

טוב הקהילה

בס"ד

יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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טיב המערכת

אתה החילות – אתה החילות

A man was standing in a corner and praying the following: "Ribono shel olam, I have to marry off my daughter and I need a lot of money for this. Please send me all the money I need." In his heart he thinks, 'Perhaps I should go to the big donors or to a certain wealthy man', and he continues praying: "Please send a *refuah sheleima* to so-and-so", and again he thinks to himself, 'Perhaps I have to go to a better doctor. Perhaps I should consult with a specialist.' The same happens with every Tefillah, he gives 'advice' to Hashem Yisbarach, how He should send him the salvation. Moshe Rabeinu *davens* before HaKadosh Baruch Hu with these words (3:24): אתה החילות להראות את עבדך את – 'You had begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand'. Moshe Rabeinu teaches us how to pray, how to ask requests from Hashem Yisbarach. He speaks to HaKadosh Baruch Hu and only He fulfills it. 'You had begun', only You and no other. Similarly, it is written in Chovos Halevavos, 'If a person thinks that someone else can help him, HaKadosh Baruch Hu tells him, "If you are relying on someone else – go to him!"'

And so, when a person asks Hashem Yisbarach to help him or do good for him, he must recognize with clear *emunah* that only Hashem Yisbarach can help him and save him, and no other creature in the world. As Dovid Hamelech said (Tehillim 127:1), אם ה' לא יבנה בית שוא עמלו בונו בו' – 'If Hashem will not build the house, in vain do its builders labor on it', and אם ה' לא ישמר עיר שוא שקד – 'if Hashem will not guard the city, in vain is the watchman vigilant'.

Who does not need salvation? Who does not ask Hashem Yisbarach to save him? Many of us ask, and sometimes we are inclined to offer 'advice' to HaKadosh Baruch Hu as to how He can save us... we forget that HaKadosh Baruch Hu '*matzmiach yeshuah*' – 'He causes salvation to flourish'. He does not need any help from little, low people as us since He is able to save us. Any suggestions or advice that we can offer, are all His suggestions. These are all ways that He chose in the past to use them to save others. Remember, only Hashem Himself can save, and it is only to Him we can turn to. We can only ask of Him, and hope for help and salvation, and 'הבוטח בה' חסד יסובבנו' – 'but the one who trusts in Hashem, kindness surrounds him' (Tehillim 32:10)

- Tiv HaTorah – Va'eschanan

טיב ההשגחה

'והשיב לב אבות על הבנים'

And He will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons

How many prayers and boiling tears are shed for the *chinuch* of children? And when the child goes slightly off the course, then the dam of the river of *teras* opens without stopping, making all the *segulos* in the world not helpful. My teenage son, despite learning strongly in yeshiva, found himself 'good' friends who persuaded him to watch movies. Once it started it was hard for him to stop, and he looked for any opportunity to go places to watch movies. Of course, over time he asked me to allow him to watch movies in the house so that he would not watch outside because then he would be exposed to the wrong content, and he preferred to protect himself and not fall to even worse things...

I explained to him that in our house we do not watch movies, neither me or anyone else, and the computer is fully protected and is only used for work, and no persuasion would do any good to bring movies into the house for him. The boy did not give up and continued to press with claims that there was supervision in the house and outside he might fall into worse things. Until an idea popped into my head: "Go to our Rebbe and tell him the matter, and if I receive an order from him, then I will immediately do as he says and bring everything he tells me into the house!!!"

The next day the boy showed up at the Rebbe's house and presented his arguments. Of course, the Rebbe tried speaking to his heart and explain to him the seriousness of the matter, and why we came into the world, and he asked him to learn books of mussar, which had the power to kill the power of the *yetzer hara*. He added that it would better to pray to go blind and not sin *chaililah*. But all these words fell on deaf ears. We left the Rav's house and my son left me holding the *sefer* the Rav gave him, he continued on his way as if nothing happened. I dropped him off at the stop for the yeshiva. I *davened* to Hashem that He enlighten the correct way for me.

Suddenly, I did some soul searching as I myself walk around with a kosher, filtered device that I use for work, but I get news headlines and movie reviews on it. True, everything is kosher and clean, but if I do not control myself, how can I ask the boy to be pure when I am flawed?! It was hard but I took upon myself not to be updated at all during The Three Weeks until after Tisha B'Av, which means not to look at friends' devices...

This is very hard for someone who has no other way to keep up with news in the world but I took this on because of the boy.

That week, on Motzaei Shabbos, the boy told me that he wanted to let the Rebbe know that he took on not to watch movies until Tishrei, even though this was very hard to take this on himself!!! All the speeches did not help, just one acceptance by the father helped immediately. I publicize the story to inform parents that instead of yelling and being frustrated, each person should examine himself for a flaw that he is asking his child to correct. Even *bain hazmanim* remember that the apple does not fall far from the tree. .ג.ל

מעשה אבות סימן חבנים
The deeds of the fathers are a sign for the children

**ושננתם לבניך ודברת בם בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך בדרך ובשכבך
 ובקומיך: (ז:ו)**

**You shall teach them to your sons and you shall speak of them
 while you sit in your home and while you walk on your way, when
 you lie down and when you rise. (6:7)**

I heard from my revered father, my teacher, that there is a hint in this *posuk* that the father's main success in training children is dependent on his own personal habits. Since the children are dependent on the fathers, they negate their view to his view, and they set their way of life based on his way of life. Therefore, if a person wants to fulfill '*veshinantem levanecha*' – 'you shall teach them to your sons' – to guide his sons to learn Torah, then it is incumbent on him to fulfill '*vedibarta bam*' – 'and you shall speak of them' – that he himself must be involved in learning Torah. From this, the sons will set in their minds that this is the path that the person must choose to go on.

