

## 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 • Parashas Shemini 5782

480

## ההספד באשכבתיה דרבינו הגדול שר התורה מרן בעל דרך אמונה זצוקללה"ה

### The Hespel at Maran HaRav Chaim Kanievsky zt"l's Levayah

---

#### The Only “Gavra Rabbah” in the World Is Gone!

There’s a Gemara (*Megillah* 28b), “Woe unto Eretz Yisrael, for it is missing a *gavra rabbah*, a great person.” The Gemara is telling a story of an *adam gadol* who passed away in Eretz Yisrael, and when they eulogized him, they said, “Woe unto Eretz Yisrael!” A great man’s death is a tremendous loss for Eretz Yisrael, because he had been in Eretz Yisrael, and now the country lost him.

The Gemara does not say that this person was the only “*gavra rabbah*” in Eretz Yisrael — there actually were others. But until this person’s passing, there had been another one, and now one is missing. When one *gavra rabbah* is missing, the *hashpaah* on the world is deficient — because when there are more *gavra rabbah*, there is greater *hashpaah*. One less *gavra rabbah* means less *hashpaah*; therefore, “Woe unto Eretz Yisrael.”

#### Woe Unto Eretz Yisrael, Woe Unto the Entire World

And here, by us, the “woe unto Eretz Yisrael,” is because we’re lacking a *gavra rabbah* — **but not a *gavra rabbah* that is one of a few others, but the only *gavra rabbah* in Eretz Yisrael.** And not only is Eretz Yisrael “lacking” a *gavra rabbah*, there simply is no *gavra rabbah*! It’s not that we’re just missing one, a *gavra rabbah* is missing completely. There is no *gavra rabbah* like him in Eretz Yisrael!

And this situation is terribly painful for Eretz Yisrael and for the entire world. There is no *gavra rabbah* like him in the entire world, a *gavra rabbah* who had a *hashpaah* on the entire world. We all know that people from all over the world were influenced by him and asked him for *brachos* and *tefillos*. He would be *mashpia brachah* and *tefillah*, a physical *hashpaah* and a spiritual *hashpaah*. He had such great *hashpa’os*, and now they are no more. Not here, and not anywhere in the entire world! Not only is it “Woe unto Eretz Yisrael,” it’s “woe unto the entire world.” There is no *gavra rabbah* like him anywhere, and we now lack his *hashpaah*.

If we don't have this *hashpaah*, it's simply terrible, *noira v'ayoim*, because a person needs a *hashpaah*. Without it, a person's yetzer hara is very strong and can control him. Chazal say (*Kiddushin* 30b), "A person's yetzer hara overpowers him every day and tries to kill him, as it states, "The wicked one watches for the righteous man, and if HaKadosh Baruch Hu wouldn't help him, he would not be able to overpower it." That is, a person can only overpower his yetzer hara if he receives *siyatta d'Shemaya*. But one will only be given *siyatta d'Shemaya* if he does something, as the commentaries say (see the Gra, *Kol Eliyahu, Sukkah; Mesillas Yesharim* chap. 2) that only if a person does whatever he can possibly do, then he receives *siyatta d'Shemaya*. If not, there is no *siyatta d'Shemaya*.

We'll keep it short; there is a lot to say, but now is not the time for lengthy speeches. *L'maaseh*, it obligates us — what are we obligated to do now? What must we do, what are we obligated to do now that the *hashpaah* is missing?

There's another Gemara (*Zevachim* 115b, cited in Rashi, *Parshas Shemini*): When HaKadosh Baruch Hu inflicts strict justice on tzaddikim, Hashem is "*misyarei, misaleh u'miskaleis*, feared, exalted, and praised, as it states: "*Noira Elokim MiMikdash*, You are feared Hashem, from Your Mikdash.' Do not read it *MiMikdash* (Your Sanctuary), but *Mimekudash* (by those who sanctify You)." When *middas hadin* is inflicted on tzaddikim, it is not a punishment for the tzaddikim — to the contrary, it's to their benefit because HaKadosh Baruch Hu is thus "feared, exalted, and praised." Let's look at the first concept mentioned here: *misyarei*, feared. What is *misyarei*? To increase *yiras Shamayim*! When we see *middas hadin* inflicted on tzaddikim, it arouses us to increase *yiras Shamayim*.

Now, one must be on a *madreigah* to do so; not everyone is on this *madreigah*. To our great misfortune, we are a poverty-stricken generation, an orphaned generation, and there is a lack of *baalei madreigah*. We must feel, the entire generation must feel the lack of the *hashpaah* of "*misyarei*," and increase *yiras Shamayim*. Every single person needs *yiras Shamayim*. There are many *madreigos*, levels, of *yiras Shamayim*, there are endless *madreigos*, but each person should at least take something upon himself and increase his *yiras Shamayim* a little more and a little more.

How does one increase *yiras Shamayim*? After all, people have hearts of stone (*lev even*) because we have a yetzer hara. A heart of stone cannot accept *hashpaah*, so what can we do? How can we influence our stone hearts?

