

מאמר ב' • תקון המדות

Mussar · Hebrew with Nikud and a Literal Translation

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This page teaches us a fundamental truth: everything in nature is a miracle, sustained only by Hashem's decree. When we keep the Torah, we are walking on a 'bridge of iron,' secure in Hashem's protection and provision, for the world was created on condition that we fulfill His will. Our struggles and anxieties often stem from a lack of emunah, like the 'officer' who doubted Hashem's word, thinking we must force things to happen.

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

נמצא למדין מכל זה שהשקפה האמתית הוא לדון את הטבע לנס.

We find, learning from all this, that the true outlook is to judge nature as a miracle,

יעזו כי כל הטבע תלוי לו בלי מה,

Because all of nature is dependent on Him without anything.

ורק גזרת ה' היא היסוד לכל בגין הטבע.

And only the decree of Hashem is the foundation for the entire structure of nature.

ונמצא שהאדם העובר על קיום התורה אם יעבור לו הטבע אף בדרך הטבע הוא נס גדול,

And it turns out that for a person who transgresses the fulfillment of the Torah, if nature passes him by, even in a natural way, it is a great miracle,

כי הפריאה היא על תנאי אם יקים את רצון ה',

For the creation is on condition if he will fulfill the will of Hashem,

כמו שכתוב אם לא בריתי וכו' חקות שמים וארץ לא שמתי (ירמיה ל"ג),

As it is written, 'If not My covenant, etc., I would not have set the laws of heaven and earth' (Yirmiyahu 33),

ונס גדול הוא עם כדור הארץ שאינו נופל תחת רגלי המורדים בדיברי ה',

And it is a great miracle with the earth that it does not fall under the feet of those who rebel against the words of Hashem,

והנס הוא הטבע כי מה שהטבע משמש את השומר מצוה הוא הטבע של הדבר,

And the miracle is nature, for that which nature serves the one who keeps a mitzvah, that is the nature of the thing,

כי כך הייתה הגזרה הקדמונה שיהיה מדרגת הטבע אל התורה כמדרגת עבד אל אדוניו.

For such was the primordial decree, that the level of nature should be to the Torah as the level of a servant to his master.

לְכֵן יָכוֹל כָּל הָאָדָם לָלֶכֶת בְּטַח כְּמוֹ עַל גִּישָׁר שֶׁל בְּרֹזֶל עַל קִיּוֹם הַתּוֹרָה,

Therefore, every person can walk securely, as if on an iron bridge, upon the fulfillment of the Torah,

כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "בְּהִתְהַלֵּכְךָ תִּנְחָה אוֹתָךְ" (מִשְׁלֵי ו'),

As it is written: "When you walk, it will guide you" (Mishlei 6),

וְהַתּוֹרָה תִּנְחָה אוֹתוֹ לְכָל הַהַצְלָחוֹת וְתִשְׁמְרֶהוּ מִן כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הַמְּזִיקִים,

And the Torah will guide him to all successes and protect him from all harmful things,

וְכָל שֶׁכֵּן שְׂלֵא יֵאָזֵק לוֹ הַתּוֹרָה וְלֹא יִשְׁלַל מִמֶּנּוּ שׁוֹם דְּבָר טוֹב וּמוֹעִיל,

And all the more so, the Torah will not harm him, nor will it deny him any good and beneficial thing,

רַק הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר אָסוּר בְּמַאֲסֵר הַהֶרְגֵּל,

Only the person who is imprisoned in the jail of habit,

וְכַפּוֹת בְּזִמְי הַמְשַׁפְּטִים שֶׁל הַחוּשִׁים הַחִיצוֹנִיִּים הוּא חֵי תַחַת הַשְּׁקֵפֶת הַשָּׁקֶר,

And bound in the chains of the judgments of the external senses, he lives under the perspective of falsehood,

וְדֵן כָּל הַחֲסְרוֹנוֹת שֶׁיִּגְעוּ לוֹ מִפְּנֵי סִבָּה זוֹ וְסִבָּה זוֹ וְסוּמְךָ עַל כַּחוֹ וְעֶצֶם יָדוֹ,

And he judges all the deficiencies that will come to him because of this reason and that reason, and he relies on his strength and the might of his hand,

וּבִאֲמַת אָמְרוּ חֲזוֹ"ל אֶפִּילוּ הוֹשִׁיט יָדוֹ לִכְסִי לִיטוֹל שְׁלֹשׁ וְעֹלָה בְּיָדוֹ שְׁתֵּים הָרִי הוּא בְּכָלֵל יְסוּרִין (עֲרֻכִּין ט"ז).

