

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

אבלי ציון וירושלים

The mourners of Tzion and Yerushalayim

HaRav Rebbe Aharon Kroll would relate: When he was young the 'Imrei Emes' of Gur made *Aliyah* and came to live in Yerushalayim. He wanted to go up to the Kosel Hamaaravi, and he – R' Aharon, merited to be among those who accompanied him on the way. Of course, they went by foot, and from Shaar Yafo [Yafo Gate] to the Kosel they had to climb many steps, and since the Rebbe was old and weak, those accompanying him had to carry him on a chair and exerted themselves to bring him up quickly as was their custom, until they reached the Kosel Hamaaravi. When they arrived, they put down the Rebbe's chair and hoped that now they could rest a bit from the strenuous hike and regain their strength for the way back. But they hardly had enough time to read one *perek* [kepital] of Tehillim and immediately the Rebbe wanted to go back since he was not able to endure the great suffering and pain of the destruction [Churban] and the distress of the *Shechina*, when he saw the place of the Bais HaMikdash in its destruction.

We are literally standing at the peak of the days of mourning for the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash, and to our great suffering and disappointment, the Bais HaMikdash is so distant from our understanding and comprehension, and we do not even know what we lost and what we are mourning for, until we must strengthen ourselves to suffer and mourn for the *Churban*. In the siddur of R'Yaakov MiEmdin he brings down the testimony of a *goy* who was a commissioner of the Romans in Yerushalayim, and he witnessed firsthand the offering of the *Karban Pesach*, and he described the glory and beauty that was there. At the end of his testimony, the *goy* writes that after all he had seen with his eyes, he did not understand how the Jews are able to survive and live without the Bais HaMikdash!

True, we are not asked to feel the same feelings as the generation of the *Churban*, and also not to conduct ourselves as Gedolei Yisrael have conducted themselves through all the generations, as they merited to feel the pain of the *Churban*. But at least we should not hide, and we should not think that everything is good, and even if we do not understand what we have lost – the very awareness that we lost something great, should make our spirits sad, and from this no one is exempt. This is why Chazal established for us the customs of mourning in these days 'to help us' remember the pain and feel it for ourselves. Chazal said (Taanis 30b), 'Whoever mourns for Yerushalayim, will merit to see its rebuilding'. May it be His will that we soon merit to see the consolation of Tzion and Yerushalayim and the building of the Bais HaMikdash. Tiv HaEmorim – The Three Weeks

טיב ההשגחה

עזרי מעם ה' – My help is from Hashem

I read the story in last week's sheet about having devotion to *daven* with a *minyan*, and I remembered a similar story that happened to me and my brother. A few months ago, while we were traveling together for the *yahrzeit* of Rebbe Yeshaya ben R' Moshe of Kerestir in Poland. We planned to *daven* Mincha as soon as we landed in the airport in Katowice, Poland once we gathered the many Jews there who also wanted to *daven*.

We landed safely and we tried to arrange a *minyan* for Mincha, but everyone hurried to their buses, and they could not be detained for even a minute afraid that they would miss the trip with the group. It turned out that all the other observant travelers were in groups, and they were not concerned about the time since it was still four hours before sunset...

They were not concerned about *davening*, but my brother and I were faced with the difficult dilemma of what to do?! The trip from Katowice to Lizhensk takes about five hours, meaning that we would arrive after sunset. On the other hand, it was the one place that we knew we would find a *minyan* and we would also be able to *daven* at the holy site of Rebbe Elimelech in Lizhensk.

We remembered a story that Rav Gamliel HaKohen Rabinovich told about an elderly Breslov chassid whose grandson urged him to fly to the site of Rebbe Nachman, and the chassid was very moved by the invitation. He had already gathered his bags and a minute before getting into the car, he asked his grandson, "Where will we *daven* Mincha?" The grandson replied, "Saba, don't worry, we will find a *minyan* at the airport." In that moment the grandfather turned around and went back into the house, saying, "A trip to the Rebbe is a great thing, but in no way at the expense of one mitzvah!!!" All urging did not help, and he stayed in Israel.

We did not think too much about it and made it in three-and-a-half hours to Lizhensk, with joy and emotion we got out to *daven* at the site of Rebbe Elimelech. But to our great disappointment, there was no one at the site except for one man who had already *davened* Mincha.

Ten minutes before sunset I said to my brother, "We did the most we could do, we added 3&1/2 hours to the trip, we have no choice, we must *daven* by ourselves!!!" With a heavy heart, we began to say *karbanos*. Suddenly, we heard the squeal of brakes, and out of nowhere, two cars pulled up with four men in each car, looking for two more for a *minyan*.

I cannot describe the joy we felt at that moment. We *davened* with joy and emotion as Dovid HaMelech said in Tehillim (121:1-2) 'from where will help come', out of nowhere, 'help is from Hashem Who made Heaven and earth!!!'

