאֵינוֹ מְבַרֵּר וּמְזַכֵּךְ and refining and elevating his character traits, as  
 מִדּוֹתָיו כּו' בְּנִזְכָּר לְעֵיל mentioned above –  
 וּלְבַעֲרָם לְגַמְרֵי מִנִּפְשׁוֹ, and utterly eliminate these qualities from his soul.  
 וְאֵז יֵלֶךְ לְבִטּוֹחַ דְּרָכּוֹ After doing so, he can proceed confidently on his  
 בַּעֲבֹדָה בְּתַפְלָה way in the service of prayer with *bittul*,  
 בְּבַחֲיַנֵּת בְּטוֹל בְּבַחֲיַנֵּת בְּטוֹל  
 וְנִכְוֵן הַמִּדּוֹת continuing to refine his character traits  
 וְקִיּוֹם הַתּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת and fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* in a desirable  
 כְּדָבָעֵי כּו'. manner.

#### **קצור.** Summary:

שְׂנֵאת חֶנָּם הִיא הַמְּקוֹר לְכָל מִדּוֹת רָעוֹת Baseless hatred is the underlying source for all a  
 וּמִקְוֶה לְכָל מִדּוֹת רָעוֹת person's negative character traits.  
 צְרִיכָה חִפּוּשׁ בְּיִתְרָה Therefore, it must be searched for carefully and  
 וּבְעִיּוֹר לְגַמְרֵי. utterly destroyed.

(כו) צריך לחפש ... ובסדקין: ע"ד לשון רז"ל בפסחים ו', ב. ולהעיר מסיפור קול יעקב כוונת ביעור חמץ.

## 💡 POINTS TO PONDER 💡

### ♦ **The Subtle**

I have looked inside myself and have found no hatred to the other, am  
I good to go?

### ♦ **Search for Chometz**

How do I discover my real issues?

### ♦ *What insight can you glean from Heichaltzu chapter 16?*





