

“Messages of Chizuk”

*Unedited transcript of Rabbi Baruch Levine's address at the
Chain V'Chesed Shabbos Chizuk, VaYishlach 5773*

Preface

I would like to commend the Chain V'Chesed division of Ahavas Olam on bringing us together for a Shabbos of Chizuk. It is most appropriate for Ahavas Olam to do this because your Rov-Rabbi Simcha Klein is himself a power-house of Chizuk to all who know him well and he has with his unique personality and Yiras Shomayim made Ahavas Olam a place in Detroit for people to grow spiritually. His two Seforim that he wrote Yalkut Maishiv Nefesh and Yalkut Kisra Shel Torah have given overwhelming Chizuk to so many B'nai Torah. May he be Zoche to continue his Avodas Hakodesh Ad Maiya V'esrim and may your beautiful Torah Center be gebentched with Hatzlacha.

1 - Chizuk is Critical To Our Survival

“Chizuk” is such a critically essential component in our lives that it influences not only our spiritual striving but indeed it can spoil our very health if we are deprived of it.

During the dark years of Shiboos Mitzrayim, the Medrash tells us there were various decrees that Paroah inflicted on the Yidden; each one more difficult than the last. First they had to work, then their sons were thrown into the sea, then the hardest was Teven Lo Nitán Lohem. No more raw materials were provided for the bricks. The obvious question is how can that be the worst level? The answer our commentators give is that once they had to gather their own material, they could no longer afford to rest on Shabbos. In order to keep up with the Chashbon, the exact amount of bricks required, they needed the extra day to work. So what was so critical about Shabbos? The answer is it wasn't the sleep or rest that was now missing but we are told that on Shabbos they would gather together and learn –you see they had scrolls, Megillos, which contained the stories of Adom Harishon of Noach and the Mabul. Stories of Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov – and they had the Mizmor Shir L'yom Hashabos, that chapter that held the answer for the most powerful question of Tzaddik V'rah Lo –Inside each Jew was the burning question; how could, and why should, they suffer so much?- they were B'nai Melochim? They were the chosen people? Children of princes and kings? Together they supported each other and gave Chizuk to each other until it soothed their neshomos. And now Shabbos was missing and that Chizuk was gone, that was the utmost harshest decree because a Jew without Chizuk withers away.

The story is told by R'Yeruchom Olshin of two men who were thrown into Auschwitz together at the beginning of WWII. One was a strong muscular tall Goy, the other a short slim Jew. For some invisible reason the short, slim-built Jew existed throughout the war but the Goy only lasted a year. The Yid had his Emunah, his Tefilah and whatever Mitzvos he could still fulfill. These gave him that Chizuk that crucial, invisible ingredient that supports life itself.

2 - Chizuk Messages From The Current Parshios

I think these Parshios in Braishis that we are into now Vayetzai V'ayishlach V'Yeshev all have powerful messages of Chizuk to us.

Let's begin with Vayaitzai –last weeks Parsha. The Sedra begins with the magnificent vision the dream of a Sulom, a ladder, each rung going higher from the ground to Shomayim with Angels going up and down. What is the message of the ladder? The simple answer is the message of every Sefer Mussar and Baal Mussar: remember to Shtieg, to grow to go from rung to rung in your Avodas Hashem and that meant for Yaakov to grow to the point that Angels are in his life. For Yaakov this was crucial at this point in Yaakov's life, he was entering a stage he never encountered before –he was until now surrounded by Yitzchok and Rivka and learned in Shem V'avers Yeshiva for 14 years. Now however he would be in a most hostile environment-for 20 years he will fight to keep his ideals intact. Normally we would think that just to be able to leave as he came would be a great accomplishment; that then is the message of the Sulam, the ladder-G-d says I expect you to be even greater than when you entered this spiritual wasteland.

I would like to share with you another message of the Sulam, the wondrous dream of Yaakov but first I must tell you a short story.

A young teenage girl from Switzerland was deeply troubled. Her father made an appointment with his Rabbi who of course agreed to meet with her. At the meeting she burst into tears. When she calmed down she explained her dilemma. Over the past two years she had been stricken with cancer R'L, and after many treatments she was now, Thank G-d in remission. "When I was ill" she said, "I davened so intensely. I felt so connected to Hashem and I treasured that closeness. But now that I'm in remission, I don't daven with the same intensity and I no longer feel that closeness. How can I regain that connection without being ill again?"

