

# טיב הקהילה

בס"ד

'יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו הרה"צ ר' גמליאל רבינוביץ שליט"א

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טיב המערכת

טיב ההשגחה

## ואני הנה לקחתי – And I, behold! I have taken

It is brought down in the Midrash (Tanchuma Terumah Siman 2): A *chaver* was once traveling on a ship with many merchants and they asked him, "Where is your merchandise?" He told them, "My merchandise is greater than yours." They searched the entire boat, and they could not find anything of his. They began to laugh at him, when pirates (robbers) boarded and took everything they found on the ship. They landed and entered the country, they had nothing, no bread to eat nor clothes to wear, what did that *chaver* do? He went into a Bais Medrash sat and learned. When the people saw he was a great Ben Torah, they stood up and showed give great honor, and treated him properly as befitting with greatness and respect. The leaders of the community began to accompany him on his right side and his left. When the merchants saw this, they came to him, appeased him, and said to him, "Please, do us a favor and speak favorably of us before the people, for you know what we were and what we lost on the ship. We beg of you, do a kindness with a us, speak to them for even a small piece to put in our mouths and we will live, and we will not die of hunger." He told them, "I told you; my merchandise is greater than yours, yours was lost and mine endured. Ho! כי לקח טוב 'כי נתתי לכם' – 'For I have given you a good lesson'."

We are all familiar with the scenario that when we give a child something to eat, even before he tastes it he says, "I don't like it" or "It doesn't taste good", and we say, "But you haven't tasted it, how you know that it doesn't taste good?"! HaKadosh Baruch Hu gave us the Torah, and it is pleasant, and if we do not sense the pleasantness – then apparently we have not tasted it... now we have the opportunity to open the mouth and taste it, and ask of the Creator, 'Please, Hashem, sweeten the words of Your Torah in our mouths', and HaKadosh Baruch Hu guarantees that whoever is involved in Torah does not have to worry about the mundane, for Heaven will be concerned for him for all his needs. If this is so then it works out that Chag HaShavuos is not only Yom HaDin [Judgment Day] for spirituality, but even for the mundane. So is it brought down in the Gemara (Kiddushin 84b), 'It was taught in a Baraisa, Rebbe Nehorai said, "I leave all the professions in the world, and I only teach my son Torah, for every trade in the world only stands for the person in his youth but in his old age he is exposed to hunger. But Torah is not so. It stands by a man in his youth and provides him with a future and a hope in his old age.'"

- Tiv HaMoadim - Shavuos

## 'רפואה שלימה לכל מכותינו'

### 'A complete recovery for all our ailments'

Severe pain pierced the left side of my body, pain that simply kept sleep from eyes. I could not sleep without waking up, who would think that it would not be possible to sleep on this side, I would not even dream of it. In addition to all the troubles, the chiropractor who I have known for many years just flew to the United States for two months, so I had no one to talk to at all. I *davened* to Hashem to deliver me from my misery in a way that was good in the eyes of Hashem.

Every morning despite the pain, I did not forego my set time for Torah, and I went to *shiorim* in Kollel with devotion.

In the middle of the *shior*, in order to find a comfortable position, I rocked and stretched out on the chair. But suddenly the chair broke and I fell to the floor of the room with a loud and unpleasant thump, my feet hit the bottom of the table.

With thanks to Hashem, I got up and I sat down to continue learning as usual.

That night, lo and behold, I slept through the night without pain and without waking up every minute. The same thing happened the next night and the third night. Now, after four days, the pain has almost completely disappeared from the personal treatment that HaKadosh Baruch Hu gave me by falling off the chair.

Amazingly, a person thinks that he is receiving a blow, but he really is receiving a cure for his affliction!!!

Speaking of the *shior*, I would be pleased to take advantage of this platform to say that I do not forego the time of the *shior*, this is my set time for Torah! This week one of the bus companies called me and asked me to take a trip which began at the time of the *shior*. Despite my wanting to do it, I told him that there was no way I would do it at the expense of the *shior*, and all his pleading and begging will not help him. As soon as I finished the *shior*, he called me saying that a new trip came up from 1:00 PM until night. The job involved transporting a group plus waiting for them a few hours in that place and bringing them back. In the end, the group finished early and I was paid for all the hours with plenty of time to listen to *shiorim* until they got back on the bus. The first trip that was offered to me was difficult and annoying, and in the merit of the yoke of Torah that I did not forego it, I received an easier job and did it gladly.

