

קהילת בית דניאל



Congregation Beis Doniel

Divrei Chizuk

***Shavuos
5780***

Given by
Rabbi Dovid A. Gross

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Dear Friend,

For the last few months Klal Yisroel has been going through a challenging time; our shuls, yeshivas and schools have been closed and we have been semi-quarantined in our homes. In order to try and keep our *kehilla* and friends connected I created a daily *chizuk* chat before Pesach and posted *divrei chizuk*. B”h I have posted 65 audio and video *divrei chizuk*. For the last ten days the *chizuk* has been based on *Shavuos and Kabalas haTorah*. I am presenting you with theses *divrei chizuk* transcribed from the audio. These were not prepared for “print”, rather transcribed the way I said them.

I would like to thank Mrs. Michal Sinowitz who once again was willing to take on this project and transcribed my words in a most professional manner.

My *tefilla* is that the *chizuk* that emerges from these *divrei Torah* should be a *zechus* for all the *cholim*, be a *shmirah* for Klal Yisroel, and should serve to bring a *yeshua* from this *tzarah, b’karov*.

Dovid A. Gross
Rav, Kehillas Beis Doniel
Cleveland, Oh

Table of Contents

1. We Are All <i>Choshuv</i>	4
2. Prepare!	6
3. <i>Ma'amad Har Sinai</i>	9
4. <i>Hahu Yoma</i> – Shavuos	12
5. A Unified Nation	14
6. Fire & Flowers	17
7. <i>Mamleches Kohanim</i>	19
8. <i>Naaseh Ve'Nishma</i> -How We said it	21
9. Torah Under All Circumstances	23
10. Torah – Our Security	26

Shalom aleichem everyone.

We are continuing our *divrei chizuk*. As we are getting closer to the *yontif* of *Shavuos*, for the next ten days of *divrei chizuk* which will lead us up to *Shavuos*,— we are going to focus now on the *yontif* of *Shavuos* and קבלת התורה and be *mechazek* ourselves, just like we did before *Pesach* on the *Hagaddah*

Today is the forty-fifth day of *divrei chizuk*, *Baruch Hashem*, and *Be'ezras Hashem* we will be able to continue to be *mechazek* each other as we come closer to *Shavuos*.

We mentioned yesterday that Ezra made a *Takanah* to read the קללות – the rebuke of the תוכחה of *Parshas* בחוקותי before *Shavuos*: "תכלה שנה וקללותיה" – let us be finished with the year, together with all of the curses that have been coming in this year, and we should start a new year of *Brachos*.

The *Tosfos* points out that even though this is true – however, we never *lain* בחוקותי right before *Shavuos*. The same thing being with *Parshas* כי תבוא before *Rosh HaShanah*. There is always a buffer week between בחוקותי and *Shavuos* and כי תבוא and *Rosh HaShanah*. The *Tosfos* says in מגילה דף ל"א ע"ב:

"כדי שלא להסמיך הקללות שבבחוקותי לעצרת" Although Ezra wanted us to read it and be מתעורר from it, like we mentioned yesterday; but he also wanted there to be a buffer week between the two and that's why במדבר is the הפסק – the separation, the division between the קללות and the actual *yomtov* of *Shavuos*.

However, Rav Moshe Feinstein לברכה זכרונו has a beautiful *vort* to explain how *Parshas BaMidbar* – this week's *Parsha* – actually has שייכות to *Shavuos*. It does not just happen to be the buffer week between בחוקותי and *Shavuos* – *BaMidbar* is a necessary הקדמה, a necessary introduction to *Shavuos*. Rav Moshe explains that there are people who think that they don't have it in them to become great in *Torah*. And because of that they don't have the confidence, they feel they don't have the potential – so they don't put all their effort into it. They are מתרשלים ללמוד – they are lazy or weak from learning, thinking that they are not going to come to a great מדרגה in *Torah*.

Says Rav Moshe that in *Parshas BaMidbar* we count – Moshe Rabenu counted all the Jews: "שאו את ראש כל עדת בני ישראל" – lift them up and count them. Says Rav Moshe – why is it that when it comes to counting, does the *Torah* use לשון of raising? "שאו את ראש" – raise the heads. Rav Moshe answers that when *Klal Yisrael* were counted, and they were counted one by one – individuals: it wasn't an estimation, it wasn't a fly-by, guessing how many people there were. Every person passed by Moshe Rabenu and was counted "למשפחתם לבית" – who are you, who is your family, which *Shevet* do you come from. Every person was an equal number: Moshe Rabenu was one, and the lowest person in *Klal Yisrael* was equally one. No one in *Klal Yisrael* was worth more than someone else – there was no one who was worth two people, five people, ten people. Everyone was worth the same in the counting. Everyone was counted as one. And when *Klal Yisrael* sees this, and when people see that they are on equal footing and they are being counted equally amongst *Klal Yisrael* – "שאו את" "שאו את" – that lifts them up. That raises them up; that lifts their head high and gives them חשיבות and says: you are something important. You are not just another person in *Klal Yisrael*, who maybe feels inadequate compared to people who have greater כשרונות. You have כשרון – you have potential to be great according to your *madrega*, the

same as every other person in *Klal Yisrael* has that potential. And you are not just a number – you are a person. "לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֶּם לְבֵית אֲבֹתֵם" – you have a family, you have a *Shevet*, you are something חשוב! And that's how *Klal Yisrael* was counted: "שָׂאוּ" – they were raised up. The counting lifted up their heads and gave them a חשיבות.

"ולכן קודם שבועות" says Rav Moshe – therefore before *Shavuos* we have to read *Parshas BaMidbar*, "שהוא פרשת הפיקודים" – that's the *Parsha* of counting, "שנאמר בלשון נשיאות" – that was said using a terminology of raising up. "ללמדנו שבאופן זה יכול לקבל התורה ללמדה" – to give confidence to every person in *Klal Yisrael*: every one of us is able to be *mekabel* the *Torah*. Every one of us is able to be great in *Torah*. Everyone of us has an equal shot and an equal chance to become great. "שָׂאוּ" – that raises us up and that gives us the confidence for *Kabalas HaTorah*.

This is similar to a *vort* that Rav Moshe says in last week's *Parsha*, (*Rav Zalman Sorotzkin* says a similar thing.) At the end of *Parshas בחוקותי* is the *Parsha* of ערכין, the values of a person. In *Halacha* there are two ways of figuring out the "value" of a person. What does "value" mean? It means in regards to making נדרים: you are going to donate to the *Beis HaMikdash* a certain amount of money, how much? The value of this person. There are two ways to figure out the value: there is street value and there is intrinsic value. Depending on the terminology the person uses, whether he uses the שווי – the street value, or the ערך – the intrinsic value, will depend on what he has to pay. Street value? Go to the slave market and see how much is this person worth? Is he strong, is he weak? Is it a man or a woman? What could they do? Are they sick? Are they healthy? What is their age? That has to do with street value. There are some people who have very little street value, while others have a very high street value.

However, then there is the *Parsha* of ערכין – which is a set amount that the *Torah* gives based on the age bracket that the person is in. Rav Moshe says this teaches us that every person in *Klal Yisrael* has an intrinsic value. There is a certain *madrega* – he calls it הקבועה "לאדם" – every person has intrinsic *chashivus*; let no one say that we are not worth anything. Yes, there is a street value, and the street value has a different way of being measured. But the *Torah* tells us – there is the *Parsha* of ערכין: there is an intrinsic *chashivus* to every Jew. There is an intrinsic *madrega* that every Jew is able to achieve. Every Jew, naturally, has the ability to achieve that intrinsic *chashivus* and *madrega* that *Hashem* has given him.

