

## WORTHY MASHPI'IM

### Suitable Teachers

Chazal say that it is forbidden to learn even Torah from one deficient in *emunah*, lest one be influenced by their ways.

(שבת עה ע"א, שו"ע יו"ד סי' קל)

It once happened that a certain *talmid chacham* conducted himself so inappropriately that Rav Yehuda wanted to place him in *cherem*. However, he was hesitant to do so, for then the local *talmidim* would not be allowed to learn Torah from him.

Rav Yehuda therefore consulted with Rabba bar Bar-Chana, who told him: The *possuk* says that one should learn Torah from a *talmid chacham* "since he is a *malach* of *HaShem*." This teaches us that only if the *talmid chacham* conducts himself like a *malach* should one learn Torah from him. Since this *talmid chacham* is acting as he does, Torah may not be learnt from him. Nothing will therefore be lost by placing him in *cherem*.

(מ"ק יז ע"א, שו"ע אדה"ז הל' ת"ת פ"ד ה"ז)

The Rebbe adds another requirement: one should seek to learn Torah from a teacher who is sensitive to its *kedusha*, to its connection with *HaShem*. Whatever the listener learns from such a teacher will then impact his *neshama* fruitfully.

(שיח"ק תש"כ ע' 195)

### Chassidische Leadership

At the *farbrengen* of Simchas Torah תרפ"ט (1928), the Frierdiker Rebbe was speaking of the need to be connected to the "head" (the Rebbe), when he turned to Reb Chatshe Feigin and said, "This is your job, to see that there should be *mashpi'im* in every town."

Reb Chatshe asked if he should find someone locally who could serve as a *mashpia*, and the Frierdiker Rebbe replied, "Yes, with this they will be connected to the head."

Reb Chatshe then asked, "Is that because the *mashpia* is closer to the head?"

The Frierdiker Rebbe gave his confirmation.

(סה"ש תרפ"ט ע' 49)

The Frierdiker Rebbe said: *Mashpi'im* serve a vital function in *darchei haChassidus*. The process of transmitting and imbuing chassidische values can be likened to the planting of a seed. The *mashpia* is the planter; the *chossid/ mushpa/ talmid* is the fertile soil; and the quality of the fruits depends largely on the planter's success in preparing the soil. He cannot afford to be lax in this work, because a fruit that is spiritually rotten not only causes serious damage to his own spiritual life; it can also profane the sanctity of *Chassidus* (*chillul kedushas haChassidus*).

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' תכו)

From the first moment of the *farbrengen* of *Yud-Beis Tammuz* תרצ"ט (1939), it was clear that something was greatly disturbing the Frierdiker Rebbe. After making a *bracha* and saying *LeChayim*, he began to share his pain.

The Rebbe spoke of the difference between the chassidim of the past and those of the present: "At *farbrengens* in the past, *eltre* chassidim would speak of *avoda*, using vivid stories of a Rebbe or a *chossid* to illustrate their lessons. When admonishing a younger chossid, they would handle this with sensitivity and genuine sympathy. Today, when gathering at a *farbrengen*, some older chassidim joke at the expense of others and everyone laughs. And so there has arisen a new brand of chassidim with unworthy *middos* and inappropriate talk. That was unheard of in earlier generations."

The Frierdiker Rebbe concluded: "Today, as well, there are B"H many true *eltre* chassidim who continue in the way of *Chassidus* as in past generations. It is their obligation to admonish the younger chassidim and point out clearly the authentic path of *Chassidus*."

The vital message of this *sicha* was immediately printed and distributed amongst the chassidim in Warsaw and then again by the Rebbe in the year תש"ח (1948).

(סה"ש תרצ"ט ע' 342 ואילך, סה"מ תש"ח ע' 251 ואילך)

In a letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe once bemoaned the state of some "*mashpi'im*" who, instead of teaching *Chassidus* of the Rebbeim in their original form, use concepts of *Chassidus* as material for their speeches and entitle them as "*Chassidus*."

In his words: "They justify themselves by arguing that they are doing it so that 'the people should understand,' but in fact they are rebelling against the Rebbeim and dimming the pure light planted by them. It is therefore no surprise that their words have no lasting impact on their listeners. These speakers have brought shame to the *Chassidus* they claim to stand for, by neglecting the crucial point of *avoda shebalev* – heartfelt *davening* and the study of *Chassidus* in a heartfelt manner."

