

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 Behar 5782

486

Kevod Shamayim in Every Action and Deed

We learn in *Pirkei Avos*, “Whatever Hashem created in His world, He created solely for His glory, as it states, ‘Whatever is called by My Name and for My glory, I created it, formed it, and even made it.’” The purpose of the creation of all worlds: Azilus, Briah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah, is solely to bring about *kevod Shamayim*. And since this is the purpose of creation, every single person was created for *kevod Shamayim*, so we must be cognizant of every single thing we do and make sure that every action generates *kevod Shamayim*.

Rabbeinu Yonah writes in *Shaarei Teshuvah* (3:148), “Among the ways of making a *kiddush Hashem* is to announce with every expression of one’s lips, with every hint of his eyes, and with every *hanhagah* and movement of his hands – that the foundation of man’s *nefesh* – the main purpose of our soul, and the beauty of its desires, the goodness and essence of it, and the purpose and preciousness of it, is service of Hashem Yisbarach, fear of Him and His Torah, as it is written, ‘For this is all of man.’ And this matter brings glory to Hashem Yisbarach.” That is, every single action and deed must be done for the purpose of increasing *kevod Shamayim*, because this is the purpose of Creation, and a person lives to bring honor to Hashem. This is his ticket to existence.

Therefore, a person must be aware — before performing any action — whether it is *kevod Shamayim* or not. It could be that the actual action is good, but the result is not *kevod Shamayim* — it’s actually the opposite. It depends on the reality of every single action, and one must use his good judgment.

Mezakei HaRabbim and Machti’ei HaRabbim

Zikkui harabbim, having a good influence on others, is the greatest form of *kevod Shamayim*. But if someone *chas v’shalom* causes another to sin, Chazal say (*Sifri Parshas Ki Teitzei*, cited in Rashi to *Devarim* 23:9) that causing another person to sin is worse than if he kills him, because killing him only brings death on his body, but causing him to sin has an effect on his *Olam Haba*. On one hand, one can achieve *zikkui harabbim*, which is a tremendous thing, but on the other hand, he can also cause others to sin, which is the opposite.

Chazal (*Avos* 5:18) tell us about Yeravam ben Nevat, who sinned and caused the masses to sin that “the sin of the masses is attributed to him.” That is, all sins that the *tzibbur* continues performing due to his influence, are attributed to him and it’s considered as if he’s sinning. Any Jew of his generation, or even in later generations, who sinned because of him, because of the sinful education they received, is “attributed to him.” All their sins belong to him.

Chazal tell us (*Rosh Hashanah* 32b) that on Rosh Hashanah, *sifrei chaim* and *sifrei meisim*, books of the living and books of the deceased, are opened. We can understand why the books of the living are opened — they open *sifrei chaim* to see what each person is doing, to inspect his deeds. But why are the *sifrei meisim* opened?

I believe the *mefarshim* explain that the *sifrei meisim* are for those deceased souls who sinned and caused others to sin in their lifetime. Every year, these books are re-opened to see which sins have been added to their repertoire of sins, because any sins other people performed due to their influence is ascribed to their detriment and it’s considered as if they sinned themselves — even after their death. This is how a living person can bring sin upon a dead person — when he sins because of the dead man’s influence. All these sins are attributed to the dead man and it’s considered as if he’s presently sinning. So after he dies, he’s still sinning, through the living person. This is how on the one hand, a person can enjoy *zikkui harabbim*, and on the other hand, he can suffer from being a *machti’ei harabbim*, *Rachmana litzlan*.

The Influence and the Zechuyos for Generations

What makes someone a *mezakeh es harabbim*? There are many possible areas of *zikkui harabbim*. For example, Torah. A person can cause others to be *osek baTorah* — and there are many ways he can do so. If he’s a rebbi, he can give his *talmidim* a good taste for Torah; if he says a *sichah* and people who hear it receive a good taste for Torah; or if he pays someone else to give a good taste for Torah to those who need it.

Someone who is *mezakeh* and *mashpia* on others, all the *zechuyos* of those people belong to him and are attributed to his merit. For example, if a person has a *haspa’ah* on

his family and his descendants, and this influence is passed down and spreads further to his grandchildren, to their friends and neighbors, then all the good deeds of those who have been influenced by him belong to the *mashpia* who brought them this merit.

The *Chovos HaLevavos* writes (*Shaar Ahavas Hashem* chap. 6) that when someone influences others, all the good deeds they do are attributed to the first person and are credited to him. Additionally, whatever is done in future generations is considered as if he did it, even though he's already in the *Olam HaEmes* and cannot perform good deeds himself. But they are being performed through his *koach*, and everything is a *zechus* for him.

