

# טיב הקהילה

בס"ד

יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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## טיב המערכת

### כוחו של יהודי – The Power of a Jew

Our Rebbe, the Baal Shem Tov was once walking with his grandson HaRav HaKadosh Rebbe Boruch of Mezbusz when they came across a duke who was oppressed with suffering. When the duke heard the Baal Shem Tov approaching he turned to him and asked him if he could find some cure for his illness. The Baal Shem Tov told him that he would but he asked that cut back a little on his desires for only then would it be in his power to find a cure for him. But the duke did not agree to this and he said that he was not able to because it was literally part of his nature. This was amazing to the Baal Shem Tov who could not understand how a person could be like this. The Baal Shem Tov told him that this was because he was born to an elderly couple whose strength for desires was diminished and he was not eager to follow them in this and therefore lacked the power to abstain from his desires.

When they parted, HaRav HaKadosh Rebbe Boruch asked his grandfather, "Saba (Zaidy, Grandfather), why didn't you answer him that if you are Jewish, and a Jew has the special power to overcome difficulties with mind over matter?" The Baal Shem Tov answered him that to a gentile this is a very heavy matter and it is impossible to explain the concept of the nature of a Jew.

The coin that Chachamim minted in the middle bracha of the Yomtov Tefillah has an amazing format. 'You have chosen us from all the peoples' and with this tefillah the Congregation of Israel is glorified in that the Holy One Blesses is He chose it from all the nations and merited it to serve before him and to have His Name called upon it. Therefore it was not for nothing that our Chachamim z"l minted this bracha specifically in the Yomtov Tefillah for through it the supernatural powers are revealed for no other nation or language deserves this and only we who are children to the Omnipresent have been privileged with this gift to overpower the spirit above the ordinary.

The holiday of Pesach is approaching and in it we are warned, 'you shall not eat any leavening' and therefore, every Jew fulfills with the desire of his heart the mitzvah of removing on the fourteenth of Nissan. He knows that for the next whole week he is warned to shun that most vital thing, he separates himself from something which is so common and even so he fulfills with joy the will of his Maker and this shows the advantage of a Jew who is separated from all the other nations and he is able to forego that which is natural.

Under close examination you will find that this applies to all the other holidays as well where has to apply his strength to overcome something that is natural and on these days the advantage of Israel over the other nations is very clear.

- Tiv HaMoadim - Pesach

## טיב ההשגחה

### 'מעין בא עזרי' – 'From where will my help come'

I promised my grandchildren an outing during vacation if they continue to study well all winter each according to his character and ability. Vacation time came and the grandchildren were already insistent as to when we would go on the promised outing. I arranged for a nice minibus for the studious grandchildren and off we went on a steep, winding exhausting trip. Since I often listen to the shiurim of Rav Gamliel shlit"א and he frequently speaks about going on outings to appropriate places, we chose a distant location where most people do not tour. With a stick and a backpack I walked behind the guide towards the monument stone of the Tanna that awaited us at the end of the trail. Two hours passed until we reached our destination and the grandchildren were happy and joyous and they started cheering. I was very happy that we had reached our goal but my body could not take even one more step. I felt that my bones had separated from my body. The thought that I needed an additional two hours of walking to return to the exit hit me hard. In order not to cause any concern to my grandchildren I did not say a word, but at the headstone of the holy Tanna I poured out my heart in prayer for salvation "where will my help come from!" We began to walk back and one of the boys passed through a narrow rocky gorge and dislodged a large rock with his foot and it rolled passed the boys that were walking behind him. By way of a miracle no one was hurt and he was able to extricate himself from the gorge and return to the group in one piece but not before they all accepted upon themselves to learn several pages of gemara as thanks for the miracle. A short time later, a park ranger jeep appeared and a park ranger got out and asked to speak to the leader of the group. I approached to find out what was going on and he furiously told me to get in the jeep. When I asked him what this was all about, he said that he was following and observing us the whole time and we had disturbed a protected eagle nesting area and I would have to pay a heavy fine for this offense. I explained to him that we were hiking with a paid guide and *chailah* we never intended to break the law. He calmed down a little and he asked why we specifically came to this area. I explained to him that nowadays it is very difficult to tour where there are a lot of people because some dress inappropriately and I tried to find a place where there was a holy site to pray. He asked and he listened with much interest to the explanations and the reasoning and in the meantime I sat in the jeep that was travelling back along the winding trail and I thanked Hashem for sending merciful salvation. When we reached the parking lot by the office he let us out by the minibus and let us go without a fine.

