

Perspectives

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TWELVE



Education and Discipline

The Frierdiker Rebbe

Rabbi Yitzhak Ushpol

Master Educator
Regulations for Students

Too Good?

Rabbi Binyomin Cohen

A Unique Approach to Education

Rabbi Aharon Dovid Gancz

A Ticket to an Island in Time

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“All the News That’s Fit to Print”

Mrs. Molly M. Resnick

A Guest in Samarkand

Rabbi Hillel Zaltzman



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Contents



16

Reb Yitzchak Ushpol

MASTER EDUCATOR:
CARING AND INSIGHTFUL
DISCIPLINE A LIST OF GUIDELINES
REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS



56

A UNIQUE APPROACH TO EDUCATION
Rebbi Aharon Dovid Gancz



27

EDUCATION AND DISCIPLINE
The Friediker Rebbe



82

THE LUMINARIES OF HOMES
The Teacher in Chassidic Legend

12 THE MIND OF A CHILD
The Rebbe's Perspective

74 A TICKET TO AN
ISLAND IN TIME
Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan

98 ALL THE NEWS"
"THAT'S FIT TO PRINT"
Mrs. Molly M. Resnick

134 MY PERSPECTIVE



48

TOO GOOD?
Rabbi Binyomin Cohen



102

A GUEST IN SAMARKAND
Rabbi Hillel Zaltzman



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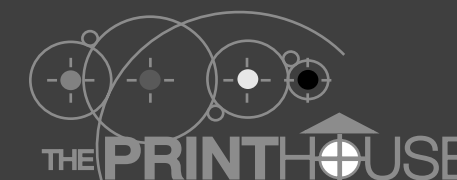
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MASTER EDUCATOR: Caring and Insightful Rabbi Yitzchak Ushpol

BY DOVID ZAKLIKOWSKI

Rabbi Ushpol learning in the Yeshivah zal.. Credit: Lubavitch Archives

CHILDHOOD

Rabbi Yitzchak Dov Ber Ushpol was born in 5671 (1911) in Shventzian, Lithuania, to R.Shlomo Eliyahu and Kayla Rochel. He studied Torah with his great-uncle, Yosef Hendel, and later with local teachers.

He had fond memories of his childhood town, recounting the many characters and the *chassidische shuls*, which were

