

## Darkei HaChizuk

ארבעה צריכים חיזוק (ברכות לב): - שיתחזק אדם בהם תמיד בכל כחו (רש"י)

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### The Acquisitions of Torah — Zechuyos for Hatzlachah

Everything requires *zechuyos*. Even success in Torah requires *zechuyos*, and 48 acquisitions of Torah, as elucidated in *Avos* chap. 6, are the *zechuyos* for success in Torah.

We see something very special in these 48 *kinyanei haTorah*. The first 24 acquisitions begin with the letter “*beis*”: *b'talmud* (actual learning), *b'shemi'as ozen* (listening), *b'arichas sefasayim* (verbalizing one's learning), *b'binas halev* (comprehension of the heart), etc., all the way until *b'kabbalas hayissurim* (by accepting suffering). Then there are 24 additional acquisitions, which begin with the letter “*hei*”: *ha'makir es mekomo* (one who knows his place), *ha'sameach b'chelko* (one who is happy with his lot) etc. There are exactly 24 of each, half begin with *beis*, and half with *hei*. And we must understand what this is all about.

The *Midrash Shmuel* explains that there is a difference between the two groups. The first 24 acquisitions relate to the *tzuras halimud*, the proper way to actually learn: *b'talmud*, *b'shemias ozen* etc. These are all matters related to actual learning. The next 24, which start with the letter *hei*, are more general attributes relating to a person's essence, how he should act even when he's not learning. They teach us what a person's essence should be and how a person should behave — in action and in thought. For example, a person should “know his place,” and should be “happy with his lot,” along with all the other matters mentioned there.

The concept “*ha'sameach b'chelko*” is different than its counterpart in the first grouping, “*b'simchah*” (with joy). They are actually two different things. “*B'simchah*” means he's learning with joy, the learning itself is making him happy, while “*ha'sameach b'chelko*” is more general, it's even after he finishes learning. Even when he's not learning, he's happy with his lot and is content with what he did learn, he's happy with his *ruchniyus* and the first group of 24 *kinyanei Torah* that he had while he was learning.

The same is true regarding all the other concepts in the last 24 acquisitions. They are all general concepts relating to a person's essence, through which we can become an *adam hashalem*, “a complete person” who is equipped for success in Torah. For example, there is “one who makes a fence for his words,” “one who does not take credit for himself,” “likeable,” “loves Hashem,” “loves other people” etc.

Many of these attributes are not simple matters; they are great *madreigos*. For example: “distancing himself from honor” — not just that he doesn't like honor, he actually distances himself from it! There is a nature to run away from honor, to not want people to honor him. I myself have seen someone like this; it's hard for him to bear it when others honor him. When someone cannot bear honor and is uncomfortable when others honor him, it points to purity of the soul and a very special *madreigah*. Similarly, there are many other matters; 24 regarding the way to learn, and 24 regarding a person's essence and behavior.

Of course, **all these 48 attributes necessary to acquire Torah are not just natural ways to succeed, they are zechuyos!** For example, “by learning,” “by listening” — the first 24 which relate to *tzuras halimud* — are *zechuyos* for success in Torah. The same is true regarding the concepts that also apply after learning, such as “being happy with his lot.” We already mentioned that there are two concepts included here: first one must be happy while he's actually learning, because the learning makes him happy, but he also must be happy afterwards — he should be happy about what he already learned. All his happiness is connected to *ruchniyus*; he wants *ruchniyus* and is happy about *ruchniyus*. That's a *zechus* for success in Torah.

### Twenty-four — A Special Sheleimus

We explained that there are 24, and then another 24. The number 24 appears in another Gemara (*Bava Metzia* 84a) about Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish. The two were *chavrusas*, and when Reish Lakish died, Rabbi Yochanan cried and shouted, Where is Reish Lakish? He needed Reish Lakish to continue learning with him. He couldn't live without Reish Lakish. The *chachamim* tried to calm him down, and they sent Rabbi Elazar, who was the *gadol hador* after Rabbi Yochanan. For every halacha that Rabbi Yochanan said, Rabbi Elazar would cite a proof. Rabbi Yochanan complained, “Do I need someone to bring me a proof? I am sure that it is correct. Reish Lakish would have asked 24 questions on everything I said and I would give him 24 answers. Through these questions and answers, we had such pleasure and the *sugya* became even clearer!” Rabbi Yochanan was so troubled that he lost his mind, because he lacked life, he lacked the very thing that gave him life.

In any case, the number 24 is mentioned here: 24 questions and 24 answers. [See *Shabbos* daf 33, when Rabbi Shimon





