

טוב הקהילה

בס"ד

'יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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טיב המערכת

קדושים תהיו – You shall be holy

A man was walking along the street when he saw a crowd of people at the base of a very tall building. He stopped to see why there was a crowd there and he was told that this building had 100 stories and the king promised a large reward to whoever could climb to the top of the building. All the people there raised their eyes to the top of the building and when they saw how tall the building was, they gave up and continued on their way. But that man decided to go up. He began to walk up floor after floor until after several floors he saw an elevator before him. He went into the elevator and within a few minutes he was at the top of the building. Before receiving the reward, the king called him and asked him, "What caused you to climb despite seeing all the people who would not dare to do this?" The man replied, "I knew that if the king says it is possible to go up, then surely the thing was possible. Thus, despite not knowing how, I decided to do what I knew I could do, and from the way to the top was easy." The Torah command us (19:2) 'You shall be holy', but if we try with our human perception, we have no clue how to do this. Even if we are told about great generations that reached lofty levels of holiness, we say to ourselves, "They succeeded, but as for us, what chance do we have to succeed? We are small and weak, and we do not have the strength that they had." True, to reach high levels of holiness is not a simple thing, but this is also not that hard, how can this be?

It is told about Rebbe Yisrael of Rozhin who once when he was a child was seen crying. When asked why he was crying he replied, "I want to eat, but what can I do since I heard my father say that when a person wants to eat – he is not allowed to eat!" We mistakenly think that to be holy means to totally abstain from food and all other worldly items. Perhaps this is so, but we do not start here. In order to be holy we start at the lower floors, to wait a few minutes before eating, to cut down a little on the things that are not necessary, and similarly with those things that everyone can begin with. Over time Heaven will help them rise to very high levels, for we must remember this: If the King commands us to go up, it is surely possible.

- Tiv HaTorah - Kedoshim

טיב ההשגחה

'Move lightly' – 'לנוע בקלילות'

I left my house with the intention of walking to shul to give a shiur. I left the building and suddenly felt very weak to the point that I did not have the strength to walk to the shiur. I asked Hashem to send me a ride to the shiur which was not far from my house. Just as I was asking, a friend on an electric scooter, as many older people use, stopped to greet me. I said Shalom and he wanted to know where I was going. When he heard where, he offered me a ride on his scooter. I gladly accepted and within a few minutes I was at the shiur. Thanks to Hashem for the kindness He bestowed on me.

.מ.ה.

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'I and not a messenger' – 'אני ולא שליח'

One of the most important machines in a pizzeria is the 'opening machine' [a large mixer], which is the machine that rolls the dough, and a lump of dough opens into a large round dough, and this makes it easier to arrange on the grid prior to baking. In the past, the dough was prepared by using a rolling pin which took much more effort and time. Two days before Pesach the machine broke and I was left holding a stack of orders and with a machine that only worked intermittently...

I called a friend who works in a place that fixes these machines, who agreed to take it in which itself was a huge favor, who would bring the machine to the repair shop and bring it back immediately after it was fixed? This is a large expensive machine, filled with flour, even after it was cleaned it would still be heavy. Most mixers are cleaned before Pesach. I tried to hire a driver, but ten of them turned me down. All of them were either busy or simply not interested.

At night I raised my eyes to Hashem and asked for advice and salvation. Suddenly, I saw on my phone a missed call from a young man who runs errands, and it did not enter my mind that this was an errand.

I returned his call and I asked him if he could bring my mixer into the repair shop and bring it back after it was fixed? He answered that he was happy to take the mixer in the morning and return it when fixed.

I asked him why he called me and what had he wanted?

He replied, "I wanted to order a pizza pie for the house and instead of calling the store, I called your private number."

.ו.ש.

'תורה' ו'חסד' הם תרי ריעין
'Torah' and 'Chesed' [kindness] are two friends

ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ה' (יט:יח)

You shall love your fellow as yourself. (19:18)

Rashi explains: **You shall love your fellow as yourself – R' Akiva said, "This is a great rule in the Torah."**

I once heard an explanation of R' Akiva's words as follows: **'This is a rule'** for anyone who is a **'a Gadol [great] in Torah'**. That is, no one has merited to be a **'Gadol in Torah'** who does not have the rule of **'you shall love your fellow as yourself'** as a light unto his feet. He always thinks about how to do better for another. This trait prepares the person to achieve Torah. As HaRav HaTzaddik Rebbe Binyamin Rabinowitz once told me, Chazal enumerated forty-eight ways with which to acquire Torah (Avos 6:5), and whoever contemplates them will see that many of them are about interpersonal relations, to teach us that that the main success in Torah is in the merit of one who carries the yoke of his fellow and seeks his benefit.

