



# STANDING BEFORE THE KING

## Standing before HaShem

A righteous Yid once stopped by the roadside to daven. A powerful minister came riding by and greeted him, but he did not reply. The minister waited for him to finish and then screamed: "Good-for-nothing that you are! Doesn't it say in your Torah that you should guard your life? So why didn't you return my greeting? I could have chopped off your head with my sword!"

The Yid replied with a question, "If you were standing in front of a king, and your friend passed by and greeted you, would you return the greeting?"

"Of course not!" said the minister.

The Yid continued, "And if you did return the greeting to your friend, what would the king have done to you?"

"He would have chopped off my head!" said the minister.

The Yid concluded, "How much more so does this apply to the King of Kings, Who is eternal!"

The minister was appeased and the Yid continued his journey in peace.

(ברכות לב ע"ב)

In a letter to his chassidim, the Alter Rebbe explains why *davening* is likened to standing before a king. If a person standing before a mortal king busies himself with his own matters, he is publicly displaying his foolishness. Moreover, by publicly insulting the king he is forfeiting his life. But what if a person lacks the sensitivity to appreciate the awesome privilege of beholding the king in all his glory? He, too, should at least conduct himself with respect when in the royal presence. How much more so does this apply to the eternal King.

(אגה"ק סי' כד)

One must give close attention to the responses to *Kaddish*, for its holiness is even greater than that of *Kedusha*. Even during *Shemoneh Esreh* one should pause and listen to *Kaddish* [until the end of the sentence, "Yehei shmei rabba..."]. Those who speak during *Kaddish* should be admonished, even if there is a *minyan* present

without them.

During *chazoras hashatz* one should concentrate and listen to the *brachos* of the *chazzan*. It is forbidden to talk, recite *Tehillim* or learn, even if one answers *Amen*. Those who do otherwise should be admonished.

If someone engages in mundane conversation during *chazoras hashatz*, his transgression is too great to bear, for by speaking while the congregation is involved in praising *HaShem*, he is showing that he has no connection to Him.

(שו"ע אדה"ז סי' נו ס"א וס"ד, סי' קד ס"ה, סי' קכד ס"ו וס"י)

In order to ensure silence during *davening*, the Alter Rebbe enacted a decree that no idle talk should be spoken from the moment the *sheliach tzibbur* begins until the end of the last *Kaddish*. This applies during *Shacharis*, *Mincha* and *Maariv*.

(אגה"ק סי' כד)

## Showing Reverence

The *Zohar* writes that by speaking during *davening* one implies that he does not believe *HaShem* is in *shul*, for if he did, he surely would not talk.

The *Smak* says that we ought to deduce a *kal vachomer* from the way idolaters conduct themselves in their places of worship: throughout their prayers, they stand in silence. How much more so does this apply to us, who stand in the presence of *HaShem*.

(זהר תרומה קלא ע"ב, סמ"ק מצוה יא, ועד"ז בס' חסידים אות יח)

When Satan complains that Yidden commit *aveiros*, *HaShem* rejoins that if the *goyim* had accepted the Torah, they would have been far worse. However, when Satan argues that Yidden converse during *davening*, this response does not apply.

A hint for this can be found in the *possuk*, "*HaShem yilacheim lachem vatem tacharishun*." The *psbat*, of course, is that "*HaShem* will fight your battle, and you shall remain silent." In addition, on the level of *derush*, that *possuk* is hinting that *HaShem* will protect us – on

condition that we remain silent and refrain from idle talk during *davening*...

(דרך משה, רב ייבי בקונ' מורא מקדש)

The two *tzaddikim* – Reb Yaakov Yosef ("Reb Yeivi") of Ostroho and Reb Pinchas of Koretz – couldn't agree: What was the issue that needed the most urgent attention? Reb Yaakov Yosef held that it was the habit of idle conversation during *davening*, so he would go around and constantly arouse people to refrain from talking in *shul*. Reb Pinchas held that the most widespread problem was the lack of *tznius*, and he focused his efforts on correcting that.

One day, while they were debating this question, each trying to convince the other that he was right, they finally agreed that they would open a *Chumash* at random, and the first *possuk* to catch their eye would indicate who was right.

They opened a *Chumash Bereishis*, and immediately saw the words of Shimon and Levi concerning Dina: "Should he deal with our sister so grossly?!"

A victory for Reb Pinchas!

