



REVERING THE TORAH (2)

AVOIDING DISRESPECT

R. Yehuda said that Yerushalayim was destroyed only because the Yidden were disrespectful to *talmidei chachomim*. Rav said that there is no remedy for the punishment awaiting a person who insults a *talmid chacham* and R. Elazar said that a person who does not show respect for a *talmid chacham* by rising in his presence will forget his Torah learning and will not live long.
 (שבת קי"ט ע"ב, קידושין ל"ג ע"ב)

The *Mishna* says that an *apikores* does not merit a share in *Olam HaBa*. The *Gemara* explains that the term *apikores* includes the following people: one who insults a *talmid chacham*; one who insults another in the presence of a *talmid chacham*; one who says, "What benefit do the *talmidei chachomim* bring? All their learning is only for themselves!" – for he does not recognize that the ongoing existence of the world depends on the study of Torah; or one who says, "What benefit are the *rabbonim* to us? Whatever they *passen* is clearly written in the Torah" – for he does not recognize the breadth of knowledge involved in *passkening a shayle*.

Why is even a person who is not particularly disrespectful also considered an *apikores*? As Rabbeinu Yona explains, that person's lack of respect shows that he is also lacking an appreciation for *HaShem's* Torah.

R. Papa once inadvertently referred to some *chachomim* as "those *rabbonim*" (instead of "our *Rabonim* in that city") and then fasted as a *kapara*.
 (סנהדרין צ' ע"א וצ"ט ע"ב ואילך, שערי תשובה ח"ג פ' קנה)

For many years, a certain chossid of the Alter Rebbe was not blessed with children. Whenever he asked for a *bracha*, the Alter Rebbe would respond that he was unable to help him. Once, however, after giving his usual response, he added the advice that he visit Reb Shlomo Karliner. That *tzaddik* would be able to help him.

When he arrived in Karlin, he was told to wait until the *tzaddik* traveled out of town and then to accompany him on his journey. A few days later, Reb Shlomo in fact left Karlin, and gave permission for anyone who had a request to join him on his trip.

As they passed through a certain town, the *tzaddik* told this chossid, "If you contribute money (and he named a large sum), you will merit having children." The chossid, not being

a man of means, felt he could not fulfill that weighty request. Disappointed and saddened, he returned home.

Some time later, when he next visited Liozna, and the Alter Rebbe asked him what had transpired, the chossid told him how he had refused to fulfill the *tzaddik's* formidable demand.

The Alter Rebbe said, "You once embarrassed a *talmid chacham*, and that is why you are childless. Since the *talmid chacham* has already passed away, you cannot ask him forgiveness, and according to the *Gemara*, 'One who embarrasses a *talmid chacham* must pay a significant sum of gold as an atonement.' Reb Shlomo traveled with you to the *kevarim* of those *poskim* who hold that this *kapara* can be attained even after the *talmid chacham* has passed on. That is why he demanded so much money – but now it is too late."

The chossid protested, "I have never insulted a *talmid chacham*!"

The Alter Rebbe queried, "Didn't you once insult Reb Yissachar Dov, the *rov* of Lubavitch?"

"Eh! Reb Yissachar Dov... I do not consider him a *talmid chacham*," said the chossid.

The Alter Rebbe responded, "Eliyahu HaNavi revealed himself to Reb Yissachar Dov every day – and you do not respect him as a *talmid chacham*?! I cannot help you, nor can I forgive you for speaking of him dishonorably, for I was his *talmid*."

(סיפורי חסידים ראה המשפיע ע' קכו)

Every *motzoei Shabbos*, it was the custom of Reb Hillel Paritcher to partake of a chicken that had been *shechted* and prepared that night. Once, while visiting Kremenchug, he was hosted by Reb Yosef Tumarkin, the *av beis din*, and the *rebbeitzin* wanted to have a chicken prepared for him for *motzoei Shabbos*. Of the two *shochtim* in Kremenchug, Reb Hillel preferred the Polisher chossid over the Chabad chossid, so *Rebbeitzin* Tumarkin sent him the chicken. However, by that time he was not at home: he had already left to go and *shecht* for the following day. The *rebbeitzin* decided that since she had no choice, and since even her husband ate from the *shechita* of the Chabad chossid, she would send the chicken to him. Yet when they sat down for their *melaveh Malka* and were served chicken and soup, Reb Hillel did not touch it. Reb Yosef, his host, concluded that there must have been

some *shayle* with the chicken and asked his wife what it had been.

"There was no *shayle*," she said. "He's probably not eating it because it was *shechted* by the Chabad chossid."

Her husband then asked Reb Hillel to explain his reasoning, so that he would know whether the *shochet* could be trusted. Reb Hillel assured him that there was nothing wrong with his *shechita*. However, since he had once heard him embarrassing a *talmid chacham*, he did not want to eat from his *shechita*. Reb Yosef asked how this could be corrected if the offended party had already passed away. Reb Hillel advised that the *shochet* should go with ten other men to that man's *kever* and ask for forgiveness. Once that was done, he would eat from his *shechita*.