But then the person's job is to *shteig* even more and to increase his *chashivus* over what his baseline is, over his intrinsic *chashivus*, that is much easier for him to attain, because that is who he is. Then the person has to push himself further, increase his *chashivus* in the eyes of the *Torah*, through *shteiging* in *Torah*, learning *Torah*, doing *mitzvos*. Making that effort to grow – that's how his *chashivus* is increased in the eyes of the *Torah*.

For us, *erev Shavuos*, this is the lesson that we need; the הקדמה in our first *divrei chizuk*. Remember – שָׂאוּ אֶת ראש – lift up your heads! Everyone of us has the potential to be great. Everyone has a baseline intrinsic *chashivus* in the eyes of the *Torah* – *madregos* that every Jew in *Klal Yisrael* has. Then, look up, *shteig*; go to the next *madrega*. Increase your *chashivus* in the eyes of the *Ribono Shel Olam*; increase your *chashivus* in your own eyes. Then you will be able to be מקבל את התורה – accept the *Torah*, learn the *Torah*, *shteig* in *Torah* and bring נחת רוח to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

Shalom Aleichem everyone.

We are continuing our *divrei chizuk*, focusing on the *yontif* of *Shavuos* and *Kabalas HaTorah*, ה.ב.א.ע.ל.י.נ.ו. ל.ט.ו.ב.ה.

In *Parshas Yisro*, פרק יט פסוק ב, the *Pasuk* says: "וַיֵּסְעוּ מִרְפִּידִים וַיָּבֹאוּ מִדְבַר סִינִי" – and they travelled from *Refidim* and they came to *Midbar Sinai*. *Rashi* quotes the *Mechilta* that asks: this *Pasuk* seems to be superfluous – we already know they were in *Refidim* and we know from the *Pasuk* before that they came to *Midbar Sinai*. Why is it necessary for the *Pasuk* to repeat this information and tell us that they travelled from *Refidim* and came to *Midbar Sinai*? The *Mechilta* answers, according to the way the *Netziv* quotes it: that just like they came to *Midbar Sinai* התורה על מנת לקבל את התורה, in order to accept the *Torah* – so too they traveled from *Refidim* התורה על מנת לקבל את התורה. It wasn't only when they came to *Midbar Sinai* that they had in mind that they are coming to accept the *Torah* – when they left *Refidim* they had already had in mind, we are travelling towards *Kabalas HaTorah*. The *Pasuk* therefore, connects the two: "וַיֵּסְעוּ מִרְפִּידִים וַיָּבֹאוּ מִדְבַר סִינִי". Both of those events – the travelling and the coming, were with the same intention, the intention to accept the *Torah*.

But the *Netziv* is still bothered: why is it important to know this information? Why do we need to know that they left *Refidim*, already with the intention of *Kabalas HaTorah*? Isn't it enough that they come to *Midbar Sinai* ready to accept the *Torah*? The *Netziv* says: "מכאן יש דבר – from here we learn a very important thing, that when it comes to any דבר, when it comes to anything that's holy – whether it's a person, who is going to receive some *Kedusha*, or whether it's an object or an article that is going to be imbued with *Kedusha* – the more הכנה, the more preparation that's put into the person or the object, will make it that when that *Kedusha* finally comes, it will have a greater effect on the person or on the object. The *Kedusha* will be that much greater based on the preparation that the person put into it. And the *Netziv* says – I have a proof to this: in *Masechtah Bava Metziah* the *Gemarah* tells us: "גדולים מעשי חייא" – how great are the actions of *Rebbi Chiya*, who said that he would ensure, if necessary, that *Torah* should not be forgotten from *Klal Yisrael*. How would he do it? He would plant flax, and from the flax he would then spin threads to make nets. He would catch deer; he would *shecht* the deer. He would take the hides, turn them into קלף, into parchment by tanning them and then he would write on them חמישה תורה. He would go to a city and teach five children – each one, one of the חומשים. Take another six children, teach each one of them one of the משנה; and then they would all teach each other. And in that way, *Torah* would not be forgotten from *Klal Yisrael*.

Asked the *Netziv*, and the *Maharsha* also asked the question – why did he need to go to such lengths in order to write the חמישה חומשי תורה on the קלף – on the parchment? In order to make a *kosher Sefer Torah* all you need to do is buy hides from the marketplace and do the tanning לשמה. Turn it into leather, into parchment – לשמה. לשם קדושת ספר תורה – that's all you have to do. Why would *Rebbi Chiyah* bother himself, not just to trap the animal and *shecht* it for קדושת ספר תורה, but go all the way back to the planting of the flax in order to make the nets to trap the deer, to get the hides – to finally make the קלף? Why did he have to start all the way from the beginning?

The answer is, says the Netziv, because these חמישה חומשי תורה needed to have an effect on these children. If he wanted these children to make sure the *Torah* wasn't forgotten from *Klal Yisrael*, the *Kedusha* in that *Sefer Torah* had to be so strong that it had such a strong effect on anyone who learns from that *Sefer Torah*, especially the children who would be learning from it. Therefore he understood that if it is "בכוחו לפעול בלב התינוקות בשפע יתירה" – if these *Sifrey Torah*, these *Chumashim* are going to have the power to effect the hearts of these children in the greatest way possible – בשפע יתירה – with a great flow of *Kedusha*, he had to start being מקדיש – sanctifying, preparing for this *Kedusha* all the way from the beginning. Not just from the tanning, which is על פי דין, not just from the *shechting* – but all the way back – not just from the trapping – all the way back to planting the flax with the *Kedusha* that these are going to be used to make the nets. Make the nets with the *Kedusha* that these are going to be used to trap the deer in order to get the hides – to finally make those חמישה חומשי תורה. And in that way, when those children would learn from it, the *Kedusha* they would receive would be בשפע יתירה – an unbelievable flow.

Where did Rebbi Chiyah know this from? He learned it from our *Pasuk*, says the Netziv. *Klal Yisrael* wanted to get the full effect of *Kabalas HaTorah* – feel the full *Kedusha* of *Kabalas HaTorah*. They knew they could just show up לקבל את התורה, but if you want to get the full *Kedusha* – they knew they had to leave from *Refidim* as they started their travels towards *Midbar Sinai*, it was already with the preparation לקבל את התורה – in order that they should be able to feel and be effected by the *Kabalas HaTorah* in the fullest force that is possible; with the greatest *Kedusha* that is possible. Rebbi Chiyah learned it from our *Pasuk* and that is what the *Torah* is teaching us.

This is what we are doing with our *divrei chizuk* as we prepare for *Kabalas HaTorah*: we are starting to look forward to the *yontif* of *Shavuos*, Every *yontif* and every *Kabalas HaTorah* needs a preparation to be able to feel the full force of the *Kedusha*. But I think that this year *Shavuos*, we have to make sure that we stress the הכנה, the preparation. And I will explain why. In other years, a person could say to himself – what am I doing over *yontif*? There are *Shiurim*, I will find a *chavrusa*, there are learning programs – there are so many things to do if you just show up in *shul*. You can show up for the program and you can still get the effect of the *yontif* of *Shavuos*, the *Limud HaTorah* at night and the *Limud HaTorah* during the day. However, this year, most of us will not be in *shul* the entire night of *Shavuos*. Many *shuls* will not be opened and even those that are, will probably not have this type of situation because of the Covid-19 virus. Therefore, it behooves every one of us to start preparing today. Think about: what am I going to do over *Shavuos*? What am I going to learn over *Shavuos*? Find a *Masechta*, find a *Perek*; what's my goal? Two *blat*, five *blat*. Am I going to learn a *Parsha* in *Chumash*? Am I going to learn the *Parshios* of *Kabalas HaTorah*? Am I going to learn some *Prakim* or a *Navi*? Whatever it is – a person has to be prepared – this year more than ever. To be able to get the *Kedusha* of *Kabalas HaTorah*, to come to *Kabalas HaTora* properly, a person has to make sure that they are prepared with a plan and a goal, what am I going to get out of this *yontif*; what am I going to get from this *Shavuos*.

