

## Darkei HaChizuk

ארבעה צריכים חיזוק (ברכות לב:) - שיתחזק אדם בהם תמיד בכל כחו (רש"י)

A *Sichah* from Maran HaGaon Rav Gershon Edelstein *shlita*, Rosh Yeshivas Ponevez • Iyar 5780

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# A *Derashah* to Mark the Start of the Summer *Zman* for Tens of Thousands of Yeshivah *Bachurim* and *Avreichim* — 2 Iyar 5780

### The *Maalah* of a Yeshivah: Increases Wisdom

In *Pirkei Avos* (2:7), the *mishnah* states: “One who increases Torah study, increases life, one who increases sitting (*yeshivah*) increases wisdom.” Torah without *yeshivah* increases life, and Torah with *yeshivah* increases wisdom. That means that “a *yeshivah*” adds a *madreigah* in Torah, in *chochmas haTorah*, in understanding and *amkus*, depth. When one learns Torah without a *yeshivah*, it increases life, life in this world and in the World to Come. The Torah learned in *yeshivah*, however, is in a completely different league — it increases *chochmah*!

A *yeshivah* is called a *yeshivah* when there is a *tzibbur* in one place together with *rabbanim*, *talmidim*, and *chaverim* — these are three of the forty-eight *kinyanei haTorah*: *shimush chachamim*, *dibbuk chaverim*, and *pilpul hatalmidim*.

Chazal also said (*Makkos* 10a), “I learned a lot from my *rabbanim*, but I learned even more from my friends, and I learned the most from my students.” You may ask how this can be? Is it possible to learn more from one’s friends than from his *rabbeim*? After all, the *rebbe* is one who gives over *yedios*. In what way does learning from friends give a person something more than when he learns from his *rebbe*?

### Friends and *Talmidim* Promote Understanding and Clarity

The explanation of this is that when it comes to *havanah*, understanding and clarity, a person gains more *havanah* and *amkus* when learning together with friends, *dibbuk chaverim*. **Through *shimush chachamim*, one gains *yedios* and understanding of what he heard, but through *dibbuk chaverim* he**

**has the opportunity to increase his *havanah*, *amkus*, and clarity, as they are involved and toiling together, and they review the *shiur* and delve deeper into it, again and again, and they understand it with greater *amkus*.** This is the meaning of “more from my friends than from my *rabbeim*.”

*Pilpul talmidim* is the benefit the *rebbe* enjoys — “I learned the most from my students.” Because the *talmidim* ask their *rebbe* *sheilos* that he personally did not think of — and now he has to come up with an answer, and as a result of the question and answer, the *sugya* becomes clearer to him.

### Rav Yochanan’s Pain over Lack of Clarity

The Gemara (*Bava Metzia* 84a) tells us about Rav Yochanan, whose *chavrusa*, Reish Lakish, was like a *talmid-chaver* for him. When Reish Lakish passed away, *Rebbi Yochanan* was terribly upset and could not bear to be without him. He cried, Where is Reish Lakish? He needed Reish Lakish to be *osek baTorah* with him.

When the *chachamim* became aware of *Rebbi Yochanan*’s pain, they sent him *Rebbi Elazar ben Pidas*, who was the greatest *Tanna* in Eretz Yisrael, after *Rebbi Yochanan*. And when *Rebbi Yochanan* would say a *halachah* or a *chiddush*, *Rebbi Elazar* would bring a proof. *Rebbi Yochanan* told him, Do I need proofs? After all, I know I’m saying the correct *pshat*. Reish Lakish, on the other hand, would ask me twenty-four questions and I would give him twenty-four answers, and that way, the learning became clearer. It was such wondrous pleasure of achieving clarity.

Now, the Gemara doesn't tell us what the number twenty-four represents, but we've found that the Torah is acquired through forty-eight acquisitions. The commentaries (*Medrash Shmuel*) relate that first twenty-four acquisitions begin with the letter "*beis*," as in: *b'talmud*, *b'shmi'as kol*, etc. The next set of twenty-four begin with the letter "*hei*," as in: *ha-makir es mekomo*, *ha-sameach b'chelko*, etc.

They explained that these are two separate topics. First, the *mishnah* mentions twenty-four attributes that are related to the *tzuras ha-limud*, the way one should learn, like *b'shmi'as ha-ozen*, by listening closely, *b'arichas sifasayim*, by speaking articulately, *b'dibbuk chaverim*, by clinging to friends, *b'pilpul ha-talmidim*, by expounding with students, *b'yishuv*, by deliberation, *b'mikra*, by [knowing] Tanach, etc. All these start with "*beis*." But the attributes that start with *hei* are matters relating to a person's essence: the type of personality traits that set the ground for success in Torah, such as: *ha-makir es mekomo*, one who knows his place, *ha-sameach b'chelko*, one who is happy with his lot, etc. There is a total of forty-eight matters: twenty-four relating to the way to learn, and twenty-four relating to one's personality.

Maybe this too is the reason for Rabbi Yochanan's twenty-four questions and twenty-four answers, forty-eight in all, just like the forty-eight ways the Torah is acquired.