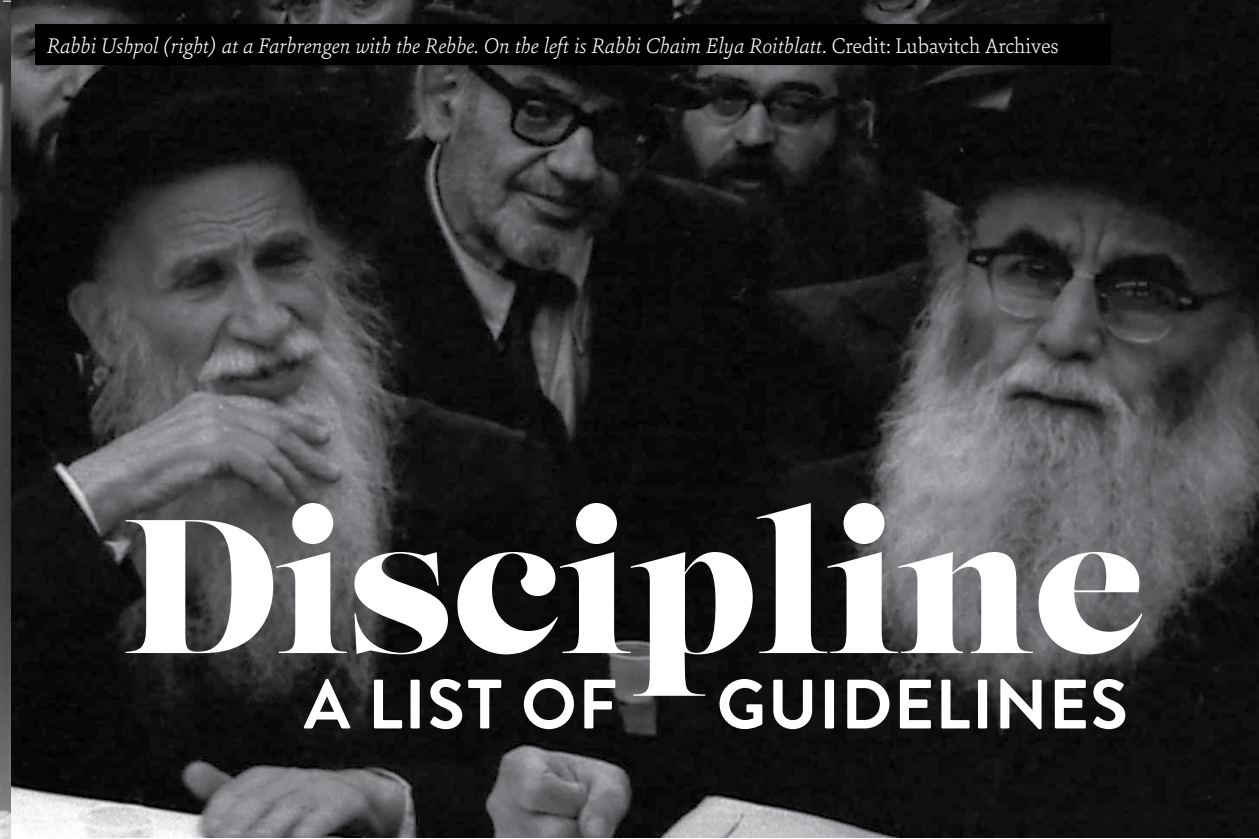
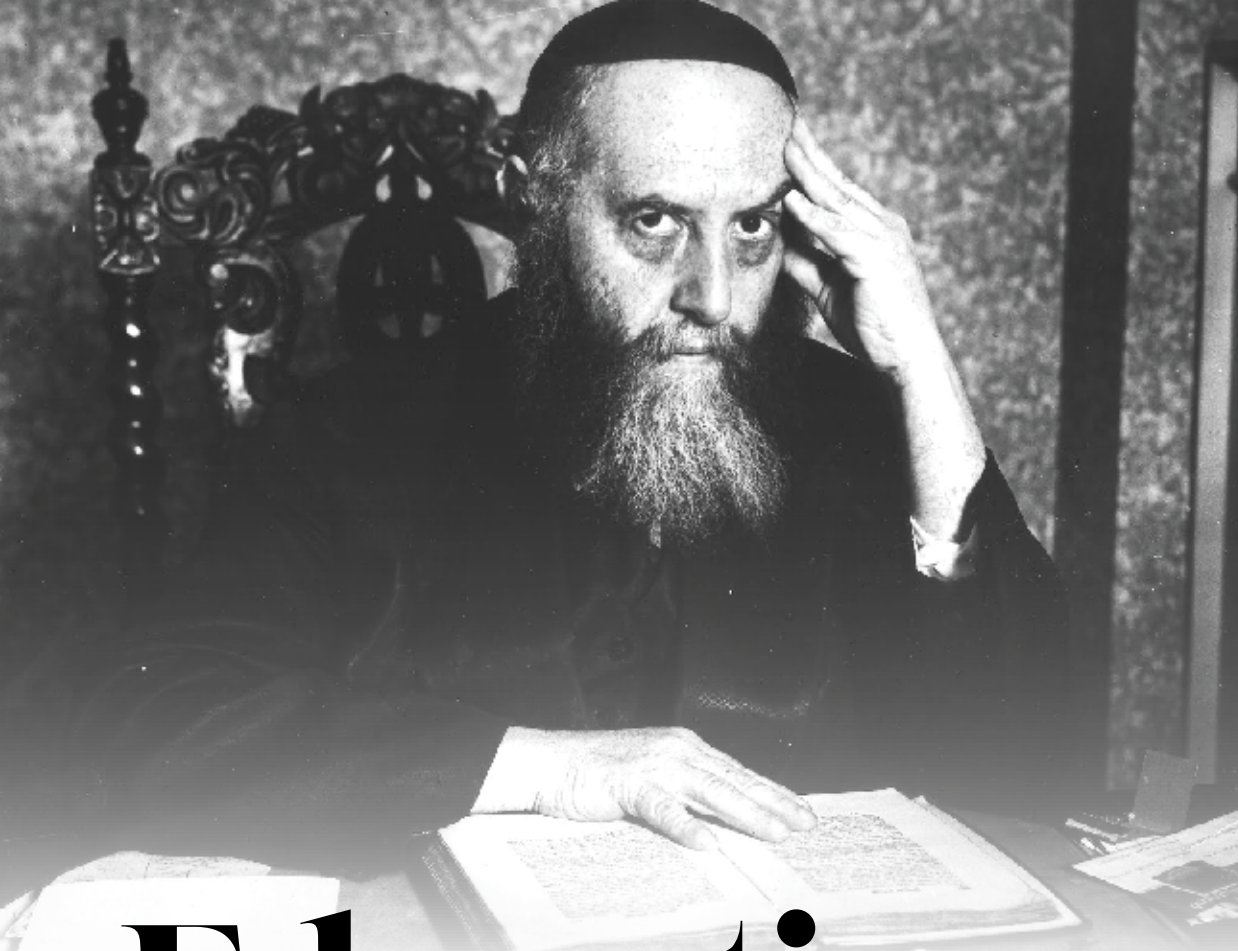
documented in the volume *Zichron Shventzian* (Tel Aviv, 1965, and translated from Yiddish to Hebrew in *Oholei Lubavitch*, Vol. 1). He recalled Betzalel, the potato merchant: “He had a sweet voice and would sing wonderful soul-stirring *nigunim*. He would donate potatoes to the *chassidische farbrengens*.” Chaim Zerach had severe problems standing, “yet when he

