

טוב הקהילה

בס"ד

יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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טיב המערכת

חמשה בקר וארבע צאן – Five cattle and four sheep

The Gemara (Bava Metzia 85a) relates a story about Rebbe HaKadosh: 'One time they were leading a calf to slaughter. It went and hung its head in the folds of Rebbe's garment, and cried, as if to say, "Save me". Rebbe told it, "Go, for this you were created." In Heaven they prosecuted Rebbe because he did not show mercy on the calf, and they decreed suffering upon him. Rabeinu HaKadosh suffered great pain for many years until one day he saw the maidservant sweeping the house, and she saw mice [per the Gemara – baby weasels] in a corner of the house and she wanted to kill them. Rebbe told her, "Leave them be, it is written (Tehillim 145:9) 'ורחמיו על כל מעשיו' – 'and His mercy is upon all His creations'." When Heaven saw Rebbe's mercy on small mice [weasels], they sweetened his judgment and stopped his suffering.'

The Torah tells us that if a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, 'חמשה בקר ישלם תחת השור וארבע צאן – תחת השה' – 'he shall pay five cattle in place of the ox, and four sheep in place of the sheep' (21:37). Rashi quotes the Gemara (Bava Kamma 79b): 'Rebbe Yochanan ben Zakai said, "The Omnipresent had pity on people's dignity, for an ox which walks on its own feet, and through which the thief was not humiliated by having to carry it on his shoulders, he pays five. But for a sheep which he carries on his shoulders, he pays four since he was humiliated through it.'" That is, that thief who came in stealth and stole a sheep, had to carry it on his shoulder -of course, it was not because he had pity on the sheep, rather it was to steal it and run away faster. Still, the act that he did – to carry the sheep on his shoulders, caused him humiliation, and so the Torah has mercy on him and lightens his punishment a little!

There is boundary to the mercy of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. But the Torah teaches that we must also have mercy, even for a lowly thief, and certainly to one who is not like this, and even more so our family. The Torah teaches us how to think about the pain of another, to try to understand what he is feeling, to join in his pain and to think about it. This has to be set as something basic in the identity and essence of the person, this is one of the characteristics of the Jewish people: being humble, having mercy, and doing acts of kindness. A Jew must always dig deep to understand another and conduct himself with compassion. Chazal promise us (Shabbos 151b), 'Anyone who has compassion for G-d's creations will receive compassion from Heaven', and who does not want to receive compassion from Heaven?!

- Tiv HaTorah - Mishpatim

טיב ההשגחה

'שליח מצוה' – 'Messenger for a mitzvah'

I left to *daven* Mincha in one of the cities when suddenly, I saw a dear previous neighbor, a *talmid chacham* and *yarei Shamayim*, very pleasant. My heart pounded within me because I remembered that one of his sons who I had last seen a few months ago, was not able to overcome the challenges of our generation and fell into the trap of the *yetzer*... When I saw his father, I thought to myself that I have get in touch with his son to talk to him and bring him close, and slowly return him to the good, since in the past I worked with youth like this, and the boy liked me.

I finished *davening*, and my conscience did not leave me alone: "Why didn't you connect with him months ago? Why didn't you think then about the pain his parents were going through to see their son dressed like an unlearned child, and you didn't put in the slightest effort?!" I went about my daily routine and forgot the matter.

A few hours later I returned home, and just then there was a knock at the door. In the doorway stood a man with a certified letter that needed a signature. I looked at him and he looked at me with sparkling eyes, I recognized him and could not believe this was him!!! I said to him, "Is it you?!" I could not believe my eyes, I could not believe that a few hours ago I was troubled that I had not connected with him, and now he was standing in front of me in the doorway to my house!!!

I immediately greeted him warmly, and we began to have a meaningful, long conversation that he did not want to interrupt, and he just wanted to keep talking... we made up to continue to be in touch...

ב.ש.

רק שבתו יתן ורפא ירפא: (בא:יט)

He shall only pay for his sitting idle, and he shall heal. (21:19)

It is told about Rebbe Shayale of Kerestir, that one time people came to him to inform him that someone was dangerously ill, and he instructed that a large sum of money be donated in his name for the Shabbos expenses of the poor, and through this he would be healed. He added that the source for this *segulah* is from the *posuk* 'He shall only pay for his sitting idle, and he shall heal'. The word '*shivto*' means 'his Shabbos', and the hint is that if one gives 'his money' for the sake of Shabbos is adding value to the Shabbos, and in the merit of the extra portion that he adds for Shabbos, he merits to be healed.

Relying on his words, we can also say that his intent is to apply this principle to '*tosefes Shabbos*' – adding to Shabbos, for one who accepts this on himself adds to the value of Shabbos, and in the merit of this, he will merit 'and he shall heal'.

As brought down in the name of Rebbe Mordechai of Lechvitch, that the influence of the holiness of Shabbos is very great, and it is not possible to assist the person with his physical eyes, but rather, with his spiritual eyes, that is, Torah, Tefillah and *avodas Hashem*. But the sanctity of '*tosefes Shabbos*' – adding to Shabbos can even help for physical [mundane] matters and needs. The more one makes Shabbos early, the more the mundane influence extends. He ends, "If only the '*baalei batim*' [householders] would listen to me, they would make increase '*tosefes Shabbos*' a lot and they would have an abundance of *parnasah* [income]."

