

טיב הקהילה

English edition

באנגלית

Parashas
Yisro
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5786

י"ח ע"י
קהילת שבתי בבית ד'
בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הרה"צ
רבי גמליאל הכהן
רבינוביץ שליט"א

On the occasion of Shabbos Tahareinu in our kehillah, Shivti, we present a shmuess from Rabbeinu, the gaon and tzaddik, shlita, taken from the newly Hebrew published kuntress "Tiv Chamasecha," a collection of shmuessen addressing the spiritual harm of technology, published for the days of Shovavim.

The chain of Torah transmission

Moshe Rabbeinu received the Torah at Har Sinai and gave it over to Yehoshua; Yehoshua to the zekeinim, the zekeinim to the neviim, and so on, generation after generation, until the Chachamim of our generation. And the Chachamim in our generation – from all sectors of Jewry, without exception – unequivocally ruled that it is forbidden to use these impure devices. Anyone who does not listen to them goes into the category of someone who transgresses the words of the Chachamim, chas veshalom.

...

The words of the Chachamim are more severe than those of the Torah

The Gemara brings the exhortation of Shlomo Hamelech, "My son! Be careful with *divrei sofrim* more than the words of Torah, for in the Torah one finds *mitzvos aseï* and *mitzvos lo saaseï*, but whoever transgresses *divrei sofrim* is liable to the death penalty" (*Eruvin* 21b). Rashi explains, that *divrei sofrim* refer to the new decrees that were enacted in every generation to make a protective fence (around the mitzvo of the Torah).

This seems difficult to understand. There are indeed many *aveiros* in the Torah which carry the death

Make for yourself a Rav



penalty; why should *divrei sofrim* be more severe than the words of the Torah? Some explain with the following analogy: The way of the world is that when a king makes laws, and someone transgresses one of these laws, he is not immediately put to death. First, they conduct a trial, and if he is found guilty, he will be given the appropriate punishment. However, there are circumstances in which someone will be killed immediately, no questions asked. This is if someone approaches the king and is suspected of planning to kill or even harm him; then, the king's guards will immediately kill the suspected rebel.

Now, the earthly kingdom works similar to the heavenly kingdom (*Berachos* 58a). The *Torah Shebichsav* is the King's commands; someone who transgresses them must be judged by the Sanhedrin. They must interrogate the witnesses, make sure the defendant had *hasraah* (warning), until they conclude that he is indeed guilty of a capital crime; indeed, it was rare for the Sanhedrin to kill any Jew (*Makkos* 7a). But the *Torah Shebe'al Peh* and the instructions of the *Chachmei Hatorah* are like the King's guards, protecting and safeguarding Jewish conduct, making sure it is in line with the King's laws. They

therefore have the power to put to death anyone suspected of compromising their protection of the King.

We must know that this does not only apply to the *Chachamim* in the times of the Mishnah or Gemara, but *also to every Chacham in his generation who stops the breach with a protective fence* – his enactment has the status of *divrei sofrim*, with the same consequences of someone who transgresses them.

Someone who carries these “devices of destruction,” is transgressing the words of the Chachamim according to all opinions!

Until recently, it was very rare to find someone (amongst the *chareidim*) who could be classified as one who transgresses the words of the *Chachamim*, for we all are careful in all the *takanos deRabbanan* that Chazal instituted. Also, all the decrees of the Rishonim [for example the famous *cherem* of Rabbeinu Gershom not to marry two wives, or the *takanah* of not eating *kitniyos* on Pesach; both of which were accepted in all Ashkenazic communities, and is codified in Shulchan Aruch]. Even the decisions of the Gedolei Acharonim were accepted in Klal Yisrael. True,

there are *halachos* in which there are different *minhagim*, and some conduct themselves according to the *meikilim* (the lenient opinion), and they cannot be classified as *avaryanim* (transgressors), as they have on whom to rely.

