



HEAVENLY SUSTENANCE

RECOGNIZING THE SOURCE

The talmidim of Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai asked him, "When the Yidden were in the *midbar*, why didn't HaShem make enough *mon* come down once a year to last for a full year?"

Rebbe Shimon answered this with a *moshol*: A king had an only son whom he provided with all his needs once a year. However, he became dissatisfied with this arrangement, for the prince would visit only once a year to receive his funds. The king therefore decided to give him his allowance day by day, so that he would have to visit him every day. So too, a Yid living in the *midbar* who had a number of children would worry and say, "Perhaps the *mon* will stop coming tomorrow and we will all die of hunger!" He then had no choice but to trust fully that HaShem would provide him with all his needs.

(יזמא עו ע"א)

Though the *tzaddik*, Reb Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, rarely agreed to accept money, he usually did accept support from one wealthy and scholarly chossid. However, one day this chossid was distressed to find that the *tzaddik* refused even his accustomed gift.

Asking the Rebbe for his reason, he was told: "Every livelihood has a cause activated by HaShem, Who sometimes removes the cause to test whether the person places his trust in the cause – or in HaShem, Who brings about the cause. If the man had placed his trust in the cause, thinking that his livelihood depended on it, then when the cause is removed, his *parnasa* is cut off. If, however, he had placed his trust in HaShem, then another cause is provided and his livelihood continues.

"In my case," Reb Menachem Mendel explained, "your support has been the cause of my income. If HaShem should want to test me and remove my cause, you will become poor and thus be unable to support me. I would therefore prefer to remove the cause."

The chossid insisted that he nevertheless would like to continue, even if he became poor as a result. After repeatedly declining his request many times, the *tzaddik* finally agreed to accept his gifts as he had done before. That same year, the chossid lost his wealth and was forced to seek other employment in order to support his family.

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 505)

Shortly after the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in

America, he once asked someone what he does, and was told, "I make a living." The Rebbe responded, "A living is made by the *Eibershter*; a Yid must be the recipient (*mekabel*)."

(תו"מ ח"ט ע' 115)

The Rebbe would often quote the Rebbe Maharash that *parnassa* in our times is similar to the *mon*, sustenance from heaven, which was not measured by the effort invested. For that reason one need not be concerned about his livelihood and trust completely in HaShem.

(לקו"ש חט"ז ע' 178 הע' 38 ובכ"מ)

RELYING ON HASHEM

Returning home from *cheder*, on his way to his father's room, the Mittlerer Rebbe saw Reb Shmuel Munkes among other chassidim and ran towards them. Listening to their conversation, he heard Reb Shmuel ask two wealthy chassidim why they looked so downcast, to which they responded that they were experiencing hardships in their *parnasa*.

The young boy was surprised at the question, and claimed that this kind of worry is clearly described in *Tehillim*. He quoted the *possuk*, *atzabehem kesef v'zahav ma'asei yedei adam*, whose simple meaning is that the idols which *goyim* worship are made of silver and gold, fashioned by hand. However, he went on to interpret it to mean that people are sad (*atzeiv*) because they think their silver and gold depend on the work of their own hands.

The young Mittlerer Rebbe continued, "Businessmen can be so foolish as to think that the quicker they hurry to bring merchandise from the fairs and do more business, the more money they will accumulate. As a result of this blindness (and he continued to quote that passage), *peh lahem velo yedabeiru* – though they have mouths and repeat words of *Chassidus*, those words don't really speak to them; *einayim lahem v'lo yir'u* – they have eyes, but do not recognize *Hashgacha Pratis*; *oznayim lahem v'lo ya'azinu* – they have ears, but only hear *chitzoniyyus*, mere superficialities; and therefore *af lahem v'lo yerichun* – they have no sense of smell: they become insensitive to *ruchniyyus*."

The Mittlerer Rebbe concluded, "And eventually they themselves become *avoda zara*..."

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 043)

A simple Yid once traveled to spend *Shabbos* in the court of Reb Mordechai of Chernobyl. When he

asked for a *bracha* before departing, the *tzaddik* asked him about his daily routine, and the Yid told him how he rose early to buy merchandise from the local farmers and returned home to *daven* when he finished. The Rebbe condemned this conduct, but the Yid excused himself by saying that if he *davened* first, he would be unable to buy the merchandise. Reb Mordechai then told him the following story:

"A *yungerman* was supported by his father-in-law, but when his family grew and he was forced to find additional means of support, he left home and worked as a *melamed* for three years, saving every coin he earned. Finally, having collected enough to start a business, he decided to make the long trek home. On *erev Shabbos* he reached a little village near his hometown, where he realized that he would not be able to reach home in time. He decided to stay at a wayside inn, but was afraid to leave the money in his bag lest someone steal it. On the other hand, he didn't know if he could trust the innkeeper with it. Having no other choice, he gave it to him to hold for him. Throughout the entire *Shabbos* he worried about his money, and immediately after *Havdala* requested it back. Upon receiving his wallet, he counted all the gold coins and was happy to find that nothing was missing – but then continued to shake the coins and look through them.

"What are you looking for?" the innkeeper asked. "Is something missing?"

"The guest explained that he wanted to make sure that his one copper coin was there as well..."