**The Korban Pesach was eaten in a group- בחבורה נאכל הפסח**

Behold, we see that the mitzvah of offering the Korban Pesach is that it must be brought with a group as the posuk states (Shemos 12:3)

ויקחו להם איש שה לבית אבותו של בית

– they shall take for themselves, each man, a lamb for a father's house, a lamb for each household. A little further it warns (12:4)

אם ימעט הבית מהיות משה ולקח הוא ושכנו הקרוב אל ביתו במסכת נפשות איש לפי אכלו תכנסו על השנה

– but if the household would be too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor who is near his house shall take according to the number of people; everyone in proportion to his eating, shall you be counted for the lamb. It is appropriate to linger on this topic, why is the Pesach specifically eaten with a group? Also, what is the intent of the posuk when it states his neighbor who is near?

Perhaps we can say that the Children of Israel before leaving Egypt were steeped in forty-nine levels of impurity and were very small-minded and because of their exceedingly low level they had absolutely no desire to leave there and the Holy One, Blessed is He had to awaken them with a celestial awakening and through this take them up from the filth of Egypt and only then after they merited the light that Yisbarach illuminated for them were they willing to go out of Egypt and convert from servants of Pharaoh to servants of Hashem Yisbarach.

However, all this was guidance for that specific time for once their mindset was on exiting Egypt they were no longer able to receive the celestial illumination, therefore the Holy One, Blessed is He, did them a favor and preceded the celestial illumination before they realized that they would be exiled. However, the guidance for generations was not like this, for if there would constantly be guidance by a celestial light then this would negate the freewill of man for in an instance such as this there would surely be no challenge to rebel against the will of Hashem Yisbarach. The desire of Yisbarach is that a person should serve Him initially because of the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, and this should arouse him below and this will lead to a celestial arousal, and then the Holy One, Blessed is He, will spread the holy illumination from Heaven and then we will be privileged to enjoy the service of Hashem Yisbarach.

Behold, in order for a person to be aroused by an earthly awakening it is incumbent upon him to be in a group of those that fear Hashem Yisbarach, for although the main advantage of a person is the soul (neshama) that is within him, still it is clothed in an earthly body and the tendency of the body is for material things and a person requires much encouragement so that he does cause himself to stray from His will, and if *chalilah* he is not privileged to have the strength to overpower his Inclination, then the Inclination will very quickly cause him to fall because of the material things which are the encrustations of Egypt *chas v'chalilah*. But, if he associates himself members of a group that want to nullify their will for the will of Hashem Yisbarach, then one man will help his fellow to serve their Creator through the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and they will elevate to elevations of attachment to Hashem through the holy illumination. Therefore, at that moment that Israel merited the illumination from Heaven, they understood that this was not a guidance for generations since they themselves had never experienced anything like this and only now they earned this privilege so that they could be taken out of Egypt and since they wanted the privilege of having this light permanently, the Holy One, Blessed is He hinted to them this advice that they should always be bound and connected one to another for this is the utensil that will benefit them for generations. Therefore they were commanded to eat the Pesach in a group.

There is a holy statement of HaRav HaKadosh Rebbe Dovid of Leluv zy" a regarding the order of Pharaoh (Shemos 5:7):

לא תאספון – you shall not continue

that really according to the rules of grammar the word should have been written 'לא תסיפון'

But the way it is written signifies an expression of *אסיפה* - gathering

and the order of Pharaoh becomes 'Do not let Israel gather together and form one group' for even he recognized the great power of 'love of friends'.

This especially helps us in our day as well as we find ourselves in the footsteps of Moshiach and difficulties both internally and externally have increased very much and in this condition it is very difficult for a person to continue on alone, without friends to help him and as HaRav HaKadosh of Rozin zy" a states on the posuk (Bereishis 49:1)

ואספו ואגידה לכם את אשר יקרא אתכם באחרית הימים

– Assemble yourselves and I will tell you what will befall you in the End of Days – and this is how he explains it: 'Assemble yourselves and I will tell you' gather yourselves together and be one group, 'what will befall you' this should be very important to you, 'in the End of Days' which are the days that are in the footsteps of Moshiach when darkness covers the earth and we need much encouragement and therefore this is very sage advice.