My father, my teacher, would add to emphasize his point, "I was a *mechanech* [rebbe, teacher], and I continued like this. One of the *mechanchim* came to me and asked me to speak to one of the students in his *shiur*, since the student was getting older, but his spiritual growth was not in line with his getting older. He has no desire for Torah or *avodah*, and even though his teachers continually speak to him about the advantage of Torah and *avodah*, and all the other boys drink their words with thirst, and they warm their hands to serve Hashem, these words are not making an impression on the heart of the boy.

My father, my teacher, continued, "So, I called the boy over and asked him to explain the matter, and after much coaxing I succeeded to understand the oppression on the heart of the boy. This is what he said to me, 'I heard those same amazing words about the virtue of the Torah from my father. He indeed 'spoke well' however, when I observed if he also 'acted well', I did not see this by him. He told me that every moment that a person does not aside for Torah and mitzvos, aside from what he lost of the eternity of that moment, he also transgresses the sin of '*bitul Torah*' – wasting time which is very harsh. But he himself is very far from the testimony he speaks, and when he gets home from a hard day of work, he opens the newspaper and does not set aside time for Torah... if these are his words, then why should I be a fool and believe him?' Obviously, my father, my teacher called the boy's father, and enlightened him of this, and he truly changed his ways."

This misfortune once happened to me as well. Parents came to me asking me to reach out to their son whose heart had turned away from Torah and mitzvos. When I came to speak to the heart of the boy, he told me explicitly that he does not know why his parents are not happy with his behavior, "I see with my own eyes how they are not so particular about mitzvos, and the difference between me and them is only internal, they are still ashamed of this. Therefore, they present themselves outwardly as Torah and mitzvos observant, but I am not ashamed of this. Just the opposite, the trait that I am better than they are is that in addition to not being observant they fool those around them. This is not so with me as I do not fool anyone and I act this way even in public..."

These two facts are like two witnesses, the father does not have the strength to train his children and accustom them to the good which he himself is negligent of. The father must know that the nature of a man's heart is evil from his youth (Bereishis 8:21) and his heart leans to the negative side. Why should he force himself to negate his will to that of his Creator when no one shows him that this is the correct path... only if the son sees his father act properly – he does not have the yoke of others – and conducts himself appropriately, then he will understand as well that he must choose well, since this is the true way of the Torah.

Look in the holy *sefer* 'Sfas Emes' (Vayeishev 5634 Iylu) where he brings down the Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 34:8) 'Rebbe Yitzchak said, "The Torah has taught you proper behavior, that if a person does a good deed he should do it with a joyful heart. For if Reuven had known that HaKadosh Baruch Hu would write about him (Bereishis 37:21) 'וישמע ראובן ויצילהו מידם' – 'Reuven heard, and he rescued Yosef from their hand' he would have carried Yosef on his shoulder and taken him to his father.'" The Sfas Emes explains that surely the Midrash is not taken in its plain meaning, for if Reuven knew that praises would be written about him and it would have honored him, he would have been more careful with his actions. We cannot suspect that the holy tribes did an *avodah* that was not totally for the sake of Heaven, or an *avodah* for the sake of honor and praise. It must be that the intent of the Midrash is to explain why Reuven wanted to act secretly, and to this it responds that he did not know that his mindset and his actions were etched in the holy Torah, and his actions would teach and influence generations. Had he known this, he would not have hidden his intent and his actions. We conclude from here that the same applies to every person. He must know that every detail of his actions are relevant to all the generations that come after him, and through this awareness he will be strengthened in his observance of Torah and mitzvos.

We are now in the month of *aveilus* for Rabeinu HaGadol, the Av Bais Din of Yerushalayim. I once went to him with my family, and I showed all the Torah pieces they had written. Among other things I said to him that even though I had not earned much success like this, however I thank and praise my Creator that he gave me sons who are *talmidei chachamim*. However, Rabeinu disagreed with me and said, "Do not say that, and do not separate your achievements from theirs, for without a doubt their success is based on your success. It is only in your *zchus* that they are successful, for had you not been involved in Torah, they would not appreciate the holy Torah, and they would not have attained the level where they are.

It is told regarding the 'Bais Yisrael' of Gur, that he went out of his way to bring close and honor one of the plain people who would come into him, and this aroused wonder. What did the Rebbe see in this simple man? When he was once asked about this, he replied that this man merited good children, which proves that he is upright and Heaven fearing, for were it not so, he would not merit this...

True, so that the father should merit to go in the proper path, it is incumbent on him to improve his ways and accustom himself to Torah, mitzvos, and refined character before he even sets up his house. As it is told, they asked the 'Chazon Ish' when does the obligation fall on the father to train his children in Torah and mitzvos, and the Chazon Ish replied, "This obligation begins ten years before he gets married! It is only once the person accustoms himself to Torah and mitzvos his ways change for himself, and it becomes second nature to him. Then he can properly serve as the perfect role model for his descendants after him.