### **Absence of Yeshivah — Creates Pain and Shortcoming**

In any case, when Reish Lakish was with him, there was clarity in the learning, and when Reish Lakish was not, there was not. Rabbi Yochanan was pained terribly by this and cried: Where are you, Reish Lakish? Where are you, Reish Lakish? His pain was so strong that he couldn't be calmed down, until he finally became unsound of mind. The *chachamim* davened for mercy, they davened that he should die. Since his mind was not sound, why did he need to remain alive? And so he passed away.

This is the current situation: there are no *yeshivos*, and the *tzibbur* — *rabbanim*, *chaverim*, and *talmidim* — cannot be together. It's a great deficiency when learning together in a *tzurah* of a yeshivah is not possible. There's no *shimush chachamim*, there's no *dibbuk chaverim*, and there's no *pilpul ha-talmidim*. Although it is possible to learn over the phone, or people from the same family can learn together, it's not the same as it was before. It's not a yeshivah. That's the situation now; there's no yeshivah. There

is Torah, and one who increases Torah, increases life, but there is no yeshivah, and as a result, there is no increase of *chochmah*, wisdom.

### **What Should a Person Do to Gain Wisdom?**

What's the solution? How can we be *zocheh* to create a situation of "*marbeh chochmah*," increasing wisdom? In the Gemara at the end of *Niddah*, it states that they asked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chanina: "What should a man do if he wants to become wise?" They did not say: "if he wants to learn?"; they said: "if he wants to become wise?" This means they're asking how to increase *chochmah*, how does one attain *chochmah* — clarity and depth in Torah. Rabbi Yehoshua told them, "He should increase *yeshivah*," just as it says in the *mishnah* in *Avos*: "One who increases *yeshivah* (sitting), increases wisdom."

They told him, "Many have done so and still haven't attained *chochmah*." Many, and they didn't attain *chochmah*! There are individuals who merited *hatzlachah* in Torah due to sitting and learning for a long time, but not everyone. Many tried but were not successful. If so, what's the solution? How can everyone attain the great *madreigah* of "*marbeh chochmah*," increasing wisdom?

Rabbi Yehoshua answered them: "Ask for mercy from the One to Whom *chochmah* belongs." That means one also needs *tefillah*: increase *yeshivah* (sitting and learning) and ask for mercy. For we need *zechuyos*, and the *zechuyos* are *tefillah*. Without *zechuyos*, one can acquire Torah, but not "success in Torah." One needs *zechuyos* for *hatzlachah* in Torah, and the *zechuyos* are acquired through davening and begging for mercy.

### **Prayer for *Ruchniyus* Is Effective — Tried and True**

The truth is there's a *pasuk* about *tefillah* (*Devarim* 4:7), "For which great nation is there that has its G-d close to them, as Hashem our G-d is whenever we call out to Him." **We have Hashem close to us whenever we call out to Him. If one davens and begs for *rachamim*, he receives an answer from *Shamayim*, and he has a *yeshuah*.** For every single *tefillah*. While Rav Yisrael Salanter once said that *tefillah* doesn't always help for *gashmiyus*, because everyone's material needs are decided on Rosh Hashanah: who will become poor, who will become wealthy, who will be serene, who will be pained — there is a limit to material matters. However, there is no limit to *ruchniyus*, and it is tried and true that *tefillah* helps for *ruchniyus*.

Therefore, if someone asks for *rachamim* about his *ruchniyus*, for his Torah, for his *avodah*, and all other *ruchniyus* matters, indeed if one asks for *rachamim* there is *siyatta d'Shemaya*. It's tried and true. That's what Rav Yisrael Salanter said. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chanina said that the solution is to "increase *yeshivah* and ask for *rachamim*." Asking for *rachamim*, *tefillah*, provides the *zechuyos* that will help you merit *chochmas haTorah*, the wisdom of Torah.

### **Davening Helps If There Is No *Bittul Torah***

Further on in the Gemara they ask, "What is the Gemara coming to tell us?" Rashi explains what the question is: It's simple that one must ask for mercy and that nothing is possible without *tefillah*, so what's the *chiddush* here?

The Gemara explains that one without the other does not help. This is the *chiddush*: One must increase *yeshivah* as well — he might think that *tefillah* alone provides *zechuyos* and even if a person wouldn't increase *yeshivah*, he can still become a *gadol baTorah*, without increased *yeshivah*. He might think that he could devote less effort and not learn so much, yet still succeed because of the *siyatta d'Shemaya* he merits due to his *tefillah*. The *chiddush* is that this is not so. **If he does not increase *yeshivah*, his *tefillah* will not help. He needs *zechuyos*, and one who does not increase *yeshivah* — meaning, he does not learn with *hasmadah* — then he is guilty of *bittul Torah*. And if there's *bittul Torah*, there are no *zechuyos*!** While it's true that *tefillah* provides *zechuyos*, the sin of *bittul Torah* is still present and counteracts those *zechuyos*.