The same thing is for the women, who perhaps are not involved in *Limud HaTorah* in the same way, but many women come to *Shul* for *Duchening* – for *Birchas Kohanim*, for *Yizkor*, to hear *Megilas Rus*, to hear the הדברות. And in most places, this is not going to be feasible and they perhaps will also feel the lack of *Kedushah* of the *yontif* of *Shavuos*. They also should make goals for themselves. It's the *yahrzeit* of David *HaMelech* – maybe have a goal of how much *Tehillim* you are going to say, maybe have a goal of something that you

will learn. Every one of us, for this year's *Kabalas HaTorah* has to make sure that we have a goal.

We need to start preparing today, "וְיִסְעוּ מִרְפִּידִים", if we want to get the full force of *Kabalas HaTorah*. Every דבר שבקדושה needs a *hachanah*; כל שכן this year – we all need to be prepared with goals, with סדרים, with ideas of what we are going to do in order to be *mekabel HaTorah* with the greatest *Kedushah* possible.

Have a wonderful day. *Kol tuv.*

that he is lying – we know it is not true. "וְגַם בְּךָ יֵאֱמִינוּ לְעוֹלָם" – Hashem told Moshe Rabenu – they will believe in your Torah forever! After I orchestrate this event called מעמד הר סיני.

Says the Ramban that this is called: "לימוד אמנות התורה". Learning about הר סיני; understanding מעמד הר סיני; remembering הר סיני is called – learning about *Emunas HaTorah* – our belief in the *emes* of Torah. That is what מעמד הר סיני is. And that's why it is from the יסודות האמונה. Hashem says, it is the foundation of everything; it's the security of the entire Torah – that no one could come along and be חס ושלום, מכחיש, and tell us things have changed.

That is why it is such an important *Mitzvah* for us to talk about, to think about, to remember and tell it to our children and our grandchildren.

The Rambam, in *איגרת תימן*, where he is writing to the תימני Jews who were going through a lot of *tzaros*, of people coming and telling them that they should שמד – they should change their religion, claiming "things have changed." And he writes חיזוק to them: we have to remember הר סיני, מעמד הר סיני, like *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* commanded us "לזכרו תמיד" – to constantly remember it and never forget it. *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* said that we have to teach our children, "כדי שיגדלו על ידיעתנו" – they have to grow up with this concept real to them. Like the *Pasuk* says: "וְהוֹדַעְתֶּם לְבְנֵיךָ וּלְבְנֵי בְנֵיךָ".

The Rambam gives advice to the people from ימן and he says: you should make gatherings, you should make conventions – "וַיִּסְפְּרוּ בְּבָבֶל קהל ועדה" – gather people together and describe what מעמד הר סיני was all about; "גדולו והדרו" – its glory, its greatness; שהוא "שהוא" – this is the foundation that all *Emunah* revolves around. And this is the *Yesod* to the *Emes* of Torah. He continues citing *Psukim* from שיר השירים describing *Klal Yisrael* answering those who try to get them to stray from Torah. They tell them, "we will only believe you, חס ושלום, if you bring us another הר סיני – then we will know Hashem has changed His mind, because we will hear it directly from Hashem."

That's what *Shavuos* is really all about: *Shavuos* is the day of הר סיני. It's the day when not only do we learn about the Torah and talk about the Torah and accept the Torah. We have to be מחזק ourselves in *Emunas HaTorah* in הר סיני, that there is a special *Mitzvah* never to forget it from our lives and to teach our children and our grandchildren: "יזום אֲשֶׁר עִמְדָה לְפָנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּחֶרֶב".

It's a day to learn about *Matan Torah*. It's a day to talk about *Matan Torah*. Not only did we see *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* talk to Moshe Rabenu, the Ramchal writes that our *Emunah* was so great – it became a part of our DNA. Because Hashem, by מעמד הר סיני, opened up all the heavens and we were able to see with clarity Hashem's plan for the world, how He runs everything. *Emunah* became engrained in *Klal Yisrael* through הר סיני. It is the *Yesod* of Torah, it's the *Yesod* of *Emunah*, it's the *Yesod* of everything. As the Rambam wrote, everything revolves on הר סיני. And that's why we can never forget it.

I think we have to make an effort to learn about it and talk about it on *Shavuos* – especially when we have been talking for the last number of weeks and months about *Emunah*. *Pesach* was *Emunah* in the *Ribono Shel Olam*. מעמד הר סיני brought the *Emunah* to an entirely different level. We didn't have to believe Moshe Rabenu – we heard Hashem talk to Moshe Rabenu. We saw with clarity that Hashem runs this world. It became a part of us. That's what מעמד הר סיני was all about. And therefore, that is what *Shavuos* is all about. It is about

not only לימוד התורה – but it's אמונת התורה – *Emunah* in the *Ribono Shel Olam* as the ברא עולם.

This fits so beautifully with our *divrei chizuk* throughout this whole period as we have been saying that we have been going through a course of *Emunah* – *Hashem* is showing us once again that He runs the world; He's the boss! And if that's true – and we know it's true – we have to see the *Amitus HaTorah* and we have to trust *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. We will dedicate ourselves to that *Torah* that He has given to us, the *Emes of Torah*. That's what מעמד הר סיני taught us. That is something we can never forget and every single day we must remember it. *Shavuos* is the time that we talk about it and we elaborate on this ענין – on this topic. But we must remember it every single day of the year. **That** is what *Shavuos* is all about: learning *Emunas HaTorah*; taking our *Emunah in HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and His *Torah* to the next level.

Have a wonderful day, *Kol Tuv*.

Shalom aleichem everyone.

We are continuing our *divrei chizuk* based on *Shavuos* and *Kabalas HaTorah* הבהא עלינו לטובה.

I want to continue our discussion from yesterday when we talked about מעמד הר סיני. The *Gemara* עב סח דף פסחים מסכתא פסחים says that Rav Yosef, on the day of *Shavuos* would say: prepare for me some choice meat to celebrate, because "אי לא האי יומא" – if not for this day, "דקא גרים" – that caused me to be Rav Yosef, איכא בשוקא, "כמה יוסף איכא בשוקא". There are many people named Yosef and I would have been Yosef! I am only **Rav** Yosef because of the day of *Shavuos*.

I want to share with you a thought from Reb Chatzkel Levinstein זכרונו לברכה. This *Dvar Torah* is very dear to me, because this is – I think – the last time that I spoke to מורי ורבי, Rav Shlomo Brevda זכרונו לברכה in learning. Not the last time I spoke to him before he was *niftar*, but the last time I spoke to him in learning. It was before *Shavuos* and he told me this *vort* of Reb Chatzkel that he had just seen in the טוב לקח טוב. Reb Chatzkel was his *Rebbi* and he was so excited to find a new *vort* (for him) by Reb Chatzkel. Reb Chatzkel says as follows: that really, it's almost an impossibility for a person to overcome his יצר הרע. A person's יצר הרע is a part of him, a part of his מצב הטבעי – his natural situation, his natural level. A person has to work very, very hard to be able to overcome that – because if you think about it, if this is your default, if this is where you are always falling back on, you struggle to move forward, you struggle to overcome it. But the minute you stop your struggle – you fall right back to where you began; that is the nature of a person. So how is it, asks Reb Chatzkel, that we have any chance of ever overcoming our יצר הרע and growing in *shteiging*?

