

טיב הקהילה

בס"ד

'יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו הרה"צ ר' גמליאל רבינוביץ שליט"א

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טיב המערכת

אם שמוע תשמע – If you will listen

A little boy asks his father for a drink and his father pours the requested beverage and fills his cup. A few minutes later the boy sees another bottle that catches his eye and he asks his father for some from the second bottle, but what is he to do? He has still not drunk the first drink and his cup is still full. His father tells him, "First you have to drink what I already poured for you and then I can pour you the second drink that you are asking for..." If the boy is old enough, he will understand, but if he is too young then he will not yet understand, what is the problem with pouring more drink into the full cup?!

We learn in the Gemara (Berachos 40a): 'R' Zeira and some say R' Chinana bar Papa said, Come and see how unlike the characteristic of HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the characteristic of flesh and blood man. The characteristic of flesh and blood is that an empty vessel can hold what is poured into it, whereas a full vessel cannot hold any more. However, HaKadosh Baruch Hu is not like that. A full vessel (a person filled with Torah knowledge) can hold even more, whereas an empty vessel (one devoid of Torah) cannot hold things, as it says (Shemos 15:26) 'ויאמר אם שמוע תשמע' – 'If you will listen', If at first you will listen, you will be destined to listen again. But if at first you do not listen, you will not listen later either. Another explanation, if you will listen to the old (i.e. you will review what you have learned) you will listen to the new, 'ואם יפנה לבבך' – 'But if your heart turns away, לא' 'תשמע' – 'you will not listen' later.

The MaAdanei HaShulchan zt"l once asked a non-observant man to put on Tefillin, but the man outright refused. Moreinu HaRav asked him why he was so against it? The man replied that he felt that if he would put on Tefillin once, this would cause him to keep other mitzvos, and this he was not willing to do.

Chazal have taught us (Avos 4:2) 'one mitzvah leads to another'. One who learns once, his heart is aroused to learn more for the Torah is like a magnet, and one who begins to learn receives more desire and love of Torah, which causes him to want to learn more. In this way he is always adding on. This is not a secret that one who adds to his learning, his brainpower increases, and he is smarter and sharper. At times a person may want to learn but it is hard for him, his heart is not drawn to learning, what does he do? The advice is, even if it is hard, start once and the heart will want more and more. Chazal said (Rashi to Shemos 19:5 quoting Mechilta) 'all beginnings are difficult', but to continue is easy for by HaKadosh Baruch Hu an empty vessel does not hold but a full one does.

- Tiv HaTorah – Ki Savo

טיב ההשגחה

'שיעור באמונה' – 'A lesson in faith'

I participated in a *simcha* of a neighbor. When one of the neighbors heard that my son is learning in a yeshiva in Rechovot, she was very excited, and she asked if she could send something small with my son to Rechovot. She explained that her son was flying to learn in a yeshiva in the United States and he forgot to take the siddur that she bought for him, and because of corona there are very few flights and tomorrow is flying to the yeshiva from Rechovot.

I told her that I would gladly send the siddur with my son, but someone would have to take the siddur to the yeshiva which was on the other side of the city. "Clearly", she said, and she asked for the address of the yeshiva. When I told her the address, she caught her breath, jumped from the seat and said: "If this is not *hashgacha pratis* then what is? The boy flying out lives right on that street a few houses from the yeshiva!!!" We all saw the hand of Hashem and we strengthened our faith and trust.

.א.ב.

'כוחה של תפילה' – 'The power of prayer'

"Abba, please buy us a parrot!!!"

"I am not buying anyone a parrot!!!"

"Then buy us any kind of pet?"

I explained to them that their older brothers had pets, and in the end, all the work fell on me, the feeding, the cleaning, and after the initial excitement wore off, they were not at all interested in what happened to the pets.

The little ones promised to take care of it and they decided to pray to Hashem that they should have a pet. In truth, in my heart I felt for them especially after seeing the neighbors with pets, but I knew that the taking care of it would fall on me alone.

One morning I heard my son cry out: "Abba, Abba, please come quick, a bird flew into our house!!!"

I didn't rush knowing that a wild bird that flew in would fly out right away. When I got to the living room, I found a beautiful parrot flying from side to side trying to get out, but my kids had already closed all the openings so that it would not leave the house. A few minutes later, with Hashem's help, I caught the parrot to the delight of the little kids. I asked a neighbor what kind of food and water do I give it? Now that Hashem sent the children a pet, I had no choice but to take care of the gift that Hashem had sent them in a unique way.

I announced *hashavas aveidah* [return a lost object] but no one claimed it. The owner must have given up hope, but the children were filled with joy.

.ב.ה.

והיה כי תבוא... ולקחת מראשית כל פרי האדמה (כו:א-ב)

It will be when you enter... you shall take of the first of every fruit of the ground (26:1-2)

It is known that every mention of '*vehaya*' denotes joy [*simcha*], since there is no joy to a farmer like when his crops begin to sprout from the ground and grow. After all his hard work and effort to plow and plant, hoe and weed, after hoping days and nights for both strong and usual rain, for blessed dew, that will grow beautiful shrubs and flowering trees, nice flowers, and dripping and juicy fruit.

After all the waiting with anticipating eyes and heart, to see blessing from his effort until he merits seeing his beautiful fruit. He worked hard so they would grow to glory. This is when he enters his field to delight in what he sees and to rejoice with the completion of his work. The Torah commands that immediately upon seeing the first fruit emerging from its blossom, he designates it for the mitzvah of Bikkurim as Rashi explains, 'A man goes down into his field and sees a fig that has begun to ripen. He wraps a reed-grass around it and says, "This is bikkurim."'

