

מאמר ב' • תקון המדות

Mussar · Hebrew with Nikud and a Literal Translation

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This page teaches us a profound lesson about true honor and leadership, explaining that a person who is truly strong in their commitment to Torah and truth, willing to forgo their perceived honor, will ultimately gain genuine respect and influence. It illustrates this with a powerful mashal of a merchant who sticks to his fair price, eventually earning trust and success, unlike one who constantly changes his word. The core idea is that by mastering oneself and adhering to Hashem's will without compromise, one becomes a wellspring of blessing for themselves and others.

Nikud and the literal translation are a learning aid prepared by the editor (AI-assisted, pending review), not the sefer's own vowelization.

והיפוכו, האדם אשר יכול להפקיר את כבודו,

And its opposite, the person who is able to abandon his honor,

והוא יכול לבטל מה שעולה על רוחו מן הדמיונות הכוזבות.

And he is able to nullify what comes up in his spirit from the false imaginings.

הוא לא יחת מפני כל ויעמוד על האמת.

He will not be intimidated by anyone and will stand firm on the truth,

כפי מה שתנחה לו התורה וכל רוחות העולם לא יזיזו אותו ממקומו,

according to what the Torah will guide him, and all the winds of the world will not budge him from his place,

ואף על פי שהוא יצא בכל פעם לסכן את כבודו המדמה,

And even though he went out each time to endanger his imagined honor,

עד שבהשקפה ראשונה הסכנה קרובה מהצלתו,

until, at first glance, the danger is closer than his rescue,

בכל זאת סוף הכבוד לבוא ויגיע לו מזה המשכה גדולה,

Nevertheless, in the end, honor will come, and from this, a great flow will reach him,

והכל רצין אחריו ודורשים את דעתו וחקירתו נעימה ופרידתו דאגה.

And everyone runs after him and seeks his counsel, and his companionship is pleasant, and his departure is a source of worry.

ומצינו כֵּעֵין זֶה בְּעֵינֵי הַמַּסְחֵר,

And we find something similar to this in matters of business,

אִם יַחְלִיט סוֹחֵר לְהַעֲמִיד מַחִיר מוֹחָזֵק שֶׁל כָּךְ וְכָךְ לֹא פָחוֹת וְלֹא יוֹתֵר,

If a merchant decides to set a fixed price of such and such, no less and no more,

אֲמָנָם בַּיָּמִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים יִפְסִיד הָרַבָּה קוֹנִים,

Indeed, in the first days he will lose many buyers,

כִּי יִסְבְּרוּ עָלָיו, כִּי הוּא עֹקֵשׁ וְרוֹצֵה לְהַרְוִיחַ דָּמִים שֶׁל פְּלוֹנִי,

For they will assume about him that he is stubborn and wants to profit from the money of so-and-so,

אָבֵל לֹא לְאֶרֶךְ יָמִים יִפְסִיד.

But not for many days will he lose.

כִּי מִזֶּה גּוֹפֵא יִתְבָּרַר לְקוֹנִים כִּי לֹכֵן אֵינוֹ מוֹתֵר מְאוּמָּה מִפְּנֵי שֶׁלִּכְתַּח לָהּ הָעֶמִיד סָכּוּם כָּזֶה שִׁיְהִיָּה שְׂוֵה לְכָל־ם,

For from this itself it will become clear to the buyers that therefore he does not concede anything, because from the outset he set such a sum that would be equal for everyone,

וְשִׁוֵּה לוֹ לְהַפְקִיר אֶת הַקּוֹנִים מִלְּשַׁקֵּר בְּדַבּוּרוֹ לְבַקֵּשׁ הָרַבָּה וּלְוֹתֵר עַל פָּחוֹת,

And it is worthwhile for him to abandon the buyers rather than lie in his speech by asking for much and conceding for less,

עַד שֶׁנַּעֲשֶׂה מוֹחָזֵק לְנֶאֱמָן וְהַכֹּל קוֹנִים מִמֶּנּוּ בְּלִי הַשְׁתַּדְּלוּת לְהַפְחִית מִסְכּוּמוֹ,

until he becomes held as trustworthy, and everyone buys from him without effort to reduce his price,

וְגַם מֵרַחוּק יִשְׁלְחוּ לוֹ מָעוֹת וּמֵאֲמִינִים אוֹתוֹ כִּי לֹא יַעֲרִים לָהֶם,

And also from afar they will send him money and they trust him that he will not deceive them,

וְסוֹחֵר הַלָּזָה אִף שֶׁבִּתְחִלָּה קָדָם שֶׁנַּעֲשֶׂה לְמוֹחָזֵק נֶאֱמָן הַפְּסִיד הָרַבָּה,

And this merchant, even though at first, before he became an established, trusted one, he lost much,

אָבֵל הַהֶפְסֵד הַזֶּה הֵבִיא לוֹ רַב תּוֹעֵלָת,

But this loss brought him much benefit,

כִּי נַעֲשֶׂה עַל יָדוֹ נֶאֱמָן לְבָרִיּוֹת,

for through him he becomes trusted by the creations,

וַיֵּשׁ לוֹ נֶאֱמָנוּת בְּהִלּוּאָה,

And he has trustworthiness in a loan,

והמשכה להשתתף עמו מקרוב ומרחוק.