And on the other hand, Yeravam ben Nevat caused the masses to sin, and all their sins are attributed to him. Even though many generations have passed and he's no longer alive, since sin is still continuing in future generations because of him, it is considered as if he is continuing to sin. More and more sins are attributed to him. This is the gravity of *machati'ei harabbim*.

Keeping Quiet During a Quarrel

A person can be a *mezakeh es harabbim* even passively, through a *shev v'al taaseh*, without doing anything. He can derive merit for himself and influence others, just as Chazal say (*Chullin* 89a), "The world exists for one who holds himself back [בולם את עצמו] during a fight, as it states, 'The land hangs by a thread [בלימה].'" That is, if a person holds himself back and is quiet when other people embarrass him and cause him pain, and he's quiet and doesn't respond — he wants to say something, but he holds back — he hears other talking about him, but he doesn't talk, he merits to uphold the world with his silence.

Chazal also teach (*Gittin* 36b), "Those who are insulted and do not insult back, those who hear their shame and do not respond, they perform [mitzvos] out of love and rejoice in suffering, the *pasuk* says about them, 'And those who love Him are like the sun emerging in its strength.'" That is, a person who hears himself being embarrassed and does not respond in kind, and one who hears his shame, which is worse than embarrassment, and does not answer, the *pasuk* says about them: "And those who love Him are like the sun emerging in its strength." It's a great *madreigah* and a level of *Olam HaBa* that one cannot imagine. Indeed, *Tosfos* on *Bava Basra* daf 8 describes this *madreigah* of *Olam HaBa*. Just through keeping quiet and holding one's tongue, with a *shev v'al taaseh*, a person is *zocheh* to uphold the world. The world exists in his merit!

Zikkui HaRabbim Is Dependent on Prior Zechuyos

We already spoken many times about the concept of needing prior *zechuyos* in order to merit *zikkui harabbim*.

Chazal say (*Avos* ad loc.): "Moshe merited and brought merit to the masses. The merit of the masses is attributed to him." The *mishnah* first mentions "he merited," and only then does it say "he brought merit to the *rabbim*," because Moshe Rabbeinu had prior *zechuyos* which he needed in order to be the Receiver of the Torah at Maamad Har Sinai — where Klal Yisrael heard Hashem's voice: "'I am Your G-d' and 'You shall not have...'" were heard from Hashem's mouth" (*Makkos* 24a). Moshe Rabbeinu was *zocheh* to experience such levels of the Shechinah's revelation at Maamad Har Sinai because he first "merited," he had prior *zechuyos* that brought him up to that level.

And what was Moshe Rabbeinu's merit? The Midrash (*Shemos Rabbah* 2:2) relates when Moshe Rabbeinu was shepherding Yisro's sheep in the desert — and a shepherd is obligated to take care of the sheep — a lamb ran away from the flock. He ran after the lamb — after all, he's a shepherd, and a shepherd must watch his sheep — and the lamb ran and ran until it stopped near a pool of water and stood near it to drink. Moshe saw that it ran away for a fair reason, because it was thirsty and wanted a drink. Since there was no water where the flock had been grazing, the sheep ran until it found water to satiate its thirst.

And then Moshe said, "If so, the sheep is tired, and rightfully so. Now we have to get back to the flock and it's hard for it to walk." Moshe put the lamb on his shoulder, because he pitied it, and began the walk back. HaKadosh Baruch Hu said, "You have mercy while guiding a human's flock of sheep, by your life, you will shepherd My flock, Bnei Yisrael." In the merit of Moshe's mercy on Hashem's creatures, including animals; since he had *rachmanus* on the sheep, he merited to become Moshe Rabbeinu.

A person can be thought-out to such a degree as Moshe Rabbeinu was. He noticed that the sheep was tired and decided to put it on his shoulders — even though I'd become tired from carrying it. But the sheep is tired, and I feel bad for it. This is how Moshe Rabbeinu was *zocheh* to receive the Torah at Har Sinai; it was in the merit of this *madreigah*. **Through middos tovos, one can merit such tremendous zechuyos, just as Moshe Rabbeinu merited.**

The *mishnah* writes about Moshe Rabbeinu: "the merit of the masses is attributed to him." That is, the merit of all *maasim tovim* that we all do, all of Am Yisrael, starting from Moshe Rabbeinu downward, the fact that we are *osek baTorah* and perform *maasim tovim*, is all attributed to Moshe Rabbeinu's merit. It's considered that he performed all these mitzvos — because he influenced Klal Yisrael and gave them merit through Kabbalas HaTorah at Har Sinai. Whatever we continue doing in the merit of that *hashpaah* belongs to him. And the very first

zechus that led to this tremendous level of *zikkui harabbim* was the story with the sheep.