(אג"ק מוהרי"צ ח"א ע' שמו)

### Choosing a Rav

When introducing the initiative for appointing personal *mashpi'im*, in addition to the already-appointed community *mashpi'im*, the Rebbe set criteria regarding whom one should choose as a mentor.

Firstly, said the Rebbe, a *mashpia* must have the three qualities that characterize *Yidden* in general: he must be compassionate, bashful and kind – visibly so, and to a degree appropriate to his position.

Secondly, *Chazal* teach that one should learn Torah from a *rav* who resembles a *malach*. This means that the *rav* should be far removed from personal bias and envy, so that he can advise a fellow *Yid* without any personal interests involved.

(תו"מ תשמ"ז ח"ב ע' 632, 691)

## CONSIDER THIS!

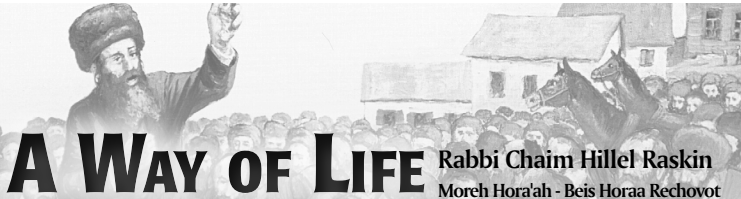
- Why does the personal lifestyle of the teacher matter, if what he is teaching is true?
- How does one know who is worthy of serving as an example for *chassidim*?

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# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin  
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

## Mazal Tov Between Aliyos

A friend was called up to the Torah to name his daughter. May I wish him *mazal tov* when he returns to his place?

- The Gemara records a prohibition to talk during *krias haTorah*,<sup>1</sup> and the Zohar writes that one should envision that he is standing at *Har Sinai* and receiving the Torah.<sup>2</sup> (The Alter Rebbe adds that for this reason some were particular to shake during *kriah* as the Jews did at *Matan Torah*.<sup>3</sup>)
- Learning during *laining* is likewise prohibited. However, one may nevertheless answer an urgent *shaila*<sup>4</sup> or stop someone from transgressing (*la'af'rushi mei'issura*). Yet, if possible one should motion without speaking.<sup>5</sup> One who heard *kriah* already may learn quietly during *laining* if without him there is a *minyan* listening and he turns away or distances himself before *kriah* begins to demonstrate that he isn't part of the *minyan* (and he is not disgracing the *kriah*).<sup>6</sup>
- Regarding the breaks between *aliyos* (*bein gavra lgavra*), *rishonim* are divided:<sup>7</sup> Some say that the prohibition only pertains to the time of *laining*, while others argue that the prohibition was instituted for the entire duration of *kriah*, lest one come to continue his conversation during the *laining*.<sup>8</sup>
- Learning between *aliyos* is subject to a further question. Some say that according to those who prohibit talking, learning is likewise prohibited,<sup>9</sup> while others hold that learning on one's own does not pose a problem.<sup>10</sup> Contemporary *poskim* write that today when the *aliyos* are spaced with long *mi-shebeirachs* one may rely on the lenient opinions to learn Torah during that time, but not to converse.<sup>11</sup> (Some permit saying something quick and important<sup>12</sup>). *Acharonim* note that listening to the *mi-shebeirach* and answering *amen* helps the *bracha* materialize and it is therefore appropriate to answer.<sup>13</sup>
- Still, some contemporary *poskim* write that one may wish *mazal tov* since the reason for the prohibition to talk between *aliyos* is so that one won't continue talking during the *aliya*, and with a short *mazal tov* we aren't concerned.<sup>14</sup> Some add that wishing *mazal tov* is sort of a *mitzvah* (or at least *kavod habriyos*), which can be allowed in this circumstance.<sup>15</sup>