And in truth, Chazal said, even if one put his hand into his pocket to take out three [coins] and two came up in his hand, he is included in the category of yissurin (sufferings) (Arachin 16).

רוֹאִין אָנּוּ מִזֶּה עַד כַּמָּה שׁוֹמֵר הַבּוֹרֵא אֶת הָאָדָם אֵף מֵהַמְּלָךְ לֹא יָכוֹל לְשַׁמֵּר אֶת עֲצָמוֹ שְׂלֵא יִתְחַלֵּף לוֹ שׁוֹמֵר אוֹתוֹ הַבּוֹרֵא אֶת הָאָדָם הַנִּרְצָה לוֹ,

From this we see how much the Creator guards a person, even that which a king cannot guard himself from being exchanged, the Creator guards that person who is desired by Him.

וְאִם יִתְחַלֵּף לְאָדָם נִחְשָׁב לוֹ לְיְסוּרִין וְלֹא מְקָרָה הִיא זֶה,

And if it changes for a person, it is considered for him as yissurim, and it is not a random occurrence.

אֵלָּא הַכֹּל בְּיַד שָׁמַיִם וְאִנְשֵׁי מַעֲשֵׂה לֹא קִבְּלוּ שׁוֹם מִתְּנָה כָּל הַשָּׁנָה,

Rather, everything is in the hands of Heaven, and men of action did not receive any gift all year,

כִּי אָמְרוּ מִשְׁלָנוּ הוּא, כִּי כִּךְ נִקְצֵב מִיּוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים כֵּן הוּא בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם,

For they said, 'It is from us,' for thus it was decreed from Yom Kippur, so it is in the Yerushalmi,

שְׁקָלִים פָּרָק ד', וְכָל טְעוֹת הָאָדָם בְּהִנָּהֶגֶת הַבּוֹרָא עִם הָאָדָם בְּתִהְיוּכֹתָיו,

Shekalim, Chapter 4. And every error of a person regarding the Creator's conduct with man in his journeys,

אֵיךְ שֶׁנִּדְמָה לוֹ כִּי הַסְּבוֹת נוֹתְנִים וְהַסְּבוֹת לוקְחִים,

how it seems to him that the causes give and the causes take,

וְחַיּוֹ הָאַחֲרִים אֲשֶׁר כָּל יָמָיו כַּעַס וּמִכְאוּבִּים,

And his other life, in which all his days are anger and pains,

וְהַשְׁתַּדְּלוּתוֹ לֹא יַעֲלֶה לוֹ מָה שֶׁלְּבוֹ חָפֵץ נוֹתֵן לָנוּ תַּמוּנָה חִיָּה הַמַּעֲשֶׂה דְּשָׁלִישׁ,

And his efforts will not bring him what his heart desires, giving us a vivid picture of the act of the third party,

כִּי בַּעַת שֶׁאָמַר הַנְּבִיא בְּשָׁנַת הַבְּצָרָת,

For at the time the prophet said, in the year of drought,

כִּי מָחָר יִהְיֶה סֵאָה סֵלֶת בְּשֶׁקֶל וְסֵאֲתַיִם שְׁעוּרִים בְּסֹלֶעַ שָׂאֵל אֵלָיו הַשָּׁלִישׁ הַיַּעֲשֶׂה אֱלָקִים אַרְבּוֹת בְּשָׁמַיִם
וְהִיא כְּדָבָר הַזֶּה?

For tomorrow there will be a se'ah of fine flour for a shekel and two se'ahs of barley for a sela. The officer asked him, 'Will Hashem make windows in the heavens, and it will be like this thing?'

וְאָמַר לוֹ הַנְּבִיא: בְּעֵינֶיךָ תִּרְאֶה וּמַשֶּׁם לֹא תֹאכַל. וְכֵן הָיָה,

And the prophet said to him: 'With your eyes you will see, but from there you will not eat.' And so it was,

שֶׁנַּעֲשֶׂה זֶה לְמָחָר, וְנִדְרָס הַשָּׁלִישׁ (מְלָכִים ב' ז') וְצָרִיכִין אָנוּ לְהִבִּין הֲלֹא כָּל אָדָם בְּדוֹרָנוּ שׂוֹאֵל שְׂאֵלַת
הַשָּׁלִישׁ וְלֹא יָבוֹא עָלָיו הָעֲנָשׁ שֶׁל הַשָּׁלִישׁ,

that it will become cheap by tomorrow, and the officer was trampled (Melachim II 7). And we need to understand, behold, every person in our generation asks the question of the officer, and the punishment of the officer does not come upon him,

