



## SEEKING GUIDANCE (2)

### LEARNING FROM THEIR WAYS

Chazal teach that a person should associate himself with *talmidei chachomim* as much as possible, for thus he will learn from their ways.

The author of *Sefer HaChinuch* writes that connecting to *talmidei chachomim* upholds the entire Torah, and is a strong foundation to help the *neshama*. A person who is ordinarily in the company of *talmidei chachomim* will be held back from transgressing, *chas veshalom*. As Shlomo HaMelech writes, "He who goes with *chochma* will become a *chochom*."

(רמב"ם הל' דעות פ"ו ה"ב, ס' החינוך תל"ד)

Surprisingly, the Torah identifies Elisha HaNavi not as the foremost disciple of Eliyahu who received Torah teachings from him, but as "the one who poured water over the hands of Eliyahu." From this we see that serving *talmidei chachomim* is even more valuable than learning from them. Besides the *zechus* of helping them, it is specifically through such contact that one can receive guidance on how to live one's daily life.

(ברכות ז' ע"ב, מחזור ויטרי תכט)

The Friediker Rebbe related: During the time of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, one could find *eltere chassidim* visiting Lubavitch year round. The younger *chassidim* would service them ("*shimush*"), and this enabled them to watch the *eltere chassidim* daven, eat, learn and interact with others.

Very often this would impact the young *chassidim* even more than their own study of *Chassidus*. As Chazal say, "Being of service to Torah sages is superior even to Torah study," for study produces a learned person, whereas *shimush* produces an *oved HaShem* and a *chossid*.

(לקו"ד ח"ד ע' תרפח)

On another occasion the Friediker Rebbe related: In the past, *yungeleit* would spend time in the close company of *eltere chassidim*. The *eltere chassidim* would repay the gratitude

that they owed to their own *madrichim*, by now relaying to the *yungeleit* what they had received many years earlier. This contact is what made a *chossid*; this contact is what made a true *chassidisher* gathering.

(סה"ש ה"ש"י"ת ע' 453)

### VITAL DIRECTION

In תש"ט (1949) the Friediker Rebbe bemoaned the fact that young *chassidim* were lacking guidance. It is unfortunate, he said, that the young *chassidim* refrain from observing the *eltere chassidim* who themselves had learned to appreciate the preciousness of an *elterer chossid*. Even a *talmid* who is successful in his studies and in his own character refinement needs a great deal of *shimush* before he is fit to guide others. As *chassidim* were wont to say, "An *eltere chossid* has more mellow sense than a *yungerman* who is a *maskil* and an *oved*."

In my youth I saw how the really young *chassidim* were delighted when an *elterer chossid* took an interest in them. It did not matter whether the budding *chossid* was told a warm word or a stern one, since he knew that it was preparing him to be able to absorb the *Chabad-chassidisher* education into the very roots of his soul.

With such a *chinuch*, the *chassidisher* child rose from level to level, enabling him in time to raise his own *Chabad-chassidisher* family.

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' 1006)

In the winter of תשי"י (1950), the Friediker Rebbe discussed the necessity for *chassidische* guidance. He said: "Nowadays, many *chassidim* are completely off track. It is often the loud youngsters, lightheaded and spiritually insensitive, who arrogantly jump to the head table, and thus they remain naked – without a knowledge of *Chassidus*, and even without *middos tovos* and a *geshmak* in *davening*. For, as the age-old *chassidic* saying goes, 'Everyone needs *chinuch*, even a Rebbe who is the son of a Rebbe and the grandson of a Rebbe.'"

(סה"ש ה"ש"י"ת ע' 350)

### STUDYING THEIR CONDUCT

Reb Michoel Beliner, the legendary *mashpia*, is fondly remembered by oldtimers from Lubavitch as Reb Michoel *der Alter* ("old Reb Michoel"). When he grew frail, the yeshivah administrator suggested to the Rebbe Rashab that he no longer be paid a salary. The Rebbe told him, "In my eyes, the fact that the *bochurim* can gaze at him is worth a salary. He is an image of an *alter chossid*."

(Incidentally, some *chassidim* understood that phrase to intimate that Reb Michoel was equal in standing to a vintage *chossid* of the *Alter Rebbe*....)

(לשמע ארוך ע' 103)

One storekeeper in the town of Lubavitch would close his shop every Monday and Thursday morning so that he could go and hear the elder *chossid* Reb Hendel saying *VeHu Rachum* through his tears.

(לשמע ארוך ע' 110)

One day, during his early years in Homil, Reb Aizel Homiler *farbrenge*d with the local *baalei batim* and told them: "The true '*mizrach*' is at the back of the *shul*, where the *melamdim* sit. You should listen and learn from the words of the *melamdim* just as you listen and learn from the Rebbe's words."