Reb Chatzkel says, that is because *Klal Yisrael's* מציאות, *Klal Yisrael's* essence – changed at מעמד הר סיני. At מעמד הר סיני, when *Klal Yisrael* heard the *Ribono Shel Olam* say "אֲנֹכִי ה'" "אֲלֹקֶיךָ... לא יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים" and the *Medrash* says that they were in such a panic and a fright that their *Neshamas* left them; and then the *Neshamas* were returned to them. And when the *Neshama* returned to them – it was a new *Klal Yisrael*. It was a new person – a person whose *Neshama* had seen "אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ"; had experienced מעמד הר סיני. That *Neshama* went back into a person – I think they say בשם Reb Baruch Ber – it was a *Torahdikeh Neshama* that changed the essence of who *Klal Yisrael* is. And therefore, *Klal Yisrael* was no longer people who their מצב הטבעי – their default settings, their natural situation – is יצר הרע, is the הרע, כוח הרע. אדרבא – the opposite is true: *Klal Yisrael's* default is that they want to do what is right, *Klal Yisrael's* default is *Emunah*, is *Torah*, is *Mitzvos*. The הרע sometimes gets the best of us, but if we could just bring ourselves back to who we truly are – we are truly people who serve *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* with our טוב יצר.

That, says Reb Chatzkel, is what Reb Yosef was saying: it's true – *Klal Yisrael* had experience *Yetzias Mitzrayim*; *Klal Yisrael* had experienced a *Krias Yam Suf*. Unbelievable experiences and lesson of *Emunah*, but none of those were strong enough to change the nature of *Klal Yisrael*. They made a רושם; they would help a person *shteig*. But not to be able to change the person to be able to be free from his יצר הרע. That only happened by מעמד הר סיני, when we experienced "אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ". As we said yesterday – when we heard *Hashem* speak to Moshe *Rabenu*; when we saw the heavens open and everything about the בריאה and the *Ribono Shel Olam* was crystal clear – when that happened, the מציאות, the essence of *Klal*

Yisrael changed; we became entirely different people. We were free of the יצר הרע and of מלאך המוות at that point. And even when they came back with the עגל, we were still on our default settings – the מצב הטבעי of *Klal Yisrael* was a בריאה חדשה, something new and that is, the will – the רצון – to keep the *Torah* and do the *Mitzvos*; have *Emunah* in *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

And that is why Reb Yosef said "אי לא האי יומא", if not for that day – he wasn't saying, 'if not for us being מקבל the *Torah*'; he wasn't saying there were other experiences of *Emunah* that could inspire a person. But "אי לא האי יומא" – it was the experiences of מעמד הר סיני that gave me the כוח to not just be a Yosef in the *shuk*, a regular person in the market. Not a Jewish person – a person in the market whose default is רע, whose default is his יצר הרע. I am of *Klal Yisrael* and that gives me the כוח to rise above the רע; to have my יצר טוב be the one who tells me what to do – because that's my true essence. Says Reb Chatzkel that every time a person talks about מעמד הר סיני; every time a person remembers מעמד הר סיני – he is re-charging the מעמד הר סיני in his *Neshama*. And that will give him the כוח to fight his יצר הרע that day – because that's who he truly is.

This is especially true when it comes to "האי יומא" – that *yontif* of *Shavuos* – it's a time to talk about *Emunah*. It's a time to talk about who *Klal Yisrael* are. It's a time to talk about how we, *Klal Yisrael*, are filled in our DNA with *Emunah*, *Torah* and *Mitzvos*. That's who we are: we are מציאות הטוב. Sometimes the יצר הרע gets the best of us, but in essence, the default settings of *Klal Yisrael* is *Emunah*, is *Tovah*. And on "האי יומא" of *Shavuos* – and every day we remember מעמד הר סיני – we are re-charging that battery in our *Neshama*, to give us the כוח to fight the יצר הרע that day.

The *Tur* writes that when one recites the *Bracha* of "אשר בחר בנו מכל העמים ונתן לנו את" every morning at *Birchas HaTorah* – that *Bracha* is the זיכרון, the remembrance and the praise to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* from מעמד הר סיני.

"שבחר בנו מכל העמים" – He chose us; "ונתן לנו את תורתנו מתוך האש" – *Hashem* made מעמד הר סיני – that's where He gave us the *Torah*. That is how we remember מעמד הר סיני every single day of the year. And like Reb Chitzkel is saying, if we just think about "אשר בחר בנו" – we will be charging up our *Neshama*; we will be invigorating ourselves with מעמד הר סיני which will give us the power to fight the יצר הרע of the day; to learn *Hashem's Torah*; to have *Emunah* in situations that we find ourselves. That's what מעמד הר סיני does for *Klal Yisrael*. That's what *Shavuos* does for *Klal Yisrael*. That's what *Birchas HaTorah* – "אשר בחר" – does for *Klal Yisrael*. מעמד הר סיני, like we said yesterday, is from יסודות האמונה that keep *Klal Yisrael* growing and close to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

Let's take advantage of "האי יומא"; let's be מחזק in what מעמד הר סיני is about. Let's learn about it, talk about it, experience it. It will give us the כוח to be the best that we could be.

Have a wonderful day, *kol tuv*.

Shalom aleichem everyone.

We are continuing our *divrei chizuk* as we approach the *yontif* of *Shavuos*, הבא עלינו לטובה.

It's *Erev Shabbos Kodesh, Parshas BaMidbar*, and as we mentioned earlier this week – *Parshas BaMidbar* always precedes *Shavuos* – most often the *Shabbos* right before *Shavuos*. And many of the *Mefarshim* make a connection between the *Parsha* and the *Yontif* of *Shavuos*.

I want to share with you a beautiful *vort* on *Kabalas HaTorah*, from Rabbi Yosef Nechemia Kornitzer לברכה זכרוננו לברכה, Rav of Krakow, double great-grandson of the Chassam Sofer, זכותו תגן עלינו. And I want to apply it to *Parashas BaMidbar*.

When *Klal Yisrael* camped in front of *Har Sinai*, "וַיִּחַן שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגְדַת הָהָר"; Rashi brings the famous *Chazal*: "ויחן" is in a singular expression – "כאיש אחד בלב אחד" – *Klal Yisrael* was camped united as one. *Rashi* continues: "אבל שאר כל החניות" – but all the other camping "במתחלוקת" – there were divisions, there were schisms in *Klal Yisrael*. And the question that Rav Yosef Nechemia is bothered by is *Klal Yisrael* now came to הר סיני – to this unbelievable event, on such a high מדרגה – "כאיש אחד בלב אחד"; why is it necessary to stress the fact that all the other times that they were camping and travelling it was with divisions, it was with *machlokes*. Just highlight the fact that today they were "כאיש אחד בלב אחד"?

If we look at *Parshas BaMidbar*, it is the *Parsha* that describes the way *Klal Yisrael* travelled and camped in the *Midbar*. "איש על דגלו" – every *Shevet* had a flag. *Rashi* says that the flag had a distinct color, based on the color of the stone of that *Shevet* on the חושן that Aharon *HaKohen* wore. "ואותות" – and symbols. The *Eben Ezra* and the *Ramban* both say that each *Shevet* had a unique symbol: Yehuda had an ארי, Reuven had a picture of a person – every *Shevet* was unique. Every *Shevet* was different, because every *Shevet* has its strengths, has its מעלות, and has its כוחות – unique to that *Shevet*. Yaakov *Avinu* – when he gave the *Brachos* to the *Shvatim*, highlighted the strengths of each *Shevet* and gave them a *Bracha* that they should be able to be successful in serving *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* with their strengths. Every *Shevet* in *Klal Yisrael* is able to serve *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* in the *derech* that talks to them; in the *derech* that is their מעלה – as long as – and the *Pasuk* continues – "מִנְּגִיד" "סְבִיב לְאֶהָל מוֹעֵד יַחְנוּ" – as long as everybody is facing the *Ohel Moed*. As long as everybody has this שמים שמים towards the *Mishkan*, towards the *Torah*, towards the שכינה – then you can have a different flag, with a different symbol on it. Twelve שערים in *Shamayim* for the *Avodas Hashem* of each *Shevet* as it enters to the *Ribono Shel Olam* through its unique pathway and unique gate.