Therefore, along with *tefillah*, he must also increase *yeshivah*, learn with *hasmadah* without *bittul Torah*. And not only must he be *osek* in Torah learning, it must be "*b'yeshivah*," in an actual *yeshivah*! With

*shimush chachamim*, *dibbuk chaverim*, and *pilpul ha-talmidim*. Otherwise, it is *neged ha-teva*. In order to be *zocheh* to *hatzlachah* in Torah, he must increase *yeshivah*, and ask for mercy. That is the solution.

### **Utilize All Available Opportunities for Torah Study**

However, the current situation is that it is not possible to increase learning in a *yeshivah* setting, because there are no *yeshivahs*, and it's not possible for a *tzibbur* to be together. We don't have the *metzi'us* of *rabbanim*, *talmidim*, and *chaverim* together, but **through *zechuyos* we can be *zocheh* that there will be *yeshivah*!**

**One can acquire *zechuyos* through *tefillah* and Torah learning without wasting time — one's Torah should be *b'shleimus* as much as possible. Every individual should learn as much as he can — either by himself or with friends, with *chavrusas*, with family members who are together, or over the phone. *Rabbanim* and *talmidim* should also learn over the phone, utilize all available opportunities for Torah study — with *dibbuk chaverim*, *shimush chachamim*, and *pilpul ha-talmidim*, all the possibilities! If one utilizes all his possibilities, together with *tefillah*, he will have *siyatta d'Shemaya*.**

*B'ezras Hashem*, may we be *zocheh* to implement all of this, and do what is necessary to acquire the *zechuyos* for success in Torah, and may we be *zocheh* to the imminent salvation when the situation returns to its previous state, and we will once again increase Torah learning in an actual *yeshivah*, like in the past, *b'ezras Hashem*.



## **Sidrei Zman Kayitz – For Now**

as Set by Our *Rabbanim*

**ג' רשכבה Maran Sar HaTorah shlita  
Rabbeinu Maran Rosh HaYeshivah shlita**

1. Summer *Zman* begins on Sunday 2 Iyar.
2. On Sunday, all *yeshivah bachurim* start learning in their homes, three *sedarim* a day.
3. Even those who must help out at home should make sure to learn at least two *sedarim* (morning *sefer* and then either afternoon or night *sefer*) every single day!
4. *Kollel avreichim shlita* will also start summer *zman* on Sunday, but due to the situation, it is not possible to set any guidelines regarding how much each *avreich* should learn, therefore this great responsibility falls upon each *avreich* himself.
5. Every family should designate a room, or place, for the *sedarim* during these times.
6. A set *masechta* should be chosen and learning should take place at set times, so that there shouldn't be a *rifyon, chas v'shalom*.
7. The optimum arrangement is that each person should have *chavrusas*, be it with family members — brothers, or father and son — or via telephone with a *chavrusa* he's comfortable with.
8. Davening should take place at set times.
9. Make sure to set aside time to learn *mussar* every day. During these weeks of *Sefirah*, one can learn *Maseches Avos* and *Avos d'Rebbi Nosson*. A beneficial suggestion is to learn *sefer Chofetz Chaim*.
10. Be very careful with *kibbud av v'eim*. When everyone is at home, *bachurim* are obligated to help out when necessary. Every single person must make sure that his presence lends to a pleasant atmosphere in the home.

## **Lichvod**

### **Yedideinu HaGeonim Marbitzei Torah Roshei HaYeshivos HaKedoshos V'HaMashgichim shlita**

At the start of the summer *zman bs"d*, it is our duty during these days to assist our *talmidim n"y* to the best of our ability, be it via *shiurim, sichos*, and *vaadim* as is accepted in every *yeshivah*, all through the telephone.

However, so that they'll be able to learn and overcome all the obstacles, it is imperative to maintain a personal *kesher* between the *rabbanim shlita* and the *talmidim*, as this brings about growth in Torah and *yiras Shamayim*.

Therefore, we decided to request that all *yeshivos* arrange that one of the *rabbanim* — that is, the *roshei yeshivah, mashgiachim, ra"mim shlita*, and the *meishivim shlita* as well — should personally speak over the phone with every single *talmid* once a week, or more, as is necessary, and make sure that he is set up with *chavrusas*, by phone or with family members, as well as whatever other needs the *talmidim n"y* may have.

May we be *zocheh* to be *osek baTorah* as in the past.

Signed,

*א"י ר' יצחק אריאל*

### **An Empowering Letter to Jewish Women**

This is an important announcement to Beis Yaakov, Jewish women, who bring up their sons all year long to Torah and mitzvos. In light of the current situation, they now have a special role to assist in *limud haTorah*, by designating a room in their homes where their husbands and sons can learn during their *sedarim*.

The women's *sechar* will grow greatly commensurate with the difficulty this entails. They will be rewarded in Olam HaBa and Olam HaZeh and will see much *nachas* from all their children, *Amen kein yehi ratzon*.

*א"י ר' יצחק אריאל*

*Dedicated*

**לע"י מלכה מחלה בת מרדכי זיסקינד ע"ה  
נלב"ע ג' אייר תשס"ו - תנצב"ה**

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The *sichos* are transcribed and translated from a weekly *va'ad* in Rav Gershon Edelstein's home.