would *daven*, he would forget about his pain.”

At one point during his early years, Rabbi Ushpol studied near the residence of the Rogochover Gaon. “I recall spending some of my free time,” Rabbi Ushpol wrote, “sitting outside his window and basking in his scholarly learning.”

In the mid-1920s, when Rabbi Ushpol was a young *bochur*, his father, continuing a prestigious rabbinical line (including R. Yankel Landau, later *rov* of Bnei Brak), became *rov* of the village of Kurenitz, not far from Vilna, Lithuania.

As an older *bochur* he attended the Rokov *Yeshivah*, and continued in the newly-established Tomchei Temimim *Yeshivah* in Vilna. Eventually for seven years he



Education and Discipline

The following unpublished *sicha*, delivered by the Frierdiker Rebbe on 20 Elul, 5703, was said at a meeting of the teachers and *hanbala* of Tomchei Temimim. The Frierdiker Rebbe discusses a number of guiding principles that relate to both the presentation of material and discipline of the class, addressing issues that are as relevant today as when they were first said.

The *sicha* was transcribed by Rabbi Yitzchak Ushpol, one of the teachers present at the meeting. Rabbi Ushpol later prepared a list of guidelines for the teachers based on the *sicha*. The *sicha* and guidelines are being published here for the first time.

Translated by Rabbi Yehuda Leib Altein

Discipline

A LIST OF GUIDELINES

PREPARED BY **RABBI YITZCHAK USHPOL**
BASED ON THE ABOVE YECHIDUS

Discipline is a great and important responsibility for every teacher. With discipline he can achieve everything, and without it he can accomplish nothing. One should not strive to integrate a dictatorial-style discipline; to the contrary, the point is for the student to recognize the importance of discipline in society, both within the class and without, so that he will resolve to control himself whenever disturbance is detrimental to another.

Students themselves admire their teacher if he can instill within them a spirit of *kabbolas ol* and devotion to their work. There is no need to emphasize that discipline is an important yardstick

used by teachers and principals when evaluating a teacher; as such, one should invest all his efforts into attaining it.

DISCIPLINE “DON’T”S

Hitting. One should not raise a hand to hit a student. Although the *possuk* states, “He who holds back the rod hates his son,”⁵ and students are like children, this practice has a negative influence on the children of our generation, and a teacher must train himself to refrain from hitting his students.