(רשימות דברים [חדש] עמ' 642)

The following painful episode was reported by Reb Shmuel Nimoitin, the chossid who served as the contact between the Frierdiker Rebbe and the Rogatchover Gaon: "Before the Frierdiker Rebbe went to Leningrad, he dispatched me to the Rogatchover Gaon, the leading *rov* of the city, to receive his permission, not wanting to cause him any disrespect. However, three chassidim, fired with misguided zeal for the Rebbe's honor, apparently said something to the Rogatchover that caused him to leave the city.

"When the Frierdiker Rebbe heard about this, he told them to ask the Rogatchover for forgiveness. He warned them that they were playing with fire. One of them followed the Rebbe's strict instructions, and was forgiven. Of the other two, one passed away within the year. The other, who had been a *tamim* in Lubavitch and a well-reputed chossid, strayed from the path of *Yiddishkeit*. Although after ten years he did *teshuva*, none of his offspring remained *frum*."

(הצפנת פענח במשנת הרבי עמ' ס"א, הרוגצובי עמ' 122)

CONSIDER THIS!

- What is so severe about disrespecting a *talmid chacham*: the shame caused, or the underlying cause for the disrespect?
- How was the chossid expected to know how great Reb Yissachar Dov, the *rov* of Lubavitch, really was?

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A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

EATING IN THE STREET

Is it permissible to eat in a designated picnic area of a park?

- There is a genre of *halacha* known as *hilchos derech erez* which include the Torah's expectations for behavior regarding mundane daily living, including eating, sleeping, talking etc. A facet of *hilchos derech erez* is that it is axiomatic to Torah that one should not act in a manner that disrespects oneself.
- The Gemara tells us that one who eats in the street degrades himself so much that he loses his credibility to serve as an *eid* (witness). This halacha is recorded in Shulchan Aruch.
- While during the times of the Gemara this was considered degrading even by the general population, today it is common to see people eating in the street. Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach writes that although this has become common practice, it is still inappropriate and should not be done. The rule is that something deemed by Chazal as inappropriate should not be done, even when it becomes common practice.
- The Talmud Yerushalmi cautions a *talmid chochom* not to eat in the street, which seems to indicate that all others may eat in the street (unlike the Talmud Bavli which disqualifies anyone who eats the street from serving as an *eid*).
- To resolve this apparent contradiction the *meforshim* define exactly what the Bavli is referring to. Some say this only applies to one who eats while actually walking or one who regularly eats on the street. Others limit it only to those eating bread, while others say it only refers to a proper meal.
- However, since the rationale behind not trusting one who eats in the street as a witness is because it is undignified, it does not include designated eating areas such as a picnic area.

קידושין מ"ב, תוס' שם ד"ה ויש אומרים, טוש"ע חו"מ סי' לד ב"י, ב"ה, וסמ"ע שם, ספר ויהי בנוסע עמ' רה

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CURRENT EVENTS

ד' טבת

REB CHAIM SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

Reb Chaim Shneur Zalman, the third son of the Tzemach Tzeddek, was born a year after the *histalkus* of his namesake, the Alter Rebbe. Sometime during his youth, when he fell ill, the name Chaim was added. His manner of *avodah* was quite remarkable, with tumult and enthusiasm. Three years after the Tzemach Tzeddek passed away he relocated to Liadi and served as a Rebbe to many *chassidim*. He passed away on the 4th of Teves, תר"מ (1879).



All through the year of the Tzemach Tzeddek's *histalkus*, people would not want to join his minyan, for immediately upon the start of his *davening*, Reb Chaim Shneur Zalman would begin singing and forget where he was, until he 'returned to himself' a long while later.

He was spotted several times striding back and forth during *Shmone Esrei*, jubilant and dancing, his face aflame. It was said about him, that he had *ahava b'tanugim* (bliss from closeness to Hashem).



Reb Chaim Shneur Zalman said about himself, "*v'dor rev'i yoshuvu heina*," that being the fourth generation since the Alter Rebbe, he returned to Liadi.

The 'Beis Rabbi' enumerates similarities between Reb Chaim Shneur Zalman and the Alter Rebbe: He was born during the first year following the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus* and named after him. He resided in Liadi for eleven years, like the Alter Rebbe had, and was nifter at age 66 during the month of Teves, like the Alter Rebbe.

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

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

THE BEST CHANUKAH GELT

In the year 5744, the Rebbe began a campaign of printing Tanya's in every city, town and village. The Rebbe explained that with every printing, *kedusha* is brought to that place. In addition, people will feel more of a connection, and will wish to learn from a *sefer* printed in their own city.

Harav Dovid Moshe Rosen served as the Chief Rabbi of communist Romania. In the year 5744, he suffered from many anti-Semitic attacks in the media, and he was afraid for his own personal safety. When he wrote to the Rebbe asking for a *bracha*, the Rebbe answered: "The *zechus* of printing the Tanya will protect you!"

Within a few days, the situation stabilized.

On the third night of Chanukah 5752, sixty two editions of the Tanya, which were printed throughout the former USSR, were brought in to the Rebbe's room. Those present relate that the Rebbe was beaming, and his face was shining. The Rebbe said, "This is the best Chanukah gelt, the biggest Chanukah gelt a Yid could receive!"

לע"נ ר' יצחק ב"ר אליהו ע"ה ור' דובער ב"ר אליהו ע"ה



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