

# Darkei HaChizuk

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

A Sichah from Maran HaGaon Rav Gershon Edelstein *shlita* • Re'ah 5781

## Man Was Created to Work

We are now at the end of the period known in the Yeshivah world as "Bein Ha'Zemanim." Generally, people who work do not have a large amount of vacation at one time. However, in the Yeshivah world where people have very rigorous and strict schedules, we have this break every summer in order for Avreichim and Bachurim to recharge their batteries for Elul Zeman.

There are no set learning Sedarim during Bein Ha'Zemanim as there are during the Zeman. Therefore, some people view their learning during Bein Ha'Zemanim as a "favor" that they are doing Hashem during Bein Ha'Zemanim. This is the nature of many people who learn during Bein Ha'Zemanim.

We know that the Dor Ha'Midbar learned Torah for quite a long time from Moshe Rabeinu at Har Sinai (after the giving of the second Luchos). Even so, immediately after they left, we find that they were punished. To understand why this happened, the Gemara in Shabbos (116a, see *Tosfos there as well*) cites the Passuk in Bamidbar (10:33) that famously states regarding the Dor Ha'Midbar, "And they traveled away from the mountain of Hashem." The Gemara comments on this, that they left Har Sinai like a child who runs away from school. While they were at Har Sinai, they learned Torah diligently. However, when it came time to leave, they were happy that they would no longer have to put forth the great effort that it took to truly learn Torah. This is like a child running away from school. Even if he is a good child who enjoys his learning, and he actively participates in the various Torah lessons that are taught to him, he simply is more interested in playing, than he is in learning.

If this is the nature of the great generation that received the Torah, and heard Hashem's voice, it is clearly the nature of a person in our generation! The great generation that received the Torah clearly saw Hashem (see *Rashi on Devarim 4:35*). They even heard Moshe Rabeinu speak audibly to six hundred thousand people without a microphone, and they saw sounds (as stated by Chazal)! Even so, when they began to depart from Har Sinai, they felt relieved that they no longer needed

to put so much effort into learning Torah. If they felt this natural instinct to relax more than they should, we certainly must be aware of this nature, and fight it as much as possible.

The Passuk in Iyov (5:7) states that man was created to work on himself. We see that even when a child is born, before he has any clear intellect, he moves his hands and feet very often. When he learns to walk he often starts to run around. This is because the nature of man is to work and accomplish. When a baby becomes a child (especially an older child), who starts to understand why he should or should not do certain things, he is more selective regarding how he invests his time and energy. Even though he understands that he must accomplish, the *Mesilas Yesharim (ch.6)* explains that people want to rest, as working and accomplishing is difficult.

We know that it is healthy to be physically active. The Rambam (*Dei'os 4:15*) states that a person who just sits and is not active will always be in pain and lack strength. It is known that people who need to recuperate from an illness, and therefore are bedridden for a long time, often have difficulty getting up and about again. Some of them even need physiotherapy to learn how to walk again, and regain their strength.

The brain is very similar. If a person uses his brain very often, it works like a well oiled and efficient machine. If he does not use his brain, it becomes weak and slow.

The Gemara in Sanhedrin (99b) states that everyone is made to work. The Gemara continues that one might think this means he must "work" his mouth (for Torah and Tefilah, and even regular speech), or perhaps it means literally to work. The Passuk states, "For he saddled (i.e. worked) his mouth," implying that the work being referred to is working one's mouth. The Gemara means that it is impossible for one to exist without speaking. I have related previously that a very serious student once tried to refrain from speaking anything that was not related to Torah, but he simply could not do so and stay sane. A person will not be able to maintain his sanity without some regular speech between him and his friends.

The Gemara continues that it is still unclear if this refers primarily to Torah or to mundane speech. The Passuk, “This Sefer Torah (i.e. words of Torah) should not be removed from your mouth” teaches that this refers to words of Torah. In other words, the purpose of “working” in this world is to speak words of Torah. One also needs some mundane speech with his friends. However, that is not why man was created. He was created to earn a portion in the next world, and this is done primarily through speaking words of Torah (which also is enjoyable in this world, as we have explained previously).

## Happy is One Whose Job is Torah

The Gemara continues that Rava stated (explanation based on Rashi) that all bodies must work, but happy is the body whose work is Torah. This is as we explained previously that a person must work, both physically and with his mouth. He must also exercise, as we explained above. It is even said in the name of the Chafetz Chaim that a person must make sure he walks a little, and breathes some fresh air everyday, in order to maintain his health. However, a person’s spiritual health is improved by learning Torah, as this is food for the soul. **Happy is a person who fulfills his “work of his mouth” by saying and learning Divrei Torah!**

Included in this category are people who deal on a daily basis with performing Mitzvos, whether Bein Adam l’Makom or Bein Adam l’Chaveiro. Helping other people fulfills the tremendous Mitzvah of loving your fellow Jew. Even the thoughts that a person has regarding helping his fellow Jew are considered holy thoughts!