Reb Mordechai concluded, "Look at this silly fellow! After seeing that all his golden coins were returned to him, he still suspected his host of perhaps stealing one copper coin.... And you are doing the same. Every night you entrust HaShem with your *neshama*, and when you wake up in the morning, He returns the gold you have given Him. So how is it that you don't trust that He will give you your *parnasa* if you wait until after *davening*...?"

(אדמו"רי צ'רנוביל ר"ה)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Why does HaShem create difficulties in one's *parnasa*?
- Why is *bitachon* so essential to the service of HaShem and the ways of *Chassidus*?

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A WAY OF LIFE

LITIGATION IN SECULAR COURT

I have heard that in the case where one party refuses to appear before a Beis Din, the Beis Din may give permission to turn to a secular court to retrieve money owed to him. How is it possible that an issur d'oraisa is waived for monetary gain? Why is it treated differently than all other issurim which the Torah obligates one to forfeit all his money to avoid transgressing?

- The *issur* of litigation in secular court (*halacha l'perkaos*) is a severe one, and one who transgresses is considered to have raised a hand against the Torah and as having blasphemed. Nevertheless, when one party refuses to come to *Beis Din*, it is permissible for various reasons.
- The most basic explanation is that this case was especially permitted since the *Torah* was concerned lest anarchy reign. Had there been no recourse to turn to secular courts, rogues who fail to submit to the authority of *Beis Din* would be able to do as they see fit, leaving observant *Yidden* without any remedy.
- On a deeper note: The reason it is prohibited to litigate in secular courts is because by preferring secular law which is the product of human intellect over *halacha* which is *Hashem's* wisdom, it creates the impression that the litigant acknowledges the superiority of man-made law, which is idolatrous. However turning to secular court out of desperation, when a litigant has no other alternative to obtain money rightfully belonging to him, does not give the appearance of regard to secular law.
- Another explanation discussed in *poskim* is that once a litigant receives permission from *Beis Din*, the secular court becomes "agents", so to speak, of the *Beis Din* to carry out its bidding.
- However the simplest explanation is as follows: The prohibition to summon another *Yid* to a secular court is derived from the *posuk* "v'eyle hamishpotim asher tosif lifneihem" (these are the laws you place before them) from which *chazal* deduce "before them" i.e. a *Beis Din* but not before a secular court. Hence this only applies where one has the option of going to *Beis Din*. However if the litigant was summoned to *Beis Din* and refused to appear, it is as if there is no *Beis Din*, and it follows that there is no prohibition to turn to secular courts to begin with.

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CURRENT EVENTS

כ"ב שבט

THE KOTZKER REBBE

Reb Menachem Mendel Morgenstern of Kotzk was a well-known Rebbe. He studied under the tutelage of the tzaddik the Chozeh of Lublin, and afterwards traveled to the *Yid Hakadosh* of Peshischa and Reb Simcha Bunim of Pshis'cha. After the passing of Reb Simcha Bunim, he took over the lead of his chassidim. He was known to be very sharp and always demanded of his chassidim to be truthful to themselves and completely devoted to the truth. For the last twenty years of his life, he closeted himself in his room and did not engage with his chassidim. He passed away on the 22nd of Shevat, תרי"ט.



The Kotzker Rebbe was well known for the sharp way he dealt with his chassidim. It was therefore quite astounding when a certain Rov came to Kotzk and the Rebbe greeted him in a friendly manner, talked to him for a while and then invited him over to eat. Later, one of the Rebbe's close chassidim expressed his wonder over this. The Rebbe replied, "What do you not understand? This man is a very foolish and thinks very highly of himself. He believes that it is an honor for me to have him as a chossid, so you know what? I gave him that impression, for giving a fool what he wants is also an act of *gemilas chesed*..."



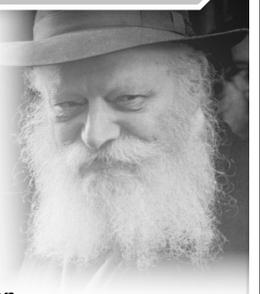
The Kotzker Rebbe was once asked how he gives people advice regarding matters of this world when he himself is totally divested and detached from all worldly matters? The Rebbe replied, "I act objectively. Whenever there is a business deal, there always needs to be someone who is uninvolved in the deal that is able to give an objective opinion. So too, I, who has no dealings with the mundane world, am truly objective and able to give the proper advice..."

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

"WE'LL THINK ABOUT IT"

Hour after hour the Rebbe would stand, despite the doctor's advice, and receive his children, *Klal Yisroel*. Often, after handing out dollars for many hours, the Rebbe would have to treat his arm, but under no circumstances would the Rebbe hear of taking breaks.



It happened once, on a *Yud Shvat*, the Rebbe returned from the *ohel*, where he had been standing for many hours, and went straight to *daven minchah* and *mairiv*. After which, the Rebbe immediately began to distribute a *kuntres* to the *chassidim*, as they filed past.

Reb Yaakov Yehudah Hecht, a warm *chossid*, approached the Rebbe and begged him to taste something, as the Rebbe had not eaten anything at all since the night before. The Rebbe replied, "We'll think about it - tomorrow..."

The distribution of *kuntreisim* continued deep into the night.

לזכות הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל והת' אהרן שיחיו שפוטין