הַשָּׁלִישׁ לֹא בָּטַח בְּמֹאמְרֵי ה' וְלֹא הֶאֱמִין הַיּוֹם כִּי מָחָר יִהְיֶה זֶה,

The officer did not trust in the word of Hashem, and he did not believe today that tomorrow it would be cheap,

וְהָאָדָם גַּם כֵּן אֵינוֹ מֵאֱמִין הַיּוֹם,

And man also does not believe today,

כִּי מָחָר לֹא יִחְסֹר לוֹ, אֲלֹא דוֹאֵג הַיּוֹם מָה יַעֲשֶׂה לְמָחָר,

For tomorrow he will not lack, rather he worries today what he will do tomorrow,

וְאָמְרוּ חַז"ל מִי שֶׁיֵּשׁ לוֹ פֶּת בְּסִלּוֹ וְדוֹאֵג וְאֹמֵר מָה יֵאָכֵל לְמָחָר הֲרִי זֶה מְקַטְנֵי אֱמוּנָה,

And Chazal said, 'One who has bread in his basket and worries, saying, 'What will I eat tomorrow?' behold, this one is among those of little emunah.'

ומזונותיו של אדם קצובין לו מראש השנה עד יום הכפורים,

And a person's sustenance is allotted to him from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur,

ולכן לא קבלו אנשי מעשה מתנה כל השנה,

And therefore, men of action did not accept a gift all year,

כמבאר בירושלמי (שקלים פרק ה').

As explained in the Yerushalmi (Shekalim Chapter 5).

ונמצא כי כל מרדות נפשו של אדם להקדים מה שאחר הבורא,

And it is found that all the rebellion of a person's soul is to hasten what the Creator delayed,

כמו מי שנוסע במכונה של מסלת הברזל ודוחק באצבעו על הכותל למחר הליכתו שהוא ממש כשטות של פלוני הסובר כי בדחיקת אצבעו ירוץ המכונה יותר מהרה,

Like one who travels in a train car and pushes with his finger on the wall to hasten its journey, which is truly like the foolishness of someone who thinks that by pushing with his finger the train will run faster,

כיון שהוא רודף לפעל בדבר שכבר הוא פעול וירוצ' להשיג מה שיבוא לו ממילא,

Since he pursues to act in a matter that is already acted upon, and he runs to achieve what will come to him on its own,

כי הדבר הקצוב לו כבר יש לו במציאות ומה שאינו קצוב אף אם יהפך את כל העולם לא יוסיף עליו אפלו כחידל,

For that which is allotted to him, he already has in reality; and that which is not allotted, even if he turns over the entire world, he will not add to it even like a mustard seed,

ואם אינו משים לב לזה, ובוטח על השתדלותו וכח גופו ותחבולותו,

And if he does not pay attention to this, and relies on his efforts and the strength of his body and his stratagems,

הוא בעצם כמו שאלת השליש היעשה אלקים ארבות בשמים,

It is essentially like the question of the third one, 'Will Hashem make windows in the heavens?'

כי באמת משגי מה הוא להוט אחר השתדלותו ודוחק את השעה ומוטרד להקדים מה שאחר הבורא הוא רק מפני השאלה הזאת הנחבא בקרבו ומסיתו להכיר,

For in truth, from what is he so zealous after his efforts, and pushes the hour, and is troubled to hasten what the Creator delayed? It is only because of this question hidden within him, which entices him to recognize,

כי אם לא יעשה בעשרה אצבעותיו לא יפול לו מן השמים,

For if he will not do with his ten fingers, it will not fall to him from the heavens,

וישאר כמו מדבר מקום לא זרועה,

And it will remain like a desert, an unsown place,

ואם הִיָּה מְכִיר הַמְצִיאוֹת כִּי כָל דָּבָר לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה לְבָדּוֹ וְאִין אָדָם נוֹגֵעַ מִה שְׁמוּכָן לְחֻבְרוֹ אֶפְלוּ כִּמְלֵא נִימָא,

And if he would recognize the reality that nothing is done by itself, and no person touches what is prepared for his fellow, even by a hairsbreadth,

וְאִין אָדָם נוֹקֵף אֶצְבָּעוֹ מִלְמַטָּה עַד שְׁמִכְרִיזִין עָלָיו מִלְמַעְלָה וְאִם יוֹשִׁיט יָדוֹ לְכִיס לִיטוֹל שְׁלֵשׁ וְיִעְלָה בְּיָדוֹ שְׁתֵּים בְּכָלֵל יְסוּרִים הוּא,

And a person does not stub his finger below until it is decreed upon him from Above, and if he extends his hand into his pocket to take three and two come up in his hand, it is included in sufferings.