"Wait," said Reb Yaakov Yosef. "Let us look at the explanation written in *Targum Yonasan*." Sure enough, there it is written: "It is not proper that it be talked about in the *shuls* that... idolaters defiled the daughter of Yaakov Avinu..."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 521)

Sometime around the year תש"ה, the Rebbe entered the *shul* at 770, stood at the *bima*, and announced that he had just come from speaking with his father-in-law, the Friediker Rebbe, who had asked him to convey the following message: "My father (the Rebbe Rashab) was with me and asked, 'How does it come to pass that in your *beis midrash* people talk during *kerias haTorah*?' "

(קדושת הדיבור ח"ג ע' 921)

## CONSIDER THIS!

- Why shouldn't one talk during *davening*: for the sake of others, for himself or for *HaShem*?

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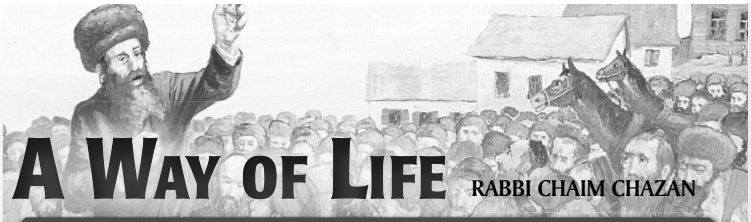
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# A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

## Shnayim Mikra During Kriah

Is it permissible for one who has not completed *shnayim mikra v'echod targum* before *krias hatorah* to read *shnayim mikra* during *krias hatorah* when he knows otherwise he will not be able to complete it before his Shabbos day meal?

- Optimally *shnayim mikra* should be done on Friday<sup>1</sup>, but if one wasn't able to complete it by then, it is proper (*mitzvah min hamuvchar*) to finish before eating the Shabbos day meal. If one didn't manage to finish it before the meal, one is obligated to complete it before *mincha*. There are those that hold that if one didn't finish before *mincha* then one can make it up until the next Tuesday or some say until *Simchas Torah*<sup>2</sup>.
- The Chabad *minhag*<sup>3</sup> for *Shnayim mikra* is to say every *possuk* twice and then *targum*. Others<sup>4</sup> have the custom to read the entire *parsha* twice and then the entire *targum* on the *parsha*.
- In general one ought to listen carefully to *krias hatorah* and refrain from learning then<sup>5</sup>, but the Alter Rebbe brings in his *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>6</sup> that there are those who permit reading *shnayim mikra* during *krias hatorah*. He appears<sup>7</sup> to be referring to reading every *possuk* twice and then *targum* and thus not following along the *kriah* with the *baal koreh*. However, it is obvious that this not the preferred option.
- A preferred<sup>8</sup> alternative option is to read along with the *baal koreh*, thus completing the entire *parsha* once. One can then complete *chumash* for the second time and *targum* between the *aliyos* and after *davening*.
- The downside of fulfilling part of the obligation of *shnayim mikra* by reading together with the *baal koreh* is that one both isn't hearing *kriah*, and not saying *shnayim mikra* in the optimal fashion. Because although there are some who say<sup>9</sup> that one should always read along with the *baal koreh*, according to *kabbala* this is not optimal<sup>10</sup>. In addition, as mentioned, the Chabad custom (based on *kabbala*) is to do *shnayim mikra possuk* by *possuk*. But when faced with no other time to do *shnayim mikra*, one should at least fulfill the minimum halachic obligation, although thereby forfeiting the most *kabalisticly* favorable manner.

1. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' רפה דסעי' ו' ודיש נוהגין אחרי שחרית ויש נוהגין אחרי חצות, בנוגע לפועל ציין בשערי הלכה ומנהג ח"א עמ' רמג להנהגת נשיאי חב"ד המובא בהיום יום לד' טבת שנהגו אחרי חצות.  
 2. ראה שו"ע"ר שם סעיף ה.  
 3. ספר המנהגים עמ' 25.  
 4. הובא בשו"ע"ר שם סעיף ג.  
 5. שו"ע"ר סי' קמו סעי' ב.  
 6. שם סעי' ח.  
 7. אדה"ז מצייין לס' קמ"ו אבל סי' זה בשו"ע"ר לא הגיע לדינו, וכ"כ במ"ב שם ס"ק יא, וראה גם בספר קצור הל' שבת משו"ע"ר סי' רפה הע' 13.  
 8. שו"ע"ר שם וראה קצור הל' שבת משו"ע"ר שם הע' 15, ויש לתקן מה שכתב בדעת אדה"ז בפסקי תשובות סי' רפה אות י' ציין 90. ש"ת יחזה דעת ח"ב סי' לז.  
 9. מג"א סי' קמו ס"ק ה בשם מטה משה.  
 10. ראה המצויין בפסקי תשובות סי' קמו אות ה.