The Rabbi was impressed with the girl's sincerity and told her that there are different phases and chapters in each person's life. Each is a challenge. Throughout each stage Hashem wants to see how we connect to Him. In times of sorrow, it is one way and in times of happiness it is another. The intensity of the Tefila will vary with each chapter and phase. We have to search ourselves for the way to remain connected in the way appropriate in that phase.

I would like to suggest another approach to her question.

The Gemorah tells us why were the Imahos-our Matriarchs childless? Answer the Gemorah "Mipnai Sh'Hakadosh Boruch Hu Mi'save L'Tefilasson Shel Tzaddikim" Hashem desires the Tefilos, the prayers of the righteous; he wants the bond that is created through those heartfelt Tefilos. This means that Hashem creates a desperate situation in order that the righteous will come closer to Him.

I think it is foolish to think that after Sorah had Yitzchok and Rivka had Yaakov and Aisov and Rochel had Yosef that the bond was severed. Rather Hashem showed these righteous women how close they can become and now, that is the standard; that is the level they should reach for, in all subsequent Tefilos, whether for others who have their problems or for other issues they themselves have. I'd guess that the reward for these Tefilos and connection to Hashem would be

even greater if they are at that high level since now the feeling of desperation and tension are removed.

I think this is the secret of the Sulom, the ladder, Hashem gave to Yaakov a gift, a yardstick that he should try to reach throughout his 20 years Galus – and by doing so Hashem was Mechazak him, indicating how high Hashem thinks he can go.

When I was in Lakewood I had to travel one hour each way to a doctor appointment to fit hard contact lenses on my corneas that had Keratoconus. So every Tuesday evening I borrowed two cassette tapes from a cassette library and I listened to Rabbi Miller on the two hour trip. One of those lectures was on our Parsha this week, Parshas Vayishlach and his lesson in Chizuk is timeless.

Yaakov fights a monumental battle with an angel –our Rabbis tell us it was the protective angel of Aisav. We are told this represents the eternal conflict and tension of good against evil, Yetzer Tov against Yetzer Harah. The fight rages on for hours and hours until finally Yaakov wins. Rabbi Miller, Zatzal commented, from here we see an important lesson for all of us. Obviously an angel can be victorious over Yaakov in a split second so what is with this protracted battle that Yaakov even wins? The answer is that Hashem does not give a person a Nisayon, a test that is over his head, the tests are custom made and Yaakov with sheer determination and perseverance was able to conquer the angel.

Let me tell you a fascinating Chasam Sofer on this week's Parsha, an insight that is so important to our talk. The angel, Saro Shel Eisav, after loosing the epic battle, a battle that lasts through the night, tells Yaakov, "Shalchuni," Let me go, "Ki Alah Hashachar", because the dawn has come, Rashi brings the Gemorrah in Chillin (91) that says let me go because I must say shira, I must sing my song. Asks the Chasam Sofer – what is the song and why just now? The answer is the angels sing when they complete their job. His job was to entice and fight against the good of Yaakov, the job was not to destroy him or make him fail, rather to make him struggle. When Yaakov overcame the angel, the angel completed his mission and then must sing.

This insight is so important to us; many of us have struggled with issues that sometimes seem over our "pay grade", over our heads. We must believe that Hashem knows exactly how much we can take and how much He should expose us to. It is always a custom-fitted challenge.

3 - Hashem Gives Us Strength To Survive Nisyonos

The story is told of a Chosid who was visiting his Rebbe when he got the terrible news through a telegram that all his merchandise was on a boat that sunk in the Atlantic Ocean. The man was now penniless. After absorbing his situation, suddenly the Chosid turned white and fainted. When he was finally revived, his Rebbe told him, you have nothing to worry about; it was the wrong ship and a different owner. How do you know he asked, Trust me it's not your merchandise. Three days later the shipping company apologized for sending the telegraph to the wrong recipient. The happy Chosid ran to the Rebbe with the joyful news, "but tell me," asked the Chosid, "how did the Rebbe know?" He said "I saw your dreadful reaction, I knew this nisyon this test was not made custom for your, it was way over your head."

This lesson is true regarding marriages where sometimes one would think that the grass is greener on the other side of the road. First of all that is usually debatable, but even if it is, a person must believe in the words of Chazal, that before you were even born you and your spouse were destined to live with each other. I believe this is the explanation of the question about a persons' marriage, is it Motzee or Motza which refers to the Pesukim of Motzee Ani es Haisha Mar Mimaves, or Motza referring to Motza Eesha Motza Tov, I found a woman, I found goodness. Which is it? I think that there is a hint in the question itself, Motzee is a language of present tense; I find. Motza is past tense-I have found. Motzee therefore means, you are still looking, I am still finding. That is terrible if you are still looking and judging your spouse in comparison to others. But if you found yours, then its good, you trust in Hashgacha, you are done looking.