אִזְ הִיָּה זוֹרֵק מֵעָלָיו כָּל עַל הַסְּבוֹת,

Then he would cast off from himself the entire yoke of the causes,

וְאִזְ הִיָּה מִפְּקִיר כָּל בְּטָחוֹנוֹ בְּמִכְרִיו וְאוֹהָבָיו וְכַח גּוֹפּוֹ וְתַחֲבוּלָתוֹ,

And then he would abandon all his trust in his acquaintances and his loved ones, and the strength of his body and his cunning,

כִּי אֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ לְכָלָם וְאִין צָרִיךְ לְצַפָּה יְשׁוּעָה מִסְּבוֹתָיו,

For he does not need all of them, and he does not need to anticipate salvation from his causes,

כִּי כָּבֵד יֵשׁ לוֹ גִּשְׁרֵי שֵׁל בְּרֹזֶל הִיא הַגְּזֵרָה אֲשֶׁר קִצְּבָהּ לוֹ מִכָּבֵד כָּל מְזוֹנוֹתָיו וְכָל שְׂאֵלוֹת הַחַיִּים שָׁלוֹ,

For he already has a bridge of iron, which is the decree that long ago allotted him all his sustenance and all his life's needs,

וְאִם אֵינוֹ עוֹשֶׂה כֵּן, וְכָל הַיּוֹם לֹא יָנוּחַ וְלֹא יִשְׁקֹט מִרְדּוּף אַחֲרֵי הַסְּבוֹת לְמִבְקָשׁ,

And if he does not do so, and all day he will not rest and will not be still from pursuing after the causes for what is desired,

הוּא רַק מִפְּנֵי שְׁשׂוֹאֵל שְׂאֵלַת הַשְּׁלִישׁ הַיַּעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹקִים אַרְבּוֹת בְּשָׁמַיִם,

It is only because he asks the question of the third one, 'Will Hashem make windows in the heavens?'

וְאִם כֵּן מִפְּנֵי מָה לֹא יָבוֹא לוֹ גַּם הַפֶּסֶק שֶׁל הַשְּׁלִישׁ?

And if so, why should the interruption of the third not also come to him?

וְאַמֵּנָם הַמְצִיאוֹת אֵינוֹ כֵּן.

But indeed, the reality is not so.

בְּאַמְתָּ גַּם עַכְשִׁיו כָּל מִי שְׁשׂוֹאֵל שְׂאֵלַת הַשְּׁלִישׁ יִשְׁגֶּה גַּם הַקְּלָלָה שָׁלוֹ,

Truly, even now, anyone who asks the question of the third will also achieve his curse,

כִּי בְּעֵינָיו יֵרָאֶה וּמִשָּׁם לֹא יֵאָכֵל,

for with his eyes he will see, but from there he will not eat,

כִּי כָּל אֶחָד חוֹשֵׁב עַל חֲבִירוֹ וְחֲבִירוֹ עַל חֲבִירוֹ וְאִין אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִנְיַע לְחַפְצּוֹ,

For each one thinks about his friend, and his friend about his friend, and there is no man who will move towards his desire,

וְהוּא קָלִיל הַשְּׁלִישׁ כִּי בְּעֵינָיָהּ תִּרְאֶה אֵיךְ שֵׁשׁ לְאַחֲרִים וּמִשָּׁם לֹא תֹאכַל,

And this is the curse of the third [party], for with your eyes you will see what others have, but from there you will not eat,

וְלָךְ תִּחְסַר זֹאת.

And you will lack this.

וְזֶה מְצוּי בְּכָל אָדָם שֶׁחֹשֵׁב רַק כִּי חֲבִירוֹ הִגִּיעַ לְחֻפְצוֹ וְהוּא לֹא,

And this is found in every person, that he thinks only that his friend has reached his desire and he has not,

וְגַם חֲבִירוֹ חֹשֵׁב עַל חֲבִירוֹ כִּי פְּלוֹנִי הִגִּיעַ לְחֻפְצוֹ וְהוּא עוֹד לֹא הִגִּיעַ,

And also his friend thinks about his friend that so-and-so reached his desire and he has not yet reached it,

וּבְמִצָּב זֶה נִמְצָא כָּל הָעוֹלָם עַכְשָׁיו,

And in this state the entire world is found now,

וְשׁוֹנָה הוּא עוֹד מִהַשְּׁלִישׁ כִּי הַשְּׁלִישׁ מָת וְלָכֵן לֹא אָכַל,

And he is different yet from the third, for the third died and therefore did not eat,