And a drawing forth to participate with him from near and from far.

ויש סוחר אחר אשר תמיד הוא מתחיל בכפליים ממה שהוא שוה,

And there is another merchant who always starts at double what it is worth,

ויש לו שם רע כי הוא שקרן והקונים לא ישמחו מקנייתם,

And he has a bad name because he is a liar, and the buyers will not rejoice from their purchase,

כי תמיד יחשבו שמה יהיה לו להשתדל יותר להפחית ממה שאמר,

For they will always think, perhaps he should have striven more to diminish from what he said,

והכל חושדין אותו כי פיו ולבו אינם שוים,

And everyone suspects him that his mouth and his heart are not equal,

ומתרחקים מלהיות לו ומלהשתתף עמו ומרחוק אינם מכירים לו כלל.

And they distance themselves from being for Him and from participating with Him, and from afar they do not recognize Him at all.

וכן ממש הענין הכבוד האמור,

And so too, precisely, is the matter of the aforementioned honor,

כי הראשון אשר הסכמתו חזקה והסכים ללכת רק בדרך שתבחר לו התורה ומצד עצמו אין לו שום נגיעה,

For the first one, whose agreement is strong, and he agreed to go only in the path that the Torah chooses for him, and from his own side he has no personal interest whatsoever,

ואינו מותר מדרכו מאומה ושזה לו שכל הקונים יברחו ממנו ולא יגרע מן האמת אף כחוט השערה,

And he does not concede anything from his path, and it is equal to him that all the buyers flee from him, and he will not diminish from the truth even a hair's breadth,

כי כל הגדרים והסגים שהסכים עליהם,

For all the fences and safeguards that he agreed to,

כראי מצקים, וכל המקרים והבזיונות,

like a solid mirror, and all the occurrences and disgraces,

לא יזיזו אותו ממקומו, אז אף שמתחלה היה מפקיר את כבודו לגמרי,

they will not move him from his place, so even though at first he would completely abandon his honor,

סוף הכבוד לבוא, יען כי נעשה בזה מוחזק לאדם גבוה,

In the end, honor will come, because through this he becomes established as a lofty person,

וְהַכֹּל יוֹדְעִין כִּי הוּא מְדַבֵּר הָאֱמֶת וְלֹא יִנְסוּ אוֹתוֹ לְפַחֹת מִדְּרָכּוֹ,

And everyone knows that he speaks the truth, and they will not test him to diminish from his path,

יַעַן כִּי חֲזָק הוּא בְּהִסְכָּמָתוֹ,

Because he is strong in his agreement,

וְלֹא יִזְלוּ לוֹ מֶה שֶׁיָּקָר לוֹ,

and they will not cheapen for him what is precious to him,

אֶף כְּחוֹט הַשְּׁעָרָה, וְלָכֵן הַכֹּל מֵטִים אֵלָיו וְסָרִים לְמִשְׁמָעָתוֹ.

Even like a hair's breadth, and therefore everyone inclines to it and submits to its authority.

לֹא כֵן הָאָדָם הַהִפְכָּפֵף אֲשֶׁר לְרִגְעִים יִתְהַפֵּף,

Not so is the fickle person, who from moment to moment changes,

מֶה שֶׁאֹמֵר אֵינוֹ מַחֲשֵׁב וּמֶה שֶׁמַּחֲשֵׁב אֵינוֹ אוֹמֵר,

What he says, he does not think, and what he thinks, he does not say,

שֶׁכָּל־ם מִתְרַחֲקִים וְאִין דְּבָרוֹ יָקָר לָהֶם,

that everyone distances themselves and His word is not precious to them,

וְאִם יִשְׁתַּדֵּל לְהִתְקָרֵב בָּמָה שֶׁיִּחְנִיף לָהֶם זֶה גּוֹפֵא יֶרְחִיק אוֹתוֹ כִּי סִהָדָא שֶׁקָּרָא אַאֲגְרִיחוֹ זִיל (סנהדרין כ"ט).

And if he will strive to draw close by flattering them, this very thing will distance him, for 'a lying witness, go hang him' (Sanhedrin 29b).

וּבִזָּה יוֹבֵן מֶה שֶׁהָשִׁיב ה' לְמֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ,

And with this will be understood what Hashem answered Moshe Rabbeinu,

בָּעֵת שֶׁשָּׂאֵל מֵאֵתוֹ "יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹהֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכֹל בֶּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל הָעֵדָה וְכו' וְאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם וְאֲשֶׁר יְבִיאֵם וְכו'" (במדבר כ"ז) וְהָשִׁיב לוֹ:

At the time that he asked from Him, "May Hashem, the G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, etc., who will lead them out and who will bring them in, etc." (Bamidbar 27), and He answered him:

קַח אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ (שם).

