



HOLY BUSINESS (1)

THE JOB OF A YID

Chazal teach: Great is he who supports himself by his own efforts; as the *possuk* says, "He is praiseworthy both in this world and the next." Chazal further state that a person should not say, "Since I am of dignified ancestry, it is unbecoming for me to humble myself by working" – for long before his time, *HaShem* Himself worked, when He created the world.

(ברכות ח"א, זרזר חדש ח"א ט ע"א)

Many of the great *tanaim* and *amoraim* worked as menial laborers to earn a living. Hillel was a woodcutter; R' Oshiya, R' Chanina and R' Yochanan were shoemakers; R' Yehudah was a baker; and others served as blacksmiths, net weavers, tailors, diggers and porters.

(אוצר האגדה ערך אומנים ובעלי מלאכה בין חכמי התלמוד)

A chossid who earned his *parnasa* by managing a tavern traveled to visit the *tzaddik*, Reb Arye Leib, better known as the Shpoler Zeide, to pour out his heart. He was afraid that his constant contact with the coarse customers who frequented his tavern might dull his spiritual sensitivity.

The Shpoler Zeide smiled and said, "It seems that you want to fulfill your purpose as a Yid by being presented with a sack full of gold, being seated in a clean and splendid palace, dressed in silken garments with a *shtreimel* on your head, and being surrounded by shelves filled with holy *sefarim*... and then you will be able to serve *HaShem* by *davening* and studying Torah with a clear, pure mind. But if *HaShem* wants individuals to serve Him without any distractions, for that He has countless myriads of *malochim*! The real delight that He finds in this world comes from those who are surrounded by obstacles and hardships and feel that they are confined in a gutter – and despite this they think about *HaShem* and anxiously yearn for the moment when they will be able to say just a few words to Him. No *malach* can experience such a longing!"

The Shpoler Zeide concluded, "Don't complain about your livelihood. On the contrary, thank *HaShem* for having given you the privilege of serving Him in this manner!"

(סיפורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 380)

Every *Shabbos*, during *seuda shlishis*, the chassidim of Reb Yitzchak Aizik of Zhidachov would sit in awed silence as the *tzaddik* sang moving *niggunim* and expounded lofty *divrei Torah*. So deeply were

they engulfed by a profound yearning for *teshuva* and *ruchniyus*, that the morning following one such *Shabbos*, none of the visiting businessman wanted to leave. It did not even occur to them that they should now be returning to their mundane affairs.

Not knowing this, the *tzaddik* asked his sons why no one had yet left. They went to investigate, and were told, "Only yesterday our Rebbe made all worldly things so unworthy in our eyes, that we are ashamed to face him with our problems about our farm animals and our businesses."

Hearing this, the *tzaddik* smiled and related that there had been a similar occurrence with the *tzaddik*, Reb Menachem Mendel of Rimanov, who had then told his chassidim, "*Shabbos* is one thing; weekdays are something different. Let the businessmen return to their homes and engage honestly in their commerce."

Reb Yitzchak Aizik went on to quote the words of *Tehillim*: "The heavens belong to *HaShem*, but the earth He has given to man," that is, to labor. Hearing his message, each chassid folded up his *tallis*, packed his bags, and returned home to his daily affairs.

(סיפורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 166)

The preparation of the *dirah b'tachtonim* is accomplished primarily by those in the workforce who use the physical world for the sake of *HaShem*. For this reason, until *Moshiach* comes, the amount of *Yidden* in the workforce (*Zevulun*) greatly exceeds the number of those dedicated to learning Torah (*Yissachar*).

Furthermore, by serving *HaShem* despite the challenges of the physical world, a Yid reveals a deeper, essential connection of his *neshama* to *HaShem*. This is only revealed when this Yid later dedicates time to *davening* and learning.

(לקו"ש ח"ל ע' 137 ואילך עיי"ש)

SERVING HASHEM IN WORK

The Baal Shem Tov taught that working in a worldly occupation can be comparable to studying Torah and even greater – for everything in the world was created for the glory of *HaShem*, and when a person uses worldly things in the way prescribed by the Torah, he is serving their Maker.