Five years ago, I went to Cleveland to be menachem avel Mrs. Sorah Stein, the remarkable almana of Reb Shalom Refael Yehuda Stein, son of the famous Rosh Hayeshiva, who died young after a lengthy illness. I told her an explanation that I heard about something we say every morning in Shacharis, an explanation she had already heard and internalized. We say in Boruch S'heomar, Boruch Merachaim Al Harbrios. Blessed is Hashem who has compassion on those he created. Boruch Merachaim al ha'arets, blessed is Hashem who has pity on the land, Boruch meshalaim s'char tov le'yerarov, Blessed is Hashem who pays reward to the ones who fear him. Boruch podeh U'natzil, blessed be Hashem who redeems and saves. These are all beautiful descriptions, but one of those is Boruch gozair u'mekayaim, Blessed is Hashem who decrees and fulfills, why is that seemingly harsh statement here among the compassionate ones? The answer is it is compassionate because it means if Hashem makes a gazaira, a decree, even harsh, he is makayain, He helps those to live through it and not succumb. Again we see our nisyones, our challenges are custom-made.

4 - Chizuk Via Internalizing Hashgocha Pratis

We must ask ourselves how can we, best be Mechuzek ourselves. We are not Yaakov or the holy Shevatim in Mizrayim, we don't fight with Angels or dream of magical ladders. I think that one of the most powerful ways to become Mechuzok is to be extremely attentive to see Hashgacha Pratis-the personal messages that come Divinely our way. The non-believers categorize those occurrences as merely coincidental but we know there is no such thing.

In Lakewood, the Mashgiach R' Nosson Wachtpogel Zatzal told us in our Musar Chabbura to keep a notebook and write down every act every occurrence that seems out of the ordinary, and slowly we will be astounded at what we find. This Chizuk is extremely powerful.

I have a close friend, Dr. Todd Fladen, an eye surgeon in Canton, Ohio who became a Baal Teshuva in his mid 40's, a rarity in the Teshuva movement. He was the president of the Reform Temple, slowly moved to the Conservative synagogue and even became a leader there and finally he and his attorney wife became wonderful Ba'alay Teshuva. He wrote to his friends that his journey included writing down for 12 weeks in a small book that he always kept with him all rare and strange occurrences. He always kept his eyes open – For him it was not enough to accept that Hashem created the world he needed to believe that G-d was in his everyday life. He said it was life altering and then acceptance of Torah Meesinai was natural.

This too is a lesson from the Parsha; next week in Parshas Vayeshev Yosef is thrown in a pit and sold to Egypt through Arab merchants. Everyone remembers that Rashi tells us why does the Torah spend ink telling us what those Arab merchants were carrying on their camels which was various perfumes? The answer is so Yosef Hatzadik would not have to smell their usual fare which was always kerosene and tar – Asks Rabbi Mordechai Pargemansky, does Yosef really care? He is in such a precarious state – sold by his brothers to the worst country, far from his unknowing father, what the difference if the ride is sweet smelling? The answer is to show Yosef you are not alone, you will not suffer one iota more than G-d will prescribe. This is the message of Chizuk through Hashgacha Pratis – Divine, private intervention. We too should be attuned and aware of the Hashgacha Pratis in our lives.

Incidentally, I recently saw hashpacha pratis, I never knew that Chasam Sofer that I told you not until just 2 days ago while doing last minute preparations on this talk, did I chance upon it.

Sometimes Hagacha Pratis is so open it can be Mechuzek hundreds who are just watching from afar.

Take for instance the story of a particular Yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel of boys who are very dedicated to learning. Only during their lunch break between sedorim do they sometimes go out for a walk or run errands that they need or grab a nap to be able to learn until late at night.