The *pasuk* (*Iyov* 14:19, and see *Avos d'Rebbi Nosson* chap. 6) gives us the only solution: "Water erodes stones" — one drop and another drop and yet another drop. This is how the water will erode the stones. This is the reality. The only *etzah* is to learn *mussar*, to be *osek in mussar sefarim*. A person should live with self-criticism, self-criticism to investigate his actions, because the yetzer hara is very strong and requires constant supervision. We need — at every single second — *hashgachah* (supervision) and *hashpaah* with *siyatta d'Shemaya* not to fall into sin. This is the first thing: not to fall into sin, and also to grow.

This is the obligation of *yiras Shamayim*, as the *pasuk* states (*Devarim* 10:20): “Fear Hashem your G-d.” The mitzvah of *yiras Shamayim* is mentioned many times in the Torah, for it’s no simple matter. *Yirah* is contrary to human nature, and we need constant *chizuk* for *yiras Shamayim*. The *chizuk* can only occur by setting steady daily learning sessions in *mussar sefarim*!

Furthermore, one must learn *mussar sefarim* that have an influence on him, *sefarim* that are interesting. *Baruch Hashem*, there are many *mussar sefarim*. *Shamayim* is giving all of Klal Yisrael the merits of various possibilities to be *zocheh* to success in *ruchniyus*. There are *mussar sefarim* that have a *hashpaah* — each person should choose what interests him the most. If a person learns a boring *sefer*, it will not have a *hashpaah* on him, but there are interesting *sefarim*, or interesting chapters in *sefarim*, and when you learn interesting *mussar* on a steady basis, every day, it has an effect. It is *mashpia*. This is the only *eitzah* that we need in order to overcome the *yetzer hara*.

### **We Are All Indebted to Him, the Entire Tzibbur and the Entire World Is Indebted to Him!**

Now, in this present situation and at this moment, when we lack the *hashpaah* we had from such a great person as Rav Chaim, a *hashpaah* of *ruchniyus*, we are obligated to repay him, and we are also obligated to repay him with *ruchniyus*. We must do things to give him the merit of more pleasures in Olam HaBa — as the pleasures of Olam HaBa are limitless. There are many proofs to this, as the *pasuk* states (*Yeshayah* 64:3): “No eye has seen it, Hashem, except for You.” Even the prophets did not know what Olam HaBa was like; they did not even have an inkling of what the pleasures of Olam HaBa are. (See *Berachos* 34b.) Now we are obligated to give him the pleasures and the *zechuyos* that we’ll accrue due to the *hisorerus* his *petirah* brought about. Indeed, it’s a *zechus* for him.

We owe him a lot, and this is the only way we can repay him, by waking ourselves up spiritually, *l’hitoreir! L’hitoreir, l’hitoreir*, and to increase more and more *zechuyos*. This is a spiritual salvation for us too — to merit eternal life. Furthermore, it is also a great *chesed* and a great obligation to perform *chesed* with the deceased — especially since we owe him so much. We should give him what we owe him, and there’s no limit to how much we owe him; the entire *tzibbur* and the entire world is indebted to him. We must give him *zechuyos*, and as we said, there is no limit to the *zechuyos* and the pleasures of Olam HaBa. There are a number of proofs for this.

If so, *l’maaseh*, this is what we are obligated to do, and this is the only *eitzah*: set a daily learning session in interesting *mussar sefarim*. This will help and it will have a *hashpaah*, because every person who learns *mussar* receives a tremendous *hashpaah*. There are many stories about people who started learning *mussar* on a daily basis and they received a great *hashpaah*; and their house became a happy home. Learning *mussar* does not bring on *atzvus*, sadness; to the contrary, it results in a happy life. By learning *mussar*, the entire household becomes a happy, *me’ushar* household.

As we said, learning *mussar* creates spiritual pleasures for us — it brings us to *ashrecha baOlam haZeh*. Furthermore, it is a tremendous *zechus*, and we are obligated to do so for the great *niftar*, to whom we are indebted. *Shamayim* should have *rachamim* on us that we should be *zocheh* to whatever we need. *U'bila ha'maves la'netzach, u'machah Hashem dim'ah me'al kol panim*. May Hashem conceal death forever, and may He wipe away the tears from all faces.

**On Erev Shabbos, after hearing of the *petirah*,  
Rabbeinu, *yebadel l'chaim*, said the following:**

He had many *zechuyos*, many *zechuyos*! His *hasmadah*, what *hasmadah*. He would walk down the street and he didn't even know the name of the street. He'd walk the whole way from his house to Kollel Chazon Ish, and what was the name of the street? He didn't know! He didn't look! He was careful not to look at anything besides Torah, and when he'd travel, he was always with his Gemara, the entire time. There was *bekius*, incredible *bekius*, what *bekius*. And he was also a *baal mofsim*, a miracle worker.

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

For donations or dedications of the Hebrew and English flyers, or to receive the *sichos* to your email, please contact:  
[darkei.hachizuk@gmail.com](mailto:darkei.hachizuk@gmail.com)

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