But lately, there is such a thing. Today there are *avaryanim* who are not concerned about the words of the *Chachamim*. These are those who carry these impure devices, for there is no Gadol who holds it is permissible to carry and use them, so one cannot say that he relies on a certain Rav. It must be that he doesn't care about the opinion of the *Chachmei Yisrael*, which puts him into the category of a *porek ohl* (someone who throws off the yoke), *chas veshalom*, regarding whom Chazal said is *chayav misah* (deserving of death), *Rachmana litzlan!*

As we have said, this does not only apply to the previous generations like the *Anshei Kneses Hagedolah*, rather also to all the *Chachamim* in Klal Yisrael until today, and until *Moshiach* comes, whom Klal Yisrael have accepted their authority – whoever transgresses their words are called “transgressing the words of the *Chachamim*”. Because obviously, it does not say in the Shulchan Aruch that internet is forbidden, for this *kelipah*

**להבין עמקי סודותיה
חגים מועדים וזמנים
עם תורת הקבלה**

מבאר ומפרש
דברי הרב והרש"ש
בשפה ברורה
המביא הלומד בו
להבנה ברורה
ודצויה בטיב הכונה

הערות ודקדוקים
קושיות ותירוצים
בדברי הרב והרש"ש

מראה מקומות
על דברי הרב והרש"ש
ומקורות על הביאור

**הסדרה המיוחדת שתוכל גם ל
ליכנס לכל מועד באוירא עילאה
ובתענוג רוחני לחוש את אור המועד**

- חג הפסח
- ספירת העומר
- חג השבועות
- בין המצרים
- ראש השנה
- עשיית ויוהכ"פ
- חג הסוכות
- שוכבי"ם
- חנוכה ופורים
- שבת - ד' חלקים

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(husk of *tumah*) was not around then. So, when the *Chachamim* in every generation, using their *daas Torah*, announce that something is forbidden we must listen to them.

...

For What is a Shochet Guilty?

Chazal say regarding killing a live being on Shabbos, if one slaughters, for which *melachah* is he guilty of transgressing? Rav says for dyeing (because he dyes the meat of the animal red) (*Shabbos* 75a). The Baal Shem Tov zy"l explains this based on the Gemara that says, the *yetzer hara* goes down [to this world], tricks [a person to sin], then goes up and angers [the King with his prosecution], receives permission [to kill him], and goes and takes his soul (*Bava Basra* 16a with Rashi's explanation).

The Baal Shem Tov explains as follows: the *shochet* refers to the *yetzer hara*. The Gemara is asking, why is he guilty? [Chazal say, that in the future Hashem will kill the *yetzer hara* (*Sukkos* 52a)]. After all,

this is his job, to lure people to sin – why should the *yetzer hara* be punished for this? The Gemara answers that he is guilty of dyeing. This means, he indeed is not guilty for luring people to sin; rather, he is guilty for the manner in which he seduces people, which is by dyeing the sin with the color of a mitzvah. This creates almost an impossible test, for an *ehrliche Yid* will naturally

resist any temptation to sin – but a temptation to do a mitzvah is almost beyond human strength to resist, and for this the *yetzer hara* will be killed.

...

Make for yourself a Rav

Notice that we said “almost” impossible; however, one is not entirely absolved of guilt for following the *yetzer hara*, even when colored as a mitzvah. Why not? Because one should have gone to a

rav to clarify his doubts, and if he didn't, he will have to give an accounting to the heavenly *beis din* for this.

Especially regarding topics of technology, which a person is naturally drawn to, and this discoloring of the *yetzer hara* has the power to blind even the otherwise smart people to fall down the slippery slope. Therefore, as every situation is different, it is imperative to consult true *daas Torah* on this matter, to discuss with a *talmid chacham* who is knowledgeable about these matters, who will show him the correct path to

take in order not to stumble into the *yetzer hara's* pit.

May Hashem help us that we merit to purify and sanctify ourselves in all our ways, and be safeguarded from all the dangers and *nisyonos* (temptations) of our times, *amen*.

arrogant demonstrates that in his view there is power apart from the Creator Yisbarach. For if not for this, he would not be arrogant about his qualities, because he would know that these are nothing but a gift from Heaven, and were it not for the will of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, he would .have no quality at all

The matter of anger also indicates an aspect of heresy. As is brought in the sefer Tanya (Iggeres HaKodesh, chapter 25), which explained why it is severe like idolatry. These are its words: "But this intent is absolute truth. And it is with the introduction of the statement of Chazal, 'Anyone who becomes angry is as if he serves idol worship,' etc. And the reason is understood by those who possess understanding, for at the time of his anger, faith departs from him. For if he believed that this came to him from Hashem, he would not be angry at all. And even if a human being, who has free choice, curses him or strikes him or damages his property, and is liable in human courts and in the Heavenly court for his evil choice, nevertheless upon the one who is harmed it has already been decreed from Heaven, and there are many messengers to the Omnipresent.

