

VALUING TIME

Precious Moments

The Torah says that Avrohom Avinu became old and was "coming in days." The *Zohar* explains that this refers to the many *mitzvos* that he fulfilled: all the days of his life were fully utilized for the service of *HaShem*.

As *Chassidus* explains, a person is given the exact number of days he needs to accomplish his tasks in this world. If a day is not used for its purpose, that day's task is left undone.

(זהר ח"א קכט א, תו"א עט, ב, אג"ק ח"א ע' נד, חכ"ב ע' א)

To highlight the importance of valuing every moment and utilizing it for growth, the Rebbe made two points:

Firstly, wasted time never returns. Every individual is given a specific number of days and seconds to accomplish all that he is charged with. Hence, when a day is misused, this loss is irreplaceable.

Secondly, today's *avoda* raises tomorrow's *avoda* to a higher level – for, as *Chazal* say, a person who has a hundred coins desires two hundred. Therefore if today is misused, this will weaken the chances for a better tomorrow.

(תו"מ חכ"א ע' 59)

Many ancient ethical works point out the same unfortunate reality: while people are concerned over a loss of money, they are less concerned over a loss of time. In truth, of course, the reverse should be the case. Lost money, after all, can be recovered; lost time cannot.

(ראה ס' החיים לר' שמעון מפראנקפורט י, א, סה"ש תשמ"ט ח"ב ע' 601)

Passing Time?

During the summer of תרנ"א (1891), at the age of eleven, the Frierdiker Rebbe was arrested for trying to protect another Yid from a cruel police officer. Thrown into a dark cell and overcome by fear, he suddenly realized, "I'm imprisoned just like my holy forefathers were, so I should respond to the challenge with courage and faith, and spend my time studying *Torah*."

He already knew the *Mishnayos* of *Zero'im* and

Moed by heart, so he began reviewing them. Suddenly, he heard fearful groaning and whimpering. The prison was dark, and he could not make out the source of the sounds, so he tried to ignore the moaning and concentrate on his learning. He then *davened Mincha*, omitting *Tachanun* because he was so happy to have had the great merit of being imprisoned for defending another Yid's honor.

Continuing to review from memory, he once again heard wailing noises. He struck a match, looked around the cell, and discovered a calf tied up, with a muzzle on its mouth. His fears were calmed. He went through the entire *Seder Zero'im*, began *Seder Mo'ed*, and before he had a chance to finish, he was released.

Later, when his father, the Rebbe Rashab, heard what had occurred, he complimented his son on being able to review *mishnayos baal peh*. Otherwise, he added, with what would he have been superior to (*lehavdil*) the calf which had also been imprisoned...?

When the Frierdiker Rebbe related this story, he added: "These words engraved in my mind and heart the necessity of preparing 'provisions for the way' by learning *Torah* by heart, so that in any situation, one will not waste his time."

(התמים חו' ע' ס"ה)

Every moment was so precious to the Rebbe Rashab, that he was available to discuss communal matters only at mealtimes. When the Frierdiker Rebbe was away and the Rebbe Rashab had to review the *yeshiva's* affairs with the bookkeeper, he did so during mealtime.

For the same reason, even when money was extremely tight, he always traveled by train first class, so that he would be able to learn undisturbed.

On *Nittel Nacht*, when it is forbidden to learn *Torah*, the Rebbe Rashab would use his time to play chess, thereby sharpening his mind for his future *Torah* studies. From this, says the Rebbe, we see how even when one cannot learn *Torah*, he should utilize his time for beneficial activities.

(לשמע און ע' 113, רשימות היומן ע' ריה, סה"ש תש"נ ע' 192)

A Single Minute

During a visit of the Rebbe Rashab to Germany, some local *Yidden* accompanied him to the railway station, and one of them remarked that the train would be leaving in another minute.

The Rebbe replied, "In one minute one can do *teshuvah*."

(תו"מ ח"ב ע' 183)

In the year תש"ד (1944), the Rebbe davened at the *amud* after the passing of his father Reb Leivik. It once happened that the *minyan* did not gather in time. The Frierdiker Rebbe called the *rosh yeshiva* and told him that his son-in-law, the Rebbe, had complained about his wasted time. The *rosh yeshiva* excused himself, saying that the *bochurim* had arrived only five minutes late.

The Frierdiker Rebbe replied, "For my *eidem*, a minute is a year. Do you want to steal *five years* from him?!"

(אוצר פתגמי חב"ד ח"ב ע' 50)

When, in his early years in America, the Frierdiker Rebbe spoke of the imminent coming of *Moshiach*, some people questioned his activities to strengthen *Yiddishkeit* and build *yeshivos*. They argued: "If anyway we are in *golus* only for a short while, what is the need for all this?"

The Frierdiker Rebbe answered by reminding them of the *Mishkan* in the desert. While in some places *Bnei Yisroel* camped for long periods of time (once for 19 years!), in others they camped for only one day. Yet, in every place they set up the *Mishkan* with all of its *keilim* and *korbanos*, regardless of how long they stayed.

(סה"ש תש"א ע' 162, תו"מ ח"ה ע' 299)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is it important to use every moment so that more will be accomplished, or so that each *moment* is elevated?
- Does using time to the maximum mean not to relax?

