



REVERING THE TORAH (3)

DEFENDING THEIR HONOR

Chazal teach that a *talmid chacham* is called "Shabbos." The Rebbe explains that just as *Shabbos* is removed from the weekday and its worldly activities, so too a *talmid chacham* is a person who is removed from the material activities of this world and is dedicated to *ruchniyus*.

(זהר ח"ג כט,א, לקו"ש ח"א ע' 40)

One day the Baal Shem Tov was shocked that he had seen a Yid being *mechalel Shabbos*, since everything a person sees exists within himself to a degree. He then recalled that once, after having heard someone degrading a *talmid chacham*, he himself had remained silent – and Chazal teach that a *talmid chacham* is called "Shabbos."

(רשימות דברים ח"ג ע' 7)

Similarly, the Baal Shem Tov was once told of a Yid who desecrated *Shabbos*. In response, the Baal Shem Tov said that he himself had a share in the *aveira*, since he had once made use of a *talmid chacham*, and this had led to that Yid's actual *chillul Shabbos*.

(רבי יבי כב,ה, תו"מ הל"ו ע' 7)

It was a tense time: the Russian government was about to decree that all *rabbonim* must learn Russian. A meeting of *rabbonim* and *maskilim* was held in Petersburg, in which the Rebbe Rashab and Reb Chayim Brisker participated. During Reb Chayim's speech, some *maskilim* began to ridicule what he was saying. The Rebbe Rashab wrote something on a note, handed it to his chossid, Reb Mendel Chein, and left. After the speech they opened the note to find out why the Rebbe had left, and read that he could not take part in a meeting at which the words of *gedolei Yisroel* are ridiculed. Hearing this, all the *rabbonim* stood up and left as well.

(ס' הצאצאים ע' 193, קדושת הדיבור ח"ג ע' 128)

The Rebbe once overheard one of his secretaries calling a certain *rov* by his first name. The Rebbe told him sternly, "He is a *rov*!"

(ניצוצי רבי 693)

SPEAKING UP

It was the custom of the *tzaddik*, Reb Chayim ben Atar, who is known as Or HaChayim HaKadosh, to distribute meat to poor *talmidei chachomim* in honor of *Shabbos*. One week a plague broke out amongst the cattle, and as a result, all the animals in town were found after *shechita* to be *treif*. Only the calf that was *shechted* for the *tzaddik* was *kosher limehadrin*. When one of the wealthy townsmen heard about this, he rushed to Reb Chayim's house, hoping to get some meat in honor of *Shabbos*. He offered an enormous price for a piece, yet was told, "This is not a butcher shop. The meat is reserved for poor *talmidei chachomim*."

While they were speaking, one of Reb Chayim's regular "customers" walked in. Upset, the rich man exclaimed: "Eh... You call this a *talmid chacham*?!"

Reb Chayim ignored his comment and gave the visitor his portion. The rich man realized the futility of his endeavor and left, furious. That night, the Or HaChayim HaKadosh had a dream in which he was told from *Shomayim* that since he had not protested against the embarrassment of a *talmid chacham*, he would have to go into *golus* for a full year. He immediately packed his few belongings and set out on a long and arduous trek, traveling from one place to another, making sure never to sleep two nights in the same place. He often went to sleep hungry, yet he accepted his pain with love and davened to *HaShem* to forgive him for his sin.

On *erev Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai* the *tzaddik* found himself on the outskirts of a city. Sitting down on a stone to rest his weak body, he reflected on the first *posuk* of the *parsha*, which begins with the words, *Im bechukosai teileichu*. As he then continued walking towards the city, still in *dveikus*, he conceived forty-two original insights on this *posuk*. When he finally reached the *shul*, the *shammes* asked this needy stranger to be his guest for *Shabbos*. At the conclusion of the Friday night *seuda*, the *shammes* told him of the local *minhag* to visit the *rov* at his home, and together they set out, joining the throngs already gathered, all eagerly waiting to hear *dvrei Torah* from the *rov*.

At the head of the long table, with eyes closed, sat the *rov*, enraptured in a state of *dveikus*. After a few moments he awoke, quietly shared fourteen insights on the above *posuk*, and concluded, "These *peirushim* I just heard in *Shomayim*, cited in the name of the holy *tzaddik*, Reb Chayim ben Atar."

"Chayim ben Atar!" the unknown guest corrected him loudly.