"And not only that, but even at this very moment when he strikes him or curses him, the power of Hashem clothes itself in him, and the breath of His mouth, Yisbarach, which gives him life and sustains him, as it is stated (Shmuel II 16:10), 'כי' - 'For Hashem said to him, Curse.' And where did He say to Shimi? Rather, this thought that fell into Shimi's heart and mind descended from Hashem, and the breath of His mouth, which gives life to all their hosts, gave life to the spirit of Shimi at the time that he spoke these words to Dovid. For if the breath of His mouth, Yisbarach, were to depart for one moment from the spirit of Shimi, he would not be able to speak at all, etc." End quote from the Tanya.

From his words we learn that the severity of anger is because it is a blemish in faith, and therefore Chazal equated it to idolatry, which is denial of the living G-d.

From here there is a lesson regarding all the principles of faith, that a person must be exceedingly careful with them, for he must be concerned lest HaKadosh Baruch Hu does not overlook offenses with regard to these sins.

The commandment of faith includes all thirteen principles, as well as faith in the

holy Torah and in all its statements, as the Rambam wrote, he who established the thirteen principles (see at length in the commentary to the Mishnah by the Rambam, chapter ten of Sanhedrin): "And one who does not believe even in part, even in one matter of the Torah that was said to Moshe from Sinai, is as if he completely denies the Torah of Moshe."

The Ramban (at the end of Parashas Bo) added regarding faith that one must also believe that there is no nature in the world at all, and that everything is only miracles. One should see there his language at length. Among his words he wrote that "one who does not believe that everything that appears as nature is G-dliness and miracles have no share at all in the Torah of Moshe."

Therefore, a person must be exceedingly careful in the commandment of faith in all its details and fine points. He must also believe that everything is overseen with individual providence, and that it is in the category of a miracle, and that there is no nature in the world at all. He should place all the weight of his reliance on this matter of faith, for it is the essence of the Torah and its existence in the world.

From 'מדיבור למעשה' - 'words to deed'

טיב ההשגחה

said that this was nothing other than a sign from Heaven that one who seeks and speaks about hashgacha pratis, HaKadosh

Baruch Hu shows him tangibly that He, Yisbarach, watches over us with a providence beyond the natural course.

ז.ל.



'A cover story' - 'סיפור כיסוי'

I traveled to wash the car, and in my car I keep a kippah on a regular basis, out of concern that if my kippah or that of one of the passengers should fly out the window, then there would immediately be a replacement kippah.

My son said to me at the car wash: "Abba, maybe it is time to throw this kippah into the trash? It has already been in the car for five years and it does not look so good anymore!!!"

I thought that he was right, but nevertheless I left the kippah in the car door.

That night I traveled to a wedding, and a relative approached me with an embarrassed look that he had forgotten to take a kippah from home and it was uncomfortable for him to enter a chareidi wedding like that. I quickly ran to the car and gave him the kippah as a gift.

He was so happy, and I, in contrast, was happy twice over. If I had not washed the car that day, I would not have remembered that the kippah was there...

ב.ה.

Baruch Hashem, we merited to marry off all the children, and for many years we had not made a Shabbos together. We were blessed with many daughters. The husband of one of the daughters flew abroad, and she decided to make a Shabbos of bonding in her home. We made a Shabbos reunion of all the daughters, and it was a truly unique experience. We arranged the Shabbos around the theme of hashgacha pratis, and we spoke a great deal about the subject of contemplating Divine Providence. We brought a good friend to lecture to us on the topic on Friday night, and we even accepted upon ourselves that all of us would connect to a special shiur on Kol Halashon of Shaar HaBitachon, in order to continue the strengthening for the entire year and for all of life.

Despite the fact that we prepared everything in advance, we forgot to prepare enough cut paper (tissues). The lecturer said that perhaps she would send some, and we thought that perhaps we would knock on neighbors' doors, even though we were in an unfamiliar area. On the way after the uplifting meal, we walked toward the apartment in which we were staying. Two meters before the entrance to the building, we found a package of tissues thrown on the road. Another four meters, another package of tissues thrown on the road. We did not believe what our eyes were seeing, and together we

טיבת המעשיות

The Commandment of Faith

אָנְכִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ

מִצְרַיִם, מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים” (כ.ב)

I am Hashem your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage (20:2).