That is the lesson of *Parshas BaMidbar*: we **are** different! There are divisions in *Klal Yisrael*. But that's our מעלה. The *Moshol* is to an orchestra: if you have an orchestra that has only one instrument, playing the same notes – you don't have beautiful music being played. But if you have all different types of instruments, playing all different types of notes, in all different types of keys, and all different ways and they blend together in harmony to make a beautiful sound – that's *Shalom*. That's *Achdus*. *Shalom* means harmony, it means every person contributing to this big nation called *Klal Yisrael* who is singing with their *Avodas Hashem* to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. That's the campings of *Klal Yisrael*; those are the דגלים,

those are the *אותות*. Those are the different colors of the stones on the *Choshen*: every *Shevet* is unique.

Says Reb Yosef Nechemia – that is *gadlus of Klal Yisrael*: the *gadlus* is that we are in *מחלוקת*, not in the traditional sense of the word, that we are fighting with each other and we are arguing with each other. Rather, there are divisions in *Klal Yisrael*, because just like each *Shevet* has its own *מהלך*, many people have their own *מהלך*. There are "מפלגות" – he says, "וכיתות שונות" – all different types of groups, "לפי דעותיהם והשקפותיהם" – according to the way their *דעה* is, according to their *Hashkafa*. "ובאמת פירוד כזה חיבור הוא" – says Reb Yosef Nechemia – this type of division is actually a *חיבור*, it is actually connecting, it is actually unity; "הנאה להם והנאה לעולם" – that's good for *Klal Yisrael* and it's good for the world. *כי על* "מינו" – each one of them is able to serve *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* in his way, and each one is *מחזק* the other one, because everyone has one goal: *מועד* – they are looking towards the *Ohel Moed*.

Says Reb Yosef Nechemia: how do you know when *Klal Yisrael* is united properly? How do you know when these divisions are actually a connection, a harmony for *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*? It's when it comes to the *איסודות התורה*, when it comes to the *איסודות האמונה* – we are all on the same page, we are all standing there together. When it comes to *הר סיני*: "ויחן" – מעמד הר סיני – *שם ישראל נגד ה'קהר* – everything falls to the wayside when it comes to *Kabalas HaTorah*; when it comes to *הר סיני*: *מעמד הר סיני*. Because that is the *בריח התיכון* – that's what holds us together as one, as we go off on our different paths, we remain connected by the fact that we are united by the *איסודות* and the foundations of *Yahadus, Torah* and *Emunah*.

Says Reb Yosef Nechemia: "ויחן שם ישראל נגד ה'קהר" – that's a *מעלה* of *Klal Yisrael*, that we were united "כאיש אחד בלב אחד" when we stood by *Har Sinai*. Says *Rashi*, "אבל שאר כל" – *החניות בתרעומות ובמחלוקות* – but all of the other campings were with divisions. That not a *חיסרון*! That's part of the *מעלה*. It is not a *מעלה* when people who do everything together continue to do everything together. It's a *מעלה* when people do things differently; but when something's important – they come together. The fact that in every other camping there were divisions, there were *דגלים* – there were "אתת לביית אבותם" – every family, every *Shevet* was unique. Then, when they came "ויחן שם ישראל נגד ה'קהר" – that was a *מעלה*; that showed that all those divisions were not really *מחלוקות* but were actually *חיבור*, we were actually connected to each other "כאיש אחד בלב אחד".

That's something that is such an important lesson as we approach the *yontif of Shavuos*, "כאיש אחד בלב אחד". As we have lived through this Corona virus situation. As states and countries are re-opening, we were so united when it came to *Torah*, when it came to *Avodah*, to *Gmilus Chasadim*. We were all in this together! There were no *ותרעומות* and *מחלוקות*; *Klal Yisrael* united together in so many unbelievable ways throughout this situation. And now, as we all go back to our *shuls*, and we go back to our places – we go back to our *מחלוקות*. We have to remember this. We have to remember that the only way that going back to our unique ways of serving *Hashem* is a *מעלה* – is if we remember how we united when things were important, when things were dangerous. When *Klal Yisrael* was in a *סכנה* we were all in the same boat, *davening* and learning in our own homes. Everything fell away – we were "כאיש אחד בלב אחד". Let's remember that as we go back to sort of "normal" life. As we approach the *yontif of Shavuos* let us not lose that *Achdus*! It is not a *סתירה* to *Achdus* that we have our own *מהלך*. We each have our own unique way – *איש על דגלו באתת לבית* – "איש על דגלו באתת לבית" – *אבותם*. But let's remember the "ויחן שם ישראל נגד ה'קהר"; and that will bring such a harmony and a *נחת רוח* to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

"עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ" – we should be zocheh – "הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל" – that we should all live בשלום together; accept the Torah together בשלום and be'Ezras Hashem we will unite as we come and meet משיח צדקינו – אמן.

focus on the beauty of *Torah*, that will help a person learn *Torah* בזריזות, do the *Mitzvos* בזריזות and בהתלהבות. When you are able to recognize how beautiful it is – all you want to do is to *chap arein* more; is to learn with more *geshmack*, to learn with more התלהבות. To do your *Chesed* with an excitement – זריזים מקדימים למצוות – The intensity cannot be a burden; the intensity cannot be something heavy. It has to be a result of the beautiful *Har Sinai*, of the beautiful flowers that exist in *Klal Yisrael*. And that is why when we come to a *Shavuos* and we want to highlight what is it that we need to look at – what is the first thing that we have to remember in our mind? It is not the *Shofar*, and it is not the *אש* and is not the קולות and the ברקים and the smoke and the shaking mountain that *Klal Yisrael* were so scared of. That is not what we use to be מתעורר ourselves; it is not we use to dedicate ourselves to *Torah*. We come to a *Beis Midrash*, to a *Beis HaKnesses*, to a home – and there are beautiful flowers. It is the beauty of the *Torah* that we have to focus on. If you are able to experience that beauty and that *geshmack* – the *Shofar* and the *אש* and the זריזות and the התלהבות and the קולות וברקים – will follow in a healthy way, because it is a result of the beauty.

That is why, although it would seem to be contradictory – the flowers with the fire – they actually complement each other. The fire is a result and an outgrowth of the beauty of *Torah*. And that is what we focus on when we learn this *Rashi*: "שיהיו דברי תורה חדשים עליך" "התלהבות היום נתנו" – every day *Torah* has to be brand new, with an excitement, with a התלהבות. But it has to be with the recognition of the beauty of *Torah*. Every day we should look for ways that we should be able to see how beautiful *Torah* is; how *geshmack* a life of *Torah* is. How it is so full of purpose, how it is so full of value. If we are able to highlight the beauty of the *Torah* – then our עבודת ה' will be with an excitement – as if this is the first day that it was given. The most beautiful thing in the world – we will just run to dedicate ourselves to לימוד התורה, to serving *HaKdosh Baruch Hu*, to performing His *Mitzvos* – to being the best possible *Yid* that we could be, every one of us.