Take Yehoshua, a man in whom there is spirit (there).

מֶה זֶה שֶׁאָמַר אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ?

What is this that he said, 'A man in whom there is spirit'?

הַיַּעֲלָה עַל הַדַּעַת לְבַחֵר מִי שֶׁאֵין לוֹ רוּחַ?

Would it enter one's mind to choose someone who has no spirit?

וַיֵּמָּה יִתְרוֹן הוּא זֶה?

And what advantage is this?

אָמְנָם, יָדַע מֹשֶׁה רַבְּנוּ כִּי לְהִיטֵב מִנְהִיג עַל הַצִּבּוֹר לִפְתּוֹר לָהֶם כָּל שְׁאֵלוֹתֵיהֶם וּדְרִישׁוֹתֵיהֶם נֶחֱוֶץ לָזֶה אָדָם כָּזֶה שִׂיּוּדַע רוּחַ כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד וּתְכוּנָתוֹ וְטַבְּעוֹ וּמִדּוֹתָיו,

Indeed, Moshe Rabbeinu knew that to be a leader over the community, to solve for them all their questions and their demands, for this is needed such a person who knows the spirit of each and every one, and his character, and his nature, and his middos,

וְכָל הַטָּעִיּוֹת שֶׁלוֹ, וְלִפְתּוֹר שְׁאֵלוֹתָיו לְפִי רוּחוֹ וְדַעְתּוֹ וְדַרְךְ שִׁכְלוֹ,

and all his errors, and to resolve his questions according to his spirit and his understanding and the way of his intellect,

וְכִינּוּן שְׁבִנֵּי אָדָם כְּשֵׁם שֶׁאֵין פְּרָצוּפִיָּהֶן דּוֹמִין זֶה לָזֶה כִּי אֵין דַּעְתָּם דּוֹמִין זֶה לָזֶה (יְרוּשָׁלַּמִּי בִּרְכוֹת פ"ט).

And since people, just as their faces are not similar one to another, so too their minds are not similar one to another (Yerushalmi Berachos Perek 9).

נֶחֱוֶץ לָזֶה אִישׁ הָאֶשְׁכּוֹל אֲשֶׁר כָּלוּל בּוֹ כָּל חֲלָקֵי בְנֵי אָדָם וְיּוֹדַע לְסַדֵּר לְכָל אֶחָד חֶלְקוֹ הַמְּיוֹחָד לוֹ,

For this, an 'ish ha'eshkol' is needed, one who embodies all the different types of people and knows how to arrange for each one his particular portion,

וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ עֲצוֹת וְתַחְבּוּלוֹת בְּחֶלֶק הַמְּיוֹחָד לוֹ,

And He will give him counsel and stratagems in the portion designated for him,

וַיִּשְׁתַּתֵּף עִמּוֹ לָעֵין בּוֹ וּלְהַעֲלוֹת אֲרוּכָה לְכָל מַדּוּנוֹ.

And he should join with Him to gaze upon it and to bring healing to all its ailments.

וְהַמְּנַהִיג צָרִיךְ לָזֶה שְׁנֵי דְבָרִים:

And the leader needs for this two things:

הָאֶחָד, הַכֶּרֶת בְּנֵי אָדָם, לְהַכִּיר כָּל פֶּרֶט וּפְרֶט מֵה שְׂמִיחָד לוֹ; וְהַשְּׁנִית,

The first, recognizing people, to recognize every single detail that is unique to him; and the second,

לִפְתּוֹר לְכָל אֶחָד מֵה שְׂמִיחָד לוֹ,

to solve for each person what is unique to him,

וְעַל אָדָם מִמִּין הַזֶּה שֵׁשׁ בּוֹ יְכַלֵּת מִשְׁנֵי הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁאֵל מֵאֵת ה' וְאָמַר יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחוֹת לְכָל בָּשָׂר,

And concerning a person of this type, who has the capacity for both matters, Moshe Rabbeinu asked from Hashem and said, "May Hashem, the G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint" (Bamidbar 27:16).

דַּיָּק לוֹ תֵּאָר זֶה בְּכֹאן, לְפִי שְׁאַתָּה אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחוֹת לְפִיכָּה תִּדְּע לְמִצּוֹא אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יוֹדֵעַ כָּל הָרוּחוֹת וְיָכוֹל לְהֵלֵךְ עִמּוֹ לְהִבִּין חֲסָרוֹנוֹ וְתִקּוּנוֹ,

He specified this title for Him here, because You are the G-d of the spirits, therefore You will know to find a man who knows all the spirits and can walk with him to understand his deficiency and his rectification.

וְאָדָם כָּזֶה רָאוּי לְהִיּוֹת מְנַהִיג הָעָם.

And such a person is worthy to be the leader of the people.