The mitzvah of faith is the very first mitzvah with which Hashem Yisbarach commanded us at the exalted Revelation at Sinai, in the first utterance of the *Aseres HaDibros*. As the Rambam *zt”l* writes in *Sefer HaMitzvos*, in the first commandment of the count of the *Taryag* mitzvos, and these are his precise words: “The first mitzvah is the command to believe in Godliness. That is, that we believe that there exists a Cause and a Reason, Who brings into existence all that exists, and this is His statement, may He be blessed: *I am Hashem your God.*”

It is not without reason that the mitzvah of *emunah*, faith, is considered the first of all the mitzvos, even though several mitzvos preceded it historically, such as the mitzvah to bear offspring, *milah*, *gid ha’nasheh* [the forbidden displaced sinew], *kiddush ha’chodesh* [sanctifying the new month], and the like. Rather, this commandment—the mitzvah of *emunah*—contains within it the foundation and root of all the mitzvos of the Torah. For in the absence of faith, it is impossible to fulfill any mitzvah of the Torah, when one’s heart questions the very existence of the One Who commanded the mitzvah, *chas veshalom*. Therefore, the mitzvah of *emunah* is the most essential and fundamental of all the mitzvos. Indeed, all the mitzvos of the Torah are included within it, as David Hamelech *a”h* alluded in the *pasuk* (*Tehillim* 119:86), כָּל מִצְוֹתֶיךָ - *All Your commandments are faith*, to indicate that all the mitzvos are encompassed within the commandment of faith (*Maharsha, Chiddushei Aggados, Makkos 24a*, end of s.v. *Ve’amar she’ba*).

For this reason, when the prophet Chavakuk came and saw a need to establish the entire Torah upon a single foundation, he based it upon this very mitzvah, as stated at the end of the Gemara *Makkos* (24a), “Chavakuk came and established them upon one, as it is stated (*Chavakuk* 2:4), *And the righteous person shall live by his faith.*”

Now, the wording of the *pasuk* — *I am Hashem your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage*—appears to link the very foundation of the mitzvah of *emunah* to the exodus from *Mitzrayim*. This comes to teach us that the more one merits a greater “exodus from *Mitzrayim*, from the house of bondage,” the more one can merit pure and genuine faith; for faith in Hashem is bound up with faith in the exodus from *Mitzrayim*. It is well known from the holy *sefarim* that just as there exists, in the collective sense, an exodus from *Mitzrayim* for Klal Yisrael, so too, on the individual level, each person has his own personal “Exodus from *Mitzrayim*”—from all the forces of the *yetzer hara* and the *sitra achra* that cling to his soul and hold it imprisoned within their straits. As the *pasuk* teaches us: *Who brought you out of*

the land of Egypt. It is impossible to remain within “*Mitzrayim*”—that is, within material and physical constraints and limitations—and at the same time to be a believer in Hashem.

Therefore, the *pasuk* attaches the root of the commandment of faith to the departure from evil and the abandonment of impurity. Through meriting to emerge from denial and to be freed from the, ‘לא ידעתי אתה’ - *I do not know Hashem* (*Shemos* 5:2) that Pharaoh established—the hard shell of *Mitzrayim*—one thereby receives, in its fullness, faith in, *I am Hashem your God*. For these two are absolute opposites.

In this manner, a Jewish person can properly fulfill the mitzvah of *emunah*, as we were commanded in this *parashah*, and as we heard from the mouth of the Almighty at Sinai: *I am Hashem your God*.

The holy Rebbe, the Rashab *zy”a* of Lubavitch, father of the holy Rebbe the Rayatz *zy”a*, once began repeatedly asking those who served him to bring him various beverages. He would pause briefly, and then ask whether another type of drink could be brought—at one time spirits, at another a cup of tea, sometimes with sugar, sometimes without... Thus he drank far more than was his usual custom.

The members of the household, greatly alarmed for his wellbeing, feared that perhaps he was unwell and therefore requesting drink so frequently. They approached him and asked, with great concern, whether he was experiencing any illness or pain, or perhaps suffering from dehydration and therefore required so much to drink.