וּבְנוֹ הוּא רַק דְּמִיוֹן מַה שֶּׁסּוֹכֵר כִּי חֲבִירוֹ יֵשׁ לוֹ,

And his building is only an imagination, what he thinks his friend has,

כִּי בְּאֵמֶת גַּם חֲבִירוֹ חֹשֵׁב כֵּן עַל חֲבִירוֹ,

For in truth, his friend also thinks so about his friend,

וּנִמְצָא שֶׁדְּמִיוֹן כּוֹזֵב, שׁוֹלֵל כָּל הַשְּׂבִיעָה וְהַשְּׁנָה מִכָּל אָדָם,

And it turns out that a false imagination denies all satisfaction and attainment from every person,

אֲשֶׁר כָּל אֶחָד נִמְצָא רַק בְּחֻצֵי תַּאֲוָתוֹ,

that each one is found only in half of his desire,

וְלוֹ הַמָּסִיר אֶת עַצְמוֹ לְגִזְרַת הַבוֹרָא וְהָיָה יוֹדֵעַ כִּי כָּל הָעוֹלָם לֹא יִגְרָעוּ וְלֹא יוֹסִיפוּ מִכֶּכֶּי אֲשֶׁר גָּזַר לָהֶם הַבוֹרָא אֶף כְּחֶרֶדֶל,

And if one surrenders himself to the decree of the Creator, and he knows that the entire world will not diminish nor add from what the Creator has decreed for them, even a mustard seed's worth,

כִּי אִזּוֹ הָיָה שְׂמֵחַ בְּחֶלְקוֹ וְהָיָה רְצוֹנוֹ רַק לְפִי גְבוּלֵי הַגִּזְרָה וְלֹא הָיָה רוֹצֵה יוֹתֵר,

For then he would be happy with his portion, and his will would be only according to the boundaries of the decree, and he would not want more,

כִּי אֵין אָדָם רוֹצֵה דְּבָר אֲשֶׁר נִמְנָע לְהַשִּׁיגוֹ,

For a person does not desire a thing that is impossible for him to attain,

וְעַכְשָׁיו שֹׁחֹשֵׁב כִּי כָּל הָעוֹלָם הִשְׁגִּיגוּ רַק בְּכַחֲם וְעֶצֶם יָדָם,

And now, when he thinks that everyone in the world achieved only through their own strength and the might of their hand,

גַּם הוּא מִתְחַקֵּה אַחֲרֵיהֶם לְבָטוֹחַ בְּכַחוֹ וְעֶצֶם יָדוֹ,

He too traces their path to trust in his own strength and the might of his hand,

וְנִמְצָא כִּי יִשְׁיג הַקְּלָלָה בְּעֵינָיו יִרְאֶה כִּי חֲבִירוֹ יֵשׁ לוֹ,

And it will be found that the curse will reach him; with his own eyes he will see that his friend has,

וְהוּא אֵין לוֹ, וְגַם חֲבִירוֹ יַחֲשׁוֹב כֵּן עַל חֲבִירוֹ,

And he does not have it, and also his friend will think so about his friend,

וְכֻלָּם לֹא יִשְׁגִּיגוּ רְצוֹנָם, אֲלֹא שֶׁכָּל אֶחָד טוֹעֶה עַל חֲבִירוֹ כִּי הוּא פָּחוֹת מִמֶּנּוּ,

And all of them will not achieve their desire, rather that each one errs regarding his fellow that he is less than him,

וְגַם חֲבִירוֹ טוֹעֶה כֵּן עַל חֲבִירוֹ.

And also his friend errs thus concerning his friend.

וְכִמּוֹ בַּמַּצָּב הַנִּשְׁמִי כֵּן בַּמַּצָּב הַרוּחָנִי שֶׁל הָאָדָם כִּי יִשְׁאַל הִיַּעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹקִים אַרְבּוֹת בַּשָּׁמַיִם.

And just as in the physical state, so too in the spiritual state of a person, for it will be asked, 'Will Elokim make windows in the heavens?'

הֵינּוּ שׂוֹפְחִים לְמַסֵּר כָּל יָכֻלָּתוֹ וְהַשְׁתַּדְּלוּתוֹ לְמַסֵּר אֶל הַתּוֹרָה וְתִקּוֹן הַמַּדּוּת כְּמוֹ דֶּרֶךְ הָרִאשׁוֹנִים שֶׁעָמְדוּ עַל כָּל דֶּק וְיָחוּט הַשַּׁעֲרָה,

That is, that he will be afraid to dedicate all his ability and his efforts to the Torah and the refinement of his character traits, like the path of the Rishonim who stood firm on every subtlety and hairsbreadth,

וְהָיוּ נְכוֹנִים לְהַפְקִיר כָּל דֶּק הָעָלּוּל לְהָרוֹס אֶת הַנִּשְׁמָה,

And they were ready to abandon every subtle thing that could destroy the neshama,

וְלֹא דוֹקָא חֲסָרוֹן דֶּק מָה שֶׁבְּתִקּוּפָה שָׁלוּ מִבִּינִים זֶה לְחֲסָרוֹן,

And not specifically a subtle deficiency that in his era they understand this to be a deficiency,

אֲלֹא גַם חֲסָרוֹן דֶּק אֲשֶׁר בְּדוֹרוֹת הָרִאשׁוֹנִים קָרְאוּ זֶה לְחֲסָרוֹן.