One afternoon two boys were walking to a store in the neighborhood when they saw an odd sight – a hearse was driving slowly on their long block. They noticed that only the driver and a passenger were with the casket-no cars following at all. This sight was so pitiful and strange because it was not the correct way to go to the cemetery. They quickly agreed to find some boys from the Yeshiva to walk behind the hearse. Soon thirty and forty boys were walking behind the funeral vehicle and shortly afterwards more and more joined until most of the Yeshiva and many of the neighbors joined in thinking this must be a very important Niftar if the Yeshiva is following. Hundreds walked to the cemetery. When they finally got there the passenger who was a Rabbi was astonished at the crowd. “Do you know,” he asked the boys, “who was the Nifteres?” They all answered no. The Rabbi began to cry uncontrollably, then he finally told them, this is amazing, Hashpacha Pratis. This was a disturbed old woman who lived alone. Her father gave a huge donation to your Yeshiva years and years ago. Your Rosh Hayeshiva asked the generous benefactor what could they do for him and he said, “Just take care of my daughter who is not well. From time to time, they looked in on her and asked me to do the same. The Rosh Hayeshiva passed away long ago and the woman was forgotten. I thought when you all followed that you were fulfilling the request of the Rosh Hayeshiva, but I see that it is Hashem that ordained this because you knew nothing of this. And further more the driver told me he lost his way, this road was not the correct one to the cemetery. Obviously, Mei Hashem Yotza Hadovar. Everyone involved saw the Hashgacha Pratis so vividly. A Chizuk for all.

Hashgacha Pratis – Divine intervention has another wonderful component, it gives us a way to get special messages from G-d. Let me tell you a great explanation, Rabbi Frand said to a difficult story in the Gemorah in Avodah Zorah (18A)

The famous Rabbi Chanina ben Tradyon, the man who eventually was burned alive by the Romans because he taught Torah publicly and is remembered as one of the Asorah Harugai Malchus – once asked R'Yose ben Kismah, “Rebbe what position will I have in the next world?” Rav Kisma asked him, “Tell me of some good deed that you have done.” R'Chanina said that once he mixed up his own money that was set aside for his Purim Seudah with money designated for Tzeddakah. I decided to give all the money to the poor. If that's the case said R'Yose may my portion be as great as yours. How can this good deed trump teaching Torah in public at the risk of death? Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz, Zatzal answers –that its not necessarily the attention-grabbing mitzvos (that are fraught with the dangerous ingredient of lo lishma) that carry the day but rather the ones that are done in total private without any fanfare, without any concern for ulterior motives.

The answer I would like to share with you that I read recently is, that according to strict Halacha, Rabbi Chanina would have been allowed to keep the amount that he was certain belonged to him. Why did he give the entire sum to charity? Because he did not ascribe the mix up to human error or carelessness. He sensed that it was a message from G-d to give all the money to the poor. So R'Yose understood that if R'Chanina is such a person and he could see Hashem's hand is so ordinary an incident, he must be worthy of a great portion in Olam Haba. A person who lives his life thinking, what does Hashem want from me? is guaranteed a Chelek in Olam Haba. Rabbi Frand wrote that this is based in a Posuk in Ki Savo that speaks to the relationship of Klall Yisroel to Hashem – that they walk in His ways and observe His decrees, His commandments and His statues and to listen to His voice. The Ramban asks what more is included by adding listening to His voice? The answer is that Hashem has other ways of speaking to us, we don't have prophets but Hashem speaks to us through events in our lives – if we are receptive- we are on our way.

5 - Chizuk From Events That Happen To Others

The smart ones among us will be receptive even if the message is not directly sent to us. If we think that Sandy was an East Coast problem and tsunamis are for foreigners and rockets in Israel are a Mid-East problem, we will have missed opportunities. Consider if you will the story that occurred with R'av Chatzkel Levinstein, the famous mashgiach of the Mir in Europe and later of Penevezh in Eretz Yisroel.

An irreligious cab driver who was driving Rav Chatzkel remarked that he once witnessed an open miracle.

When secular Israelis complete their army service, they typically unwind by touring some exotic location. After his army service, this cab driver decided to tour a mountainous region in Africa with some of his army buddies. One night they awoke to hear one of their friends screaming in terror. The young man had a huge boa constrictor wrapped around him, squeezing the life out of the poor fellow. They had no idea how to free their friends. They took branches and clubs, but to no avail. Finally, one in the group said, “I know that when Jews are about to die, they recite Shema Tomar Krias Shama – Say it Now! As soon as the ex-soldier screamed Shma Yisroel Hashem Elkainu Hashem Echad, the snake unwound itself and slithered into the darkness of night.

That miracle changed my friend's life, the cab driver said, he vowed to become a Baal Teshuva – he kept his word and became a thoroughly religious Jew.