The Rebbe smiled and said: “Baruch Hashem, I am healthy, without any trace of illness at all. Rather, news has reached me of the troubling ‘movement’ that has begun spreading throughout Russia—the ideology of communism—which not only persecutes our brethren, the Jewish people, and Judaism everywhere, but has also begun disseminating denial and heresy throughout the world. It appears that their entire goal and intent is to uproot, from its very foundation, faith in Hashem, Baruch Hu. Therefore, they have launched such a fierce campaign, in order to increase denial and terrible heresy in the world.

“As indeed became clear in the years that

followed, these communists were among the greatest deniers, and all their books and writings were filled with mockery and ridicule of the simple faith of Klal Yisrael—may their mouths be filled with dust. Tragically, at that time the hour smiled upon those wicked ones, and they succeeded in uprooting tens of thousands of Jews from the purity of their complete faith, as is well known.”

“Therefore,” the Rebbe concluded, “in order to strengthen and establish faith in the world, I requested today to drink more than usual, solely so that I could recite—and repeatedly recite—the *berachah* שְׁהַבֵּל בְּדַבְרֵי נְהִיָּה בְּדַבְרֵי הַיְהוּדָה, to publicize and spread in the world pure and upright faith in the Creator of the world,— that all came into being by His word.”

“Know this with certainty,” the Rebbe added with sacred trembling: every time a holy Jewish person opens his mouth to recite the simple and familiar *berachah* that is constantly upon our tongues— בְּרַחֵם ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הַעֹלָם שְׁהַבֵּל נְהִיָּה בְּדַבְרֵי ה' - ‘Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, by Whose word all came into being’—he sanctifies the world and, through his *berachah*, bestows an abundance of faith upon the world. Through a single *berachah* alone—and all the more so, when it is recited with complete and proper intention—he cuts off and nullifies many forces of denial and removes them from the world.

Therefore, specifically in these times when denial grows stronger and the world fills with heresy, it is upon us to strengthen ourselves all the more in the root of the mitzvah of *emunah*, to reinforce ever more the foundations of faith within and without. Through this we shall merit the proclamation of the sovereignty of Heaven throughout the entire world, Amen.

To the court of the holy Rebbe, Rav Yissachar Dov of Belz *zy”a* came a Jewish man who had traveled from afar, having heard of the holy Rebbe, by whose light thousands of Jews derive benefit. He poured out before him his anguish and distress.

This was an accomplished God-fearing Jew, who had merited to establish his home in accordance with Torah and halachah—a home of Torah and sanctity—and who had even merited to see upright and blessed generations. Yet for some reason, his youngest son, a pleasant and charming youth, had been seized by severe doubts and confusions in matters of faith. This was a very unusual phenomenon in their family and community, all of whom were upright and complete, and had never fallen into such doubts or inner turmoil. Yet this young boy repeatedly fell into difficult trials of faith. He immersed himself in “investigations” and inquiries into the foundations of faith and

philosophy, opening various “research books” that only entangled him further and further, until he descended from one level to the next. Beyond his spiritual decline and weakening in Torah and mitzvah observance as a result of all these confusions in his mind, he also suffered greatly from them; his peace of mind was utterly disturbed, and he wandered about like a sleepwalker, his pain unbearable.

After the Rebbe gazed carefully at the *kvittel* before him, he suddenly began to question the father about the celebration of the *bris milah* of the son in question.

The man was somewhat taken aback by these questions—what connection did the joy of the *bris* have to this matter? Nevertheless, he answered each of the Rebbe’s questions one by one: Who was the *mohel*? Who was the *sandak*? Where was the *bris* held? After whom was the child named? And so on.

“And where was the *seudah* of the *milah* held?” the Rebbe pressed.

“Ah...” the man stammered, “we did not hold a *seudas bris*... Because the *bris* took place on Friday, late in the day, and all the attendees hurried home. However, as is customary, we served *mezonos* and beverages in abundance after the *bris*, and we even added more varieties of pastries to substitute for a meal, as well as several kinds of *lekach* that were baked especially in honor of the celebration. Everyone enjoyed and rejoiced—but a proper *seudas bris* with *netilas yadayim*, according to halachah, did not take place.”

At this, the Rebbe’s eyes lit up. “Now everything is understood,” he said, and he explained to the Jew something of the great significance of that holy meal, revealing to him matters from the inner chambers.