נ.ב.

ונתנה תוקף קדושת היום

Let us now relate the power of this day's holiness

Chazal have revealed to us the greatness and power of this great and holy day of Chag HaShavuos, on which Israel received the Torah, and the fulfillment of Creation is dependent on it.

It says in the Gemara (Shabbos 88a) 'Reish Lakish said, "Why is it written (Bereishis 1:31) 'ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום השישי' – 'and there was evening and there was morning the sixth day'? Why do I need the extra letter 'ה'? It teaches that HaKadosh Baruch Hu stipulated with the works of the Creation, saying to them: "If the Jewish people accept the Torah [that was given on the 6th of Sivan], you will endure. But if not, I will return you to astonishing emptiness." Rashi explains that all the components of Creation were in a state of suspension until the sixth day, which is the 6th of Sivan, for on the 6th of Sivan when Israel received the Torah all the components of Creation were strengthened and were considered as if the world was created now, the 6th of Sivan was prepared for the giving of the Torah.'

It is known from the tzaddikim that Shavuos is the Yom HaDin for our spiritual lives, and as HaRav HaKadosh Rebbe Baruch of Mezbuzh said (Botzina D'nehora Shavuos) that he is not as afraid of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur as he is of the Yom HaDin of Shavuos. Because on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we are judges for the mundane, in sum we are talking about a loaf of bread, more or less, but the Yom HaDin of the holy Yom Tov of Shavuos we are judged for our spiritual lives and our success in the eternal Torah.

So it is brought in Shelah HaKodesh on Mesechta Shavuos Perek 7 Mitzvah Os 9): It is brought down in the name of the sefer Tolaas Yaakov (page 58): 'Know that just like on Rosh Hashanah, HaKadosh Baruch Hu wanted to scrutinize the deeds of people, for that is the day of creation and renewal of the world, and just as we established to say that this is the day of the beginning of your deeds as per Rebbe Eliezer who said that the world was created in Tishrei, so did He want on the day of the giving of the Torah, which teaches about the renewal of the world, to scrutinize the deeds of the world and judge the fruit of the trees, as brought down in the first chapter of Rosh Hashanah (16a), 'the world is judged at four times in the year... on Atzeres [Shavuos] for the fruit of the trees,' and we have previously explained that these fruit are the neshamos [souls] that sprout from the trees of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and the world is judged on this day for the Torah that was given on it and we neglect it, and he was referring to the fruit of the tree that were not properly completed with Torah and mitzvos.'

Therefore, we must be very afraid of Yom HaDin, for they consider all the moments we neglected the Torah, and they will examine how we kept the Torah and mitzvos. Therefore, the preparation for this day must be as appropriate for Yom HaDin, we must strengthen in learning and keeping the Torah.

And so it is brought in the name of the mekubel the Reshash, as the person conducts himself during the days of sefirah which are the preparatory days for receiving the Torah, so too should be his conduct throughout the year. Therefore, it is fitting for us to awaken in these days to do a true cheshban hanefesh – soul searching – about our spiritual situation, to check how our Torah appears to us? In what manner do we keep its mitzvos? And to prepare ourselves to be valid receptacles to receive the Torah this year.

**על הכל יבוא אלקים במשפט** – For everything G-d comes in judgment-  
The main thing is to simply know that for everything G-d comes to judge, literally for everything, each and every detail. Our thoughts, speech, and deeds as Chazal said (Avos 2:1) 'a watchful eye, an attentive ear, and all your deeds are recorded in a book', that all our

deeds are literally written in a book. We must be aware of this constantly, that one must set aside time every day to consider that there is justice and there is a Judge, and one will have to give an accounting for everything, every thought, speech and deed.

And by steadily learning from Mussar *seforim*, and it is not enough with what one hears in a *drasha* or rousing *sichah* that one hears from time to time, though it really helps for that time, but it is possible that within a short time the feeling will depart, and he will go back to wasting time. But in order to change the life pattern, one must study steadily, work on *yireh* [awe] daily, until the soul truly acquires it, and his deeds will guide his influence properly.