Rather, even a subtle deficiency, which in the early generations they called this a deficiency.

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם: חֵיב אָדָם לומר מַתִּי יִגִּיעוּ מַעֲשֵׂי לְמַעֲשֵׂי אֲבוֹתִי אַבְרָהָם,

As they said in the Yerushalmi: A person is obligated to say, 'When will my deeds reach the deeds of my fathers, Avraham,' (Yitzchak, and Yaakov).

יִצְחָק וַיַּעֲקֹב, מִפְּנֵי שְׁלֹעַמַד עַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה צָרִיךְ לְהַפְקִיר כָּל דְּמִיּוֹנוֹתָיו וּלְצִאת בְּמוֹטָב שְׂיִקְרָא שׁוֹטֵה בְּפִי כָּל
הָעוֹלָם וְאֵל יְהִי רָשָׁע שְׂעָה אַחַת לְפָנֵי הַמָּקוֹם,

Yitzhak and Yaakov, because to stand on this path one needs to abandon all his imaginings and go out, it is better that he be called a
fool in the mouth of the whole world, and let him not be wicked for even one moment before the Omnipresent One,

וְגַם אֶת הָעוֹלָם לֹא יָבִינוּ חֲסָרוֹנוֹ וְתִקּוּנוֹ,

And also the world, they will not understand its deficiency and its rectification,

וְאֶדְרָבָה יִבִּיטוּ עַל דֶּרֶךְ הָאֲמָצְעִים שֶׁל הַתִּקּוּן כְּעַל אָדָם שׁוֹטֵה,

And on the contrary, they will look upon the path of the means of rectification as upon a foolish person,

יְהִי שָׁוֶה לוֹ גַם הַבְּזִיּוֹן הַזֶּה,

This very disgrace should also be equal to him,

כְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה רָשָׁע שְׂעָה אַחַת לְפָנֵי הַמָּקוֹם,

so that he should not be a rasha for even one moment before the Makom,

וַיַּעֲמֵד עַל הַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה כְּלוֹחֵם גָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר כָּל רוּחוֹת שְׂפָעוֹלָם לֹא יִזְיִזוּ אוֹתוֹ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ וַיְהִי בְּטֵל אֲצִלּוֹ כָּל
הָעוֹלָם וְכָל מֶה שֶׁמְטָרִיד אוֹתוֹ מִן עֲבוֹדַת אֱלֹקִים,

And he should stand on this path like a great warrior whom all the winds in the world cannot move from his place, and the entire
world and everything that disturbs him from the avodah of Elokim should be nullified to him,

וְעַל הָאֲמָצְעִים הָאֵלֶּה הוּא אוֹמֵר כִּי אֵינוּ יָכוֹל כָּל כֶּה לְהַפּוֹךְ אֶת טְבָעוֹ הָרַע,

And concerning these means, he says that he cannot so much transform his evil nature,

וְקוֹשֶׁה לְפָרוֹשׁ מִן רוֹב הָרִגְלִי הַפְּחוּתִים עַד שֶׁמִּחְלִיט בְּדַעְתּוֹ כִּי לֹא יוֹכֵל לְהִיּוֹת הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה,

And it is difficult to separate from most of his lowly habits until he decides in his mind that this thing cannot be.

וְאִף שִׁיּוּדֵעַ כִּי אִם יִתֵּן אֶת שְׁלוֹ אוֹ יִתֵּנוּ לוֹ עֶזֶר הַשֵּׁם,

And even though he knows that if he gives what is his, then they will give him Hashem's help,

אָבֵל כָּל הַקְּשִׁיָּא וְהַנְּסִיּוֹן הוּא עַל הַחֶלֶק שֶׁלּוֹ שְׂאִינוּ יָכוֹל לְוַתֵּר הוּא וּמִחְלִיט כִּי לֹא יָכוֹל לְהִיּוֹת הַדְּבָר
הַזֶּה וּכְיֵינֵן שֶׁהוּא אֵינוּ בְּמַדְרֵגָה זוֹ,

But the entire difficulty and the nisayon is upon his part that he cannot give up, and he decides that this thing cannot be, and since
he is not on this madreiga,

אֵינוּ מֵאֲמִין גַּם כֵּן כִּי אַחֲרִים יָכֻלוּ לְהַשִּׁיג הַמַּדְרֵגָה הַזֹּאת וּלְסוּף גַּם הוּא מַשִּׁיג הַקְּלָלָה שֶׁל הַשְּׁלִישׁ,

He also does not believe that others can attain this level, and in the end, he too receives the curse of the third.