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וַתַּעֲנוּ וַתֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֵי חֲטָאנוּ לַה' אֲנַחְנוּ נַעֲלָה וְנִלְחַמְנוּ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַתַּחֲגְרוּ אִישׁ אֶת כְּלֵי מִלְחָמָתוֹ וַתְּהִינּוּ לַעֲלֹת הַהָרָה: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵלֵינוּ אָמַר לָהֶם לֹא תַעֲלוּ וְלֹא תִלְחַמְנוּ כִּי אֵינִי בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְלֹא תִנְגְּפוּ לַפְּנֵי אֹיְבֵיכֶם: (א:מא-מב)

Then you spoke up and said to me, “We have sinned to Hashem! We shall go up and do battle according to everything that Hashem, our G-d, has commanded us!” You girded, each ma, his weapons of war, and you readied yourselves to ascend the mountain. Hashem said to me, “Tell them, ‘Do not ascend and do not do battle, for I am not among you, then you will not be struck down before your enemies. (1:41-42)

In order to understand the message hidden in these *posukim* we need to know two principles in the matter of Teshuva. 1. Even after we have stumbled with a severe sin, we can immediately correct it with Teshuva. The power of Teshuva is so strong that it helps to even nullify the oath of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, for the agency of Teshuva changes the nature of the person and makes him into another person, and the decree was not issued against this new person. 2. On the other hand, it is incumbent on the person to know that it is not easy to earn Teshuva, for Teshuva does not help unless it comes from the depth of the heart, and it is not that easy to come to this deep level of regret. Therefore, from the outset, the person should be very careful regarding sin, perhaps he will not merit true Teshuva.

These two points shed light on the understanding of the matter, for *Klal Yisrael* had just stumbled over a very grave sin, to the extent that they complained against Hashem and reproached Him by saying (1:27) 'בשנאת ה' אותנו' – ‘Because Hashem hates us’ *Rachmana litzlan*. Even the severe punishment that was meted out to them shows how great their sin was. Still, when they woke up and heard what their Creator decreed on them by oath, they asked to erase their sin and the decree to be broken by saying two words, "חטאנו לה" – ‘We have sinned to Hashem!’ After they said these two words, they understood that the situation had returned as it was previously, and now they could prepare for battle, be victorious, and enter the Land, and the decree of 'במדבר הזה יפלו פגריכם' – ‘In this wilderness will your carcasses drop’ (Bamidbar 14:29) will no longer apply. The mid cannot comprehend this matter, to be so deep in sin, and with a simple statement they would again be righteous?!

The answer to this is: Yes!

There is a reality that when they say, “I have sinned” everything is sweetened! This is when this word (חטאתי) emerges from the throat of the person as a result of regret for the past. Then, this word indicates the mitzvah of Teshuva, and the power of Teshuva changes the person into someone else and he is allowed to sweeten even the harshest judgments! Even an oath sworn by HaKadosh Baruch Hu can be nullified with the power of Teshuva as mentioned.

I know that you still do not see in my words any answer to your wonder, since I did not reveal to you that is reality, and this reality is called ‘Teshuva’, and you are still puzzled as to how Teshuva helps?

This wonder is not in effect once you also understand the second principle mentioned, that by saying ‘I have sinned’ helps change the nature of the person must come from the depth of the heart. When

a person earns this, he becomes a new creation for the main being of a person is his ‘intellect’, and when the intellect changes, the essence of the person changes.

Now you can also understand that in general, that a person does not quickly change his intellect until Teshuva comes from the depth of the heart, and mainly with sins that are done intentionally, *Rachmana litzlan*. For if the day before yesterday the person did not fall into sin, it is assumed that he will not change his mind from one end to the other today, and generally, we would need a major purification to change one’s mind back to good, and then the confession will not be dependent on lip service, so his statement makes an impression.

This is the reason that in fact Israel’s Teshuva was not accepted, for even though they did Teshuva and regretted the past, they still had not come to a firm decision that they had not acted properly. Not that *chalilah* their Teshuva was not from the depth of their heart, for if this were so, they would have feared for their lives and they would not have been brazen enough to go out to battle. However, according to their high level and the greatness of the sin, they required a much deeper regret, and they still did not reach this level of examination as required.

This is what Moshe was hinting at when he said (1:41), וַתַּעֲנוּ "ותענו" – ‘Then you spoke up and said to me, “We have sinned to Hashem!”’ It does not say ‘Then you spoke up and **confessed**’, rather, ‘Then you spoke up and **said**’, the confession was only ‘speech’ and did not yet come from the depth of the heart as required, and they could still not classify it at ‘confession’, therefore, their Teshuva was not accepted and it did not work out well for them in battle with the Canaanites.