A man once came to tell the Baal Shem Tov that he had lost his oxen; he wanted to be told where

they were. The *tzaddik* opened a *Zohar*, looked inside, and told him that they were in the market city of Breslau. He later explained that *Chazal* say that there is a "great light" hidden in the Torah that enables one to see from one end of the world to the other, and with that light, those who study Torah properly can see everything.

The Rebbe derived a lesson from this story: There are those who separate the Torah from worldly matters, thinking that the *Zohar* is a holy part of Torah, while the ox is an ox, and Breslau is a market city... This is a mistake, for *HaShem* is everywhere, even in the lowliest things, thus the Baal Shem Tov saw them in the *Zohar*. This can be seen from the special purpose that the oxen filled: they brought this Yid to the Baal Shem Tov.

(מאור עינים, שבת, שיח"ק תשל"ד ח"ב ע' 451)

Chazal say that Chanoch 'sewed shoes' and thereby created spiritual *yichudim* for *HaShem* similar to those created through wearing tefillin. The Rebbe explains that this teaches us a lesson: even an ordinary shoemaker or tailor can accomplish great spiritual effects even while going about their work with the correct proper intentions.

(תו"מ תשמ"ט ח"א ע' 247, וראה תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"א ע' 304)

The eminent chossid, Reb Hillel Paritcher, served as *mashpia* for the Yiddishe agricultural settlements founded by the Mittlerer Rebbe. What motivated this towering intellectual to agree to assume this role?

He once related how he had heard the Mittlerer Rebbe describe the inner stature of these unassuming colonists: "Picture those *Yishuvniks* standing in the field, with their *yarmulkas* and *taleisim kتانim*, planting the soil and lifting their eyes heavenward and focusing their hopes on *HaShem*..."

Visualizing that moment is what motivated Reb Hillel to become their *mashpia*.

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 83)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Why did *HaShem* make us earn a livelihood through physical work: To elevate the world or to elicit a greater love for Him?
- How can serving *HaShem* in work be greater than learning Torah?

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A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

CHOLOV YISROEL

Some gas stations and business establishments without a *hechsher* that are frequented by *frum Yidden* have *cholov yisroel* milk available to be used for coffee. May one use milk from an open *cholov yisroel* container in such a store?

(The conditions required to purchase black coffee in a store without a *hechsher* is a discussion for itself).

- When kosher food or drink is in the hands of *goy*, depending on the type of foodstuff, there are different *halachic* requirements to ensure that the *goy* does not exchange or tamper with the food. Meat and wine for example, require a double seal. Milk requires one seal for it to be considered *cholov yisroel*.
- Considering the case at hand: If the bottle was not opened in the presence of the *Yid* purchasing the coffee, the milk has then been in the hands of *goyim* without a seal, and therefore would not be considered *cholov yisroel*.
- The fact that the milk is in a *cholov yisroel* container does not prove that the *goy* didn't add *cholov akum* milk. If, for instance, the *goy* would notice that the *cholov yisroel* milk was nearly finished, what would stop him from taking the bottle of *cholov akum* milk standing nearby and pouring some into the *cholov yisroel* container?
- In a situation where the *goy* would not derive any benefit from exchanging or adding to the kosher item, it is kosher without a seal. However, in our case, this is not so:
- Firstly, kosher milk costs more than regular milk, so the *goy* would have a vested interest in refilling the kosher container with *cholov akum* milk. Secondly, every time the kosher milk finishes he would need to purchase another bottle, which is a bother. The *goy* would find it much easier to add non-*cholov yisroel* milk to the kosher container, instead of buying more *cholov yisroel* milk. Thirdly, the *goy* has a reason for preferring not to buy more *cholov yisroel* milk when the bottle finishes: since only a minority of the customers require *cholov yisroel* milk, if there are leftovers that won't stay fresh, he will need to discard it, and by adding the *cholov akum* milk, this can be avoided.
- Furthermore, in this case there is no guarantee that the milk in the kosher container was ever *cholov yisroel* (unlike definite *cholov yisroel* that was left with a *goy* without a seal, which at one time was known to be *cholov yisroel*).
- In summary: If the bottle is opened in the presence of the *Yid*, then he may use it; but if it was open before, it cannot be considered *cholov yisroel*.

