

# Humility and Strengths

Source Sheet by Rabbi Naftali Rothstein, NYHS

## Leviticus 1:1-2

(1) The LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying: (2) Speak to the Israelite people, and say to them: When any of you presents an offering of cattle to the LORD, he shall choose his offering from the herd or from the flock.

## ויקרא א':א'-ב'

(א) וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה  
אֵלָיו מֵאֵהָל מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר: (ב) דַּבֵּר  
אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם  
אָדָם כִּי־יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם קֶרְבָּן לַיהוָה  
מִן־הַבְּהֵמָה מִן־הַבְּקָר וּמִן־הַצֹּאן  
תִּקְרִיבוּ אֶת־קֶרְבַּנְכֶם:

## Sforno on Leviticus 1:2:1

(1) אדם כי יקריב מכם, when one brings from theirself close to G'd by means of a confession and by humbling theirself.

## ספורנו על ויקרא א':ב':א'

(א) אדם כי יקריב מכם כי יקריב מעצמכם בוידוי דברים והכנעה

## Exodus 38:8

(8) He made the laver of copper and its stand of copper, from the mirrors of the women who performed tasks at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

## שמות ל"ח:ח'

(ח) וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת הַכִּיּוֹר נְחֹשֶׁת וְאֶת  
כַּנּוֹ נְחֹשֶׁת בְּמִרְאֵת הַצַּבָּאוֹת אֲשֶׁר  
צָבְאוּ פָתַח אֵהָל מוֹעֵד: (ס)

## Rashi on Exodus 38:8:1

(1) במראת הצבאת Now Moses was about to reject them since they were

## רש"י על שמות ל"ח:ח':א'

(א) במראת הצבאת. .... וְהָיָה

made to pander to their vanity, but the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "Accept them;

מוֹאִס מִשָּׂה בָּהֶן מִפְּנֵי שְׂעֵשׂוּיִם  
לִיָּצֵר הָרָע. אָמַר לוֹ הַקֶּבֶ"ה קִבַּל

Nedarim 9b:6

**He said to me: I was a shepherd for my father in my city, and I went to draw water from the spring, and I looked at my reflection [babavua] in the water and my evil inclination quickly overcame me and sought to expel me from the world. I said to myself: Wicked one! Why do you pride yourself in a world that is not yours? Why are you proud of someone who will eventually be food in the grave for worms and maggots, i.e., your body? I swear by the Temple service that I shall shave you for the sake of Heaven.**

**נדרים ט' ב:ו'**

אמר לי רועה הייתי לאבא בעירי  
הלכתי למלאות מים מן המעיין  
ונסתכלתי בבבואה שלי ופחז עלי  
יצרי ובקש לטורדני מן העולם  
אמרתי לו רשע למה אתה  
מתגאה בעולם שאינו שלך במי  
שהוא עתיד להיות רימה ותולעה  
העבודה שאגלחך לשמים

Shadal on Exodus 38:8:2

...

**שד"ל על שמות ל"ח:ח:ב'**

(ב) הצבאות אשר צבאו: אולי  
הכוונה על דרך יבא לצבא צבא

**Rav Kook, Measures of the  
Ray"h, Humility**

"At times, we need not fear

הרב אברהם יצחק הכהן קוק,  
מידות הראי"ה, ענווה ח'  
"לפעמים אין צריכים להתירא

greatness, for it elevates the person to do great deeds.”

מגדלות, שהיא מרוממת את האדם לפעול גדולות.

### Targum Jonathan on Exodus 38:8

(8) And he made the brasen Laver, and its foundation of brass, from the brasen mirrors of the pious women, who, at the season, came to pray at the door of the tabernacle of appointment,

### תרגום יונתן על שמות ל"ח:ח'

(ח) וְעִבַד יֵת כִּי־וְרָא דְנַחֲשָׁא וַיֵּת בְּסִי־סִיָּה דְנַחֲשָׁא מִן אֲסַפְקֵי לִירֵי נַחֲשָׁא נְשִׂיא צְנִיעוּתָא וּבְעִידֵן דְּאֵתוּן לְצִלָּאָה בְּתַרְע מִשְׁכַּן

### Likutei Moharan 282:2:1-3

(1) **2.** Likewise, a person must find [some good point] within himself. It is known that a person must take care to be happy always and to keep very far away from depression {as has been explained in our works a number of times}.

(2) It may be that when he begins examining himself, he sees that he possesses no good whatsoever and is filled with sin, and that as a result the Evil One wants to push him into depression and sadness, God forbid. Even so, it is forbidden to fall on account of this. Rather, he must search until he finds in himself some little bit of good.

