

Parasha Meditation

Acharei Mot / Kedoshim

Vayikra 16:1-20:27

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

“Love your Fellow as Yourself” by Reconnecting with the Soul of Souls

Introduction:

In *Parashat Kedoshim* – the *parasha* that teaches us how to become holy – we learn about the prerequisite to love others, as we love ourselves. True holiness is not just about what we do outwardly, but it is even more about how we feel inwardly. A real holy person has learned to control his feelings, to think only holy thoughts about others, and to feel love and compassion for every creature. To be holy, is to let go of all the big and even small resentments that we may carry with us. Only then will we be able to truly love each other with a full heart as the Torah teaches:

“לֹא תִקֹּם וְלֹא תִטּוֹר אֶת בְּנֵי עַמֶּיךָ וְאֶת־בְּנֵי עַמֶּיךָ לְרַעַךְ כַּמִּוֶּדֶד אֲנִי הָשֵׁם” (ספר ויקרא פרק יט: יח)

“Do not revenge, and do not bear a grudge against the children of your people. Love your fellow as yourself, I am Hashem.”¹

Learning to Forgive Ourselves

The Torah verse requires us to love our fellow, as we love ourselves. In order to give and receive love, we need to begin by learning to love ourselves. If we don’t have love for ourselves, all our relationships may suffer. It is impossible to fulfill this mitzvah from the Torah, and free ourselves from holding on to grudges, without deep inner spiritual healing work. Many of the women who come to me for *EmunaHealing* (Spiritual Healing) have difficulty loving themselves. They may be filled with guilt and shame and have a hard time learning to forgive themselves. In order to forgive ourselves we need to go into a meditative state, to get in touch with our guilt and its underlying causes, before we can remove it. The next step is then to work on forgiving others truly with all our hearts, and sending them love. This too, requires the meditative work of spiritual healing.

The Oneness of Love

The *gematria* (numerical value) of the Hebrew word for “love” – אַהֲבָה – *ahava* is thirteen. This is the same *gematria* as the Hebrew word for “one” – אֶחָד – *echad*. The number thirteen also alludes to the thirteen attributes of mercy.² Only when we become one with someone, can we

¹ Vayikra 19:18.

² The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy or *Shelosh-Esreh Midot*, enumerated in the *Shemot* 34:6-7, are the attributes with which G*d governs the world.



really love that person. This is why the greatest love is between a mother and her baby, as they were one in her womb. To feel love, we need to reveal the aspect with which we unify with our friend.

Receiving Hashem's Love – the Soul of Our Soul

The body is a vessel for the soul; the soul is a vessel for the Divine. Every Jew has a Divine spark of light and love emanating directly from Hashem. This is the source and power of our love – G*d's love, which is beyond our reality. Hashem surprises us with endless love, if we only open for Him, even a small opening, to receive.

“פתחי לי פתח כחודה של מחט ואני אפתח לכם פתח שיהיו עגלות נכנסים” (ילקוט שמעוני שיר השירים, ה, רמז תתקפח)
 “Open for Me like the opening of a needle, and I will open for you an opening for wagons to enter.”³

Meditation:

Sit comfortably in your chair, close your eyes and take deep breaths several times. Notice anything you may be holding onto, and let go... Connect with the light of Hashem, which always comes down from Above. Our body is continually filled with Hashem's light and love even when we don't see it or feel it; we know that we are filled with Hashem's light.

1. Imagine Hashem's light filling your head and spreading down your shoulders to the rest of your body. Picture your entire body as a light bulb filled with light.
2. Now try to get in touch with old feelings of guilt and resentment. Did someone ever embarrass or reject you? Did you ever feel a lack of love and consideration from a family member or a close friend? Did you yourself mistreat someone who needed you? Or do you feel guilty about something you've done? Tune into any images, words or feelings that come up for you.
 Allow yourself to get in touch with any painful feelings that you may have repressed and swept under the rug.
3. Visualize these feelings as dark clouds within you. Try to locate these dark clouds in your body. Are there any in your head, in your throat or perhaps in your heart region?
4. Send Hashem's light and love to each of the dark clouds within you. Keep breathing into them, one by one, until you feel them evaporate or burst.
5. Think about a person that you feel badly about for whatever reason. Visualize your bad feelings/resentments/grudges as dark clouds within you, within the other person, or on an imaginary string connecting the two of you.