Rav Chatzkel looked at the driver and said U'mah itcha and what about you? Me? Said the driver, the Rav doesn't understand, the snake was not wrapped around me – it was around my friend. Classical missed opportunity. However, we would be wise to follow the reaction of the Jews in Poltava in this next story.

My Rosh Hayeshiva Zatzal Rabbi Elya Svei was born in Lithuania in a small city called Poltava. When he was a young boy he entered a Shul to daven Maariv and found the townspeople saying Tefillin with much passion. He noted that he has yet to see such an outpouring of emotion in a Yeshiva. He asked - "is someone sick?" "No" was the reply, "no one is sick". "So why is everyone Davening with such desperation?" He answered, "Didn't you hear, there was an earthquake and thousands of people died – Hashem wants us to do Teshuva. The earthquake was in Japan but the people in his town were frightened because Hashem was angry. This was enough of a message to inspire them to recite Tehilim as if their own lives depended on it.

6 - Good Friends As A Source Of Chizuk

When we discuss Chizuk, we must include another critical lesson from our Parsha which is the influence of bad friends. Yaakov begs Hashem Hatzilainee Na M'Yad Achi M'Yad Eisav, please save me from my brother from Eisav, Wasn't Eisav a brother? These are two distinct categories. Eisav is an evil man and it is clear to virtually anyone to stay far away from him, but what about a wicked person who acts like a brother, such a relationship can be so detrimental. When I was 13, I left my home in Denver to go to Telz in Cleveland. My father Alov Hasholom had a lot of instructions for me. He warned me to get enough sleep, he warned me not to waste the precious commodity of time, and to get the best chavrusos available. But the thing he was most adamant about was choosing the right friends. They can change you, they can hurt your personality in ways you won't even be able to notice. They can have such a negative impact. When I was fortunate enough to become a 10th grade Rebbe I passed on that message to my Talmidim. I would say, "Look at Dovid Hamelech, he writes so much in Tehillim. But the very first thing he talks about is the danger of bad friends. When I was a Rebbe, Rabbi Avi Shulman came to speak to the staff at the Yeshiva Bais Yehuda, I don't remember any of the other topics but the one he spent the most on was friends. He told us to identify the negative people in our lives and replace them with positive friends. They can be Mechazaik you greatly whereas negative people pull you down. A good friend will hold you up when you are down and will help you reach your goals, and will correct you when it's needed. We cannot always rely on our own judgment for so many decisions, as we go through the journey we call life. It is truly a brocha to have a few good friends; I know I owe so much to mine.

7 - Being Mechazek Others

This brings us to the obvious next step in our quest for Chizuk that is to be a mechazek of others –be that good friend. I am fortunate to know Rabbi Paysach Krohn. On one of his trips here, we were driving together and he asked me to please take him to a drug store. I thought he needed some medicine and I offered to try to give him what he needed if I could. He said he needed to buy a colored post card of Detroit because he always sends one to a certain woman in New York who is afflicted with the terrible disease called ALS. R' Paysach explained, "The woman cannot

move much and certainly cannot travel, I am fortunate to see so much, so I told her I will send her a picture of all of the places that I go to.” True to his word, he has sent her over 500 postcards. Let’s keep that story to ourselves. I am not sure he wants it known.

R’ Pesach is that good friend looking to uplift not only that woman, but you know as well as I do, he uplifts, he inspires, he is mechuzek so many thousands with his amazing talks all over the world. But the important lesson is that he has become one of the most mechazek of people I know. Give chizuk to others and you’ll see a transformation in yourselves. Look for ways to be mechazek others, you will be richer from it.

I think this may be at least part of the secret of the greatness of the famous Klausenberger Rebbe Zatzal – one story to be inspired about him.

In 1994 during the shiva period for the legendary Klausenberger Rebbe, many people waited in line to visit the mourners in their Brooklyn home. One woman in her 60’s waited in line with a paper bag in her hand. When her turn finally came, she sat down with the family and told her amazing story. She said “I was an 11 year old orphan after the war and I lived like so many in a D.P. camp, a camp that the Rebbe was in also. One day I was walking near the Rebbe’s bunk and he happened to be looking out the window and saw me. He walked out and came over to me and said, my daughter, I see you have no socks. I said to him, I have so little, no parents, no home, socks is the least of my problems. The Rebbe motioned me to wait as he sat on a stump and took off his own socks and handed them to me. I said, “But Rebbe, now you don’t have socks!” He said, “yes, but a Bas Yisroel needs to wear socks.” With tears in her eyes this 60 year old woman opened the brown paper bag and showed everyone those socks. She said, “I had so little but the Rebbe’s socks warmed me for years.

