



DEALING HONESTLY (2)

Making a Kiddush HaShem

Chazal explain that *mitzva* to love *HaShem* requires that a Yid should act in a way that makes Him beloved by others. When a person learns Torah and deals honestly in business, people will say, "How great is he who learns Torah; how wonderful are his ways! Woe to one who does not learn Torah! We promise that we too will now learn and teach our children Torah as well." But when (*chas veshalom*) a person who learns Torah does not act honestly, people will say the opposite, causing a *chillul HaShem*.

The Rebbe explained that dealing honestly means going even *beyond* the requirements of *halacha*. One should do so also when dealing with *goyim*, thus creating a *kiddush HaShem*.

(יזמא פו ע"א, תו"מ תשמ"ד ח"ב ע' 612)

The *tanna*, Rabbi Shimon ben Shetach, used to sell flax, which he would carry from place to place. Seeking to ease his work, his *talmidim* went off to the marketplace and bought him a donkey from an Arab merchant. On their way home they noticed that he had accidentally left a valuable jewel hanging on the donkey's neck. Excitedly, they hurried to Rabbi Shimon and told him that *HaShem* had sent a *bracha* and he would no longer have to work.

Rabbi Shimon asked, "Did the owner know about it?" "No," they replied.

"If so," he told them, "you must return it immediately, for he sold you a donkey and not a jewel."

When the *goy* received the gem, he exclaimed, "Blessed is the G-d of Rabbi Shimon ben Shetach!"

(דברים רבה ג,ג, בשילוב ירושלמי בבא מציעא פ"ב ה"ה)

At All Costs

Alexander the Great once visited the King of Katzia to observe that country's laws and customs. Just then, two citizens were admitted to have their judgment rendered by the king.

"My master, the King!" called out the plaintiff.

"I bought a desolate piece of land from this man here, dug it up, and discovered a buried treasure. So I told him to take the treasure; I bought a ruin, not a treasure!"

"Just as you are afraid of being punished for stealing, so am I!" responded the other. "I sold the ruin to you, including everything in it, from the depths of the earth, until the sky!"

The king asked one man if he had a son, and the other, if he had a daughter. He advised that their children get married and the treasure be given to the new couple. Alexander looked on in amazement.

"Didn't I judge well?" queried the King of Katzia. "Sure!" replied Alexander the Great. "But if I had been the arbitrator, I would have killed them both, and taken the treasure for the kingdom's coffers..."

The King of Katzia then asked, "Does the sun shine in your country?" "Yes," replied Alexander.

"Does it rain?" He nodded affirmatively.

"Do you have animals?" "Yes," he said.

"Well, then," declared the King of Katzia, "the sun shines and the rain falls in the merit of those animals."

(ויקרא רבה כז, א)

When he was a lad of fourteen, Reb Baruch, the Alter Rebbe's father, left his hometown, Vitebsk, and traveled through many villages. Arriving in Dobromysl, he settled down to learn in the *beis medrash*. One day, a man came over to him and introduced himself, "My name is Eliezer Reuven, and I have a smithy on the outskirts of town. I live nearby, and I could use some help, so if you would care for such a job, I would provide you with food and drink and a place to sleep."

Baruch was overjoyed, for this was exactly what he had wanted. He was prepared to do the hardest labor as long as he would earn his own piece of bread, without having to rely on anyone's *tzedaka*, but asked to be paid with money, so he would not have to eat and sleep in the homes of strangers.

He worked conscientiously at the smithy

throughout the day, and in the evening, he would go to the *beis medrash* to learn. And the more he observed Eliezer Reuven, the more did he respect him, for all day, as he stood hammering the red-hot iron, he would recite *Tehillim* by heart, *kapitl* after *kapitl*.

The smith's customers were the peasants of the surrounding villages, who would bring their wagons and tools to be repaired. Baruch noticed the exceptional honesty and devotion with which Eliezer Reuven treated his customers, never overcharging them even a fraction of a cent. One day in particular, Baruch noticed something which made a deep impression on him. A peasant from a nearby village had brought his horse to the smith for shoeing and at the same time he brought the wheel of his wagon to be fixed. Another peasant had brought his horse to have four new shoes put on. When the time came to ask for the money, Eliezer Reuven mistakenly charged the second peasant the amount he should have charged the first one, overcharging him six groshen.

