



RABBI JUDAH MISCHEL

Executive Director, Camp HASC

Author of *Baderech: Along the Path of Teshuva* (Mosaica 2021)

“And You Shall Love...”

The *heiligh* Rebbe Yisrael of Rhizin, the great-grandson of the Maggid of Mezritch, was

known for his righteousness and expansive sense of holiness. Brilliant, beloved and deeply committed to the wellbeing of Klal Yisrael, the holy Rhizner shared the following *ma'aseh* on Shabbos Parshas Kedoshim:

Reuven and Lazer were *chaverim*, best of friends, although they lived in different towns. One day, news spread of an accusation of rebellion against the king, which led to a death sentence. The accused provided clear evidence that he had no involvement in the crime, however, he was held up as a scapegoat. Ongoing threats of insurrection in the kingdom meant that everyone was ordered to watch the execution, and the horrible spectacle would serve as deterrence.

When Reuven arrived at the capital city for ‘the event’, he was shocked to see that the man sentenced to die, standing there before the gallows in handcuffs, was none other than Lazer. He began to push through the crowd shouting, “Wait! It was me! You’ve got the wrong guy! It was me! I am the guilty one!” A policeman grabbed him and brought him before the king. Seeing his friend Reuven, Lazer spoke up: “It’s not true! He is innocent;

I confess I was lying, I committed the crime and I deserve to die!”

Reuven pleaded with the king who was seated upon a high platform. “Your majesty, I have known this man my whole life and he is my closest friend. Believe me, he would never do what he is accused of — it’s not his personality. Please, I beg you, take me instead. I can’t bear the thought of my friend being killed. I would much rather die than stand by and watch him suffer.” Lazer refused to remain silent, and they both continued to contend that it was he who should be executed.

The king was always fearful that anyone, from his family to his ministers, could be plotting against him, and was deeply moved by the selfless love and loyalty of the two friends, each willing to die for the other. Finally, he couldn’t bear it and stood up. “I grant you both royal pardon,” he said haltingly, “but on one condition.... Please, if you would, if you could... just be my friend, like you are to each other!”

.....

וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעִי כְמוֹךָ אֲנִי ה'

“And you shall love your friend, ‘the other’, [just] as [you instinctively love and seek benefit for] yourself.” (19:18)

Rashi quotes a medrash saying that this Divine commandment is the *klal gadol baTorah* — it is not just *one* of the most important elements, but *the* central value and goal of Torah. Indeed, loving others is none other than the highest form of spiritual expression, and the most God-like activity that we can engage in.

Chazal place our religious experience in the

context of an exclusive, intimate relationship with the *Ribbono Shel Olam*. Yet, the litmus test or barometer to measure our closeness with Hashem is our commitment to the mitzvah and value of *v'ahavta*.

V'ahavta l'rei'acha kamocho is the most omnipresent of mitzvot; in every encounter with others we have an opportunity to uphold and fulfill it. As the philosopher Martin Buber notes, in the intimacy of our religious lives, *v'ahavta* is so fundamental to our identity and practice that all of Yiddishkeit “lives in its light” and is animated by this mitzvah. Rebbe Klonimus Kalman Epstein of Krakow, the *Maor VaShemesh*, proclaims this mitzvah to be the *yesod kol haTorah kulah*, ‘the foundation of the entire Torah’.

.....

This week we mark Yom haZikaron, Israel's national day of remembrance for fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism. We honor the *kedoshim* who fell in sanctification of God's Name, martyrs about whom our Sages say, “No one [is great enough to] dwell in their section of Gan Eden” (*Pesachim*, 50a). An individual who has made the ultimate sacrifice for the Jewish People transcends their individual, personal status, and becomes subsumed into the collective and comprehensive level of the holiness of *Nishmas Klal Yisrael*, and are elevated in their death and afterlife. Those who fell *al kiddush Hashem* have a portion in all of our accomplishments, for we who continue to live in Eretz Yisrael today do so in their merit.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe frames the bravery and sacrifice of *chayalei Tzahal* as the ultimate expression of *shlichus* and *ahavas Yisrael*. In *sichos* that he delivered during wartime, the Rebbe refers to *chayalei Tzahal* as “*tzadikim*”.


 תיווך המלאך
 Angel Realty
www.angelrealty.co.il

For Sale in Efrat

Dekel: * 340m Semi attached home, 11 rooms + rental unit. Great location **5,900,000 NIS**

Dagan: * 6 room garden duplex. Huge 300m garden **3,600,000 NIS**

Tamar: * Semi attached home- 8 rooms. **4.5 million**


Zayit: * 4 room apt. (near Olive) **2,670,000 NIS**

Neve Daniel: * 5 room garden duplex. **2,870,000 NIS**


For Sale in Ramot P

7 room, stunning garden. **SOLD** attached home. Great location. **6.5 million**


Gabi- 0524588716


**AMERICAN
CARDIOLOGIST
IN MODIIN**


David B Marmor, MD




**Cardiology
Consultations and
Cardiovascular
Imaging**




Dr Marmor provides thorough, personalized, and American style care for heart patients




Experienced, American trained and educated non-invasive cardiologist





Beit Shimon, Arar 9,
5th Floor, Modiin.




Parking in
Modiin Azrieli Mall







08-955-5330
 **info@osdheart.co.il**

In the Rebbe's elevated and expansive spiritual worldview, righteousness and spiritual heroism is expressed in many forms, but the willingness to give up one's life to protect the Nation and Land is literal *mesiras nefesh*, self sacrifice, the holiest of all deeds.

Indeed, numerous sections of *Mishneh Torah* outline action-based *mitzvos* that are rooted in *v'ahavta*, including *bikur cholim*, ensuring proper burial of the dead, comforting mourners, dealing with others fairly in business, *hachnasas orchim*, providing for a *kallah*, *tzedakah*, and redeeming captives. But there is no greater expression of *v'ahavta* than the willingness to sacrifice one's life for the protection of one's fellow. There is no greater *kedushah*, no higher level of dedication to *Knesses Yisrael* than the extraordinary commitment and sacrifice of our holy soldiers and their heroic families.

This perhaps is the intent of the Rhizner's *meshal* for *Parshas Kedoshim*. When we live the full expression of "*v'ahavta*", self-sacrifice for one another, then, אָנִי ה', "I, Hashem, am manifest — for I want to be a part of that sacred bond of friendship as well."

Let us reassert our commitment to one another and ensure that all of our efforts in Yiddishkeit "lives in the light" of the '*klal gadol baTorah*'. May the *Ribono shel Olam* avenge the blood of our fallen brothers and sisters, protect our beloved soldiers, and may His mercy awaken in their merit, so that we be *zocheh* to the complete Redemption, *b'karov mamash*. ■

Every person who was not born in Israel and lives in the Holy Land should celebrate his/her **ALIYANNIVERSARY** annually!
REMEMBER! WITH ALIYAH BLESSINGS!
The NEAMANS



TOUR GUIDE

Robby Berman

www.theonlytourguideinIsrael.com

Cell: +972-(0)52-527-5284

SPONSOR A SHIUR

Sponsor a Shiur to support the ongoing Torah learning at the OU Israel Center visit:
www.ouisrael.org/donate/ou-israel-center/
or email cspivack@ouisrael.org

single shiur 180nis
morning 360nis
or full day 500nis

WWW.OUISRAEL.ORG