From that day on, the *baalei batim* began to appreciate the *chassidische melamdim*, and the town of Homil became bright.

When the Friediker Rebbe related the above, he added: "In the past, people would study not only the words of a Rebbe but the words of a *chossid*. The young people would listen to the old folk, the *baalei batim* would listen to the *melamdim* – and things were brighter."

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 96)

## CONSIDER THIS!

How does one receive guidance through serving the *eltere chassidim*? Why can't it be acquired from hearing them teach Torah?

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# A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

## CHECKING STA"m BY A COMPUTER

Is one obligated to have one's *sta"m* (– *Sefer Torah*, *tefillin* and *mezuzos*) checked for their *kashrus* by a computer?

- All contemporary *poskim* concur that a computer cannot replace the obligation of checking *sta"m* by a person. However, since even after the *sta"m* has been checked by a person, the computer often finds missing words, letters and incorrectly formed letters, there are *poskim* who include a computer check in the general halachic principle “*kol ma de'efshar livrury mevarerinon*” - when the concern for *psul* is common we ought not to rely on a *chazaka* for anything that is possible for us to investigate. Hence, they hold that with the technological advances of today a computer check is obligatory.
- Checking *sta"m* with a computer cannot be compared to checking vegetables for bugs with a microscope, or checking if *tefillin* are square with a modern mechanical device, which are both not required by halacha. Halacha is only concerned with phenomena observable to the naked eye; therefore anything not observable would not be included in the prohibition or obligation. However a mistake in a *sefer Torah* is readily observable and hence renders the *sefer Torah* *posul*. All the computer is doing is exposing the location of a *psul*.
- Other *poskim* however, are of the opinion that although it is commendable to check *sta"m* with a computer, there is no obligation to do so, and there are surely no grounds to disqualify *sta"m* which was not checked by a computer.
- Another possible issue may be the prohibition to erase Hashem's name caused by scanning the *sta"m*, however *poskim* are not concerned with erasing Hashem's name on a computer screen.

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## CURRENT EVENTS

כ"ה ניסן

### REB CHAIM OF TZANZ

Reb Chaim Halbershtam of Tszanz was a *chassidish* Rebbe and a *gaon*. He was a *talmid* of Reb Naftali of Ropshitz and Reb Tzvi Hirsh of Ziditchov, and was given *semicha* by Reb Efraim Zalman Margolis of Brody. In his generation, he was known as a great *gaon* and he corresponded with many of the great *chachomim* of his time, including the Tzemach Tzeddek. Thousands of *chassidim* traveled to him from far and wide, and many Chasidic dynasties stem from him. He passed away on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, תרל"ו (1876).



The *tzedakah* activities of the Tszanzer were famous. It is said that some 100,000 gulden, an astronomic sum indeed, were distributed by him every year.

When Reb Chaim's son Reb Boruch, the Goretitzer Rebbe, had to marry off a daughter, he approached his father for some financial assistance. At that very time, some wealthy *chassidim* had come and given money for *hachnasas kallah*, and the Rebbe gave it all to one *chossid*. Reb Boruch asked his father, "Why am I worse than that other *chossid*, to whom you have given all the money?" Reb Chaim replied, "You are not such *rachmonus*. Why, if you will tell others that you are the son of the Tszanzer Rov, people will surely give you, but who is going to help this man with all the funds he needs for his daughter's wedding?"



During a *sicha* on Simchas Torah 5717 the Rebbe related:

The Tszanzer Rebbe would sleep very little, just a few hours a day. When asked how this does not affect his health, he replied, "They say that I grasp things very quickly; what takes someone else a long time to comprehend, takes me a short while. The same is with sleep; I sleep quickly..."

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### WHEN WILL MOSHIACH COME?

In the summer of 5735, the famous Russian *baal teshuvah*, Professor Yirmiyahu Branover, and his son Daniel went for *yehidus*.



Daniel asked the Rebbe what he thinks of the rumors that in the writings of the *Arizal*, hints have been found alluding to the fact that *Moshiach* will arrive in the year 5736.

The Rebbe answered the child:

"From the *Rambam*, it is understood that there were many instances when *Moshiach* should have come, but due to minor mishaps, he did not arrive. There is no reason to wait until 5736. *Moshiach* can come in 5735 too! I just spoke at a *farbrengen* about the superiority of the third day of the week, but *Moshiach* may come on a Monday too!"

The Rebbe then became very emotional, and finished off, pointing to himself, and then to them: "If I will improve, your father will improve, and you will improve – then he will come."

לזכות ר' אברהם קופול הלוי בן חנה וסימא ראניא בת איטא יהודית



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