וְהָשִׁיב לוֹ ה':

And Hashem answered him:

קַח אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ.

Take Yehoshua, a man in whom there is spirit.

בְּאוּרוֹ, שֵׁשׁ בּוֹ רוּחַ לְהִיּוֹת מְנַהִיג עַל עַצְמוֹ וְאָדָם כָּזֶה רָאוּי לְהִיּוֹת מְנַהִיג גַּם כֵּן עַל הַצִּבּוֹר,

Its explanation is that he has the spirit to be a leader over himself, and such a person is also fit to be a leader over the community,

כִּי בְהִיּוֹת רוּחוֹ כָּל כֶּה חֲזָק עַד שְׂיָכוֹל לְמַשׁוֹל עַל טְבָעוֹ וּמִדּוֹתָיו וּלְפָתֹר לָהֶם כָּל שְׁאֵלוֹתֵיהֶם וּתְבִיעוֹתֵיהֶם עַל פִּי הַהִשְׁקָפָה הָאֲמִתִּית וְאֵינָהּ מִפְּחַד מְכָל הָרוּחוֹת שֶׁבָּעוֹלָם,

For when his spirit is so strong that he can rule over his nature and his character traits, and resolve for them all their questions and their demands according to the true outlook, and he is not afraid of any of the spirits in the world,

אָדָם כָּזֶה יָכוֹל לְהִנְהִיג אֶת הַצִּבּוֹר וּלְחַנֵּכֶם כָּל אֶחָד חֲנוּכּוֹ הַמִּיחָד לוֹ,

Such a person can lead the community and educate them, each one with his unique education,

לְפִי דִרְגּוֹ וּמַהוּתוֹ, וְגִלָּה לוֹ הַסּוֹד הַזֶּה,

according to his level and his essence, and reveal to him this secret,

כִּי הַכֹּל תָּלוּי בִּיכָלֶת לְמַשֵּׁל עַל עַצְמוֹ.

For everything depends on the ability to rule over oneself.

וְאִם הָאָדָם הוּא הַפֶּכֶפֶךְ וּבִלְתִּי מוֹשֵׁל בְּרוּחוֹ,

And if a person is fickle and does not control his spirit,

כִּי יַפְעַל עָלָיו נְגִיעָה דַּקָּה מִן הַדַּקָּה לֹא יִרְגִּישׁ בָּהּ וַיִּנָּטֶה לְצַדֵּדִין אִיךָ יָבוֹא לְהִנְהִיג אֶת הַצִּבּוֹר,

For if a subtle, subtle touch affects him, he will not feel it and will incline to the sides, how will he come to lead the community?

אִם הוּא יָבֹא לְהִתְעַרֵּב עִם הַחֲלָקִים הַנִּפְרָדִים שֶׁבְּכִנֵּי אָדָם יִבְלָבֵל מִדְּוִיחָנוּף לְכָל אֶחָד מִפְּנֵי נְגִיעָה דַּקָּה מִן הַדַּקָּה,

If he comes to mix with the separate parts that are in people, he will immediately become confused and will flatter each one because of a desire that is finer than fine,

כִּי אִם לֹא יָכוֹל לַפְעֵל עַל נְגִיעָתוֹ אֵיךְ יַפְעֵל עַל נְגִיעַת חֲבִירוֹ.

For if he cannot act upon his own inclination, how will he act upon the inclination of his friend?

וְלָכֵן אָמַר קַח אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ,

And therefore He said, 'Take Yehoshua, a man in whom there is spirit,' (Bamidbar 27:18)

שֶׁיָּכוֹל לְעַצֵּר אֶת רוּחוֹ, כְּמָה שֶׁכָּתוּב שֶׁהִיָּתָה עֲבוֹדָתוֹ לְסַדֵּר אֶת הַסִּפְסָפִים,

that he is able to restrain his spirit, as it is written that his avodah was to arrange the benches,

שֶׁהָיָה אָדָם הַמוּכָן לַעֲשׂוֹת כָּל מָה שֶׁדָּרוּשׁ לְדַבֵּר בְּלִתי פְּנוֹת לְהַשְׁגִּיחַ עַל כְּבוֹדוֹ לְגַמְרִי,

that he was a person ready to do whatever is necessary for the matter, without turning to pay attention to his honor at all,

לָכֵן בָּחַר אוֹתוֹ לְהִיְוֹת מְנַהִיג כִּי יָכוֹל לַפְעֵל עָלֵיהֶם,

Therefore, He chose him to be a leader because he could influence them,

וְאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם בְּעֵת שֶׁיֵּצְאוּ לַמִּלְחָמָה,

And one who takes them out when they go out to war,

הוּא יָבוֹא לִפְנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבִיאֵם וּבְעֵת יָבוֹאוּ מִן הַמִּלְחָמָה יָבוֹא אַחֲרֵיהֶם,

He will come before them, and he who brings them, and when they come from the war, he will come after them,

עַד שֶׁיָּבִיאֵם.

until he brings them.