שו"ע יו"ד סי' קי"ח סעי' א' וסעי' י', שו"ת משיב בהלכה יו"ד ה"א סי' פט, קובץ אור ישראל גליון כ' עמ' קפז.

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CURRENT EVENTS

י"ט טבת

REB HENDEL

Reb Chanoch Hendel Kugel lived in Lubavitch and was a "*ben bayis*" by the Rebbe Rashab for forty years. The Friediker Rebbe describes him as follows, "Reb Chanoch Hendel came to Lubavitch, to the Tzemach Tzedek, for the first time in the year תר"ג. He had prepared himself for ten years before coming to the Rebbe. His heart burned with a fire of *ahavas yisroel* and he had unparalleled *midos tovos*. His *ahavas yisroel* and *midos tovos* were a product of much work and toil, and not so much from thinking and meditation. It is impossible to describe the love he had for another Yid; he would literally go on *mesirus nefesh* for every individual." When the yeshiva Tomchei Temimim opened, he was appointed by Rebbe Rashab as the leading *mashpia*. He passed away on the 19th of Teves, תר"ס (1900).

When the news came to Lubavitch that the chossid Reb Chonye Marozov was released from his draft service, Reb Hendel began dancing in the yard of the Rebbe, chanting "Chonye has gone out!" He went into the Rebbe Rashab's room, told him the news and started dancing in the room. The Rebbe Rashab got up, put his hand on Reb Hendel's shoulder and went around with him three times. Afterwards, he said, "For this, I will say Chassidus for you."

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ליקוט ב' אות י"ח)

Before he became a chossid, Reb Hendel went to the chossid Reb Zishke of Kurenitz to watch the way he conducts himself. He saw that throughout the entire day, Reb Zishke was occupied with his Rabbonus, and had no time to learn himself. Once, at a late hour of the night, when Reb Hendel was preparing to go to sleep, he saw Reb Zishke get up for *Tikun Chatzos* and then watched as he sat and learned for a few hours. The Rov then went to the *mikva* and started preparing for *davening*. Seeing this, Reb Hendel was impressed, but he began doubting his desire to become a chossid, perhaps it would be too difficult.

Later, he saw a woman come to Reb Zishke, telling him about a very seriously ill person, and as she was speaking, he saw tears streaming down Reb Zishka's face. Sometime afterward, he witnessed the Rov going out of his way to request a favor for another *yid*.

Finally, Reb Hendel decided to become a chossid, and he went to Reb Zishka to tell him his decision. "Good," said Reb Zishke. Reb Hendel asked, "But how do I do this? Please don't make it too hard!" "It's very simple," said the Rov. "The very first thing in Chassidus is *ahavas yisrael*." He explained the idea of true *ahavas yisrael*, and then said, "You are also a Yid and you must love yourself, but first you must banish the "*goy*" that is within you..."

(ספר השיחות תרצ"ז ע' 16)

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

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

"WHERE IS THE PRIDE?!"

Simchas Torah 5715 was one to remember. The Rebbe prefaced the *hakafos* with a quote from the Rebbe Rashab that "*Simchas Torah shat nit*" (on *Simchas Torah*, harsh words will not cause harm), and began discussing a sensitive topic in the most direct manner:

"The first three years when a child begins to learn, are the foundation of his future success. Then how is it that during this period a child is taken and stuffed with English and geometry?!"

"*Halevai* adults would also not know of these matters! But certainly not a nine or twelve year-old child... Hashem wishes to dwell in the mind of a *yiddishe* child – and his head is taken and crammed with secular studies! ...Where is the *yiddishe* pride?!"

This farbrengen was to be the basis of the establishment of *Oholei Torah, Cheder al Taharas Hakodesh*, by Reb Michael Teitelbaum. It was soon followed by the establishment of other *Chadorim* in Kfar Chabad, Detroit, Holland and Bnei Brak.

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