TOO GOOD?

RABBI BINYOMIN COHEN

The saintly Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev is rightly famous as the defender of the Jewish nation. Countless stories are related concerning his love for his fellow-Jews, and his incredible ability to judge their behaviour in a favourable manner. He was, however, as Rov of a city, also involved in very down-to-earth and simple matters concerning and affecting the lives of those many individuals who turned to him for assistance.

One such person, a woman, once came to Rabbi Levi Yitzchok with a problem. She had bought a cow in order to ensure a supply of fresh milk. She would use some of the milk for her family and children, and the rest she would sell, thus enabling her to buy food and other necessities. The problem was that, despite all her efforts, the cow refused

to provide any milk. She tried and tried, but not a drop came forth. In desperation she went to Reb Levi Yitzchok to seek his advice.

The Rov heard her story, thought for a while, and then asked the distraught woman if she had been attempting to milk the cow into a bucket. “For sure” replied the woman. “And,” continued Reb Levi Yitzchok, “is the bucket clean? Maybe the cow sees some dirt in the bucket and does not wish to give milk?”

The woman threw her hands up in horror. “Rebbe, what are you saying?” she sobbed. “Do you have any idea how clean that bucket is? I would **never** use a bucket which wasn’t spotless. I scrubbed the bucket for half an hour, I rinsed it out, I dried it and I polished it. You should have seen how shining and sparkling clean the bucket was. You never saw a bucket like it!”

“Now,” exclaimed Rabbi Levi Yitzchok, “I can understand why the cow refuses to give any milk. **Too** clean is also no good.”



I heard the above story from Reb Mendel Futerfas, one of the great Chasidim of our generation. Even if one could be excused for entertaining some doubt as to its historical accuracy, the basic message of the story is nevertheless clear and relevant, even for those who will never go anywhere near a cow. In all of the challenges and problems with which we are faced we are encouraged to take a balanced approach, rather than zealously devoting all of our attention to what may well be a very minor detail. It might not harm to investigate the state of the bucket as just one factor among a whole range of more important considerations. It may in fact be true that a cow could be deterred by the presence of visible and obvious dirt in the bucket. There is, however, no way known in which polishing and shining the bucket is going to make any difference to the cow, and to put all of one’s energies and efforts into this is a good recipe for the bucket to remain empty.

The lesson is equally true with regard to the path a person chooses in his service of Hashem. Unbridled intensity and enthusiastic extremism may be attractive options,



RABBI BINYOMIN COHEN
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A Unique APPROACH to Education

RABBI AHARON DOVID GANCZ

Adapted from a talk in Crown Heights – 9 Adar 1 5774

SIMILAR BUT OPPOSITE

Whenever we seek to clarify ideals, the most attention must be given to less apparent deviations. Obvious contradictions are unlikely to mislead an educated person.

Likewise, in the realm of *chinuch* and interpersonal relationships, the obvious directives of Torah are well-known. Yet, what sometimes misleads are matching ethics in secular wisdom. While on the surface they appear similar and even the same, upon further analysis, we uncover that not only are they different, they are actually opposites.

Chazal say, “If someone tells you that there is wisdom among the nations – believe

him; but if he tells you that there is Torah – don’t believe him.” Secular thinking has come up with profound guidance for ethical living, however, as products of their own mind they are lacking “Torah,” a connection to Hashem. This is not just about which laws to observe, but it’s an entirely different attitude to life itself.

Every person has unique challenges, and every group of people has its challenges. The *yetzer hara* is sly and ensnares people based on their weaknesses. Just as germs grow and mutate, the *yetzer hara* was programmed to evolve and match its setting.

Yet, just as Hashem gives us the ability to develop new remedies to tackle the

germs, He gave us the wisdom to outsmart the *yetzer hara* through the right amount of attention and thought. Hashem says, “*Barasi yetzer hara, barasi lo Torah tavlin*—I have created the *yetzer hara*, but I have given you the Torah as an antidote.” To this end, chassidim would constantly

talk and *farbreng* together to recognize the *yetzer hara’s* new facades and to find new ways to deal with him.