“Listen,” the Rebbe explained gently, “Jews usually sit down for a *seudah mitzvah* of a *bris milah* [which Rashi alludes to in *Perek Rabbi Eliezer De’milah* (*Shabbos* 130a) regarding the statement, ‘Every mitzvah that they accepted upon themselves with joy, such as *milah*, as it states (*Tehillim* 119:162), שֵׁשׁ אֲנֹכִי עַל - *I rejoice over Your word as one who finds great spoil*—they still perform it with joy; Rashi explains, ‘With joy’—by making a feast]. And at the conclusion of that exalted meal, in which many tzaddikim throughout the generations were meticulous to participate, the cup is taken for *Birkas Hamazon*. Before beginning the *zimun*, the assembled open their mouths in joyful song, with the well-known melody uniquely associated with *bris milah*, נִוְדָה לְשִׁמְךָ בְּתוֹךְ אֲמוּנֵי.

“At that sacred moment,” the Rebbe

revealed, “an immense flow of complete and pure *emunah* is bestowed upon the soul of the tender newborn, who has just entered the covenant of Avraham Avinu *a”h*, the father of believers, as he too joins the legion of the King—to connect within the faithful of the holy faith of Yisrael. For at that time, when we sing at the *seudas bris* that song, and the one leading the *zimun* proclaims aloud, בְּרִשׁוֹת קַל אֱלֹהִים וְנוֹרָא מִשְׁגָּב לְעַתּוֹת, “With permission of the Awesome and Fearsome God, a Fortress in times of distress, a God girded with might—the Mighty One on high, Hashem!” and the entire assembly responds after him with joy: נִוְדָה לְשִׁמְךָ בְּתוֹךְ אֲמוּנֵי, repeating it again and again—נִוְדָה לְשִׁמְךָ and so forth—from that supernal flow, faith takes root in the heart of the newly circumcised child.

“It is therefore no wonder,” the Rebbe concluded, “that if the *seudas bris* was omitted, and they did not sing for your son נִוְדָה לְשִׁמְךָ בְּתוֹךְ אֲמוּנֵי, doubts and confusions in faith should later awaken in his heart, for he was lacking one of the fundamental channels through which the influence of the mitzvah of *emunah* is bestowed upon the heart of a holy Jewish person.”

[Here it is fitting to append the wording of the Chochmas Adam (*Klal* 149:24): “It is customary to prepare a meal on the day of the *milah*, for every mitzvah that Klal Yisrael accepted upon themselves with joy, they still perform with joy, as it states (*Tehillim* 119:162), שֵׁשׁ אֲנֹכִי עַל אֲמֶרְתְּךָ בְּמוֹצֵא שָׁלָל רַב - *I rejoice over Your word*. One who is able to make a meal but is stingy and provides only coffee or spirits and sweets does not act properly, and the Vilna Gaon protested against this.”]

The tremendous greatness of the trait of faith and trust embodied by the holy Rebbe, Reb Zusha of Anipoli *zt”l*, is famous and widely publicized. Many wondrous accounts are told concerning his absolute clarity in this mitzvah—the mitzvah of *emunah*—and he merited to witness through it abundant kindnesses from Heaven.

One particularly extraordinary account we shall reproduce here, copied verbatim from the holy work Heichal Haberachah, by the holy Rebbe, Reb Yitzchak Eizik of Komarna *zy”a*, who writes (*Parashas Va’eschanan, Devarim* 5:25), and here are his holy words:

“My revered father-in-law, the renowned tzaddik, Reb Avraham Mordechai of Pintchov, heard from the holy tzaddik Reb Zusia of Anipoli, that in his poverty, he served as a beadle in the town of Ostroh. It was his practice to fast for two or three days, and afterward to go and ask some householder to give him bread to restore his soul.

“Once he said in his heart that it was a deficiency in faith to go and ask for bread; rather, he should trust in his Hashem with

complete faith that He would not withhold his sustenance.

“On one occasion he fasted for three days as was his custom, and after the fast no one would give him even a little food. He continued fasting and walking until he was close to death, and there was no one who would give him anything there. A great tumult arose Above, and there was no one in that entire place who was fit to perform this great mitzvah—to sustain the soul of such a holy person—because although there were many respectable individuals there, not even one of them was worthy of this mitzvah, that Hashem should send him such a gift, as explained in the Zohar.