If we are able to see that beauty – that is how we will be מקבל the *Torah* every single day. "ביום הַזֶּה" – this is the day – א' סיוון. This day – it's not in the past, it is happening today! "ביום הַזֶּה באו מדבר סיני"

Let's see that beautiful *Torah*! Let's highlight that beautiful *Torah*! Let's live that beautiful *Torah*! And BeEzras Hashem we should be זוכה to a beautiful התורה קבלת.

Have a wonderful day. *Kol tuv*.

Shalom aleichem everyone.

We are continuing our *divrei chizuk*.

Today is סיוון ב' and in *Halacha* this day is referred to as 'יום המיוחס'. The special day – a day that has *Yichus* to it. What is so special about this day? There are different explanations for that title, one of them being that today, סיוון ב' is the day that *Klal Yisrael* said "נעשה ונשמע". In *Parshas Yisro* Moshe *Rabenu* went up to *Har Sinai* on the second day of *Sivan*, says Rashi, and *Hashem* told him – this is what you should tell *Bnei Yisrael*. He came back and related all the words that *Hashem* told him, and *Klal Yisrael* answered: "כל אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ה' נַעֲשֶׂה" – whatever *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* says, *Klal Yisrael* will do. The famous words of "נעשה ונשמע".

I want to focus on something that *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* told us on that day: "וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ לִי" "שְׂרָיִם, מְמַלְכֵת כְּהֹנִיִּם וְגוֹי קְדוֹשׁ" – you will be for me a kingdom of *Kohanim* – Rashi says: שְׂרָיִם, princes, leaders. "וְגוֹי קְדוֹשׁ". What does this mean, to be a "מְמַלְכֵת כְּהֹנִיִּם"?

I want to share with you a story that happened with the first *Sadiger Rebbe*, Reb Avraham Yaakov לברכה. He was a *Rav*, a *Rebbe* in Russia and at that time there was a lot of religious persecution. And yet, he continued to teach *Torah*; he continued to have his *Chassidim* and have them learning *Torah*, doing *Mitzvos*. In fact, he was arrested and jailed for this terrible crime of teaching *Torah* to *Klal Yisrael*. While he was in jail, waiting for his sentence and his final verdict, his son was supposed to be married. The *Chassidim* were hoping they would at least allow the *Rebbe* out to attend a part of his son's wedding. But of course, they did not want him to participate. The *Chassidim* were very upset, and they figured out a way they could maybe bribe a guard to let the *Rebbe* out just for a short amount of time, and then they would get him right back in and no one would know the better. The word spread like wildfire that the *Rebbe* was going to come out of jail for part of the wedding and eventually the government and the police heard about it themselves. And now that the *Rebbe* was caught and trying to attempt to escape – the verdict was very clear: he would have to be put to death. The *Chasidim* were, of course, beside themselves and they said: we have to figure out a way to get him out of jail and out of the country. They went to a certain high-ranking officer who they had dealt with before and they were able to bribe. They told him the story and he asked: "what am I able to do for you?" They said, "it's very simple. The main problem we have is not getting the *Rebbe* out of jail – we will bribe the guards. The problem is getting him over the border. They will check his passport; they are going to know who he is, and they are not going to let him go." The officer said, "so what do you want from me?" "Very simple. We want you to go ahead of us to the border and when you see the *Rebbe's* carriage coming, you should go into the border control hut and tell whoever is there that this is a very high-ranking official and you need to be the one to actually check the passport and stamp it and let him through. Then you will just let the *Rebbe* out." He agreed. He got up in the middle of the night, took his wife with him and went to the border. When the *Rebbe's* carriage came he told the border guard that he has to go out and he will take care of this VIP customer. His wife didn't know what was going on – she didn't understand what was happening. And she peered into the vehicle that was carrying the *Rebbe* as her husband was stamping the passport. She turned to him and said: "this is the big Rabbi of the Jews!" her husband, the officer asked her: "how do you know this?"

Shalom aleichem everyone.

We are continuing our *divrei chizuk*. Today is ג' סיוון, the first of the *שלושת ימי הגבלה*, when *Klal Yisrael* prepared for *הר סיני*. We look at the *Psukim* that tell how *Moshe Rabenu* came to *Klal Yisrael* and told them everything that *Hashem* commanded, and they answered "כל אשר דבר ה' נעשה"; says the *Pasuk*: "וַיִּשָּׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֵל ה'"; Says *Rashi*: ביום "המחרת שהוא יום שלישי" – which is today, ג' סיוון. *Moshe Rabenu* went back and told *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* that *Klal Yisrael* said, "we accept".

"הִנֵּה אֲנִי בָא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעָנַן הָעָנָן" – *Hashem* told Moshe, "I am going to come in a cloud and *Klal Yisrael* is going to hear that I speak with you, "וְגַם בָּךְ יֵאֱמִינוּ לְעוֹלָם" – and that way they will believe in you forever. "וַיִּגַּד מֹשֶׁה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֵל ה'" – and Moshe told the words of the Nation to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. The question the *Meforshim* ask is, what is "וַיִּגַּד מֹשֶׁה"? It already said "וַיִּשָּׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הָעָם" – he already told *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* the answer that we accept. So why in the next *Pasuk* does it say that Moshe told *Hashem* the words of the Nation?

In the next *Pasuk*, *Hashem* continues: "וַיִּאמֶר ה' אֵל מֹשֶׁה", go to the Nation – "וְיָקֻדְשׁוּם הַיּוֹם" – they need to be prepared today and tomorrow and on the third day *Hashem* is going to come and speak to them on *Har Sinai*. *Chazal* tell us that Moshe added another day on – and that is the *שלושת ימי ההגבלה*.

The *דברי ירמיהו*, of Rav Chaim Yermiyahu Flansberg זכרונו לברכה, in his *sefer* on *Chumash* – he was a *Talmid* of the *Netziv* of *Volozhin* – says a beautiful *vort*: when *Klal Yisrael* answered, the *Pasuk* says, "וַיַּעֲנוּ כָל הָעָם יְחִידוֹ" – with this word *יְחִידוֹ* – in unison, *Klal Yisrael* is described as answering the *Kadosh Baruch Hu* ובהתלהבות, ברגש, with excitement, with *hislahavus*, everybody was able to answer בקול אחד. The *Orach Chaim HaKadosh* speaks in length how *Klal Yisrael* was full of fire, in love with *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and it was כאיש אחד בלב אחד – they were united as one and they answered as one. "וַיַּעֲנוּ כָל הָעָם יְחִידוֹ" – they answered as one.

However, when *Moshe Rabenu* was "וַיִּשָּׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הָעָם" – *Moshe Rabenu* told *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* **what** *Klal Yisrael* said, but he did not explain to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* **how** *Klal Yisrael* said it. You could read a letter and just read the words, or you could read a letter with the emotion of the person who wrote it – it's a different letter. So *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* said to Moshe, okay – *Klal Yisrael* is ready? No problem! "הִנֵּה אֲנִי בָא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעָבַן" – "הִנֵּה אֲנִי בָא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעָבַן" – we are going to have a *Matan Torah*; I am going to come to you in a thick cloud that is going to separate me and *Klal Yisrael*, but I will speak to you and they will hear me speaking to you. And that will accomplish – "וְגַם בָּךְ יֵאֱמִינוּ לְעוֹלָם". At that point Moshe *Rabenu* said – one second: "וַיִּגַּד מֹשֶׁה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֵל ה'" – he **related** the words. *Hashem* knew the actual words, but now *Moshe Rabenu* described **how** *Klal Yisrael* said it: they said it with רגש, with feeling, with *hislahavus* – כאיש אחד בלב אחד. Which is what *Rashi* tells us that *Klal Yisrael* said: "רצוננו לראות את מלכנו" – we don't want to hear *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* talking, we want to **see** *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*! We want *Hashem* to speak to **us** – just like he speaks to *Moshe Rabenu*. It's not enough that we should hear Him speaking to Moshe, we want Him to speak to us.