What was truly amazing is that the Rebbe lost his wife Rebbitzen Pessel and 11 children. He could have been broken and bitter and forlorn but he thought about others and was Mechazaik them and ended up being one of the most important giants in rebuilding Jewry after the Holocaust.

Rabbi Yaakov Kaminetzky had a great insight. We see in the Chumash in Parshas Bechukosai, the parsha of the terrible Tochacha, the rebuke that Moshe gives to the Jewish People. Immediately after that are the rules of Airuchin which means valuation. Just as someone can contribute specific amounts of money to the Sanctuary so one may vow to contribute the value of oneself or another person.

Rav Yaakov said there is a lesson in the proximity of these two parshios. If you want to know the real valuation of an individual, see how he or she conducts themselves after going through the trials and tribulations of the Tochacha. The true value of a Yid is how he acts when things are difficult. The Klausenberger Rebbe certainly showed us what he was worth.

8 - The Specialness of Every Individual

The last important aspect I will mention in helping us to become Mechuzak is the realization that there is only one you! A smart person once said, you will make a lousy anyone else but you are the best you in existence. Actually this is echoed in a lesson by the famous Rebbe – Reb Zishe.

He was once asked if he could; would he like to be Avrohom Aveinu? He said, no, I wouldn't. Hashem already has Avrohom Aveinu, but he doesn't have even one Reb Zishe.

Let me share a story I heard many years ago that I said in Shul on the Yomim Noraim. It is also written in one of Rabbi Krohn's Maggid books. Many years ago the greatest symphony conductor in the world was an Italian maestro, Arturo Toscanini. He died in 1957 at the age of 89. He was known for his intensity, his perfectionism, his ear for orchestral detail and his photographic memory.

An accomplished writer was working on a biography of the maestro and often came to interview him. One afternoon the biographer called for permission to visit that night. He said, "Not tonight. Tonight I am doing something very special and I cannot have any interruptions." "What are you doing so special?" the biographer asked. "There will be a concert in Europe and I plan to listen to it on the radio. I led that orchestra last year and I would like to hear how the conductor leads it this year and I need to concentrate fully."

The writer said, "Please, I would be so honored to listen with you. I promise not to make a sound." "Do you promise?" "Not a word" Tuscanini agreed and told him to come at 7:45.

At precisely 8:00 the concert began. Together they listened for a full hour. At the end, Toscanini switched off the radio. The biographer asked him, "Wasn't that magnificent?" "No it wasn't" Toscanini answered sternly. "There were supposed to be 120 musicians among them 15 violinists, but there were only 14!"

The biographer said nothing but he thought this is ridiculous. How could Toscanini possibly know from a radio broadcast that one violinist was missing? He didn't dare question him because the maestro was known for his temper. But he had to find out himself if it was true.

The next morning he called the music director of that orchestra and asked, "I am an American news correspondent. Please tell me how many musicians were supposed to be at the concert last night and how many actually showed up?"

The director replied, "There were supposed to be 120 musicians but one violinist called in sick – there were only 14 instead of 15."

The biographer was shocked. How in the world could Toscanini have known this? That night he returned to the maestro's home and said to him, "I owe you an apology. Last night when you told me there were only 14 violinists instead of 15, I thought you were guessing but I called the music director and he confirmed what you said. How could you have possibly known?" Toscanini said, "There is a great difference between you and me. You are part of the audience, to you everything sounds great. But I am the conductor and a conductor must know every sound that comes forth from the orchestra. When I heard the performance and realized some notes were not there, I knew without a question on violinist was missing."

This story tells us a very important lesson. To the conductor of the World Symphony, to Hashem, each one of us plays a key role. Hashem knows each line of music that should be

played by each of us. Every Tefila, every Pasuk and Mishna and Gemora that each of us should learn, every ma'ase chesed, each one of us should perform every nesinas Tzedakah each one of us should give. Maybe that's why we are taught Kol Hamatzil Nefesh Achas – Ke'elu Hitzeal Kol Haalom Kulo- if anyone saves even one person, it is as if he saved the whole world because this one world is complete only with each person playing his part in the World Symphony and without it, it is a different symphony.

So let us try to be Mechazaik each other to be aware and attuned to Hashgacha Pratis to help motivate ourselves and may our Avodas Hashem become stronger, more dedicated and more exciting with each passing day.