כִּי בְּעֵינָיָה תִּרְאֶה מִי שֶׁמָּסַר אֶת עַצְמוֹ לְהִיּוֹת הַפְּקָר כַּמְדָּבָר,

For with your own eyes you will see one who gave himself over to be ownerless, like the wilderness,

וְהִתְאַמֵּץ בְּצִפְרָנָיו לַעֲלוֹת עַל הַר ה' וְקָם שָׁמָּה וְהָיָה נִשְׁאָר בַּפְּחִיתוּתוֹ וּמִשָּׁם לֹא יֵאָכֵל.

And he exerted himself with his fingernails to ascend the mountain of Hashem, and he stood there, but he remained in his lowliness, and from there he will not eat.

וְשׁוֹנָה הִקְלִלָה זֶה מִהִקְלִלָה שֶׁל הַדּוֹאֵג דְּאֵגַת מָחָר,

And this curse is different from the curse of one who worries about tomorrow's worry,

כִּי הַדּוֹאֵג רַק נִדְמָה לוֹ שֵׁישׁ לַחֲבֵרוֹ,

For the one who worries, it only seems to him that his friend has it,

וְכָל אֶחָד נִדְמָה לוֹ כֵּן עַל חֲבִירוֹ,

And it seems to each one thus about his fellow,

אָבָל בְּמַצִּיאוֹת לֹא יִגִּיעַ אִף אֶחָד מֵהֶם.

But in reality, not one of them will reach it.

לֹא כֵן בְּמַצֵּב הָרוּחָנִי, שֶׁם בְּאַמֶּת יִרְאֶה כִּי יֵשׁ לַחֲבֵרוֹ הַמַּדְרִגָּה הַזֹּאת,

Not so in the spiritual state; there, one will truly see that his friend has this madreiga,

וְיֵשׁ לוֹ בְּאַמֶּת וְהָיָה נִשְׁאָר בְּמַדְרִגָּה פְּחוּתָהּ וּמִשָּׁם לֹא יֵאָכֵל.

And he truly has it, and he remains on a lower level, and from there he will not eat.

וְעַל כֵּן צָרִיךְ הָאָדָם לְהַפְקִיר אֶת כְּבוֹדוֹ לְגַמְרִי,

And therefore, a person must completely abandon his honor,

כִּי סוּף סוּף הָרוּדֵף אַחֵר הַכְּבוֹד,

For ultimately, one who pursues honor,

הַכְּבוֹד בּוֹרֵחַ מִמֶּנּוּ, וְאִין לוֹ מָה לְהַפְסִיד וְיִמָּסֵר אֶת עֲצָמוֹ לְהִיּוֹת לְהוּט עַל תְּקוּנָה כָּל דֶּק וּמִשְׁהוֹ הַמִּפְרִיעַ אֶל הַנִּשְׁמָה שְׁלוֹ,

Honor flees from him, and he has nothing to lose, and he will give himself over to be zealous for the rectification of every subtle thing and anything that interferes with his neshama,

וּבְזֶה יִשְׁיג דֶּרֶךְ הָרִשּׁוֹנִים.

And with this, he will attain the path of the Rishonim.

מְאָמַר בְּרוּר הַמַּדּוֹת

A clear discourse on character traits.

מה הייתה תחילתו של רבי עקיבא, אמרו בן ארבעים שנה ולא למד כלום.

What was the beginning of Rabbi Akiva? They said: He was forty years old and had learned nothing.

פעם אחת הלך על פי הבאר, אמר מי חקק אבן זו וכו'.

Once he walked by the mouth of the well, he said, 'Who carved this stone?' and so on.

אמרו לו עקיבא אי אתה יודע אבנים שחקו מים,

They said to him, "Akiva, don't you know that water wears away stones?"

מיד נשא רבי עקיבא קל וחומר: ומה רך פסל את הקשה, דברי תורה שקשה כברזל, אף על כמה וכמה שיחקוק את לבו.

Immediately Rabbi Akiva drew a kal vachomer: If something soft hollowed out something hard, then words of Torah, which are as hard as iron, all the more so will they engrave his heart.