The statement made by HaRav HaKadosh the Rebbe Zusha from Anapoli zy" a is like medication for the eyes that used the expression of the Tanna (Avos 3:2): If two sit together and there are no words of Torah between them and he explains thus:

'If two are sitting' together in one group, 'and there is not between them' that is, there is nothing that causes a separation of their hearts between them but they are in total unity, then this alone makes it 'words of Torah'. This means that the unity itself is what brings about the fulfillment of the Torah. By way of this it is understood that which Rebbe Akiva stated in regard to the posuk 'and you shall love your fellow as yourself, I am Hashem, for this is a great general rule in the Torah' for this brings the fulfillment of the Torah. ^ This topic of 'love of friends' is a basic foundation of the Torah of Chasidus and there is a famous story about the Chassid Rebbe Meir who was one of the famous Chassidim of Maran HaRav HaKadosh of Lechvich zy" a who once traveled on a long journey and this was very debilitating as was common in those days, and while on the road his Inclination overcame him *rachmana litzlan*, and the thought of sin crept into his mind like the mosquito of Titus and he did not sense the strength within him to overpower his Inclination though this was a heavy price to pay to be distanced from the courtyard of sanctity. Until he thought to himself, that even if he does not reach his Rebbe, but his actions will cause him to be removed from the group of Chassidim who were his close friends for a long time, and it was this thought alone that prevented him from sinning against Hashem. He immediately headed to his Rebbe, HaRav HaKadosh of Lechvich, and upon his arrival he told his Rebbe that the power of his friends is greater than the power of the Tzaddik because sometimes what is impossible through the Tzaddik is possible through friends. ^ A similar story is told about HaRav HaKadosh of Rozin zy" a who once came to Kloyz and saw a group of chassidim sitting together. He turned to them and asked: "Who is greater, the Rebbe or the friends?" One of the group answered: "Definitely, the friends!" and the Rebbe went back to his room. When his friends asked for an explanation he told them a story that had happened to him on the way here. On the way he saw a mirage and he almost stumbled with a grave sin and he thought to himself that he would search for another 'Rebbe' who would not have this concept, but in spite of this he refrained from sinning because he calculated that it was not worth the loss of his holy group in Rozin. The chassid concluded that behold the Rebbe grasped the whole situation but he saw how truly great is the power of friends. Once we are discussing the power of friends, we should mention that which is brought in the holy *seforim* and are well-known in the holy courtyards, that Chassidim would bless and cause salvation one for another. Chassidim would relate the story of a chassid who traveled to spend Rosh Hashanah in the holy shadow of Maran HaRav HaKadosh the Chozeh of Lublin zy" a, and when he came to receive the bracha of 'Shalom' from the Chozeh he instructed with no uncertain terms to immediately return to his house before Rosh Hashanah. When he came back to his city and he told his friends what had happened to him they gathered together to drink a 'l'chaim' and they blessed him with long life. Again he went to his Rebbe of Lublin. When he went to receive the bracha of 'Shalom' the Rebbe greeted him warmly and he explained to him that he had first seen that his days were numbered *rachmana litzlan*, and that is why he wanted him to tell his friends and relatives what had happened. But now, after his friends had caused a great salvation for him with their bracha, he could now definitely greet him warmly. There is a great lesson here regarding the power of good friends! ^ However, we also have to realize that although this advice can encourage us in our day, still it is incumbent on a person who wants to be part of an attentive group, must first check to see if the group that he wants to be associated with is right for him and if the members of the group will help him in the service of Hashem Yisbarach or *chas v'chalilah* the opposite. Sometimes member of a group will not help to elevate a person and though these people are good people, still, it is possible that these people can cause him great damage. As is brought by Chaza"l (Sanhedrin 23a) 'the pure-minded of Yerushalayim would not enter to eat a meal unless they first know who would be eating with them at the table and this is so that they would not associate with people who would not elevate them and they would be harmful to their souls. For just as the power of a friend can help bring a person closer to Hashem Yisbarach, so too, can have the opposite effect if he is not appropriate for him and this is why the posuk continues: 'But if the household will be too small for a lamb', this is a hint to a person who does not yet have an appropriate group to strengthen the service of Hashem Yisbarach and it is incumbent upon him to search for additional friends, 'then, he and his neighbor who is near to him' that is, he should see to associate with people who are in the category of close neighbor, that his friends should be like-minded and have similar views. Only then will he see the desired effect, but, if these people will be far away from his point of view, then not only will they not help him but they will sway his thinking to theirs, and he will deteriorate *chas v'chalilah*. ^ Perhaps we can say that this is hinted at in the posuk (Vayikra 19:18) 'and you shall love your fellow as yourself, I am Hashem' that the Torah comes to teach us that the whole purpose of 'love of friends' has to be connected to 'I am Hashem' and we can fulfill the mitzvos of the Torah properly and not *chas v'chalilah* the opposite. Hashem Yisbarach should help that we merit to join a group of heaven-fearing and complete people and we should merit through this to be bound and attached to Hashem Yisbarach and His Torah until we again eat from the offerings and the Pesach speedily in our day Amein.