וְזֶה שֶׁהוֹכִיחַ לָנוּ הַנָּבִיא:

And this is what the Navi proved to us:

אוֹתִי עָזְבוּ מְקוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים לְחַצּוֹב לָהֶם בְּאֵרוֹת בְּאֵרוֹת נִשְׁבָּרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָכִילוּ הַמַּיִם.

"Me they have forsaken, the Fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that cannot hold the water" (Yirmiyahu 2:13).

כִּי בְהִיְוֹת רוּחוֹ חֹזֵק וְהִסְכָּמְתוֹ בְּלִתי הִפְכָּפְכָת וְיָכוֹל לְמָשׁוֹל עַל עַצְמוֹ, אִזּוֹ יִרְוִיחַ שְׁנֵי דְבָרִים:

For when his spirit is strong and his resolve is not wavering, and he is able to rule over himself, then he will gain two things:

הָאֶחָד, מָה שֶׁרוּחוֹ הוּא כְּמַעְיָן הַנוֹבֵעַ,

The first, that his spirit is like a flowing spring,

אֲשֶׁר כָּל מָה שֶׁשׁוֹאֲבִין מִמֶּנּוּ עוֹד יוֹסִיף לִנְבֹּעַ וְלֹא יִחְסַר מִמֶּנּוּ מְאוּמָה,

that all that one draws from it, it will yet continue to flow and nothing will be lacking from it,

וְיָכוֹל לְהִיטֵּם מִנְהִיג עַל עַצְמוֹ וּמִנְהִיג עַל הַצִּבּוֹר,

And he can be a leader over himself and a leader over the community,

וְאֵין הַצִּבּוֹר מַחְסֵר שְׁלֵמוֹת עַצְמוֹ כָּלֹם.

And the community does not lack any of its own perfection.

וְאֵין הַצִּבּוֹר מַחְסֵר לְעַצְמוֹ כָּלֹם,

And the community does not lack anything for itself,

אֲלֹא הוּא כְּמַעֲיָן הַנוֹבֵעַ שֶׁמֶכַּל חוּט הַשְּׁעָרָה הוּא מִתְעַלֶּה וְהָעוֹלָם עִצְמוֹ מִתְעַלֶּה עִמּוֹ.

Rather, he is like a flowing spring, that with every single hair's breadth he elevates himself, and the world itself elevates with him.

וְאִיךָ הִשִּׁיג הַהֲצָלָחָה הַזֹּאת?

And how did he achieve this success?

הוּא מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהִפְקִיר מִקִּדְּם כָּל כְּבוֹדוֹ וְכָל רְצוֹנוֹתָיו וְהִחְלִיט בְּעַצְמוֹ כִּי מוּטָב שִׁיקָרָא שׁוֹטָה בְּפִי כָּל הָעוֹלָם וְאֵל יְהִי רָשָׁע שָׁעָה אַחַת לִפְנֵי הַמָּקוֹם (עֲדוּיוֹת פ"ה),

It is because he first made ownerless all his honor and all his desires, and he decided within himself that it is better that he be called a fool by the mouth of the entire world, and let him not be wicked for one moment before the Omnipresent (Eduyos 5:6).

וּמָסַר אֶת עַצְמוֹ לְרִצּוֹן ה' לְגִמְרֵי בְּלִי שׁוּם נִגְיָעָה עֲצֻמִּית,

and he surrendered himself to the will of Hashem completely, without any self-interest whatsoever,

כִּיִּן שִׁיכוֹל לְמַשֵּׁל עַל עַצְמוֹ,

Since he is able to rule over himself,

יָכוֹל גַּם כֵּן לְמַשׁוֹל עַל הַצִּבּוֹר.

He is also able to rule over the community.

לְכֵן כַּאֲשֶׁר יָבֵא לְנִהֵג עַל הַצִּבּוֹר גַּם שֵׁם יַעֲשֶׂה הַכֹּל לִפְי צָרָה הָעֹנֶיֶן.

Therefore, when he comes to lead the community, there too he will do everything according to the need of the matter,

כִּיִּן שִׁישׁ לוֹ דֶּרֶךְ לְמַשֵּׁל עַל עַצְמוֹ, יֵשׁ לוֹ הַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה גַּם כֵּן לְהִנְהִיג אֶת הַצִּבּוֹר בְּאוֹתוֹ דֶּרֶךְ שֶׁשָּׁמַר שְׁלֵא יִקְבֹּל חֲסָרוֹן מִנְטִיתוֹ, בְּאוֹתוֹ דֶּרֶךְ יִשְׁמַר שְׁלֵא יִקְבֹּל חֲסָרוֹן מִן הַצִּבּוֹר.

Since he has a way to rule over himself, he also has this way to lead the community in that same way that he guarded himself not to receive a deficiency from his own inclination; in that same way he will guard himself not to receive a deficiency from the community.

וְנִמְצָא שֶׁהוּא כְּמַעֲיָן הַנוֹבֵעַ.