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

לזכות הבחור הבר מצוה מנחם מענדל הכהן שי כהן שיגדל להיות חסיד, יר"ש ולמדן

לע"נ ר' שמואל מנחם הכהן ב"ר אפרים הכהן ע"ה - ט"ו בשבט

לע"נ האשה דבורה לאה בת יבחלט"א ר' מרדכי צבי שי' שטראקס לרגל היארצייט העשירי בי"א שבט נדבת משפחה שי'

לזכות הילד אברהם פייבל הכהן שי' שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט נדבת הוריו הרה"ת גרשון יצחק הכהן ורעייתו סימא רבקה שיחיו סעלינגער

# OUR HEROES

ט"ו שבט

## Reb Nechemya of Dubrovna



The *gaon* and *tzaddik* Reb Nechemya Birech Halevi of Dubrovna was one of the greatest *chasidim* of the Alter Rebbe. He was also the son-in-law of Reb Chaim Avraham, the Alter Rebbe's son. He earned his livelihood from a factory of *taleisim* that he owned. He wrote a *sefer* "Divrei Nechemya," as well as glosses on the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*. He passed away on his birthday, Tu Bishvat (1852).

Once, the *rov* of Dubrovna asked Reb Nechemya to give over a *teshuvah* (response) he, the *rov*, had written to the renowned Reb Efrayim Zalman Margolis. After reading it through, Reb Nechemya added some thoughts of his own and signed, "Reb Nechemya the manufacturer." Upon receiving the letter, Reb Efrayim Zalman asked, "Are all the manufacturers in Russia so learned?"

Once Reb Nechemya saw a soldier in the Russian army being whipped for having let his feet freeze while standing on guard duty. The soldier complained, "What have I done wrong? It was freezing outside!" He was told, "If you would remember the oath you have taken, to serve the king with all your might, this oath would have warmed you." It is said that from this event, Reb Nechemya had *chayus* for 25 years in his *avoda*, thinking of the warmth he should have as of a result of the oath he had taken before entering this world.

A *rov* once met Reb Nechemya after talking with him in learning he said, "I see you are a great *gaon*, why then do the '*lomdim*' not know about you?"

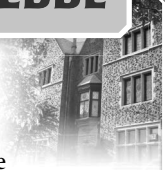
Reb Nechemya replied with a *mesheiv*: A *seforim* seller once entered the home of a great *rov* and was surprised to see the walls lined with many and rare *seforim*. The seller asked the *rov*, "Why is it that I have a tenth of the *seforim* that you have, yet everyone know about my *seforim*, while you have so many more *seforim*, but no one knows of them?" To this the *rov* replied, "Your *seforim* are for the world that's why they are famous, but my *seforim* are for myself"...

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 332)

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### Conquering the World with Learning Torah



At the famous *farbrengen* of *Chamisho Asar B'shvat* 5731, the Rebbe said to "conquer the world with learning Torah."

From the archives of Harav Ephraim Wolf, a great Lubavitch *askan* in Eretz Yisroel, we find some of the activities that were done in the aftermath of this unique *farbrengen*.

In a telephone call from Harav Chodakov, on 4 Nissan 5731, he was directed to utilize *Chol Hamoed Pesach*, to involve as much of *anash* as possible in learning. The next day, he received an instruction to shorten the leave given to the *kollel yungerleit*, so that they begin learning immediately after *Yom Tov*.

In a fascinating *yechidus* with the *Gerrer* Rebbe, the *Leiv Simchah*, on 30 Shvat 5731, the Rebbe told him:

"This year on *Chamisho Asar B'shvat*, I was at the *ohel*, and I 'was told' to *farbreng*. And so, I spoke about learning Torah. It turned out, that a few days later, there was an attempt to enforce *yeshivah bochorim* to sign up for the military in the U.S.A. It was only due to "conquering of the world with learning" that this was withheld!"

לזכות שלום דובער בן לובה לרפואה שלימה