That was part of the emotion that *Klal Yisrael* had put into the word: "נעשה". So, Moshe *Rabenu* "וַיִּגַּד מֹשֶׁה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֵל ה'" – when he heard *Hashem* say it's going to be *בְּעָבַן*

הַעֲבֹד, Moshe Rabenu said, Ribono Shel Olam let me say again what Klal Yisrael said. They said it with *zrizus*, with *hislahavus*, with a *regesh* of *Kodesh*, because "רצוננו לראות את מלכנו". *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* then says: If they want me to speak to them, then they have to go through a preparation period. "לָךְ אֶל הָעַם וְקִדְשֵׁתָם הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר" – they need to prepare themselves, "וְכִבְּסוּ שְׂמֹלֵתָם" – they have to be מטהר themselves and be מקַדְּמֵם themselves. They are not just going to hear me – I am going to talk to them פנים אל פנים, face to face. That needs a time of preparation.

Moshe Rabenu went to Klal Yisrael and said, we are going to have a מעמד הר סיני, where *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* is going to speak to you פה אל פה; and you have to be prepared. Prepare for three days – that's the שלושת ימי הגבלה.

Says the *Divrei Yirmiyahu*, there are two very important יסודות here: number one, *Klal Yisrael* was *zoche* to מעמד הר סיני – the event that we've talked about so much – that was on a higher level perhaps than *Hashem* had originally planned. A higher level than *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* had originally told Moshe Rabenu that He is going to create. Why were they *zoche* to that? Not because of their answer, but how they answered: they answered with an excitement, with a yearning and a desire. Says the *Divrei Yirmiyahu*: that's a lesson for *Klal Yisrael* for generations. Two people could do the exact same *Mitzvah*, and in their actions the *Mitzvah* is the same. But the *Mitzvos* are going to be worlds apart, because one of them just did it very cold heartedly, very matter of factly; and the other person did the *Mitzvah* with *regesh*, with excitement, with a כוונה עצומה – with great intent. – ורחמנא ליבא בעי – *Hashem* wants a person's heart. "והוא לימוד יקר מאוד", says the *Divrei Yirmiyahu*, this is such a precious lesson – "שלימדה אותנו התורה", that the *Torah* taught us "בפסוקים הסתומים" "האלה – in these *Psukim*, which at first glance seem very hard to understand.

The second lesson, says the *Divrei Yirmiyahu*, is that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* said to them: "לָךְ" "אֶל הָעַם וְקִדְשֵׁתָם הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר" – *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* said yes, *regesh* is something unbelievable. Feeling and emotion are what caused them to be *zoche* that they should be the נביאים themselves – *Hashem* should speak to them פנים אל פנים. However, feeling alone is not what gets a person to levels of *Kedusha* and *Tehara*. It's not enough to have feeling and excitement in order to have השראת השכינה – we need the actions as well; you need the מעשה as well. You need to actively be מקדש yourself. Prepare yourself, get yourself ready. Excitement and yearning is a wonderful מעלה, but if there is no action involved, that's not going to bring השראת השכינה. And that is the second lesson. Of course, רחמנא ליבא בעי - *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* wants the לב; *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* wants that a person should have כוונות and great intentions, but only when he actually does the *Mitzvah* as well. It is not enough to be a Jew at heart – it is a wonderful מעלה, but a person has to be a Jew in action as well. And a Jew in action is also not enough – you have to be a Jew at heart. Both sides of the coin are necessary and both sides were taught to us here, in *Matan Torah*. We were *zoche* to *Kabalas HaTorah* because of the *regesh*, the רחמנא ליבא בעי; and we were *zoche* because of "וְקִדְשֵׁתָם הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר" – because of the actions that we did to prepare ourselves.

As we come to *Kabalas HaTorah*, as we come to remember מעמד הר סיני – these are the two important lessons that we are being taught: do the *Mitzvos*, perform the *Mitzvos*, have *regesh*, have excitement, have *kavonah*. Prepare for the *Mitzvah*, learn about the *Mitzvah* – that's the only way a person would be able to fully perform *Mitzvos* and bring השראת השכינה to himself and to *Klal Yisrael*. These are the beautiful lesson the *Divrei Yirmiyahu* has taught us in regard to מעמד הר סיני.

Have a wonderful day. Kol tuv.

Shalom aleichem everyone.

We are continuing our *divrei chizuk* as we approach the *Yomtov* of *Shavuos*.

I want to share with you a story that happened during the Holocaust, in Auschwitz, in the barracks where they had what they called 'bunk beds'. I had the opportunity to visit – visit is the wrong word, but – to be in Auschwitz a few years ago and see this מקום that was גהינום on this earth. It was also a מקום of אדמת קודש, of such קדושה – you could feel the קדושה there. Something that I never felt before and I haven't felt since.

And you see those barracks, – the bunk beds, where people were piled up like pyramids, trying to sleep; to stay a little bit warm in the freezing cold of the Polish winters. At the bottom of one of these pyramids there were a few *Yidden* and one turns to the other – he couldn't turn – but said to the other: "I have a deal I want to make with you". "A deal? As we are piled here trying to sleep?" He says, "yes. I need a *chavrusa*. I know one *Masechta* in *Shas* פה בעל פה, *Masechta Beitzah*. And we don't have *Gemaros* here, obviously, so every day I learn one *Daf* פה בעל פה to review the *Masechta*. As I am laying down to rest – I review it in my mind". "What does this have to do with me?" said his neighbor. He said, "if we are together, maybe we should learn it *b'chavrusa*. I will say it פה בעל פה and you will listen". And they did. These two people learned *Masechta Beitzah* in the bunk beds of Auschwitz; in the *Gehenom* of the Holocaust.

From where does *Klal Yisrael* get the *koichos* to be able to learn *Hashem's Torah* under all circumstances, in the *Galus* that we are in. The *Galus* of the Crusades, of ת"ח ות"ט, of the Spanish Inquisition, of the Cossacks, of the Holocaust. Where does *Klal Yisrael* get that *Koyach*?

The answer is: "וַיִּתְּצֵבוּ בְּתַהֲתִית הַהָר" – and they stood under the mountain; *Chazal* tall us, "כפה עליהם הר כגיגית" – *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* picked up *Har Sinai* and He placed it over *Klal Yisrael* like a *gigis*, like a barrel, like a vat. And He said: "אם אתם מקבלים את התורה מוטב" – If you accept the *Torah* – good. "ואם לאו" – and if not, "שם תהא קבורתכם" – over there will be your burial place. What does it mean "שם תהא קבורתכם"? It should have said: "פה תהא" "שם תהא קבורתכם! *Hashem* would drop the mountain on them! Why does it say "שם תהא קבורתכם" – over **there** will be your burial place?

The answer, the *Meforshim* say, is that as *Klal Yisrael* was standing under that barrel, under *Har Sinai* and they were in mortal danger, *Hashem* showed them a video screen, and in that video they saw each one of their lives – and not only the *Klal Yisrael* that was standing there – but every *Neshama* in *Klal Yisrael* that will ever be born and even *Gerim*, were there under the mountain. And every *Neshama* saw every situation in their lives – they saw all the hardships; they saw all of the *Galus*; they saw the ת"ח ות"ט; they saw the Crusades – they saw it all. And *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* said to them: "do you think it is humanly possible for people to be able to survive such horrors and such *tzaros*? Do you think it's possible? אם" "אם אתם מקבלים את התורה מוטב" – if you will be *mekabel* the *Torah*, מוטב – it will be good. It means to say that you will have the *koiches* to be able to survive a *Galus*; you will have the *koiches* to be able to survive the challenges of your lives – no matter how horrible they may be. "ואם לאו" – but if you don't accept the *Torah*, "שם תהא קבורתכם" – *Hashem* pointed to each person's video screen and said: see that situation? That will bury you if you don't have a *Torah*. See that situation? That, over there, you will be buried, if you are not *Mekabel es*

HaTorah. HaKadosh Baruch Hu told *Klal Yisrael* that the only way you are going to be able to weather anything in life – "אם אתם מקבלים את התורה".