Really, these words are not said just towards the bad deeds, that he distance from the bad because of fear of judgment of G-d, rather even on the good deeds that he did and he was involved in Torah and Tefillah, one must consider that perhaps his deeds were not proper, and his Torah and Tefillah were filled with distractions and strange thoughts, and even on this we say that all your deeds are recorded in a book [included with this is speech and thought].

אם יש דין למטה אין דין למעלה

If judgment is made below, judgment is not made above

When a person thinks about this and does an introspection of all his deeds, they he earns much *siyata d'Shmaya* [help from Heaven] and sweetening of the judgment, as Chazal said (Medrash Rabbah Shoftim 5:5) 'if judgment is made below, judgment is not made above', there is no need to judge him since he has judged himself.

If however, a person does not check his deeds, then he arouses judgment from above, for if there is no judgment below then there is judgment above. All judgments and troubles in the world come because of the sins that distant us from our Father in Heaven, this causes all the judgments and troubles even in the mundane as Chazal said (Shabbos 58a) 'there is no challenge without sin, and if uproots the cause, that is, he gets closer to his Creator, and repents for his sins, then all judgments are sweetened and the troubles are nullified. So too if the person judges himself by introspection and by learning Mussar *seforim* and disciplines himself as it says (Tehillim 94:12), 'אשרי הגבר אשר תיסרנו י-ה ומתורתך תלמדנו' – 'Praiseworthy is the man whom G-d disciplines, and whom You teach from Your Torah', then he avoids harsh troubles and negates the judgment from above.

עיצומו של יום – The focus of the day

These days of preparation for receiving the Torah are very propitious to atone for the sins and to sweeten the judgment by the person accepting upon himself the yoke of Torah and the yoke of *Malchus Shamayim* [Kingdom of Heaven]. As mentioned in the Yerushalmi (Rosh Hashanah 4:8), 'HaKadosh Baruch Hu told them that since they accepted upon themselves the yoke of Torah, I consider it as if you have never sinned', and because of this the word '*chatas*' is not written by the goat of Shavuos as it is by the other holidays as it writes '*se'ir izim chatas*' since the Yom Tov itself atones.

It mentions in the holy *sefer* Bais Avraham: 'Shavuos corresponds to Yom Kippur and atones for those liable for *korais* [communal excision] like Yom Kippur, and there it is written (Vayikra 16:30) 'כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לטהר אתכם מכל חטאתם לפני ה' תטהרו' – 'For on this day He shall provide atonement for you to cleanse you, from all your sins before Hashem shall you be cleansed'. '*Titharu*' has the *gematria* [numerical value] of '*keser*' [crown] which denotes *malchus* [kingdom], that is, one who accepts upon himself the yoke of *malchus*, then the day atones and purifies and changes 'כרת' to 'כתר'. But, just like the purification in a mikveh, if even one hair remains outside the immersion does not help, similarly, the acceptance of the yoke of *Malchus Shamayim* must be complete.'

And so it is brought down in the holy *sefer* 'Kedushas Levi', that the Yom Tov of Shavuos is compared to the wedding day of *Klal Yisrael* to Hashem Yisbarach, as it were, as it is written - 'ביום חתונתו' - 'on the day of his wedding' – this is *matan Torah* – the giving of the Torah, and Chazal said (Yerushalmi Bikkurim 3:3) 'one who marries a wife, all his sins are forgiven', and if so, then Shavuos also forgives sins.

### ה' אלוֹקֵיךָ מֵיִסְרִיךָ – Hashem, your G-d disciplines you

Really a person has to know that even when *chas v'shalom* challenges and hardships come upon him, whether physically or spiritually, one must accept them with love, and remember that 'כְּאִשֶּׁר יִסֵּר אִישׁ אֶת בְּנוֹ ה' אֱלֹקֵיךָ מִסֵּרְךָ' – 'just as a father will discipline his son, so Hashem, your G-d, disciplines you' (Devorim 8:5), and everything is for his benefit and forgiveness of sins. The purpose of all these challenges is to remind the person that he has to get closer to his Creator and correct his ways. [I heard from my teacher, my Rebbe, Rebbe Binyamin Rabinovits that the person is able to know what he must correct based on the tribulations that HaKadosh Baruch Hu directs at the person measure for measure.]