Let us consider a few areas where secular views are confused with values of Torah and Chassidus.

Dovid Hamelech says in Tehillim, “*Shamra nafshi ki chossid ani* — Protect me since I am a chossid.” The simple meaning is of course that Dovid is asking for protection in the merit of his piety. However a *chassidishe vort* reads the *posuk* differently: Because I am a “chossid” I require a special protection not to misapply the ways of Chassidus.

Of course, Chassidus lifts us up above ordinary coarse challenges and gross errors that in the absence of Chassidus we would have to struggle with. But Chassidus makes us more refined so we risk becoming exposed to subtle mistakes, from which we ask Hashem to protect us.

HASHEM AND THE WORLD

The Baal Shem Tov taught *ain od milvado* – not only is there no other power in the world, but there is nothing but Hashem. He taught that Hashem is not merely *Keil Haolam*, G-d of the world, but rather it’s *Keil Olam*, G-d-world, meaning that the world is one with Hashem.

Before the Baal Shem Tov, everyone knew that there is a world which was created by

Hashem, but they viewed Hashem and the world as separate entities. Hashem is the Infinite Creator, and the world is a giant, yet finite, collection of galaxies. The Baal Shem Tov introduced a new worldview based on *Kabala* where there is nothing outside of Hashem. Whatever exists, as insignificant as it may be, is an extension and an expression of Hashem through

Secular thinking has come up with profound guidance for ethical living, however, as products of their own mind they are lacking “Torah,” a connection to Hashem. This is not just about which laws to observe, but it’s an entirely different attitude to life itself.



RABBI SHMUEL KAPLAN



In 5771, Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan, head shliach of the Maryland region, launched a project to compile a Siddur which would be illuminated by the *pirushim* of Chassidus. The Siddur, which was published in 5763, presents insights and inspirational chassidic thoughts on each part of the daily *davening* culled from throughout vast body of Chassidus, to help Chassidim *daven* with a new *geshmak*.

The weekday siddur met with tremendous success and had to go to a second printing within six months. The Shabbos Siddur is now being released to coincide with the Kinus Hashluchim.

NOT PRESSING BUTTONS

The obligations to love and fear G-d are *mitzvos* that are not time-bound: they can – and should – be fulfilled at all times.

Nevertheless, it is not realistic to expect a person, immersed as he is in his mundane daily physical activities, to suddenly become inspired with a passionate love of G-d. Obviously, careful planning and preparation are necessary to evoke such a feeling.

Our Sages therefore created an elaborate, step-by-step process of meditation in *tefillah* to overcome this very hurdle. In *Shema*, we declare the oneness of G-d and cite the commandment to love G-d. The intent is not merely to recall the commandment, but to actually fulfill it while reciting this prayer. Indeed, even the preceding rungs of the ladder of *tefillah* were structured to evoke a love of G-d and enable it blossom forth during the recitation of *Shema*.

These feelings express the power of love within the G-dly soul. Nevertheless, since that soul inhabits the same body as the animal soul, its arousal of love affects the animal soul as well. It is natural that a person who sees a friend inspired with the love of G-d in prayer will pray with more

It is not realistic to expect a person, immersed as he is in his mundane daily physical activities, to suddenly become inspired with a passionate love of G-d.

feeling himself. So too, when the G-dly soul is aroused with the love of G-d, it will inevitably impact the natural (animalistic) soul as well. (In this spirit, the Rebbe Rayatz describes how one day in the township of Lubavitch, Reb Chaim Meir the Butcher overheard the sweet and soulful *davenen* of a certain vintage chassid, and enviously exclaimed: "Aay! What a *davenen*! For a *davenen* like that I would give away a whole side of beef!")¹ True, the initial effect will not be internalized but will only be what *Chassidus* terms *makkif*, something which the intellect of the natural soul does not really grasp. Eventually, however, its influence will filter inward, and will have an effect which *Chassidus* terms *pnimi*; i.e., the natural soul will ingest it and identify with it.