(אדרנ"ת פרק ו' ב').

(AdarNa" T, Chapter 6, B).

והענין בלתי מובן הוא, היות שרבי עקיבא היה אף מתחילתו איש משתוקק ללמוד ולהשכיל והראיה שלמד אחר הקל וחומר,

And the matter is not understood, for Rebbe Akiva was even from his beginning a man yearning to learn and to become wise, and the proof is that he learned after the kal v'chomer,

למה לא למד בלי הקל וחומר?

Why did he not learn without the kal v'chomer?

ולמה היה צריך להראות ולמשלים ולקל וחומר?

And why was it necessary for proofs, and for parables, and for kal v'chomer?

היה לו לכנס לבית המדרש בלי שום משלים כלל.

He should have entered the Beis HaMidrash without any parables at all.

מה דחק לו אשר הקל וחומר פתר לו הדחק הזה.

What was the difficulty for him, that the kal vachomer resolved this difficulty for him?

אמנם אם נבין את התורה שהיא דבר הדומה לכל חכמה בעולם,

Indeed, if we understand the Torah as something similar to any wisdom in the world,

כמו תכונה הנדסה וכדומה,

like a character trait, engineering, and so on,

אֲשֶׁר יָכוֹל הָאָדָם לָבוֹא אֵלֶיהָ בְּלִי שׁוּם הִכָּנָה וּבְלִי שׁוּם בְּרוּר,

that a person can come to it without any preparation and without any clarification,

אִז עוֹד תִּתְחַזֵּק הַקְּשִׁיָּא עוֹד יוֹתֵר לָמָּה הַמִּתִּין כָּל כָּךְ עַד שֶׁמָּצָא קַל וְחוֹמֶר וּמָה חָיָה קִשָּׁה לוֹ כָּךְ זְמַן מְרֻבָּה עַד שֶׁבָּא הַקַּל וְחוֹמֶר וְתִרְץ לוֹ,

So the difficulty will be strengthened even more: why did he wait so long until he found a kal v'chomer? And what kept it so difficult for him for such a long time until the kal v'chomer came and answered him?

לָמָּה לֹא הָיָה יָכוֹל לָבוֹא אֶל הַתּוֹרָה בְּלִי שׁוּם קַל וְחוֹמֶר?

Why could he not come to the Torah without any kal v'chomer?

וְכֵן אִם נִבְיִיט עַל הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהִיא כְּמוֹ מְלָאכָת אֱמֻנוֹת אֲשֶׁר אֵין אָנוּ צְרִיכִין לְהִבִּיט עַל הַפּוֹעֵל אֲלֵא עַל הַפְּעֻלָּה לְבַד וּכְדֻמִּיּוֹן לְחֻכְמַת הַנִּגּוֹן שֶׁאִם הָאָדָם מְנַגֵּן הֵיטֵב פְּעֻלַּת הַנִּגּוֹן אַחַת הִיא לָנוּ,

And similarly, if we look at the Torah, which is like a work of art, where we do not need to look at the doer but only at the deed itself, and like the wisdom of music, that if a person plays well, the effect of the music is one and the same for us,

אִם הַפּוֹעֵל הַמְנַגֵּן הוּא אָדָם הַמְּעַלָּה אוֹ אָדָם פְּחוּת בְּמַעֲלָה שֶׁאֵין אָנוּ צְרִיכִין הָאָדָם שְׁלוֹ אֲלֵא הַפְּעֻלָּה שְׁלוֹ.

If the one performing the melody is a person of stature, or a person of lesser stature, for we do not need the person himself, but rather his action.

וְאִם נִסְתַּמְכַּל עַל הַתּוֹרָה גַּם כֵּן לְפִי הַנִּחָה זֹאת אֲשֶׁר אֵין אָנוּ צְרִיכִין לְהִבִּיט עַל הַפּוֹעֵל,

And if we look at the Torah also according to this premise, that we do not need to look at the doer,

אֲלֵא עַל הַפְּעֻלָּה, אִז גַּם כֵּן תִּתְחַזֵּק הַקְּשִׁיָּא לָמָּה הָיָה צְרִיכָה לְקַל וְחוֹמֶר.

Rather, regarding the action, then also the difficulty will be strengthened: why was it necessary for a kal v'chomer?

WHAT TO TAKE FROM IT

Let's internalize that our parnassah and all our needs are already decreed from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, so there's no need to worry or chase after things frantically. Instead of asking 'Can Hashem make windows in heaven?' with our actions, let's trust completely in His plan and focus on our avodah, knowing that true satisfaction comes from accepting our portion and striving for spiritual growth, even if it means being 'foolish' in the eyes of the world.