Another hint that their Teshuva was not as it should be, we find in the parsha of the spies where the Torah describes the Teshuva (Bamidbar 14:40), וַיִּשְׁכְּמוּ בַבּוֹקֵר וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶל רֹאשׁ הָהָר – ‘They awoke early in the morning and went up to the mountaintop saying, “We are ready, and we shall go up to the place of which Hashem has spoken, for we have sinned’, the Torah precedes their action to the Teshuva, though in fact they did Teshuva first, their Teshuva was not as it should be. Their main intent with their Teshuva was to save loss of life and land harmed by their sin. Even the very Teshuva that is subsequently described, the Torah hints that it was not with complete regret, for the words ‘of which Hashem has spoken’ in the beginning of the *posuk* could also apply to the end of the *posuk*, and then it would read ‘of which Hashem Has spoken for we have sinned’. That is, only HaKadosh Baruch Hu explains our action as a sin, but we have not yet come to understand that we have not conducted ourselves properly...

Based on what we have said, we can say that the continuing *posukim* (1:45, 46, 2:1) Moshe hints to the *avodah* of Teshuva that was imposed on Israel for this sin, for as we have said, in order for the person to earn true Teshuva, it is incumbent on him to purify himself over many days. Therefore, the victory of the Canaanites, Israel understood that they had not yet earned Teshuva as required. Therefore, "וַתִּשְׁבוּ וַתִּבְכוּ לִפְנֵי ה'" – ‘Then you wept again before Hashem’ (1:45), and still, because of the severity of the sin this Teshuva was not fit to be called ‘Teshuva’.

טיב הפרשה

And so, 'ולא שמע ה' בקולכם ולא האזין אליכם' – **'but Hashem did not listen to your voice and He did not give ear to you'** since this was still only 'voice' and 'speech'. Since this was so, 'ותשב בקדש' – **'you stayed in Kadesh'** – you remained to serve Hashem Yisbarach to add purification and sanctity [*kedusha*] 'ימים רבים' – **'many days'**, and only after remaining 'כימים אשר ישבתם' – **'as the days that you dwelt'** you merited to be uplifted and recognize the severity of their actions, then you will merit 'ונפנ' – **'we turned'** – you merited to return to your Creator.

Nevertheless, we see from here that a person does not easily earn Teshuva, only through regret from the depth of the heart. We also learn this in the Rambam (Hilchos Teshuva 2:2) that only Teshuva like this is willingly accepted. The Rambam says, 'What is Teshuva? It is when the sinner leaves the sin and removes it from his thoughts and determine in his heart that he will not do it again, as it says (Yeshaya 55:7), 'עזוב רשע דרכו ואיש און מחשבותיו', – **'Let the wicked one forsake his way and the iniquitous man his thoughts. In this way he will be consoled for the past,** as it says (Yirmiyahu 31:18) 'כי אחרי שובי – נחמתי ואחרי הודעי ספקתי על ירך' – **'For after my returning, I regretted, and after my being aware of my sin, I slapped my thigh in anguish'. I testify about him to the One Who knows all mysteries, that he will never return to this sin.'**

In light of all that was said, it is incumbent on the person to ask for mercy that he does not sin, and after he has already sinned, he should ask for mercy that he earn true Teshuva that is willingly accepted before the Master of all.

Our Strength is in Our Mouths!

In light of the alarming situation here in Eretz Yisrael, Rabbeinu, *shlita*, spoke this past Shabbos during *Seudah Shelishis* about the need to strengthen *tefillah betzibur*, as this is a great *segulah* to subdue anger and wrath when the *middas hadin* is stretched over us. After Shabbos, Rabbeinu also requested that this *segulah* be publicized in his name.

Therefore, to fulfill his wish, we are transcribing here a citation that Rabbeinu, *shlita*, mentioned from the *sefer Berach Moshe*, where this *segulah* is thoroughly explained. It says as follows:

“The passuk says (Bamidbar 33:25), וַיִּסְעוּ מִחֶרְדָּה – They journeyed from Charadah. [The word charadah means fear and dread. This teaches us] that if Yisrael seeks to be saved from fear and dread – from all kinds of harsh and evil decrees, then [we must follow the advice of the forthcoming words]: וַיִּחַנוּ בְּמַקְהֵילֹת – They camped in Makheilos. [The word makheilos means to gather and assemble], which means that we must gather and assemble together and daven with the tzibur. This is what the passuk (Tehillim 68:27), בְּמַקְהֵלוֹת בְּרָכּוֹ אֱלֹהִים – Bless Hashem in kehillos is hinting at: tefillah betzibur in kehillos with large crowds.

This is a lofty segulah to annul all kinds of fear and dread from upon Bnei Yisrael, and through its power, they can be saved from all trouble and distress and every plague and illness, and only good and kindness will be bestowed upon them all the days.”

Our hope is that Hashem Yisbarach will hear our *tefillas* and, from Heaven awaken great mercy upon us and favor us with all the *yeshu'os* and with our complete *geulah*, speedily in our days, *amen*.