The general rule is that *zikkui harabbim* requires prior *zechuyos*. Without prior *zechuyos*, a person cannot perform *zikkui harabbim*. Many people make the same mistake. They want to perform *zikkui harabbim*, and they try to do so, but it they are not successful. That's because they don't have prior *zechuyos*. One needs prior *zechuyos* for this — and what should the prior *zechuyos* be from? They can be from many different things. Moshe Rabbeinu's *zechus* is one, he had mercy on Hashem's creations, but there are many other *zechuyos*: Torah, *maasim tovim*, *middos tovos*, and *yiras Shamayim*. There are 613 mitzvos, all kinds of *zechuyos* that can enable a person to become a *mezakeh es harabbim*.

Jealous of the Merit That Led to Zikkui Harabbim

Rav Meir Shapiro did something very special. He built a huge building and established a yeshivah for hundreds of bachurim. Where did he come up with the money for this? There was one wealthy man who understood how important this was and he donated a respectable sum to the building fund. Many important people attended Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin's *chanukas habayis*. Great rabbanim and chassidishe rebbes attended, and some of them spoke.

One of the speakers (the Chortkover Rebbe *zt"l*) said: The man who donated such a substantial sum to the yeshivah is wealthy; he has the financial means to do so. I, on the other hand, am not a rich man and I cannot donate on that level, so I am not jealous of his donation. He can do it, and I can't, so I am not upset nor do I feel bad that I wasn't *zocheh* to do so myself. I just don't have the ability, so what can I do? But in order to perform *zikkui harabbim*, a person needs prior *zechuyos*. This wealthy man was *zocheh* to be a *mezakeh es harabbim*, so he surely had prior *zechuyos* that enabled him to perform *zikkui harabbim*. Now what was his *zechus*? I don't now, but it was probably something that I could have done as well — and I'm upset about that, I'm jealous of him for that. Why didn't I merit this *zechus* myself? How I wish that I too would have been worthy of the *zechus* that led him to be a *mezakeh harabbim* in Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin.

Prohibited Jealousy and Permitted Jealousy

Some jealousy is prohibited and some jealousy is good. The *Mesillas Yesharim* discusses this in chap. 4. Prohibited jealousy is if it is hard for you to see another person succeeding, either in *gashmiyus* or even in *ruchniyus*, and you want the other person to fail. For example, if someone sees his friend being successful in

zikkui harabbim and he is not as successful as him, and he's jealous and it's painful for him, and he wishes that the other person would stop performing *zikkui harabbim* because it's hard for him to see. He would be happy if the other person would stop.

The *Shaarei Teshuvah* writes (*Shaar 3*, 160) that this person falls into the category of "those who hate Hashem." The other person is performing *zikkui harabbim*, which is *retzon Hashem* and *kevod Shamayim*. Now, because of his jealousy, he doesn't want *kevod Shamayim* — the point of Creation — to occur, and this *kevod Shamayim* is difficult for him and he wishes it wouldn't be present. As a result, he is called "a hater of Hashem," and he does not receive Olam HaBa.

A person can lose his Olam HaBa with just one inner thought; this is horrible. Rabbeinu Yonah writes there, "If their soul is bad and it is difficult for them inside their heart" — if inside his heart it's hard for him that the other person does *zikkui harabbim*, he is called "a hater of Hashem" and he loses his Olam HaBa immediately without taking any action. Just one such thought is called "hating Hashem" *Rachmana litzlan*. This is the tenth *madreigah* in *Shaarei Teshuvah*.

However, the opposite exists as well: If he is happy that his friend performs *zikkui harabbim*, but he feels bad about himself, "why can't I do it," and it upsets him that he is not able to perform *kevod Shamayim* like his friend, this is a different form of jealousy — and it's a very good, kosher type of jealousy.

On Moshe Rabbeinu's last day in this world, he placed his hands on Yehoshua and turned him into an "full, overflowing vessel" (see Rashi to *Bamidbar 27:24*) so that he'd be able to continue influencing Klal Yisrael. And at that point, the wellsprings of wisdom were blocked from Moshe Rabbeinu (see *Sotah 13b*). The Midrash (*Devarim Rabbah 9:9*) tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu was jealous of Yehoshua, and he said, "One hundred deaths, and not one jealousy."

Lichorah, a person is not jealous of his *talmid* (*Sanhedrin 105b*), so how could he have been jealous of his *talmid* Yehoshua? The explanation is that it surely was not the prohibited jealousy. Moshe Rabbeinu rejoiced in his *talmid* Yehoshua's success, and he was happy about the *kevod Shamayim*, but he felt bad and was pained about himself — "why can't I do it?" And this is very good, kosher jealousy, being upset that you cannot be *mezakeh es harabbim* as well, and feeling bad about the lack of *kevod Shamayim*, feeling bad that you cannot perform *kevod Shamayim*. And this is something very good.