All eyes turned to see: Who could have the *chutzpa* to dishonor the Or HaChayim? The *shammes*, feeling responsible for his guest, begged them to leave the poor man alone. At the daytime meal, the *rov* expounded a second set of fourteen *peirushim*, explaining again that he had heard these in *Shomayim* in the name of the holy *tzaddik*, Reb Chayim ben Atar. The same scenario repeated itself. Again the guest called out, "Chayim ben Atar!" This irritated the townsmen even more. Before *shaaleshudes*, the *shammes* warned his guest to behave properly. However, the scene repeated itself a third time, and Reb Chayim was locked in a room where he was to stay until fitting measures would be decided upon.

That night, a violent storm swept through the city, and the townspeople frantically rushed to ask the *rov* for its cause. The *rov* was told from *Shomayim* that on *Shabbos*, *gehinom* closes, and it reopens on *motzoei Shabbos* when the Or HaChayim HaKadosh makes *Havdala*. And since the *tzaddik* is currently locked in a room and thus cannot make *Havdala*, there is a great uproar Above. That was what is causing such a harrowing storm below. Hearing this, the townsmen immediately released their holy guest from his confinement. Reb Chayim understood that his *teshuva* had been accepted in *Shomayim*, took his knapsack, and made his way back to his hometown.

(תולדות אור החיים הקדוש)

CONSIDER THIS!

What is the purpose of defending the *rov's* honor? Will it influence the others?

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A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

CHEATING ON A TEST

What are the prohibitions involved when cheating on a test? Is there any difference between a test on *limudei kodesh* material and *lehavdil* a test on secular studies?

- To preface: The Torah requires a Yid to be moral and honest in all matters. Often, even if one cannot point to a specific *se'if* in Shulchan Aruch that forbids something, it is nevertheless obvious that the Torah forbids behaving in such a manner. So too here, it is self understood that cheating on a test is an act of deception which flies in the face of Torah's value of honesty.
- However, the truth is that even from a dry legal perspective, cheating on a test involves several *Halachic* issues. Some instances of cheating have direct financial consequences and thus would be considered *gneiva*. For example, if one was hired based on test scores that were achieved by cheating, the salary received based on false pretexts constitutes theft.
- Even when there are no monetary implications, the very act of deceit that causes another person, including a *goy*, to have a mistaken assumption or impression, is referred to in *Halacha* as *gneivas daas*. *Chazal* list seven types of thieves, the worst of which is someone who steals "the opinion" of others, i.e. leads them to false conclusions. Therefore, leading a teacher to believe the answers on the test are his own, when in reality they were copied from someone else, violates the prohibition against *gneivas daas*. It should be noted that many *rishonim* hold that *gneivas daas* is an *issur deoraisa*.
- In summary: there is no difference between *limudei kodesh* or *lehavdil* secular studies with regard to the prohibition of *gneivas daas*.

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CURRENT EVENTS

ח"י טבת

THE BNEI YISASSCHAR

Reb Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov was born in the year תקמ"ג (1783) and was named after his uncle Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk. He is commonly known by his sefer "Bnei Yisasschar" titled thus because his Rebbe, the Chozeh of Lublin, told him that he stems from shevet Yissachar. He wrote numerous other seforim in nigleh and chassidus and was one of the great Rebbes of his time. He passed away on the 18th of Teves, תר"א (1841).



Seeing that only the rich were able to afford a proper chinuch for their children, while the children of the poor remained unlettered, the Bnei Yisasschar instituted a system called "Tamchin De'oiraisa" (support for Torah) to pay for melamdin to teach all the town's children. It was so important to him, that after introducing this system in a town, he would accept a rabbinic position in another town in order to introduce the system there.



While the Bnei Yisasschar valued the wisdom of the goyim in wordly matters, he once said, "The meteorologists can predict the upcoming weather with their wisdom. But what can they do if they predict a drought and a Yid pours out his heart in Tehillim, davening that HaShem should give rain..."

(זכרון לברכה ע' תשכ)

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

A TRADITIONAL SOLUTION

The *shaliach* to Detroit, Reb Berel Shemtov, kept on trying to convince him, but to no avail.



"I am an honest person," the man kept on insisting. "I cannot take upon myself to don *tefillin* every single day, for the rest of my life. I am not psychologically ready for such an endless undertaking. On principal, I will not make a commitment I cannot keep." Seeing that he would not budge, Reb Berel suggested he discuss it with the Rebbe.

When the man came out of the Rebbe's room, he looked relieved. He asked the *Shliach* to please place an order for the *tefillin*, so he will have his own pair to use.

Some years later, after he had been laying *tefillin* without a break, Reb Berel gathered the courage to ask him what had happened with his 'honesty' and the 'undertaking'. "The Rebbe agreed with me," he answered. "The Rebbe said I have Saturdays off..."

לע"נ ר' נפתלי איסר ב"ר יצחק ע"ה ומרת איתא בת ר' נפתלי ע"ה