Every person in *Klal Yisrael* saw that clearly. And when they accepted the *Torah* – they accepted the *Torah* knowing the hardships that were going to come to them in life, and they accepted the *Torah* – not withstanding those hardships; they accepted the *Torah* knowing that the only way they will survive through life is with this *Torah*. And the *Torah* is what gave them the *Koichos* to survive through every situation in *Galus* that *Klal Yisrael* has been in. even in a freezing *Auschwitz*, in what they called a bunk bed, piled up under a pyramid of people, two *chavrusos* could learn *Masechta Beitzah, Daf* after *Daf*, day after day. Why? Because their *Neshamas* had seen that and their *Neshamas* had been *mekabel* the *Torah* knowing that they are going to be in that situation. And in fact, the *Torah* itself is what gave them the *koichos* to be able to survive through those horrors.

"אם אתם מקבלים את התורה מוטב ואם לאו שם תהא קבורתכם" – every person in *Klal Yisrael* saw it, accepted it and that's how we are able to be a *Klal Yisrael*, to get through the challenges the *Ribono Shel Olam* sends us. We don't run away from the *Torah* – we run towards the *Torah*. "אם אתם מקבלים את התורה מוטב" – it will be good for you, you will survive the situations.

This is what the *Yontif* of *Shavuos* is about. On the *Yontif* of *Shavuos*, *Klal Yisrael* received the *koyach* to learn *Torah* and to perform the *Mitzvos* of the *Torah* in every and in any situation. On *Shavuos* we draw *koichos* to be able to follow *Hashem* and learn His *Torah*, no matter what comes to us during the year. This is when we re-charge our batteries; this is when we charge-up our *Neshamas*. Give ourselves the *koyach* to face the world, to face our lives with its challenges, fortified with the greatest weapon: the weapon that gives us the ability to survive and thrive and grow, no matter what is coming our way – and that is the *Torah HaKedosha*.

That is what *Shavuos* is all about. *Shavuos* is the time when we *daven* to the *Ribono Shel Olam*: give us the *koyach* to serve you properly; give us the *koyach* to be able to be *omed* in the *nisyonos* of life and the challenges of life; to learn the *Torah* under all circumstances. And *Torah* will continue to flourish in *Klal Yisrael*.

As we look back over the last few months, in our situation – it was not easy for the world, it was not easy for *Klal Yisrael*. But look at what we did! We gravitated towards the *Torah*; technology was harnessed to be able to learn *Torah* בחברותא; with *Shiurim* – from all over the place opportunities that we may never have had before because we were not connected to the world in this type of situation. But we drew *koichos* from our *Torah*. Our *divrei chizuk* that have been going on for so many days in a row; for so many months – this is what gives us the power. This is what gives us the strength to withstand the challenges – and especially this big challenge that we are still facing – of the *Coronavirus*.

Shavuos is the time that we look to the *Ribono Shel Olam* and say:

"ברוך הוא אלקינו שבראנו לם ודוה די לנו מן התועים נתן לנו תורת אמת"

"אם אתם מקלים את התורה מוטב" – look what the *Torah* has done for us! we know this is what *Torah* does for us.

As we come to the *Yontif* of *Shavuos*, let's prepare ourselves to *daven* to the *Ribono Shel Olam* that the challenges that come our way – we should be able to thrive through them;

grow through them. But that only comes with the ability to learn *Torah*. Let's accept on ourselves: "תורה בכל מצב". *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* will give us that strength to be able to overcome all challenges from the power of the *Torah*. That is the power of the *Yontif* of *Shavuos*.

physical part of the world. But when that physical part of the world is shook up; when there is a natural disaster like an earthquake, or a tornado, or a tsunami – the people don't feel secure any more. And everyone wants to feel secure. So, at that point, when the physical world and its security is no longer viable for them – that's when they start looking for something non-physical; something spiritual to hold on to and feel that security. Every person needs a rock to hold on to, that's the way they can go through life. People who don't have a *Ribono Shel Olam*, people who don't have a *Torah* – they find their security in the physical world. And when that is taken away from them, then they find the security in the spiritual world.

HaKadosh Baruch Hu wanted to teach *Klal Yisrael* a very important lesson: there is nothing in this world that is secure. There is no rock that you could hold on to, that you could feel safe with in this physical world. The only thing that you have to hold on – is to the *Torah*. The only thing that you know can be your rock to keep you secure – is the *Ribono Shel Olam* and His *Torah*. How did *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* show that to *Klal Yisrael* and even to the world? When they stood at *Har Sinai* and the entire physical world started shaking. They thought that the world would just crack into pieces and dissolve. It was a terrifying experience. And then the mountain began to shake, and the world began to tremble; and at that point *Klal Yisrael* saw that there was nothing secure here; the ground that we are standing on is not secure. There is only one thing that we could hold on to: and that is the *Ribono Shel Olam* and His *Torah*.

That, says Reb Schwab, is why it was necessary to make this חרדה – this trembling, this fear: to get rid of that sense of security; that we should never feel secure without the *Torah* – the only thing that we feel secure in is our holding on to the *Torah*. And when the world is less secure, we should only hold on tighter. Get a tighter grip and grasp on the *Torah*, because that is the only thing that is going to keep us afloat. That is what מעמד הר סיני was all about, says Reb Schwab.

And that is a very important lesson for us, because we have been having these *divrei chizuk* since March the 22nd – right after *Purim*. Today is May 28th – it's more than two months. I have posted 65 different audio and video *divrei chizuk* over the last two months. We have been מתחזק when the world around us fell apart; when the financial world fell apart; when the health and science don't know where to turn; when the entire world is in a ויחרד – when the entire world is in a panic. What did *Klal Yisrael* do? We looked for *divrei chizuk*! In every shul, with every *Rav*, with every *Rosh Yeshiva* – people were clamoring for the *divrei chizuk*. We, *Klal Yisrael* know, that there is nothing secure in this world, but holding on to *Hashem* and His *Torah*. We know the lesson of *Matan Torah*. And as we started our *divrei chizuk* before *Pesach*, talking about the *Emunah* of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*; today we come a full circle as we reach to the *Emunah* of מעמד הר סיני; the *Emunah* of *Matan Torah*; the *Emunah* that when the world is burning around us and when things are not going right in the physical world – we just get closer to the *Ribono Shel Olam*. The only thing we have to rely on is the *Ribono Shel Olam* and His *Torah*. That is how we weather every situation in life, every situation in our history – only because we know that there is no security in this world, other than the *Torah*.

"ה' עז" – the strength, the security – "לְעִמּוֹ יִתֵּן". That, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* gave to *Klal Yisrael*. Hold on tight! Says the *Ribono Shel Olam*, "ה' יְבַרְךָ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם"

Have a wonderful *Yontif*! Let's be *mekabel* the *Torah* with the strength and with the *chizuk*; and *BeEzras Hashem, HaKadosh Baruch Hu* will bring us *Yeshuos* and *Nechamos*. We should be *zoche* to see the coming of משיח צדקנו במהרה בימנו אמן.