The same way that the great ones of the generations gave themselves to toil in Torah, so too they gave of themselves for their fellow Jews. Who do we have as great as the Bnei Yissaschar, that whoever looks into his *seforim* is astounded by his brilliance? It is told about that Tzaddik that he could write with both hands at the same time. A different topic with each hand. In his 58 years he wrote many essays [many of which were lost due to difficult times]. It is told that as he lay on his sickbed close to his death, with only a few hours to live, he asked Hashem Yisbarach to give him three more days to prepare properly for his transition from one world to the next, and Heaven answered him. These days were set aside to think thoughts and correct with Teshuva all particulars that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is particular with His righteous.

His students and relatives who knew the deeds of their holy Rav, that in those days no one was brazen enough to enter his room, However, because they knew that time was precious, they stood outside his room who was on his sickbed secluded with his Creator. Suddenly, a man who no one knew came into the house of the Tzaddik, and without asking questions entered the room of the Tzaddik, sat near his bed, and began to speak and unload his problems before the Tzaddik. He said, "I am a merchant, and a short while ago a business opportunity presented itself that would bring me a handsome profit, a large amount of wool at a low price, to sell in the market at a high price. But to my dismay, after the deal went through the price of wool dropped and I lost everything."

More than the amazement of the students from the story of the merchant who was crying for his money, they were surprised to see how their Rav listened to the merchant, commiserated with him, and it was as if he forgot the borrowed time he was living on. Their Rav continued to amaze them by asking the details of the business and the loss that caused his downfall. Until eventually he spoke to the heart of the merchant and comforted him to give him hope. Soon the market will shift again, and the price of wool will go up in a short time. Then he will be able to sell the merchandise for a high price. The merchant was comforted and turned on his way, and the Tzaddik went back to his thoughts.

The students could not believe what they had just seen. They were sure this was a Heavenly matter which they had no concept of. They wanted to explain that this merchant was a hidden Tzaddik who knew with *ruach hakodesh* that their Rav was only a few days before his passing, and he wanted to speak with him about secret topics by way of parable. Some wanted to explain the things as a preparation to pass on to the next world. However, his son who was to replace him, Rebbe Dovid of Dinuv, thought differently. To him this was a simple merchant, and even though his father was busy sanctifying himself in preparing himself to pass to the next world, he was still able to break to help a Jew wallowing in his distress in order to calm his turbulent spirit. This was his heart's desire all his life, and he was always ready and prepared to devote himself to help a Jew...

This was also the habit of HaRav Rebbe Dovid Biderman of Leluv who would do for others, which teaches us how the Tzaddikim put all their effort into helping another Jew. He would say, "After a person passes away, he sees that every moment he lives in this world is precious, for the merit is given to him to do good and acquire eternal good for himself. If only the person was given the opportunity that after his death, he should live one more day to do good and add to his merits. Without a doubt everyone would choose mitzvos that he thinks are most important." Here the Tzaddik paused and said, "Which mitzvah do you think I would choose at a time like this? I would set aside the day to help Jews and teach them the way in *avodas Hashem!*..."

The students of the Vilna Gaon took on this view. See the introduction to the *sefer* Nefesh Chaim of the holy Gaon Rebbe Chaim of Volozhin which was written by his son, the Maharitz, who wrote about his holy father that he always devoted himself for Israel. Everything he had he gave to the people, and even his son showed that he acted the same way. This is what he wrote: 'In all his ways he minimized his honor to increase the honor of Heaven. Whether for the community, especially in public matters, he put his entire soul into it even more than he had strength for. Even though he was old, he was busy all night. Even when he had no strength *Rachmana litzlan*, even on his sickbed, he cleared his mind and raised his eyes to Heaven, to partner the name of Heaven with the distress of the people and especially to their sighs and cries, his many sighs broke up anyone who heard them. He would often rebuke me that he saw that I did not join in the pain of others. He would always tell me, "Every person was not created for himself, rather, only to help others to the best of his ability."'

Similarly, it is famously known about the Chofetz Chaim who would arrange assemblies to strengthen Judaism, since in his time there was a great decline in Judaism. It is told that at one of these assemblies, the Chazon Ish, who was then young, sat with him. The Chofetz Chaim noticed a lack of enthusiasm in the Chazon Ish who wanted to seclude himself in the four amos of Torah and halacha. The Chofetz Chaim turned to him and said, "I also used to think that it was better to seclude myself with my Maker and serve Him by clinging to Him, but I know that this is not what Hashem wants at this time. Therefore, I am willing to give up my world for Hashem Yisbarach." Needless to say, the words of the Chofetz Chaim made an impression on the Chazon Ish, and he devoted himself to the people until he was old.