And it is found that he is like a flowing spring,

כִּי מִכָּל פְּעֻלָּה הוּא מִתְעַלֶּה,

for from every action he elevates himself,

וְהָעוֹלָם מֵתְעַלָּה עִמּוֹ.

And the world elevates with him.

וְעוֹד, שְׁנִית, כִּי רָחוּק הוּא מִן הָרַע וְאֵינּוּ סוֹבֵל מִפְּגְעֵי הַזְּמַן וּמִחֲלֵי הַמַּדּוּת הָרָעוֹת וּמִנִּקְמַת הַטֶּבַע.

And furthermore, secondly, that he is distant from evil and does not suffer from the afflictions of time, nor from the sickness of bad character traits, nor from the vengeance of nature.

וְזֶה שֶׁאָמַר:

And this is what he said:

"אוֹתִי עָזְבוּ מְקוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים", וְעַל מָה הִמִּירוּ?

"They have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters," and for what did they exchange Me?

לְחֻצוֹב בְּאֵרוֹת בְּאֵרוֹת נִשְׁבָּרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָכִילוּ הַמַּיִם

to hew cisterns, broken cisterns, that cannot hold water (Yirmiyahu 2:13).

לְהִיּוֹת הֵם עַל כְּבוֹדוֹ וּלְפַחַד לְמִסֵּר עַל הַתּוֹרָה לְגִמְרִי,

to be they for His glory and to fear to give over for the Torah completely,

אֲלָא הוּא מִתְהַפֵּךְ בְּכָל הַצַּדִּיּוֹן וּמִשְׁנָה פָּנָיו לְכַמָּה גִּנּוּיִן לֹא יָכוֹל לְמַשֵּׁל עַל עַצְמוֹ,

Rather, he turns himself over in all directions and changes his face to several colors, he cannot rule over himself,

וְכָל שֶׁכֵּן עַל אֲחֵרִים. וְאִפְּלוּ מָה שֵׁישׁ לוֹ לֹא יָכִיל בְּקִרְבוֹ,

And all the more so regarding others, and even what he himself has, he will not be able to contain within himself,

כִּי יֵאבֹד זֶה דֶּרֶךְ הַחֲרִין וְהַסִּדְקִין שֶׁל מַדּוּתָיו הַמְּגִנּוֹת,

For this one will lose the path of the holes and cracks of his negative character traits,

וְיֵשׁ לוֹ שְׁנֵי הַחֲסֵרוֹנוֹת:

And he has two deficiencies:

הָאֶחָד, מָה שֶׁחָסֵר לוֹ הַמַּעֲלָה שֶׁל מְקוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים; וְהַשְּׁנִית, מָה שֶׁהוּא רָצוּץ וְשִׁבּוֹר מְטֻבָּעוּ וּמַדּוּתָיו:

The first, that which lacks the virtue of a spring of living waters; and the second, that which is crushed and broken from its nature and character traits:

וְלָכֵן אָמְרוּ חַז"ל:

And therefore Chazal said:

חֲטָאוּ בְּכַפְּלִים דְּכִתִּיב "חֲטָא חֲטָאָה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם" (אִיכָּה א' ח') וְלָקוּ בְּכַפְּלִים דְּכִתִּיב "כִּי לָקַחָהּ מִיַּד ה' כְּפָלִים בְּכָל חֲטָאתֶיהָ" (יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ מ')

They sinned doubly, as it is written, "Jerusalem has sinned a sin" (Eichah 1:8), and they were punished doubly, as it is written, "for she has received from the hand of Hashem double for all her sins" (Yeshayahu 40:2).

ומתנחמים בכפלים דכתיב (שם) "נחמו נחמו עמי יאמר ה' אלקיכם" (איכה רפתי סוף פרק א').

And they are comforted with double comfort, as it is written (there, Yeshayahu 40:1), "Comfort, comfort My people, says Hashem your G-d" (Eichah Rabbasi, end of Perek 1).

וצריךין אנו להבין מה זה נקרא כפלים?

And we need to understand, what is this called, 'doubled'?

כי בשביל שעשה שני פעמים החטא לא שייך לומר על זה כפליים, כי יתכן שעשה שלשה פעמים.

For because he did the sin two times, it is not fitting to say concerning this 'double,' for it is possible that he did it three times.

ועוד מה זה לקו בכפליים?

And furthermore, what is this, 'they were smitten twofold'?

אלא הוא הדבר שאמרנו, כי כל עקר החטא איננו מס על האדם אלא טבע הוא אשר תיסרנו רשעתו ומשובתו תוכיחנו.

Rather, this is the matter we said, that the entire essence of sin is not a tax upon a person, but rather it is a nature, as 'his wickedness will chastise him, and his backsliding will rebuke him' (Yirmiyahu 2:19).

