



## SEEKING GUIDANCE (I)

### Not Relying on Oneself

During the reign of Yoshiyahu, King of Yehuda, Necho the King of Mitzrayim prepared to pass through *Eretz Yisroel* on his way northward to wage war against Ashur (Assyria). King Yoshiyahu was aware that *HaShem* had clearly promised that even a "sword of peace" would not pass through his land, and therefore warned the King of Mitzrayim to keep his troops at a distance. That warning was ignored. Yoshiyahu thereupon confronted them in battle, where he was showered with arrows and died.

*Chazal* explain that despite the fact that it seemed so clear in the Torah as he understood it, he should have sought the advice of the Navi Yirmiyahu. He would have been taught that his generation was not worthy of this special promise.

(דברי הימים ב' פל"ה כ"ד, תענית כב סע"א)

On one occasion, when King Yannai was celebrating a great victory, an evil man called Elazar ben Po'ira persuaded the king to believe that the hearts of the *chachomim* were against him. To prove his point, he advised the king to put on the *tzitz* of the *kohen gadol* and watch their response.

When Yannai did as he was advised, one elder spoke up: "Your majesty! It is great enough to be king; leave the *kehunah* for the children of Aharon."

The king, infuriated, expelled all the *chachomim* from the feast. And Elazar ben Po'ira, seizing the opportunity, incited him to kill them all.

Yannai was hesitant and inquired: "What then will become of the Torah?"

Elazar was quick to reply, "The Torah is written and available to whoever wants to learn it."

Yannai, duly convinced, killed all of the *chachomim*, leaving the world void of Torah learning – until R. Shimon ben Shetach eventually restored the Torah to its original glory.

*Chazal* charge Yannai with *apikorsus* (heresy),

for though the *Torah shebiksav* is written, one must have teachers to guide him to a proper understanding of it, through the oral tradition of the *Torah shebe'al peh*.

This, according to some, began the development of the *karo'im*, a group of Yidden who did not follow the *chachomim* and relied upon their own understanding to explain the Torah.

(קידושין סו ע"א, כוזרי מ"ג סי' ט"ה)

Everyone who says *Ashrei* knows those words: *ves kol haresha'im yashmid* – "and He will destroy all evildoers." Well, there once lived a man who, realizing that he was not particularly righteous, was afraid of cursing himself. He therefore decided to omit the word *haresha'im* ("evildoers"), so that the verse now read, "and He will destroy all." And in due course, his children all baptized. (The root of *yashmid* also denotes apostasy.)

The medieval author of *Sefer Chassidim* explains that although this man's intentions were good, he was punished for not having consulted the *chachomim* of his town. They would have explained to him that though Dovid HaMelech himself had a wicked son, Avshalom, he nevertheless did say this *posuk*, since *HaShem* will do as He chooses.

(סי' חסידים סי' א"ג)

### Following the Elders

*Chazal* say: One should always heed the counsel of elders. Even if the elders advise one to demolish and the youth advise one to build, one should listen to the elders, for the "demolition" of the elders is ultimately "building," whereas the "building" of the youth will ultimately bring about destruction.

In this context they point to the following story:

After the passing of Shlomo HaMelech, his son Rechavom ascended the kingly throne. A delegation of Yidden soon approached him,

asking that he treat them gently and not overburden them with taxes. Rechavom told them, "Return in three days and I will answer you."

He then turned to seek the advice of the elders who had stood before his father. They told him, "If you treat the people gently, they will serve you faithfully throughout all of their days."

Dissatisfied with this approach, the king then consulted some young friends and they told him, "Be firm with the people. Tell them that you will be even more demanding than your father."

At the end of three days the people returned, and the king answered them as his young friends had advised. Infuriated, the people rebelled against him and chose Yerovam as their king.

(מלכים א' יב, לקח טוב שמות ד, כח, מגילה לא ע"ב)

When the Rebbe established Tze'irei Agudas Chabad in order to utilize the energy of the young chassidim in spreading *Yiddishkeit*, he discreetly requested some of the *eltore* chassidim to supervise their activities and offer advice.