This is implied by the very commandment to love G-d cited above. Our Sages note² that in the command to love G-d *בכל לבבך*, "with all your heart," the word "heart" appears in a poetic spelling, with the letter *beis* repeated. They explain that the intent is that we are to love G-d with "both our hearts": not only with the good inclination

THE LUMINARIES OF HOMES

THE TEACHER IN CHASSIDIC LEGEND

PREPARED BY PERSPECTIVES STAFF

Community Pillars

THE TRUE LUMINARIES

In his diary, the Friediker Rebbe records a trip with the Rebbe Rashab from Lubavitch to their vacation home in Serebrinka:

From far off, we can see two travelers sitting at the side of the road. As we come closer, I recognize Reb Peretz and Reb Menachem Mendel, the *melamdim* of Beshenkovitz. I told this to my father, and he instructed the wagon driver to slow down and drive close to where they were sitting.

As we passed them, we beheld a beautiful sight: Under a shady tree, the two chassidim sat with their *tallis katan* and *yarmulkes* showing, and their jackets, hats, shoes and walking sticks beside them. Reb Menachem Mendel, his eyes closed, was leaning on his elbows which he supported with his thighs. He was listening as Reb Peretz, whose eyes were also closed, repeated a *maamar* in the

distinctive singsong of *Chassidus*. And like any scholar deeply engrossed in Talmudic debate, he highlighted certain phrases by gesturing freely.

My father instructed the driver to stop for a few minutes, and the chassidim did not notice us. When we continued, my father told me that they were reviewing the *maamar* that begins, *Mi madad beshaalo mayim* that he had delivered on the second day of Shavuos.

The sight of the two chassidim apparently made a strong impression on my father. As we passed the town of Rudnya, he said to me:

“Five thousand, six hundred and sixty years, nine months, thirteen days, fifteen hours and so many minutes, that little plot of land has been waiting for Peretz and

Chassidische melamdim are the true luminaries of *Yiddishe* homes. They are the Avraham Avinu’s of every generation who infuse *Elokus* into every home.



Mendel to come along and share words of Torah. And by doing that, they fulfilled the sublime will of *HaShem*.

“It is hard to assess the pleasure that this elicits On High, or to describe how envious the *malochim* are of these *Beshenkovitzer melamdim*. The Rebbeim in Gan Eden are rejoicing with such grandchildren.

“*Chassidische melamdim* are the true luminaries of *Yiddishe* homes. They are the Avraham Avinu’s of every generation who infuse *Elokus* into every home. The Mittlerer Rebbe would show more affection to the *melamdim* than to the *rabbonim*, and would say: ‘It is the *melamdim* who turn *Yidden* into vessels to absorb G-dliness!’” (*Kuntres U’Mayon*, p. 35)

WHO MADE NEVL?

The Mittlerer Rebbe held *melamdim* in high esteem and often related to them with deference. Nevl was always known as a *chassidishe* town, the home of many chassidim who were dedicated to Chassidus and avoda, and on this the Mittlerer Rebbe once said, “Who turned Nevl into a *chassidishe* town? Not its *rabbonim* not its other scholars, but its *melamdim*!” (*Likkutei Sippurim*, Mittlerer Rebbe §18)



Credit: Lubavitch Archives

“ALL THE NEWS THAT’S FIT TO PRINT”

MRS. MOLLY M. RESNICK

Mrs. Molly Resnick is a former Israeli TV & PBS Science Producer and NBC News Producer, and founder of MATCKH - Mothers Against Teaching Children to Kill and Hate. She is the wife of the late Dr. Larry Resnick A”H who for many years served as the Rebbe’s Doctor. Mrs. Resnick is an Educational Mentor and Jewish Life Coach, and an international speaker in 5 languages.

In 1979 I had my first Yechidus with the Rebbe. In my naiveté as an NBC TV News producer, I recall asking the Rebbe for an interview so that I could promulgate his views to the world. When I pressed him the Rebbe gently declined saying “*Lo alecha hamelacha ligmor,*” thereby giving me a principle for life: it’s not our job to finish all the work. Looking back, my understanding is that though the Rebbe never hesitated to make use of the airwaves, he was scrupulously careful to control the message, and he knew better than to allow a newbie like myself to present his views to the world.