Both peasants had already left when Eliezer Reuven realized his mistake. He was so upset about it that he immediately set off on foot to this peasant's village about three miles away, to give him back the tiny overcharged amount. Baruch was astounded. He had never seen such meticulousness on the part of an ordinary person. He asked the smith if he really thought it had been worthwhile to walk the six-mile distance for a matter of a mere six groshen.

Eliezer Reuven replied, "About the people who lived before the *mabul*, it is written that they were so corrupt that they were not even bothered when robbing from someone less than a little *prutah*. Would you really want me to behave even worse than the people of that wicked generation and rob a man of six groshen?!"

(ספר הזכרונות ח"א ע' 75)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Why is a *kiddush HaShem* specifically related to going *beyond* the requirements of *halacha*?
- Is a *kiddush HaShem* more important than the loss of money, or will no loss be incurred?

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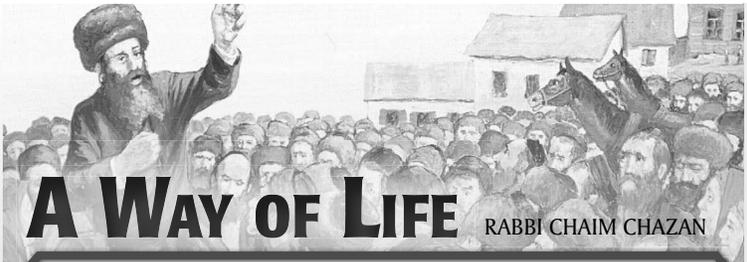
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Selling Wine to a Mechalel Shabbos

Is it permissible to sell or give as a gift non-mevushal wine to someone who is mechalel Shabbos befarhesia (publicly desecrates Shabbos)?

- One who publicly doesn't keep the law of Shabbos who touches non-mevushal wine causes it to become prohibited for consumption as if a goy touched it. (This is not the forum to discuss whether a *tinok shenishba* who does not keep Shabbos forbids wine). The Torah prohibits placing a stumbling block before the blind, which includes causing or assisting another person to do an *aveira*, known in *halacha* as *lifnei iver*. By selling or giving wine to a *mechalel Shabbos*, one is assisting him to transgress by drinking wine that he touched. Similarly a *rov* that is *mesader kiddushin* for a non-*frum* couple and gives them to drink from non-mevushal wine faces the same *shaila*.
- There are numerous reasons brought in *poskim*¹ to permit this.
 - (a) The wine is not prohibited to the *mechalel Shabbos* himself. Because the reason why the *chachomim* prohibited wine that was handled by a *mechalel Shabbos* is as a penalty² so that others should refrain from being friendly with such a person³. It follows that the penalty that the wine is prohibited only applicable to others, not to the *mechalel Shabbos* himself. Others⁴ understand that the penalty is because once one desecrates the Shabbos he becomes suspect to transgress the entire Torah, including *avoda zara*, and therefore his wine is prohibited lest he intended to use it for *avoda zara*. This concern only applies to people other than the *mechalel Shabbos* himself; but the *mechalel Shabbos* can rely for himself that he does not intend to pour the wine for *avoda zara* and therefore may drink it.
 - (b) The prohibition to cause someone else to sin only applies if the *aveira* is a definite result of the stumbling block. If there is a manner in which the "blind" party is able to use the stumbling block in a permissible way, there is no concern of *lifnei iver*. E.g. it is not prohibited to sell an electronic appliance to a non-*frum* person because he might use it on Shabbos, since not necessarily must he use it on Shabbos, hence the sale is not the cause of his sin. In the case of the wine the *mechalel Shabbos* can technically drink the wine with a straw, without touching and prohibiting it. Or better yet, he can do *teshuvah* and decide to keep Shabbos and thereby not prohibit the wine.
 - (c) In a case where several factors come together and there is a minority opinion that is lenient regarding each of them, we can rely collectively on the various minority opinions, although if there was only one of these factors we wouldn't rely on minority opinion. There is a minority opinion⁵ that to have the status of a *mechalel Shabbos* that prohibits wine, a *Beis Din* must have formally applied it. In addition there is another opinion⁶ that *lifnei iver* doesn't apply by a *mechalel Shabbos*.