However, as we mentioned previously, during Bein Ha’Zemanim, people think they are doing someone a favor if they are learning. Unfortunately, Bein Ha’Zemanim is a time when there is a tremendous lack of Torah learning.

It is important to understand that the world exists due to Torah learning. The Gemara in Sanhedrin (*ibid.*) states that if a person learns Torah Lishmah, he creates peace in Heaven and on earth. The nations of the world on earth, and their angel that represents them in Heaven, are at peace with each other when Torah is being learned. [All nations of the world have an angel that represents them in Heaven. It is clear from Sefer Daniel that there is an angel that represents Edom, Moav, and other Klal Yisrael, while the angels Michael and Gavriel represent Klal Yisrael.]

While there are wars and difficulties in the world, there are also places where there is peace. The citizens of many countries enjoy a relatively stable life. The purpose of the nations of the world is to facilitate Torah learning for Klal Yisrael. Their success, and even their existence, is due to the fact that there are people in Klal Yisrael today who are able to

learn Torah. In truth, this even applies within Klal Yisrael. The fact that many Jews who do not learn Torah are successful, is due to the fact that many other Jews are learning Torah.

## Kiruv Rechokim

We must do whatever we can to help Yidden who do not yet know how to learn Torah, or do not have the awareness that they should be learning Torah. There are many wonderful Kiruv organizations that are strengthening many Jews who want to be strengthened in their Yiddishkeit. However, we must remember that this is only accomplished through Siyata Dishmaya, which comes through Tefilah. This is as the Chazon Ish (*Igros 3:62*) writes, “We must remember that we cannot do anything besides actions that stir the Gates of Mercy, in the hopes that our actions should have the intended results. A person who Davens and pleads with Hashem will have more success than one who merely does Hishtadlus.”

The Chazon Ish (*3:62*) continues that everyone has an effect on the rest of the world with his daily actions. **“If people would truly learn Torah, they would save many people and children from thoughts of sin and Kefirah, and similar things. This is due to their influence of holiness, as they are spilling pureness into the world. The people who are in close proximity to a true Ba’al Torah are clearly affected by him, much more than they would be affected by a person who directly would try to influence them. This type of person even has an effect on people who are far away from him that is not apparent (i.e. that this effect is due to the Ba’al Torah) to the observer.”**

This is clearly true, even if he does not give Shiurim or speak to others. The fact that people see that he acts according to the Torah in all of his ways creates a tremendous Kiddush Hashem that has a wide ranging impact.

When we say that a true Ba’al Torah acts in all his ways like a servant of Hashem, we do not just mean that this is apparent when he is learning Torah or performing Mitzvos. A true Ba’al Torah eats, drinks, and sleeps because he needs to have more energy to learn Torah and serve Hashem. This is as the Rambam (*Dei’os 3:3*) states that whenever a person eats, drinks, or sleeps in order to serve Hashem, it is considered that he is serving Hashem during this time. This statement was said over many times by the Chazon Ish.

In contrast, if a person sleeps because he enjoys sleeping, he is merely enjoying the pleasures of this world. This is not considered a Mitzvah, and will not bring him any eternal reward.

The Mitzvah that he is involved in when he is sleeping in order to have strength to serve Hashem, is any Mitzvah that he does after waking up from his sleep. In other words, since the sleep was a necessary preparation for the Torah he learned the following day, the Chessed he performed, and the Tefilos that he Davened, it is considered as if his sleep was preparation for these Mitzvos. Sleeping in order to have strength to perform Mitzvos is of such importance, that some say one is exempt from a Mitzvah (i.e. sleeping in the Sukkah) if it will disturb his ability to perform a Mitzvah (the next day) that he must perform (*see Mordechai on Sukah #740*).

## Tefilah for Klal Yisrael

When we Daven, we usually Daven in the plural form. All of our requests in Shemonah Esreh are in the plural form. This is because we are not just asking that we, our family, and friends, should have success in Torah, and service of Hashem, but rather that all Jews should succeed. This includes those Jews who are not yet aware of the beauty of a life of Torah and Mitzvos, and they do not yet know how to serve Hashem. We must want all Jews, whom we are commanded to love as ourselves, to be involved in Avodas Hashem.

**I am certain that if everyone Davened from the depths of their heart out of mercy, regarding every single person in Klal Yisrael, that it pains them that they are not immersed in Torah study, Hashem would cause all of Klal Yisrael to repent.** This is as the Chazon Ish writes that Tefilah helps more than anything else (even more than Hishtadlus, as stated above).