The main thing is *kevod Shamayim*, and we need *siyatta d'Shemaya* and Heavenly mercy to be *zocheh* to be among those who perform acts of *kevod Shamayim*, every

person individually, and every single person of Klal Yisrael. Every Yid has a *Yiddishe neshama*, and *halevai* that we should all have the *zechuyos* of *mezakei harabbim*; may we “merit, and bring merit to the masses.”

In Shemoneh Esrei, we recite the *brachah* of “*Hashiveinu l’Torasecha v’karveinu laAvodasecha*, Return us to Your Torah, and bring us close to service of You,” expressing all requests in the plural form: “Return us,” “Bring us

close,” “Return us in complete repentance.” There are probably other places in our davening where we ask that all Klal Yisrael merit something. This is really very great, and we need *zechuyos* for this to happen, *zechuyos* to merit Heavenly mercy through davening. It’s well known that Rav Yisrael Salanter said that it’s tried-and-true that *tefillah* for *ruchniyus* is accepted. *Yehi ratzon* that every person from Am Yisrael should be “*zocheh*” and bring merit to others.

The Hespel at Rav Eliyahu Abba-Shaul zt”l’s Levayah

The *petirah* of the Rosh Yeshivah of Ohr LeZion is a great loss for the yeshivah. He was *mashpia* Torah and *yiras Shamayim* and *middos tovos* on all the *bachurim*. He had an influence on the entire area too, and on anyone who had a *kesher* with him. He had a *hashpaah* of Torah, *yiras Shamayim*, and *middos tovos*, which are the three pillars the world stands on: Torah, *avodah* and *gemillus chasadim*. Now this *hashpaah* is lost. It’s a loss for the entire *tzibbur* for we are lacking the influence of this *kedushah*, the *kedushah* of Torah and *yiras Shamayim* and *middos tovos* that the Rosh Yeshivah was *mashpia*.

Now it is incumbent on everyone who gained from him, all those who are now lacking that *hashpaah*, to influence themselves, to strengthen themselves in *esek haTorah*, *maasim tovim*, and *kavanah* in *tefillah*. Rashi writes in *Brachos daf 32* that “*chizuk*” means “constantly and with all one’s strength.” The only way to do this is by learning *mussar sefarim*. There are many well-known *mussar sefarim* that have a good influence. When a person has a steady learning session in *mussar*, the *hashpaah* is visible and even the atmosphere at home changes and becomes more pleasant and calm. It’s well known that *mussar sefarim* give a person a happy life.

B’ezras Hashem may all the *talmidim*, and those who were influenced by him, continue to strengthen themselves by learning *mussar* daily. This will give them *chizuk* to carry on the *hashpaah* that they now lack, and they will influence themselves and be *zocheh* to *siyatta d’Shemaya*. “One who comes to be purified will be helped,” and whoever learns *mussar* is considered “one who comes to be purified” and he is *zocheh* to *siyatta d’Shemaya*. Purity includes everything: Torah, *avodah* and *emunah*, and *gemillus chasadim* and *middos tovos*. The only way — which is also the most secure and best way — to attain this, is by learning *mussar*. Each person should choose a *sefer* that interests him, and thus, *b’ezras Hashem*, each and every person will influence himself and be *zocheh* to continue the *hashpaah* that is now lacking, due to the *petirah* of the Rosh Yeshivah, *zichrono livrachah*.

V’Shavsa HaAretz Shabbos LaShem

Excerpts from Rabbeinu’s Address at an Emergency Kinus in His Home for Keren HaShviis

We are here to discuss keeping Shemittah. Even though sadly not all of Klal Yisrael observe Shemittah, there are Gibborei Koach who withstand the *nisayon* and observe Shemittah. This is *kevod Shamayim*! And *kevod Shamayim* is the purpose of Creation, as Chazal say at the end of *Pirkei Avos*: “Whatever HaKadosh Baruch Hu created in His world, He created solely for His honor.” By our observance of Shemittah, despite all the challenges, and despite the difficulties, we are withstanding the *nisayon* and we are performing *kevod Shamayim* and making a *kiddush Hashem*.

It is surely a great *zechus* for every single person to partner in this *kevod Shamayim*, in this tremendous *zechus* of partnership in *kevod Shamayim*. The farmers who are Gibborei Koach have tremendous *zechuyos*, they are withstanding their test and being *mekadeish shem Shamayim*. This will provide tremendous *zechuyos* for success in whatever you need, *gashmiyus* and *ruchniyus*, with lots of *nachas* from the entire family and *siyatta d’Shemaya* in all necessary matters — in the merit of the *kevod Shamayim* that they are generating.

Keren HaShviis’s Israeli hotline: 1800-300-544

Dedicated by
the Kroll Family, Los Angeles
להצלחת בניהם ובנותיהם
בתורה וביראת שמים

For donations or dedications of the Hebrew and English flyers, or to receive the *sichos* to your email, please contact:

darkei.hachizuk@gmail.com

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