(3) Thus, a person has to search and seek to find in himself some little

### ליקוטי מוהר"ן רפ"ב:ב'א'-ג'

(א) וְיִכֵּן צָרִיךְ הָאָדָם לְמַצָּא גַם בְּעַצְמוֹ. כִּי זֶה יְדוּעַ, שְׁצָרִיךְ הָאָדָם לְזַהֵר מְאֹד לְהִיּוֹת בְּשִׂמְחָה תָּמִיד, וּלְהִרְחִיק הָעַצְבוֹת מְאֹד מְאֹד (כַּמְבָּאָר אֲצִלְנוּ כַּמָּה פְּעָמִים),  
(ב) וְאִפְלוּ כְּשִׂמְחִיל לְהִסְתַּכֵּל בְּעַצְמוֹ וְרוֹאֶה שְׂאִין בּוֹ שׁוּם טוֹב, וְהוּא מְלֵא חֲטָאִים, וְרוֹצֶה הַבַּעַל דְּבַר לְהַפִּילוֹ עַל יְדֵי זֶה בְּעַצְבוֹת וּמְרָה שְׂחוּרָה, חַס וְשָׁלוֹם, אַף־עַל־פִּי־כֵן אֲסוּר לוֹ לִפְלֵ מְזָה, רַק צָרִיךְ לְחַפֵּשׂ וּלְמַצָּא בְּעַצְמוֹ אִיזָה מְעַט טוֹב,  
(ג) כִּי צָרִיךְ הָאָדָם לְחַפֵּשׂ וּלְבַקֵּשׁ לְמַצָּא בְּעַצְמוֹ אִיזָה מְעַט טוֹב, כְּדֵי לְהַחֲיוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ, וּלְבֹא לִידֵי

bit of good in order to revive himself and to attain joy, as explained above. By searching until he finds a remaining little bit of good in himself, he genuinely moves from the scale of guilt to the scale of merit and can return [to God] in repentance. This, in the aspect of “In yet a little bit the wicked man is not; you will reflect upon his place and he will not be there,” as explained above.

שְׂמִיחָה כִּנּוּל, וְעַל יְדֵי זֶה שְׂמִיחָה שׁ  
וּמוֹצֵא בְּעֵצְמוֹ עֵדִין מְעֵט טוֹב,  
עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה הוּא יוֹצֵא בְּאַמַּת מִכֶּרֶךְ  
חֻבָּה לְכֶרֶךְ זְכוּת.

### **Linley, P. A., & Burns, G. W. (2010)**

Research in positive psychology has shown us that people who know their strengths and use them frequently tend to feel happier, have better self-esteem, and are more likely to accomplish their goals. However, many people have a hard time identifying their strengths (4). They see them as ordinary, even when they are not.

In order for people to use their strengths effectively, it's important that they have a clear idea of what they are and how they can be used. Therapists can be instrumental in helping clients discover and use their strengths.<sup>1</sup>

### **Govindji, R., & Linley, P. A. (2007)<sup>2</sup>**

Strengths are natural capabilities and skills that each person has. When a person uses their strengths, they tend to feel energized, and they report higher levels of self-esteem, well-being, and other desirable outcomes. Studies have

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<sup>1</sup> Linley, P. A., & Burns, G. W. (2010). Strengthspotting: Finding and developing client resources in the management of intense anger. *Happiness, healing, enhancement: Your casebook collection for applying positive psychology in therapy*, 1-14.

<sup>2</sup> Govindji, R., & Linley, P. A. (2007). Strengths use, self-concordance and well-being: Implications for strengths coaching and coaching psychologists. *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 2(2), 143-153.

indicated that strength-based positive psychology interventions might reduce depression, and contribute to successful goal completion

### **Discovering Your Strengths**

- 1. Familiarize yourself with strengths,**
- 2. Asking questions about your strengths.**
- 3. Learn about the strength-spotting mindset.**

<https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-guide/strengths-based-therapy#references>

Questions:

**What energizes you?**

**How would your close friends describe you?**

**Do you most like starting tasks or finishing them?**

**Do you prefer the big picture or the small details?**

**Describe a successful day. What made it successful?**

**What are you good at??**

**What did you enjoy studying at school or university?**

<https://positivepsychology.com/strengths-based-interventions/>

**Exercise:** list three strengths for each of the following people. How do their strengths reveal themselves?

- a close friend
- someone you admire
- an acquaintance

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