Similarly, when it comes to bringing the bikkurim up to Yerushalayim to our Bais HaMikdash and our Glory, the person is filled with great joy and he adorns his fruit in nice baskets, with song he brings his first fruit to the Kohanim who are in those days, in order to thank and praise HaKadosh Baruch Hu for His abundant kindness and mercy that reached his portion of the land, and for his success in working the ground until he saw blessing from his hard work and effort.

The person forgoes his personal joy of seeing the first growth and the fruit of his labor, and now stands and hands over everything for the Name of Hashem. This giving over is the reason and purpose of this mitzvah in front of everyone, since he gives the first of his efforts to HaKadosh Baruch Hu through his hard work – there is an intrinsic joy to give them to Hashem, for he recognizes that it was Hashem Who gave him the strength to do all this, therefore the mitzvah of bikkurim uses '*vehaya*' an expression of joy.

To sanctify the first – לקדש את הראשית

Even nowadays, times of desolation, and because of our sins those making *oleh regel* and bringing *bikkurim* have been nullified, but the mitzvah of *bikkurim* still exists. As with anything, we must give the first of them to Hashem as the posuk is expounded (Shemos 34:26) 'ראשית בכורי אדמתך תביא בית ה' – אלקיך' – 'The earliest of the first fruits of your land you shall bring to the House of Hashem, your G-d', that is, everything first – whether of the day or anything completed should be given for the sake of Hashem to sanctify all of it. This is so the first thought should be for the sake of Heaven, and this will cause sanctity to extend to all his affairs.

This conduct demonstrates that the person is grateful. Immediately upon arising in the morning when he sees that his 248 limbs and 365 sinews are working, he is grateful from the beginning of his day and he sanctifies himself to Torah and Tefillah, similar to the confession that is recited when one brings the *bikkurim* which is thanks from the outset from (26:5) 'ארמי – אבד אבי' – 'an Aramean would have destroyed my father' to (26:9) 'ויבאנו אל המקום הזה ויתן לנו את הארץ הזאת' – 'He brought us to this place, and He gave us this land', and Rashi explains, so as not to seem ungrateful.

עבודת ה' בשמחה וטוב לבב

Service of Hashem with gladness and goodness of heart

Amidst the posukim of the *tochacha* that pains the heart of those who hear it, we find a posuk which both hides and reveals the reason for the terrifying punishment of the *tochacha* (28:47) 'תחת אשר לא עבדת – את ה' אלקיך בשמחה ובטוב לבב מרב כל' – 'Because you did not serve Hashem, your G-d, with gladness and goodness of heart out of an abundance of everything'. Meaning, the reason for the punishment is for not serving Hashem with gladness and joy of heart, until he is punished and he receives all the words of the rebuke. This is the severity of doing the mitzvos sadly and lazily without elevation of spirit and craving of the heart.

The Arizal famously points out the greatness of serving Hashem with joy which lifts him to high levels until he attains *Ruach HaKodesh*, as his student testified that his lofty levels were only attained through serving Hashem with joy, as brought in the Sefer Chareidim (Introduction): The great joy of a mitzvah, every mitzvah is like a gift sent to you by HaKadosh Baruch Hu and the reward is commensurate with the amount of joy. The Arizal himself revealed that what he attained in that they opened the gates of wisdom and *Ruach HaKodesh* for him was the reward for doing every mitzvah with great joy.

It is also brought down in his *sefer* Sha'ar HaMitzvos (Introduction): The root of everything is when doing a mitzvah, do not think that it is a burden and rush to get it over with, rather, think that you stand to make thousands of golden dinars and you should be glad when you do it with boundless heartfelt joy and great desire as if someone were to give you thousands of golden dinars for doing the mitzvah. This teaches faith in the Creator Yisbarach Who prepares reward according to the amount of joy, true and with inner goodness of heart and so he will receive the Celestial light, and if he constantly does this, then without a doubt he will be given *Ruach HaKodesh*. This applies to keeping all the mitzvos, whether one has a great, strong burning desire when involved in Torah as if standing before the King and serving him with great compassion to find favor in His eyes, to receive greater and higher elevation.

The reason for this is the joy in the service of Hashem that comes to a person of true faith that every word in the Torah is a mitzvah and he believes that every mitzvah causes the building of worlds Above, and through this he comes to joy. We learn from this that one who has no craving and is lax in *avodas Hashem* not because he lacks love of Hashem, rather, he lacks faith. When he believes that everything he does causes satisfaction Above, he will strengthen to serve Hashem out of joy for the mitzvah.

שמחת העניים והנדכים – The joy of the poor and oppressed

At the end of the day when we merit to be glad, we must remember those who do not have – the poor and converts, as it says (26:11) 'ושמחת בכל הטוב אשר נתן לך ה' אלקיך ולביתך אתה והלוי והגר אשר' – 'You shall rejoice with all the goodness that Hashem, your G-d, has given to you and your household, you and the Levi and the convert who is in your midst'. After giving *ma'aser ani* the posuk concludes (26:12) 'כי תכלה לעשר את כל מעשר תבואתך ונתתה ללוי לגר' – 'When you finish tithing every tithe of your produce, and you will have given to the Levi, the convert, the orphan, and the widow, and they will have eaten in your gates and will be satisfied'. When he is glad, he will remember to be glad for those who are lacking, then his joy will be complete and true Above and below.