“Hashem Yisbarach, created for him two breasts in his mouth—one producing honey and one producing milk—and for three months he was sustained by that honey and milk, nursing from the breasts in his mouth.

“After three months, someone came to him and said: ‘Zusha, take six *groschen* and buy yourself bread.’ At that very moment, the honey and milk ceased. Thus did the tzaddik relate to my revered father-in-law.

“Behold, my brother, see how it is more pleasing before Hashem Yisbarach, to change the order of Creation than to grant a gift and the merit of a mitzvah to one who has not merited it.”

Thus far the holy words of Heichal Haberachah. From this we learn—each according to his level—how far the lofty degree of the mitzvah of *emunah* of the holy and exalted tzaddikim reaches. Concerning this the *pasuk* testifies, וְלֹא רָאִיתִי צַדִּיק נֶעְזָב וְנִרְעוּ מִבְּקֶשׁ לֶחֶם - *I have not seen a righteous person forsaken, nor his offspring seeking bread* (*Tehillim* 37:25).

There was once a poor man who came before the Kotzker Rebbe *zy”a*, and poured out his distress before him: his eldest daughter sat at home, having already reached marriageable age, and the poor man had nothing with which to marry her off properly. The Kotzker Rebbe sat at the table and wrote for him a letter of request to a wealthy man in a distant city, asking him to provide the wedding expenses.

The poor man dragged his feet day after day, until after two full weeks of hardship and toil along the road, he arrived in that city. Immediately he went to the wealthy man’s home, and to his joy found him present. He handed him the Kotzker Rebbe’s letter. The wealthy man was very pleased with the letter he had merited to receive from the Rebbe, read it carefully, and when he finished reading, took out a single ruble from his pocket, pressed it into the poor man’s hand, and dismissed him in peace.

The poor man was, of course, filled with bitter disappointment. For this he had endured all those labors? He had been fully confident that this letter would save him—and now it turned out to be only one ruble! He set off to make his way to another city, his heart filled with

resentment and overwhelmed by feelings of despair.

After several hours of travel, suddenly a man pursued him in a splendid carriage drawn by mighty horses. When the man reached him, he said that he was a messenger from that same wealthy benefactor who had given him the ruble, and that now he was sending him all the wedding expenses, with generous surplus. The poor man was, of course, overjoyed that he had been delivered from his distress. Yet he was deeply puzzled by the wealthy man's strange behavior: at first dismissing him with only a single ruble, and then, a few hours later, suddenly changing his mind and sending him all the money. In great wonder, he hastened back to that city, knocked on the wealthy man's door, and laid out his astonishment before him, asking why he had reversed his decision so completely within such a short time.

The wealthy man answered wisely: "I did not change my mind at all. There is no doubt that I observed our master's instruction with exactness and care, fulfilling it in the best possible manner. However, when you came to me, I saw that you were relying completely on the Rebbe's letter, to the point that you forgot entirely the mitzvah of *emunah*—to believe in and trust in Hashem Yisbarach. Therefore, I was compelled to send you away in embarrassment, so that your heart would be broken when you saw that even a letter from the greatest leader of the generation, written especially for you, had no power to help. Surely, in your bitterness of soul, you then poured out your supplication before the Borei Yisbarach and remembered that one must turn only to Him. Only then could I send you the full sum."

This account teaches us a second chapter in the mitzvah of *emunah*—the trait of trust: that one must trust solely in Hashem Yisbarach, alone, as the *pasuk* states (*Tehillim* 55:23), *הַשְׁלִיךְ עַל ה' יְהוָה וְהוּא יְכַלְכֶּלְךָ* - *Cast your burden upon Hashem, and He will sustain you*"

We also learn from this the proper path of giving and charity: that the wealthy man was concerned for the recipient's spiritual state to, not only for his physical needs, and did not absolve himself merely by giving money. Rather, he descended to the needs of the poor man's soul and spirit. Such is the correct path of the trait of charity—to consider the needs of body, soul, and spirit of the one who asks, and to reflect upon one's spiritual responsibility before Heaven. Undoubtedly, that wealthy man was a great individual, and all this was in accordance with the intention of the holy Rebbe who sent the petitioner specifically to him, so that beyond being saved materially, he would also learn moral instruction and the ways of a Torah life—of

faith and steadfast trust in the living God.