His student, Rebbe Moshe of Kovrin would say, "Through '*tosefes Shabbos*' that a person adds from the secular to the holy [*Michol al Hakodesh*], HaKadosh Baruch, HaKadosh Baruch Hu bestows upon him all good in regard to mundane matters. And through this addition that one adds from secular to holy, it is easier for the person to elevate even the physical which is secular to the spiritual with is holy [*kodesh*]. [It is related regarding that Tzaddik that his way was to accept Shabbos while there was still plenty of day left, and when the multitude of people were going to shul for 'Kabbalas Shabbos' he was already up to dessert at his *seudah*.]

When a Jew gets ready and adds from the secular to the holy, he demonstrates an extra affection and yearning for his Creator, for Shabbos merits the person with the inspiration of the *Shechina*, as Chazal expound (Tikunei Zohar 48) on the *posuk* (Shemos 31:16) 'לדורותם... לדורותם – *Bnei Yisrael* should observe the Shabbos... for their generations' which is a language of 'דירה' – 'dwelling', for Shabbos *Kodesh* merits each person according to his level and based on his preparation on Erev Shabbos for the influence of the *Shechina*. It is as if one is categorized as a 'dwelling' who hosts the holy *Shechina*. When the host is fond of the guest, he does not wait until the moment when the guest shows up at his house, rather, he is already prepared an hour or two before his arrival. This shows the guest that he wants him to be there since he was prepared before he even arrived. This is categorized as '*tosefes Shabbos*' – 'addition to Shabbos', for by doing this the Jew demonstrates his strong yearning for the holy *Shechina*, and it is as if he is saying he wants the influence in his midst even an hour earlier.

And so, the Jewish Nation sees this strong merit by preparing to accept Shabbos early, and as we see in Hoshanos for Shabbos Chol HaMoed Succos (אם נצורה), they *daven* that this *zechus* should stand for them to save them by saying, 'הושע נא חשה למחר ביאת שבת' – 'Please save the one who rushes to hasten the onset of Shabbos',

and even in the *piyyut* after it (כהושעת אדם) - that ask for this by saying, 'כהושעת טפולין הורו הכנה במדעם ישר כחם והודה למו' – 'As You saved those who clung to you, who taught the rules of Shabbos preparation through their wisdom, approve their strength and acknowledge them as did Moshe their shepherd', for as we have said it is a great *zechus* for Israel to be saved through it with all things beneficial.

Rav Kaplan tells the following story that he heard from the one it happened to. This was when he was young and learning in Yeshivas Mir, in the city of Mir in Lita. At that time the boys were accustomed to be hosted by the *baalei batim* of the city. One of the *baalei batim* that Rav Kaplan frequently went to told him, that after he got married, he did not have children so quickly, and years passed while he and his wife anticipated having children. Of course, they spent these years praying numerous Tefillos and *Techinos* [beseeching] for their salvation, until they merited seeing the salvation of Hashem and the wife merited to hug her son. Of course, their joy was great, but their happiness did not last long. After a short while they were informed that their son was sick from his stomach and from the birth. Because of his illness his life was in danger, and when they began to seek out doctors, even the best doctors were sorry to inform them that there was nothing they could do to save his life. In their anguish, they traveled with their son to the Rabban of Israel, the Chofetz Chaim, to receive his bracha for healing and salvation. After the Chofetz Chaim heard their distress and request, he turned to the mother of the child and said, "Why do you ask for my bracha? Accept upon yourself '*tosefes Shabbos*' and with this you will bring the bracha of Shabbos to your house." And so, the mother of the child accepted upon herself to be meticulous with this mitzvah, and after being very careful with this mitzvah for a short time, the couple bore witness to a literal miracle, Miraculously, the dangerously ill child completely recovered from his illness, and when the doctors examined him, the illness had disappeared leaving not even a remnant.

Even though halachically it is not possible to accept '*tosefes Shabbos*' more than an hour-and-a-quarter before night (see Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 261:2 and Mishna Berurah s"K 25), it is appropriate that the person make all his preparations for Shabbos early Friday morning, and how good it would be if he finished all secular activity before midday, for then he would be ready for the onset of Shabbos. So writes the Arizal in 'Shaar HaKavanos' (Drushei Chazaras HaAmidah – Drush 5, Kavanas Amein) the sanctity of Shabbos already begins to sprout an hour before midday, and in light of his words it is fitting for the person from then to turn to matters of Kedusha and Shabbos. The words of the Arizal: 'A foundation of G-d, King, Who sits... know that *tosefes Shabbos* begins on Friday from the beginning of the sixth hour, as *b'ezras Hashem* we will explain in Erev Shabbos regarding the extra words of *Yom Hashishi Hashem*, and we find that the last seven hours of Friday and all 24 hours of Shabbos, HaKadosh Baruch Hu sits on His Throne of Mercy because of the honor of Shabbos, and counts 31 hours. This is the basis for '*Keil Melech yosheiv al kisei rachamim*', and the rest of the week He sits on the Throne of Justice.'

Hashem Yisbarach should help us to be able to be counted among those who prepare early to receive the Shabbos Queen, and we should merit all the brachos and salvations through it.