1. ראה שו"ת דבר יהושע ח"ד סי"ד, יביע
אומר ח"ב יו"ד סי' י, חלקת יעקב ח"א סי'
עז, ציץ אליעזר ח"ח סי' יח, גדולת מרדכי
ח"ב יו"ד סי' מז, פרי יוסף ח"א יו"ד סי'
ז ועוד.
2. שו"ת חת"ס חו"ד סי' קכ.
3. שו"ת בית שערים חו"ד סי' רכ.
4. ראה דבר יהושע שם.
5. מהר"י אסאד סי' נ, וראה שו"ת אבני צדק
חו"ד סי' ס לעניניו.
6. שו"ת יו"ד סי' קנא.

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

לזכות הילד יצחק הכהן שי'
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נדבת הוריו הרה"ת סעדי' הכהן ורעייתו בתי' שיחיו ענגעל

לע"נ האשה החשובה מרת גיטל בת ר' אשר ע"ה וועב
נדבת בנה הרה"ת צבי ורעייתו חי' שיחיו וועב

Rebbetzin Rivkah



Rebbetzin Rivkah, wife of the Rebbe Maharash, was a central figure among Chabad Lubavitch chasidim, and was quite active in all the affairs of Lubavitch regarding the Rabbeim. She was greatly revered and a remarkable "baalas shemua," a source for hundreds of stories and anecdotes. Rebbetzin Rivkah was known as a great *baalas tzeddaka*, often pawning her jewelry for money to be given to the poor. In her later years, when the *yeshiva* Tomchei Temimim was instituted, she took care of feeding the *bochurim*, an occupation she did with deep love and enthusiasm, as she would do for her own children. She passed away on Yud Shvat, תרע"ד (1914).

Rebbetzin Rivkah excelled in her fine *middos* and consideration for others. When she married the Rebbe Maharash, she would often eat at the home of the Tzemach Tzedek and sit to the right of her mother-in-law, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. Though Rebbetzin Rivkah was left-handed, she taught herself to use her right hand, since she felt that using her left hand would be disrespectful...

Rebbetzin Rivkah's admiration for her husband, the Rebbe Maharash, was exceptional. She would never sit when he was standing, and if he entered the room while she was sitting, she would stand up. Even when she had pains in her leg and the Rebbe reprimanded her, she remained standing.

Once, when exiting the Rebbe Maharash's study, Rebbetzin Rivkah's dress got caught in the door. Not wanting to knock and disturb her husband's learning, she sat there for a few hours until the Rebbe opened the door to leave the room.

(דברי ימי הרבנית רבקה, רשימות דברים ח"ב ע' צב)

When the Yeshiva Tomchei Temimim was established, Rebbetzin Rivkah took upon herself to provide for the *talmidim*. Often, students would eat "teg" (meals eaten at local residents) in her home, overseeing the food preparation herself. She would take an interest in each *bochur*, asking how his learning was progressing, if he had where to eat every day and the like, and encourage them to add in their diligence in Torah and *avoda*.

(אגרות קודש מהור"י צ"ח ע"ב תכח)

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Postponing the Mail

Yechidus had finished in the wee hours of the morning, and the Rebbe had asked Reb Leibel Groner to bring in the mail. After working through one pile, the Rebbe asked for another one. And then another. Reb Leibel knew how exhausting *yechidus* is for the Rebbe, and he realized that these letters would keep the Rebbe awake until *shacharis*. But on the other hand, a *mazkir* must do as he is told. Not daring to suggest anything to the Rebbe outright, Reb Leibel came up with a plan. He wrote a note suggesting postponing the mail for tomorrow, and placed it atop the next pile of letters that the Rebbe asked for.

When the Rebbe saw the note, the Rebbe looked up, smiled and commented, "Do you want me to put this letter off for tomorrow too?" And the Rebbe continued dealing with *Klal Yisroel's* needs all through the night.

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