Technically, suffering can even be in a very small thing, as Chazal wrote (Arachin 16b), 'To what extent is suffering?' The Gemara answers, even if he put his hand in his pocket to take out three coins and he only takes out two coins, and Rashi explains because he is bothered that he has to put his hand in his pocket to take out the third coin.

Similarly, one must know that all the difficulties, and lack of desire, and confusion that the person has spiritually, in his learning and his Tefillah, and other matters of *avodas Hashem*, all are categorized as suffering. Yet, with all this, if a person overcomes this and involves in Torah and *avodas Hashem*, there is no greater forgiveness of sins.

Perhaps we can say as Chazal said (Sukkah 52a), 'Whoever is greater than his fellow, his *yetzer* is also greater than his', similarly this topic applies to days that are holier, like Shavuos or other holy days, when the *yetzer hara* exerts great power to stop the person from learning Torah. One must go to battle with it with great strength. Therefore, the learning in the midst of this battle is very important as Chazal wrote (Avos D'Rebbe Nosson 3:10) 'one measure in pain is more important than a hundred measures without pain.'

### הוּי מַחֲשֵׁב הַפֶּסֶד מִצְוָה כְּנֶגֶד שְׂכָרָה

#### Consider the loss of a mitzvah against its reward

When a person wants to succeed spiritually, he must live with constant calculation, what is more important, a physical life or a spiritual life? What makes him happier, and what makes him sadder? Does he value a mitzvah more than mundane things? How much physicality is he prepared to forego for a mitzvah or learning Torah? For example, if he is finding it hard to make a living, or some other physical thing that he is lacking, his entire being is focused on it, and he worries about it, and he tries to fill what he is lacking. This is not so when he is missing something spiritual [and he is missing much] does he worry the same amount? Does the missing amount bother him? For example, when he *davens* and he does not concentrate on the bracha of the *avos*, he has not fulfilled his obligation [even though it is ruled in halacha that he does not have to repeat the Tefillah (Shulchan Aruch 101:1)], does it bother him? Does he consider the loss of the mitzvah against its reward? Tefillah is something that stands at the height of the world! The same with learning Torah, if he stops learning when he should not stop learning, does this bother him? Does he seek counsel how to correct his way?

If the person does not take into account his spirituality, then he spends his life on the nonsense of the world, and he does not grab the eternal loss that he can never get back for the World to Come, when

he grabs what is really left from the mundane.

To illustrate this, we sometimes see when friends are dancing at a wedding and they are happy and joyous, even though at the time they do not see if he will be successful in life or not. But right now, it seems to them that he is successful, and they are all happy and dancing. In contrast to this, when the friend finishes a *mesechta*, do they also dance out of joy? It is brought in the Gemara (Shabbos 118b) 'The *Rabbanim* declared a Yom Tov when they would finish a *mesechta*, a day of joy for *talmidei chachamim*, for this joy is eternal. On the other side of the coin, if the friend is not successful in his learning, this should cause pain to his friends, more than a boy not finding a *shidduch*, with this a person can choose for himself what is important to him, physical success or spiritual success.

**שמע בני מוסר אביך – Hear my son the discipline of your father** – Actually, the main advice to arouse and consider an accounting of the world, and something that will always stay with him, **it is only through the study of Mussar seforim and studying the words of Chazal that awaken for this, and the learning must be steady.** It is well worth it to set aside time for this, for without having a set time, he will come to waste time, even though he is aroused for the moment by listening to a *drasha* or something similar, however, for it to settle in his mind he must learn and review the basics (as written in the introduction to Mesilas Yesharim), that there is a Creator of the world, and what is my obligation in the world, and why was I placed in this world, and through this he will change and improve.

There is a famous incident of Rebbe Yisrael Salanter, someone came to him and asked his advice, he only had a little time to learn Torah, what is the best thing to learn in this time? Rebbe Yisrael told him to learn Mussar *seforim*! This is the essential Torah learning! Rebbe Yisrael told him that if you learn Mussar *seforim*, and you know your obligation in the world, and why you came to the world, then you will see that you really have much more time to learn Torah, and this will change you and your outlook on life, and you will change your habits and way of life.