ולכן לעולם החטא הוא חטא כפול:

And therefore, forever, the sin is a double sin:

חדא, שחסר לו המעלה של מעין הנובע האמור,

Firstly, that he lacks the virtue of the aforementioned flowing spring,

ועוד, שנית, מה שמנח תחת טבעו ומדותיו הרעות,

And furthermore, secondly, that which is placed under his evil nature and traits,

ולקה בכפלים, שלא לבד שחסר לו האשר להיות משפיע על עצמו ומשפיע על אחרים,

And he is afflicted doubly, that not only is he lacking the happiness of being able to influence himself and influence others,

ומשגלל מן כל טובה, הן מצד עצמו והן מצד אחרים.

And he is stripped of all good, whether from his own side or from the side of others.

עוד לקה הוא מן תביעת הטבע ומעשה העבירות,

He was further afflicted by the demands of nature and the doing of transgressions,

כמו נדה שיש לה שתי החסרונות שאין לה הטהרה וגם היא טמאה,

Like a niddah who has two deficiencies: that she does not have purity, and also she is tamei,

וְלָכֵן מִתְנַחֵם בְּכַפָּלִים אִם הָאָדָם יָשׁוּב לִהְיוֹת כְּקֶטֶן שְׁנוּלָד,

And therefore, he is comforted doubly if a person returns to be like a newborn child,

וְלָקַח לוֹ הַדֶּרֶךְ שֶׁל נַעֲשֶׂה קֹדֶם לְנִשְׁמָע,

And he took for himself the path of 'we will do' before 'we will hear',

לְמַסֵּר אֶת עֲצָמוֹ אֶל כָּל מֶה שֶׁתִּבְחַר לוֹ הַתּוֹרָה,

to give over his very self to everything the Torah chooses for him,

אִזּוֹ יָשׁוּבוּ אֵלָיו שְׁתֵּי הַהֲצָלָחוֹת,

Then the two successes will return to him,

שֶׁלֹא יִסְבֵּל מִטְּבְּעוֹ וּמִדּוּתָיו הָרָעוֹת,

so that he should not suffer from his nature and his bad character traits,

אֲשֶׁר מוֹצִיָּאִין אֶת הָאָדָם מִן הָעוֹלָם,

which take a person out of the world,

וְעַד שְׁנִית, שִׁישִׁיג.

And until a second time, that he will attain.

הַמַּעֲלָה הַגְּבוּהָ לִהְיוֹת מוֹשֵׁל עַל עֲצָמוֹ וּבְדֶרֶךְ זֶה יָכוֹל גַּם כֵּן לִהְיוֹת מוֹשֵׁל עַל אֲחֵרִים בְּלִי שׁוּם חֲסָרוֹן,

The high madreiga is to be a ruler over oneself, and in this way one can also be a ruler over others without any deficiency.

רַק כָּל מַעֲשָׂיו יִהְיוּ כְּמַעַיִן הַנוֹבֵעַ,

Only all his deeds should be like a flowing spring,

כְּמוֹ שֶׁהַנִּדָּה הַמְטַהֶרֶת הוֹלֶכֶת מִמְּנָה הַטְּמְאָה וּמִקְבֵּלַת הַטְּהָרָה,

Just as the niddah who purifies herself, the tumah departs from her and she receives the taharah,

וְכְמוֹ בְּעֵת שֶׁהִיא טְהוֹרָה הִיא תִּבְנֶה אֶת עֲצָמָהּ וְעוֹד שֶׁתִּבְנֶה גַם דּוֹרוֹת אַחֲרֶיהָ,

And just as when she is pure, she will build herself, and furthermore, she will also build generations after her,

כֵּן הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מֵאֲפֶלֶה לְאוֹר גָּדוֹל,

So too, a person who has gone out from darkness to a great light,

אִזּוֹ פּוֹעֵל עַל עֲצָמוֹ וְנִפְעָלִים דּוֹרוֹת מִמֶּנּוּ.

Then he acts upon himself, and generations are acted upon from him.

וְזֶה שֶׁהוֹכִיחַ לָהֶם הַנָּבִיא יְחֶזְקֵאל:

And this is what the prophet Yechezkel rebuked them about:

בֶּן אָדָם וְכו', כְּטֻמְאַת הַנִּדָּה הִיְתָה דִּרְכָּם לִפְנֵי (שָׁם),

Son of man, etc., 'like the impurity of a niddah was their way before Me' (there, meaning Yechezkel 36:17),

שֶׁנִּצָּצְכִים אַתֶּם בַּמַּדְרֵגָה נְמוּכָה כְּמוֹ נִדָּה,

that you stand on a low madreiga, like a niddah,

שֵׁשׁ לָהּ שְׁתֵּי חֲסֵרוֹנוֹת, כְּאָמֹר,

that it has two deficiencies, as stated,

כֵּן הִסֵּר לָכֶם הַמַּעֲלָה הָעֲלִיוֹנָה לְהִיּוֹת מְנַהִיג עַל עַצְמוֹ וּלְנַהֵג גַּם אֲחֵרִים בְּדֶרֶךְ זֶה,