In one of the talks of Rav Reuven Feinstein, *rosh yeshivah* of Mesivta Tiferes Yerushalayim in Staten Island, New York, and son of the *gaon*, Maran Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l*, he sought to illustrate for his students the essence of the trait of trust, and presented it through a well-known American story that occurred and was publicized throughout the United States. One of the great and famous spectacles in America features expert champions who walk upon a thin rope stretched between skyscrapers or above a vast river. Step by step they traverse the rope, to the roaring applause of thousands of spectators crowding every vantage point along the route.

The performer walking upon the thin rope knows that a single tiny, miscalculated movement would cast him into certain death. Often, he holds in his hand a powerful loudspeaker, and while walking he speaks to the crowd, exciting them with various feats that he performs while in motion—such as an aerial somersault upon the slender wire.

In one breathtaking performance by a great expert who had already accumulated countless hours of walking upon such ropes, the champion stood upon the rope and asked the thousands of cheering admirers whether they believed that he could cross the entire thin rope safely.

"Yes!" the people shouted hoarsely—after all, he was world-famous and had proven his abilities dozens of times.

The champion continued, roaring from atop the rope: "Do you believe that I can take a bicycle here and now, and ride it across this rope from end to end?"

"Yes, certainly!" came the response again, for he had demonstrated even this many times.

Suddenly, a bicycle was brought to the acrobat, who stood at the beginning of the rope. With a skilled leap he mounted the bicycle and began the dangerous and dizzying ride along the length of the wire, dozens of meters above the ground.

With one hand he held the handlebars, and with the other the loudspeaker, continuing as he sped back and forth to shout to the excited, applauding crowd below, "Do you believe that I can reach the destination safely?"

"Yes!" they all cried out together.

"And now," the man continued to excite the crowd, "I will ask a more difficult question: Do you believe that while riding the bicycle between heaven and earth, I can place another person upon my shoulders and bring us both safely to the end of the route?"

"Yes, of course!" the crowd shouted,

having already placed full trust in the expert acrobat, who had proven that whatever he asked, he performed immediately.

"Well then," the champion continued, "which of you is willing to come up here to the top of the tower, and I will carry him upon my shoulders for a delightful ride across this thin rope?"

Here the man was disappointed. No response came from the crowd—absolute silence. Not one person from the enormous audience, who only moments before had shouted loudly of their complete trust in him, was willing to risk himself in any way.

In the end, all suddenly saw a young boy leap, without any fear or trepidation, onto the champion's shoulders. Together they rode back and forth upon the bicycle several times, and completed the entire route with great success.

After the two descended to the crowd below, everyone rushed to the boy and asked him: "How were you not afraid to jump into such a dangerous stunt?"

The boy smiled and said: "This champion is my father! My father—I trust with my eyes closed. He will guard me carefully in every way." It turned out that this child had grown up accustomed to a father who walked upon ropes, carrying him upon his shoulders in various feats, and thus the child had become used to trusting his father completely.

[These non-Jews, of course, do not know and do not recognize the supreme Heavenly Power that guards and oversees them at every step according to His will, and they boast before the entire world of their own strength and might. But as for us, Klal Yisrael, we know and recognize (*Chullin* 7b) that without His decree, a person cannot so much as move even a small finger.]

This story, Rav Reuven concluded, vividly illustrates the mitzvah of *emunah* and trust in two important lessons:

1. At times a person may chirp with his mouth about faith and trust out aloud, yet when it comes to actual deed—when it concerns himself—it becomes clear that he is still very far from complete trust (see the sweet words of the *Chazon Ish*, *Emunah u'Bitachon*, ch. 2, sec. 2).

2. One trusts a father with eyes closed—and all the more so, should we trust our Father in Heaven. When trust is complete, the Jew senses that the Borei Yisbarach is his Father, and therefore he has nothing to fear. As David Hamelech *a"h*, said *כְּגִמְלָה עָלַי אִמּוֹ כְּגִמְלָה עָלַי נַפְשִׁי* - *Like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me* (*Tehillim* 131:2)—like an infant sheltered beneath his mother's apron, where he feels the safest place on earth. This is the perfection of fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *emunah* according to its law—faith that brings us to the life of the World to Come, Amen!