Cut – 2015.

It started with an ad for a lecture on improving marriage that I found just a little too risqué... then a trailer about Taharas Hamishpacha with images that made me cringe... then a promo for a series on relationships that was a tad

too explicit... then a *parsha* essay with language that made me blush...

They were all meant to inform, enlighten, and acquaint large audiences with the wise perspective of Torah.

They were all meant to show that *Yiddishkeit* shies away from nothing, addresses every realm of human endeavor, and is so very up to date.

But in our effort to enlighten the world, it seems to me that we are losing our bearings. “Intimacy” is a holy and hallowed subject, whose very euphemistic name – “Family Purity” –attests to its sacred nature. The Rambam even writes that Hebrew is called “*lashon hakodesh*” – a *holy* language – because it:

“has no special name for the organ of generation in females or in males, nor for the act of generation itself that generates offspring, nor for seed, nor for secretion

and feces. Hebrew has no original expressions for these things, and only describes them in figurative language and by way of hints, as if to indicate thereby that these things should not be mentioned, and should therefore have no names; we ought to be silent about them, and when we are compelled to mention them, we must manage to employ for that purpose some suitable pseudo expressions, and when we are compelled to do so, we must make any effort to do it confidentially” (Moreh Nevuchim 3:8).

Indeed, one of the very first things that impressed me when I became a *baalas teshuvah* was how utterly euphemistic all my teachers were. And not only when they discussed intimate matters. Talking in euphemistic terms, it seems, is actually rather a hallmark of all our “greats”. Can anyone imagine the Rebbe or an *eltere chassid* using explicit language in talking about such topics?

Some people argue that one must be explicit because clarity cannot be compromised. I can attest from extensive personal experience, however, that the

Some people argue that one must be explicit because clarity cannot be compromised. I can attest from extensive personal experience, however, that the notion that people will not understand, if we use euphemisms, is totally untrue.

notion that people will not understand, if we use euphemisms, is totally untrue.

Furthermore, hasn’t the Rebbe consistently taught us that we have to “elevate people to the Torah and not lower the Torah to them?” Don’t we realize that in lowering our

standards to reach others, we are just cheapening ourselves and our product? Do we imagine people will respect us more when we use language that appeals to their *nefesh ha’bahamis* as opposed to their *nefesh Elohis*? Don’t we all know and feel intuitively that unobservant Jews and, *l’havdil*, non-Jews admire us precisely because we are different, precisely because we don’t look, act, and talk like them? Indeed, has imitating “the world” ever proven to be honorable or advantageous to us in the long run?

There is also another problem with the use of explicit language in *hafatzas hamaayanos*. The world has become much smaller and interconnected. In this interwoven universe it is almost



Reb Berke Chein

A Guest IN Samarkand

BY RABBI HILLEL ZALTZMAN

There is a special place reserved in my childhood memories for the unique personage of Reb Berke Chein. When the authorities came to arrest Reb Berke in Lvov, he managed to escape, and passed through several hiding places before arriving in Samarkand. Once there, he found refuge in the Mishulovin home and our own, for the next six years. Throughout this period, we were able to observe Reb Berke's chassidic qualities from near, and have them engraved in our spirits.

R. BERKE'S CLASSROOM

My memories of Reb Berke Chein begin with my childhood in Samarkand. R. Berke came to Samarkand together with the other Lubavitcher chassidim who had fled to central Russia during World War II. When the Lubavitcher refugees formed a community and opened *yeshivas* and secret schools, R. Berke became a teacher, and many parents wanted their children to be his students. One day my father came home and happily announced that he had been able to arrange a spot for me in R. Berke's class.

I was six years old at the time and I was very apprehensive about this piece of news. R. Berke, I had heard, punished his students with a *kontchik*—a leather strap fastened to a rod—as was customary for schoolteachers of old. One student, Mottel Kalmanson, had told me that he was a good teacher and never hit anyone, but I was still worried. Mottel, I thought to myself, is R. Berke's nephew, so he might receive special treatment.