³ *Yalkut Shimoni, Shir Hashirim, Chapter 5, Allusion 989.*

6. Take Hashem's light and send it to all of these dark clouds, one by one, until each of them evaporates or bursts. You can repeat this spiritual healing exercise with as many people as you can focus on at any given time. If necessary, you can continue at a different time.
7. Now send Hashem's light and love to the person towards whom you had resentment. By sending light to someone that you have difficulty with, you have the ability to rectify your relationship with that person.
8. You may also send light to any person close to you. It could be a person you love very much, and who is in need of light and healing. See if you can feel where the person most needs this light from you, and direct your light to that place.
9. Keep sending light as long as you are able, and then wiggle your toes and fingers before opening your eyes. It is wonderful to repeat this meditation daily, opening yourself to receive Hashem's light and sending it to different people in your life.

Notes:

It is important to send love to everyone, especially to a person with whom we have difficulty relating. A friend of mine once had difficulty relating to one of her neighbors. They had had a dispute over trivialities. She decided to work on this by continually sending her neighbor love and light. One day, her neighbor sent her two *challot* for Shabbat (Shabbat bread), without there being any special occasion. Isn't it amazing to experience the power of sending love to someone? It is so great that it can materialize into two Shabbat *challot*! This proves that sending love and light can overcome tension and difficulties that we may have with another person. This is what King Shlomo alluded to in his Proverbs:

כ"וּמִיָּם הַפְּנִים לַפְּנִים כִּן לֵב הָאָדָם לְאָדָם" : (ספר משלי פרק כז:יט)

"As in water, face answers to face, so the heart of man to man."⁴

⁴ Mishlei 27:19.

About Us



Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum, a native of Denmark, is Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. Chana Bracha also began her practice as a spiritual healer through Emuna, tefila and energy work. For more than two decades Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's

spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin located in the Judean Hills of Israel offers a unique program to women of all ages and backgrounds to learn in a holistic Torah study environment that nurtures the mind, body and soul. Intensive textual study of Tanach, Halacha and Chassidut are woven together with creative spiritual expression, and connection with the land of Israel through organic gardening, herbology, Jewish sources of healing and sustainable living. Classes in Jewish mysticism, Chassidism and Jewish meditation are directed at the spiritual thirst so prominent in our times.

*In 2010 Rebbetzin Chana Bracha published her first book, *Women at the Crossroads: A Woman's Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion*.*

Chana Bracha has a married son and several granddaughters. She lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean hills, Israel.

If you are interested in:

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin contact info@berotbatayin.org or in Spiritual Healing with Rebbetzin Chana Bracha, please contact her at director@berotbatayin.org

or visit her blog: <http://rebbetzinchanabracha.blogspot.com/2010/11/emunah-healing-for-women.html>

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin – Holistic Torah Study for Women on the Land of Israel

At Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin, we weave together Torah studies with creative spiritual expression, connecting with the Land of Israel, and healthy, organic lifestyles. In the heart of the Judean Hills, with its serene beauty, our students experience an approach to Judaism that bridges mind, body and soul. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin is designed as a micro-community within the Village of Bat Ayin where women of all ages and backgrounds engage in intense Torah learning as part of an integrated, participatory approach to Torah living.

Come Learn With Us!

Beginner and advanced levels are offered for women of all ages and religious backgrounds. Whether your interest in Judaism has recently been ignited, or you are seeking a wider perspective, Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin offers the opportunity to improve your learning skills while strengthening your commitment to Judaism within the parameters of Halachah – all while engaging your inner creative spirituality, working the Land, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Support Our School!

You have the unique opportunity to help us continue to build and amplify the light of Torah on the Land of Israel. With your help we can increase our ability to provide women an extraordinary Torah environment where they can build a solid Jewish foundation which will have an impact for generations to come.