While there certainly are righteous people who Daven in this fashion, there are not enough people who Daven in this way. If everyone would do so, the power of these Tefilos would be exponentially greater. This is as Rashi notes in Bechukosai that when the Torah says five of you will chase one hundred of them, and one hundred of you will chase ten thousand of them, the Rashi of the former is one to twenty, while the ratio in the latter case is one to one hundred. Rashi explains that this is because one cannot compare a few people who perform the Mitzvos to many people who together perform the Mitzvos. It is not just more people; their strength is much greater as a whole unit, and is not looked at as just more individuals.

This would strengthen not just those who are far away from a Torah lifestyle, but also those who are in need of strengthening in Torah, Tefilah, good Middos, and love for our fellow Jews. **If many people would Daven like this, it would have a tremendous impact on Klal Yisrael.**

Two of the ways that one acquires Torah, as stated in the sixth chapter of Avos, are “Ohev Es Ha’Makom” and “Ohev Es Ha’Briyos.” People can understand that they must love Hashem. After all, Hashem gives them life, and everything that they need to be alive. It is obvious that they should love Him! However, it is understandable that a person might have little feeling for a fellow Jew that he does not even know. After all, what has this person ever done for him? However, even so, one must love his fellow Jew.

Loving our fellow Jew means to care about each and every Jew that they should have a good and meaningful life. The only way that this will happen is if they repent, and live a life of Torah and Mitzvos. This is why it is clear that people who perform Kiruv Rechokim are involved in Zikuv Ha’Rabim.

## Obligation to Influence

The Passuk in Yechezkel (*ch.3*) states that there is a general concept of trying to influence other Jews to do the right thing. If one tells an evildoer to cease and desist from his evil ways, but he does not listen, the Passuk says, “He will die from his sin, but you have saved your soul.” However, the Passuk warns, if one does not try to convince the evildoer to repent from his ways, and he could have indeed helped persuade him to repent, “he will die from his sin, and the blood of the evildoer will be sought from you.” The Gemara in Shabbos (*55a*) indeed states that there were great righteous people who fulfilled the entire Torah completely, but they did not give rebuke and influence others to better serve Hashem. They were therefore punished, as they were held partially responsible for the shortcomings of their fellow Yidden.

When the Passuk says that the evildoer “will die from his sin,” it does not necessarily mean in this world. It may also refer to the tremendous punishment he will receive in Gehinnom, where fire is sixty times hotter than it is in this world (*see Berachos 57b*). The Ramban says that one instant of Gehinnom is worse than all of the suffering of Iyov. Accordingly, a person who could have prevented his fellow Jew from receiving this punishment, and did not do so, is held accountable.

Therefore, out of love for our fellow Jew, we should try to influence anyone we can to repent, and to live a Torah life. We must Daven with sincere intent that Hashem should cause everyone in Klal Yisrael to repent, and they should live a life of Torah.

Truthfully, a person who is on the level where he is even sincerely Davening that he should have such a life, is on a high spiritual level. All the more so if a person is Davening sincerely that everyone in Klal Yisrael should repent. However, it is certainly a spiritual level that one can attain if

he understands how important it is to love his fellow Jew. The Sifrei Mussar guide a person regarding how he can reach this spiritual level of love and compassion for our fellow Jews to the point where we sincerely Daven for them to repent (even though we do not know them all on an individual basis).

## **Ahavas Ha'Briyos Begins At Home**

Treating everyone in one's household respectfully and with good Middos is very difficult, and more difficult than treating others properly. One must be careful not to insult them, and to show that if he asking that they do something, it is not because he desires it, but rather for their own good. One must have great wisdom in order to incorporate this into how he educates the people in his household on a day-to-day basis.

Unfortunately, it is against the nature of certain people to restrain from insulting the children in their household. One must understand that children cannot even be Mochel until after they are Bar Mitzvah! When they become Bar Mitzvah, one must ask his children for forgiveness if he insulted them, and they should grant it with a whole heart.

**It is more common to be able to have good Middos outside the house than inside one's house. This is because**

**parents easily become upset when their children do not listen to them. Many children go off the Derech because parents demand that they keep certain Mitzvos or customs, and they do not understand that the parents are trying to get them to do this for their own good. This causes them to hate their parents. One must therefore try to make it clear that they are trying to have them follow the Torah way for their own good.**

Many people are born with bad Middos, but they fight these bad Middos, until they are able to have their intellect rule their behavior, despite their inherently bad Middos! Eventually, even their nature changes to become people who have good Middos!

May we all have Siyata Dishmaya!

Please daven for  
גיטה פייגה בת רבקה  
לרפואה שלימה ומהירה  
בתוך כל חולי ישראל

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