There is a specific strengthening of the *yetzer* for this, not to learn Mussar *seforim*. My father, my teacher would always mention what is brought in the will of the Rivash (page 55): **דברי פי און ומרמה – 'The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit, he has ceased contemplating to do good' (Tehillim 36:4), meaning, the words of the mouth of the yetzer hara has ceased contemplating to do good. This means that surely the yetzer hara does not entice the person to completely stop learning, for it knows that he will not listen to it. If he does not learn at all, he will not be considered in the eyes of others as anything, and they will not call him learned. But the yetzer hara entices him to not learn something that will bring him to yiras Shamayim – fear of Heaven – like Mussar seforim or Shulchan Aruch to clearly know halacha. It even entices him to spend all his time in Gemara and commentaries which stops the person from being well-rounded. I want to say that it holds him back from learning something that will improve his learning which is yiras Shamayim.'**

Therefore, the person must overcome the advice of the *yetzer* and set aside time to learn Mussar, for without steadily learning Mussar *seforim*, then all the arousals will dissipate within a short time. Even if one is before the holy holiday of Shavuos his awakening will only be momentary from the sanctity of the Yom Tov, and he has good intentions, but after the holiday he goes back to being steeped in the nonsense of this world until the month of Elul, and then the cycle repeats, but this is not long lasting, it is like something blowing in the wind, so too his awakening flies away.

## טיב הפרשה

But by learning Mussar *seforim* in order to keep what he is learning, then his internal being changes for the better, and this is the main thing. When working on the external factors everyone does the same thing more or less, learning, *davening*, and keeping mitzvos, but the main measurement is 'internally and intention of the heart' that mitzvos should not be done by people as learned, rather they must be done with *ahavas Hashem* and *yiras shamayim* [love of Hashem and fear of Heaven] and *dveikus* [devotion] and know before Whom he is serving. This only comes about with the steady study of Mussar *seforim*, until it is a constant purchase in his soul, and clearly, this does not happen if one does not exert himself.

This is how the Pela Yoetz writes it (Os Mussar): **'The advantage of studying Mussar is well-known as explained by the commentaries (Birchei Yosef Orach Chaim Siman 1) that the Rabbanim have said (Kiddushin 30b) 'I created a yetzer hara and I created Torah as the antidote' and they said, 'Draw it into the Bais Medrash, if it is stone it will dissolve, if it is iron it will melt, everything comes from learning Mussar. In general, one who does not always learn Mussar, he has not tasted the flavor of yiras chait [fear of sin], and in his eyes he is correct, he alone thinks he is an upright Jew, and even if he does hear a drasha or learns once in a yovel or hears words of Mussar, it does not help him and does not awaken him at all, dead flesh does not feel the knife.'**

As preparation to properly receive the Torah, one should be involved in Mussar *seforim* which discuss the value and importance of the advantage of the Torah and the conditions to receive it, and about correcting ones *midos* which is the main preparation to receive the Torah and it is the source to keep the Torah.

As it is brought down in the holy *sefer* Shaarei Kedusha of the Maharchu (Shaar 100): **'We find that a person must be more careful with bad midos more than keeping the positive mitzvos and negative mitzvos, for one who has good midos can easily keep all the mitzvos.'** Obviously, without learning Mussar *seforim*, one cannot correct his *midos* because it does not enter his mind at all that he needs correction.

### והרבו תחינה ובקשה – Increase pleading and requesting

We must remember that without *siyata d'Shmaya* – help from Heaven – one cannot succeed in anything, therefore one must be fastidious with Tefillah and request of HaKadosh Baruch Hu for his success and the success of his offspring daily.

I am reminded of that which we recite every morning in *Bircas HaTorah*, and we request, 'הערב נא ה' אלקינו את דברי תורתך בפינו... Please Hashem, our G-d, sweeten the words of Your Torah in our mouth... may we and our offspring – all of us – know Your Name and study Your Torah for its own sake', even little children recite this bracha and ask for their future offspring. We see from here the extent of our need to ask and pray for our success and the success of our offspring. *Tzaddikim* were meticulous with these berachos in particular and other Tefillos that ask through the day for learning Torah in general.