The Rebbe writes to them in a letter: "If *Chazal* say that the 'demolition' of elders is ultimately 'building,' how much more so the 'building' of elders. However, your advice should be given in a gentle manner that won't make the young men feel unimportant."

(היכל מנחם ח"א ע' קלו)

## CONSIDER THIS!

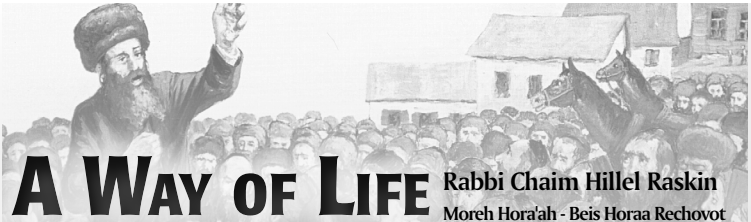
- In this day and age, when the *Torah shebe'al peh* has already been written, does one still need a live teacher to guide him?
- Why would the *chassidim* ask the *eltore chassidim* to explain to them the Rebbe's words? Hadn't the Rebbe **himself** spoken directly to **them**?

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# A WAY OF LIFE Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

## Playing with Snow on Shabbos

Is it permissible to make and throw snowballs on Shabbos?

There are several considerations here:

**(1) Handling:** One form of *muktza* is *nolad*, an item which came into existence on Shabbos, which some *poskim* apply to snow.<sup>1</sup> However, most *poskim* point out that snow is like rain that falls on Shabbos which is permissible, since the vapor in the clouds is considered existent.<sup>2</sup> If the snow is dirty, it would be *muktza* due to its lack of usefulness.<sup>3</sup> Since *muktza* may be handled indirectly (*tiltul min hatzad*), all agree one would be allowed to kick the snow with his feet.<sup>4</sup> If the snow fell before Shabbos, there is no problem of *nolad*.

**(2) Melting:** On Shabbos it is forbidden to actively cause ice or snow to melt thereby creating water<sup>5</sup> (see at length in Issue 317). Pressing the snow together will most likely cause some of the snow to melt.

(Walking on snow is permissible since: (a) It's not certain that the snow will melt (*davar she'eino miskaven*),<sup>6</sup> (b) Being as it is unavoidable, *Chazal* never applied their prohibition to walking.<sup>7</sup> A difference between these reasons would be in situations where walking on the snow will certainly melt the snow (i.e. it's not so cold, shoes are wet), in which case the Alter Rebbe suggests walking where the snow was cleared whenever possible.<sup>8</sup>)

**(3) Shaping:** Forming snowballs or a snowman is an offshoot of the *melacha* of *boneh*, combining particles to create something.<sup>9</sup> *Poskim* discuss whether there is a prohibition of *soser*, destroying, in throwing a snowball.<sup>10</sup> Regardless, one must handle the snow in such a way that it will not melt.

1. שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ה סי' כ"ב (ל"ז) שאינו דומה לגשם כיון שנסתנה. וראה פרמ"ג בפתחיה למוקצה אות כ"ט מוחמיר בגשם, וראה דובב מישרים ח"א סי' נ"ה. ובארחות שבת ח"ב פ"ט הערה רנ"ט כ' שאסור משום שאינו מוכן, ורק בזמן חז"ל נהגו לשתות שלג, וצ"ע.
2. עירובין דף מה ע"ב. וראה משנ"ב סי' של"ח סק"ל, וכן משמע בשו"ע או"ח סי' של"ח ס"ט. וראה ברייתא שבת דף נ"א ע"ב שלג והברד. שש"כ פ"ז סמ"ה. וראה ספר נשמת שבת ח"ד סי' רמ"ב בארוכה.
3. ראה שו"ע ר"ר שם סי' של"ח ס"ט.
4. שו"ע ר"ר סי' ס"ט. וראה ארחות שבת שם סעיף רנ"א.
5. שו"ע ר"ר סי' ש"כ ס"ט.
6. לבוש או"ח סי' ש"כ ס"א.
7. ט"ז או"ח סי' ש"כ סק"א.
8. שו"ע ר"ר סי' ש"כ ס"כ.
9. מקור חיים סי' ש"כ ס"ט. וראה רמב"ם שבת פ"י ה"ג. ועיי"ש שגם יש בזה משום דש. וי"א שאסור משום מעמר שמוסף השלג (מנחת שאסור משום מעמר שמוסף השלג) אין כן כיון איש ע"י ש"א, אך רוב הפוסקים לא ס"ל כן כיון שמעמר הוא רק במקום גדול וכאן אין מקום מוסיים שנק' במקום גדול, ובפרט שנתהווה מן השמים ולא מן הארץ (ס' הלכה של שבת פ"ז הע' כ"ג). וראה ארחות שבת פ"ח סל"ט אם יש בבובה שלג איסור עשיית צורה.
10. ראה שש"כ פ"ז ק"ז בשם הגרש"ז שאין שייך בה סותר כמו חבית מוסתק.

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# OUR HEROES

## Chida



Reb Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai, known as the Chida, was born in Yerushalayim in the year ה'תפ"ד (1724), and learned Torah from the leading rabbonim including the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh. He was a great posek, mekubal, and historian. He travelled the world collecting funds for the Jews in Eretz Yisroel (shadar), and visiting old libraries where he researched and copied ancient manuscripts of Gemara and rishonim. He wrote 83 seforim on a wide range of topics. He passed away in Livorno, France on the 11th of Adar, ה'תקס"ו (1806).

The Medrash says that even if the only merit Jews have is that they await Moshiach, for that alone they are worthy of being redeemed. The Chida suggests that this is the meaning of the words in davening, את צמח דוד... כי לישועתך קוינו כל היום. We are asking Hashem to send us Moshiach immediately, and to the possible argument that we are undeserving, we say, "Because we hope for your salvation all day," implying that as a reward for awaiting Moshiach, we deserve to be redeemed.

While in the town of Pisa, an eight-month-old boy who was not well was brought before him to be cured. The Chida looked at the child and was stunned. He kissed the boy on the forehead, and began teaching him Alef-Beis, and the boy repeated each letter after him. After reviewing it three times, he instructed the mother to take the child home. That night, the child passed away.

A few days later, the Chida attended a bris at which people were bemoaning the long golus and the delay of Moshiach. The Chida spoke up and said, "More than we await his coming, he is waiting to come, but our misconduct holds him back." And he added, "Just recently he came into the world, but because of our sins, he passed away." The listeners then understood who that baby was.

ליכות מנחם מענדל הכהן שי' כהן - שיגדלוה הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמעשים ט

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### Rubber Stamp

The Rebbe would receive bags of mail every day. Dealing with this mountain of correspondence would take the Rebbe many hours a week.

Reb Nissan Mindel, the Rebbe's *mazkir*, related: "I was so bold as to suggest that in the case of certain outgoing mail there might be a way to save the Rebbe some time. I referred, by way of example, to so-called standard letters such as Rosh Hashana greetings and responses to requests for the Rebbe's *bracha* on happy family events, which together could number several thousand in the course of a year. Now, if the Rebbe would permit having such letters 'signed' by a rubber stamp, a universally accepted practice, it would certainly save the Rebbe a considerable amount of precious time.

"The Rebbe politely rejected the idea. He said: 'How can I send a *bracha* to a person in such an artificial manner? How would anyone feel, receiving good wishes from his Rebbe, in a letter that is signed with a rubber stamp?'"

Reb Nissan concluded, "I should have known that anything that smacked of 'subterfuge' would be repugnant to the Rebbe."

ליכות הרך הנימוול נפתלי שי' אסטער - שיגדלוה הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמעשים ט