The Rebbe once recounted during a *farbrengen* that his teacher had also kept a similar *kontchik* on the wall. With a smile, he added that for some students, the mere sight of the strap on the wall was enough; for others the teacher had to take the strap down once in a while, to correct their behavior; and for yet others, the teacher had use it a little more...

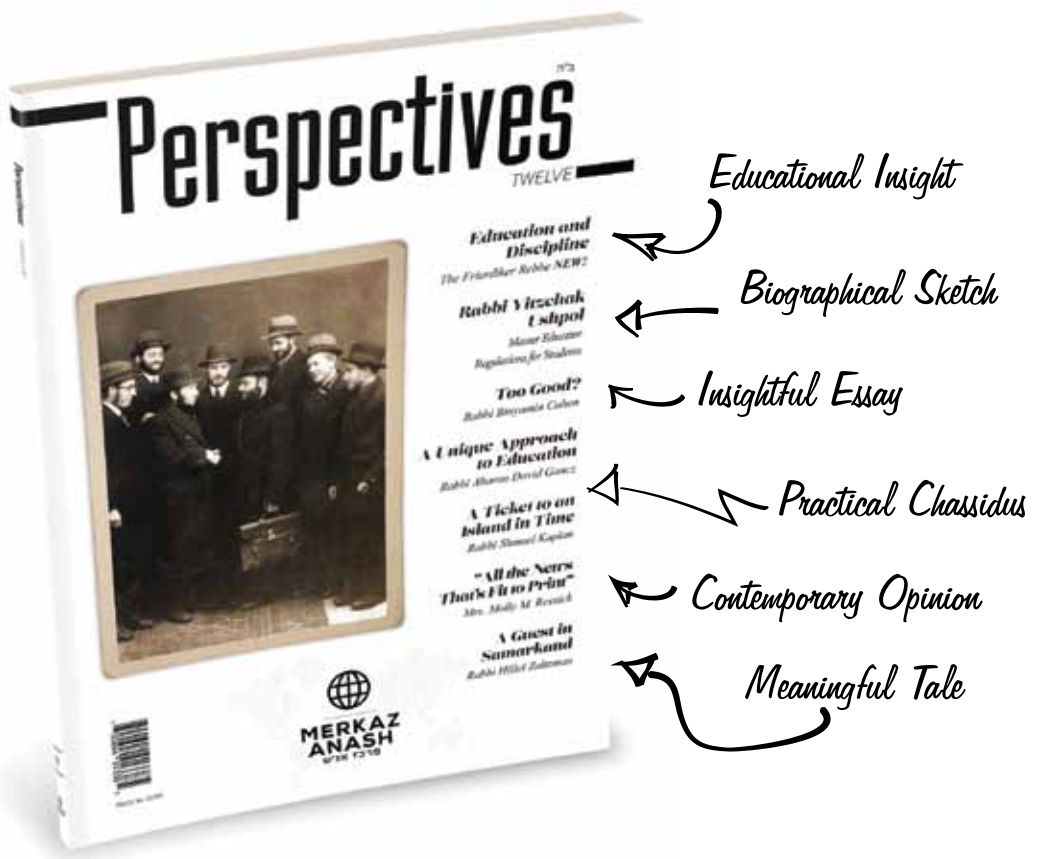
"When I joined R. Berke's class I discovered that although a *kontchik* did hang on the wall, R. Berke never used it. Mottel Kalmenson was right: R. Berke was a good teacher. And, over the years, I learned that he was much more than that."

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AT THE LAST MINUTE

When the Soviet government agreed to allow Polish refugees to return home after the war, R. Berke, along with many other Lubavitchers, tried his luck at faking Polish citizenship. He traveled to Lvov (Lemberg) where community activists—led by R. Leibel Mochkin and R. Mendel Futerfas—arranged the forged documents for him. This was, it hardly needs to be said, very dangerous work, and those who were caught paid with long years of imprisonment and forced labor in Siberia. It was only after Stalin's

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