I found in the commentaries on Tefillah for that we request in the bracha *Atah Chonein*, 'ועת' – 'endow us graciously from Yourself with wisdom', the intent is for Ruach HaKodesh [Rashi also explains it like this], and I asked Rebbe Zundel Kroizer, how is this relevant to a young boy who can barely learn Gemara yet he asks for *Ruach HaKodesh*? He answered me that it is not possible to understand a piece of Gemara without *Ruach HaKodesh*! We see this for ourselves, one person understands the Gemara and one does not, this is because one has *Ruach HaKodesh* and one does not, each according to his level has his set amount!

Based on this perhaps we can explain Rashi who said that when a person does not understand his Torah learning, he should ask in *Atah Chonein*, that is he asks HaKadosh Baruch Hu to give him *Ruach HaKodesh* to understand the words of the holy Torah.

A man told me that he remembers how the 'Minchas Eliezer' of Munkatch would recite *Bircas HaTorah* with *kavanah* and took a long time to recite them. This happened more than 40 years ago, and the memory was still fresh in his mind, and every time he recited them he was energized by the way of the Rav.

The Minchas Eliezer wrote in his *sefer* Shaar Yisachar (Chag Bikkurim Os 93): **'The tzaddikim and chassidim were accustomed to extend the bracha of Ahavah Rabbah on this holy holiday of Shavuos, aside from the simple meaning that it is then that we open the eyes and learn Torah for its sake. He further explained based on the Toldos Yaakov Yosef (Parashas Va'eira) in the name of his Rav the holy Baal Shem Tov, who was told by heaven that Moshiach is delayed because of not extending Ahavah Rabbah. If this is every day, how much more so on this day. As explained in Tikunei HaZohar (Tikun 21) on Shavuos we are taken from exile, therefore Chag HaShavuos is the time of redemption, we must extend Ahavah Rabbah as much as possible, so that we do not delay the coming of Moshiach, rather to bring him closer in our days, how good is something in time.'**

I heard an amazing story about a woman who had no connection to Judaism, she only knew of one thing that she had heard from her grandmother, that when lighting candles on Erev Shabbos cry and request to have good children. In her naivete, she did not know the meaning of good children, so she prayed that her children should grow up to be like the prime minister (Ben Gurion). At that time the prime minister went to visit the Chazon Ish [regarding the draft] and this was publicized in the media. When she heard this, she thought that if the prime minister went to visit the Chazon Ish, then the Chazon Ish must be more distinguished than the prime minister, so she started praying that her children should be like the Chazon Ish, and Baruch Hashem her Tefillah was accepted and she has a very distinguished son who teaches Torah in Israel.

We see from here the power of a simple, wholehearted prayer that works, but the Merciful One needs love [*Rachmana liba baye*], and Hashem knows what is in the hearts, and we have no inkling of how a simple prayer works for some more and some less. It is brought from *tzaddikim* on the Tefillah 'כי אתה שומע תפילת כל פה' – **'for You hear the prayer of each mouth'**, even if it is only the mouth without *kavanah*, HaKadosh Baruch Hu hears this prayer. We must not negate any Tefillah or request of our own or others, even a small prayer has great significance.

These days of the giving of our Torah are very propitious to Hashem Yisbarach that we open our hearts to His Torah, and we place in our hearts His love and His awe. It is fitting to focus on Tefillah in these days especially on the holy Yom Tov itself. It is known that *tzaddikim* would lengthen their Tefillah on Shavuos, and it is told of the Chasam Sofer that in his yeshiva they would extend the bracha of Ahavah Rabbah on Shavuos for hours.

In truth, we have a *kal v'chomer* from Rosh Hashanah which is the Yom HaDin for the mundane [physical needs], and we request much for life and *parnasah* [livelihood], then even more so on the Yom Tov of Shavuos which is the spiritual Yom HaDin, it is fitting to ask for our spiritual lives, for success in Torah and *yiras shamayim*, and we should be able to overpower our *yetzer*, and He should give His love and awe in our hearts, and we should do His will and serve Him with full hearts.