Thus, the highest level is removed from you: to be a leader over oneself and to lead others as well in this path,

וְעוֹד שֶׁאַתֶּם כְּמוֹ הַבּוֹר שֶׁאֵינוֹ מְכִיל הַמַּיִם בְּקִרְבוֹ,

And furthermore, you are like the pit that does not contain the water within it,

שֶׁאֵין אַתֶּם יְכוּלִים לַעֲצֹר גַּם מֶה שֵׁשׁ לָכֶם,

that you are not able to hold back even what you have,

כִּי הַמַּעַט מְרוּחַ הַטּוֹב שֵׁשׁ לָכֶם נִגָּר וַיֵּלֶךְ דֶּרֶךְ הַחֹרֶץ וְהַסִּדְקִין שֶׁל הַמַּדּוֹת הָרָעוֹת כִּי זְבוּבֵי מוֹת יִבְאִישׁ יְבִיעַ שֶׁמֶן רוֹקֵחַ (קֹהֶלֶת י"א),

For the little bit of good spirit that you have will drain and go away through the holes and cracks of the bad middos, for 'dead flies make the perfumer's oil putrid and ferment' (Koheles 10:1).

וְהַתְגַּבֵּר הָרָצוֹן עַל שִׁכְלָכֶם עַד שֶׁתִּהְיוּ רְצוּצִים וְנִדְכָּאִים.

And the desire will overpower your intellect until you will be crushed and downtrodden.

וְלָכֵן אָמַר לְהֵלֵן בְּעֵת שֶׁתָּבוֹא הַגְּאֻלָּה:

And therefore, it says further on, at the time when the Geulah will come:

לֹא לְמַעַנְכֶם אֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי אִם לְשֵׁם קְדוֹשִׁי וְכו' וְהִסְרֹתִי אֶת לֵב הָאָבֶן מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב בָּשָׂר

Not for your sake do I do this, House of Yisrael, but for My holy Name, etc. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh (Yechezkel 36:22).

כ"ו).

וְכָתַב הָרַמְבַּ"ם מִפְּנֵי מָה לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה ה' לְמַעַנְכֶם,

And the Ramban wrote, 'Why should Hashem not do for your sake?'

וְאָמַר מִפְּנֵי שְׂבָאֵמֶת אֵין זֶה טוֹבָה לָאָדָם שֶׁתָּבוֹא הַגְּאֻלָּה וְיִתְחַלֵּף טָבְעוֹ,

And he said, because in truth, it is not good for a person that the Geulah should come and his nature be changed,

כִּי עֲכָשׂוּ הוּא מִתְעַלֶּה מִן הַנִּסְיוֹן,

for now he elevates himself from the nisayon,

אָבֵל אֲזֵי אֵין נִסְיוֹן בְּמַצִּיאוֹת וְלֹא יִתְעַלֶּה הָאָדָם כָּלֹם וְאֵין מַעֲשָׂיו בָּאִים עַל יְדֵי יְגִיעָה וְלֹא יִקְרָא עַל שְׁמוֹ.

But then there is no nisayon in reality, and a person will not elevate himself at all, and his deeds do not come through toil, and it will not be called by his name.

וְלָכֵן אָמַר הַנְּבִיא:

And therefore, the prophet said:

לֹא לְמַעַנְכֶם אֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה וְכוּ'

"Not for your sake do I do it, etc."

כִּי לְמַעַנְכֶם אֵין זֶה טוֹבָה,

for for your sake, this is not a good thing,

אֲלֹא לְשֵׁם קְדוּשַׁי אֶעֱשֶׂה זֹאת

Rather, for the sake of My holiness I will do this.

וְכִיּוֹן שָׁכֵן, מִהֲרָאוּי לָנוּ לְטַהֵר נַפְשֵׁנוּ קֹדֶם בֹּא יוֹם הַגְּאֻלָּה וּלְזֹאת כְּקָטָן שְׁנוּלֵד לְקַבֵּל אֶת הַדֶּרֶךְ שֶׁל נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע,

And since this is so, it is proper for us to purify our souls before the coming of the day of Geulah, and for this, like a newborn child, to accept the path of 'Na'aseh V'Nishma' (we will do and we will hear),

וְאֲזִי נִרְוִיחַ כְּפָלִיִּים וְהָרוּחַ יִהְיֶה עַל חֶשְׁבוֹנֵנוּ.

And then we will profit twofold, and the profit will be on our account.

WHAT TO TAKE FROM IT

To apply this, we must strive to be steadfast in our avodah, prioritizing Hashem's will above all else, even when it means letting go of our own honor or desires. By consistently choosing the path of emes and self-mastery, we can become like a flowing spring, bringing blessing to ourselves and those around us, rather than a broken cistern that cannot hold water. Let us commit to 'naaseh v'nishma' with all our heart, purifying ourselves and preparing for the Geulah, thereby earning a double reward.