1. סוטה ל"ט ע"א.
2. ויקרא ר"ו ע"א.
3. א"ח סי' מ"ח ס"ג (מיוסד על ר"ד אבודרהם ברכה"ש).
4. הכרעת ערוה"ש א"ח סי' קמ"ו ס"ב (וסתם שאלות יכול לחכות בין גברא לגברא).
5. ראה שערי אפרים ש"ד סי"א.
6. ע"פ ס' הקריאה בתורה והלכותיה פ"ב אות ג'.
7. ראה ב"י וב"ח סי' קמ"ו (בשם רבנו יונה ורש"י).
8. ב"י שם. לחומרת הדברים ראה שלה"ק מ"ס תמיד נ"מ אות ע"ב הו"ד בבה"ט סק"ג.
9. שו"ע א"ח סי' קמ"ו ס"ב, לבוש שם.
10. א"ר א"ח סי' קמ"ו סק"ד.
11. קצוה"ש סי' כ"ה בדה"ש מ"ו ע"פ המג"א שו"ע שם סק"ג (משנ"ב שם סק"ו).
12. ראה פסק"ת סי' קמ"ו ס"ג.
13. מקור חיים קצוה"ש סי' רפ"ב, ערוה"ש סי' רט"ו ס"א.
14. ראה ערוה"ש סי' קמ"ו ס"ג שכתב ש"ע טעם הב"י מותר דיבור קצר.
15. ראה ספר לחיות כהלכה ע"פ"ה.

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

## OUR HEROES

### Rashbatz



R' Shmuel Betzalel Sheptel, known among *Chabad Chassidim* as the "Rashbatz", was one of the prominent *chassidim* of the Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash, and Rebbe Rashab. In the publications "HaTomim", the Frierdiker Rebbe describes his incredible journey to *Chassidus Chabad* and the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbe Maharash entrusted him with the education of his son, the Rebbe Rashab, who later on entrusted him with the education of his son, the Frierdiker Rebbe. In the year תר"ס (1900), he was appointed as the leading *meshpia* of Tomchei Temimim, a position which he kept until his last day. He passed away on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Sivan, תרס"ה (1905) and was buried, according to his wish, within 50 *amos* of the *ohel* of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash.



The Rashbatz once visited Chernobil for Shabbos, where he was received with respect. After Shabbos he was invited to a lavish *melava malka*, and the *chassidim* wanted him to partake of all of the foods. Despite the fact that it was connected to a *mitzva*, Rashbatz was not thrilled about the overindulgence.

The *chassidim* challenged him, "Doesn't it say that *melava malka* feeds the 'Luz' bone, from which there will be *Techiyas Hameisim*?" Rashbatz retorted, "True! However, it is possible to eat in such a manner that one does not deserve to rise at *Techiyas Hameisim* at all..."



The Rashbatz once ate at the Rebbe Rashab's Shabbos table. His young student, the Frierdiker Rebbe, noticed that he was not eating the *chrein* (horseradish) with the fish, and he pushed the *chrein* toward the Rashbatz. The Rashbatz told him, "It's bad enough that we have to eat. The food does not need a 'mediator' as well..."



The *meshpia* Rashbatz, would teach Tanya in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch. Upon reading the words of the Alter Rebbe, "One will definitely do *teshuvah* in the end, in this *gilgul* or the next, for 'no one is entirely pushed away,' he would break out crying. "Kinderlach!" he would say, "You must do *teshuvah*. Ultimately, you will be forced to do so; so what are you waiting for?"

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### A Personal Request

"I have a personal request from you," said the Rebbe to Mr. Menachem Begin. "Will you do it for me?"

The future prime minister, then serving as head of the opposition in Knesset, was concluding a few-hour-long *yechidus* with the Rebbe. The Rebbe had given him his time, hence the favor, presumably for Lubavitch of Eretz Yisroel, and he simply could not refuse.

"Of course, Rebbe!" answered Mr. Begin.

The Rebbe related sadly that parents of a French girl had written him that their daughter was seeing a *goy*. They had tried talking her out of it, to no avail. She was planning on marrying him.

"But you can do something about it," the Rebbe implored. "Please make a stopover in France. If an important personality like you talks to her in person, we may save her. I will cover the expenses of rescheduling your ticket."

Mr. Begin, moved by the Rebbe's "personal request," readily agreed. The Rebbe covered the costs, and the mission was a success. The girl now lives in Yerushalayim, as a mother of a beautiful *frum* family.

(As heard from Reb Binyomin Klein – *Abba* p. 155)



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