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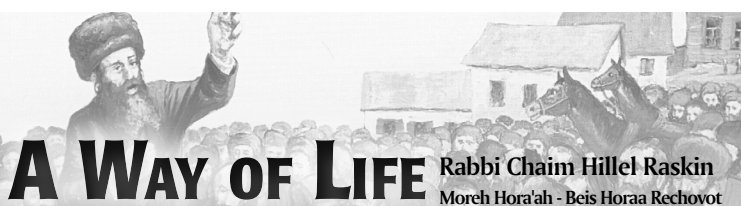
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A WAY OF LIFE

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

Flattery

Can I compliment a speaker that he did an amazing job even though I didn't appreciate his speech?

- Flattery, complementing a person falsely to earn his liking, is halachically prohibited. *Chazal* say that flattery is a cause for much punishment,¹ and according to some *Rishonim's* understanding of the *Sifri*, it is an *issur d'oraisa*.²
- False flattery is lying³ and misleading (*gneivas daas*), and it may lead to electing a person into a position for which he isn't qualified.⁴ Furthermore, the inclination to flatter and bend the truth to find favor will hold us back from giving rebuke when needed. The one flattered will suffer by becoming arrogant and careless as a result of overestimating his capabilities.⁵
- One is allowed to compliment a person for a good deed (e.g. a *chazzan* for his *davening* or a rabbi for his speech) even with slight exaggeration.⁶ However if one's objective is to receive a favor in return it is forbidden.⁷
- Well-meaning flattery to better a relationship is allowed and encouraged.⁸ One may flatter one's own spouse, or praise a *kalla* to her *chosson* and vice-versa.⁹ A teacher may flatter a student to build his confidence so that he will study more Torah.¹⁰ Likewise, *poskim* say one may flatter a person to encourage him to grow in *Yiddishkeit*. Some add that one may praise a wealthy person as a great benefactor to merit him with *tzedaka*.¹¹
- Giving a person deserved honor and respect is obviously not considered flattery. Honoring a person for his wealth is also not flattery since Hashem entrusted him or her with wealth and because they use it to do *mitzvos*. We are surely obligated to show appreciation towards those who help us.¹²
- A more severe form of flattery is complimenting sinners and causing them to feel that they are alright.¹³ Besides showing that the flatterer is more afraid of the sinner than of Hashem, he leads others to sin knowing that they will be accepted and not shunned.¹⁴ This form of flattery is only permitted in a life-threatening situation, G-d forbid.¹⁵

1. סוטה מ"א ע"ב ומ"ב ע"א.
2. ספרי מסעי במדבר לה, ספר יריאים סי' נ"ה במניין התרי"ג מצוות.
3. שער תשובה שער ג' אות קפ"ז.
4. ראה ריטב"א חולין צ"ד ע"א.
5. שער תשובה שער ג' אותיות קפ"ט – קצ"ט.
6. שד"ח מערכת ח' כלל ק"מ.
7. הליכות בן אדם לחבירו פכ"ב סט"ו.
8. ראה ראשית חכמה שער הקדושה פ"ב.
9. כתובות י"ז ע"א (כב"ה כלה נאה וחסודה).
10. ראה ש"ת שם אות קפ"א.
11. מעשה הצדקה סי' נ"ז.
12. פלא יועץ ערך חנופה.
13. שם.
14. רש"י סוטה מ"א ע"ב ד"ה ונתקלקלו.
15. ראה סוטה שם ותוס' שם ד"ה כל המחניף שו"ע ר' סי' קנ"ו סי"ח.

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

מזל טוב!

לידידינו להרה"ת מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרים שי' לוי

על הולדת הבן שי'

יה"ר שיכניסוהו לבריתו של אברהם אבינו ויגדלוהו לתורה

לחופה ולמעשים טובים

מרכז אנ"ש

OUR HEROES

Reb Moshe Yitzchak of Yasi



Reb Moshe Yitzchak (in some sources: Yitzchak Moshe) of Yasi was of the younger chassidim of the Alter Rebbe and later a chossid of the Mittlerer Rebbe. He was very *mekushar* to the Mittlerer Rebbe, and the Mittlerer Rebbe said that Reb Moshe Yitzchak was one of the three chassidim in whom he fulfilled Hashem's true intention ("*ehr hot oisgefirt di kavana Elyona*"). After the *histalkus* of the Mittlerer Rebbe, Reb Moshe Yitzchak became a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Tzemach Tzedek would recite *ma'amorim* for him in *yechidus*.



The Tzemach Tzedek once asked the son of Reb Moshe Yitzchak if he remembered anything about his father. The son shared a story to which he did not know the meaning.

"One Friday afternoon, when my father was returning from the *mikvah*, he was walking on the street when he suddenly looked up to the sky and became very excited. He asked to sit and a chair was brought from a nearby store. Bystanders thought that the hot bath had hurt him and they asked if he wanted a doctor. 'No need,' Reb Moshe replied, 'just leave me alone'. He sat for about half an hour, leaning on his hands with his eyes closed. He then looked once more at the sky, got up, and carried on his way. To this day, we do not know what it was all about."

The Tzemach Tzedek inquired about the date of the event, and the Rebbe started to laugh at the answer. The Tzemach Tzedek explained, "At that time was the *Z'lobiner chassunah* (the famous *chassunah* of the grandchildren of the Alter Rebbe and Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev). While under the *chuppah*, the Alter Rebbe said the *ma'amar* "*Ki Al Kol Kovod Chuppah*". All the *malochim* gathered in *shomayim* to hear the *ma'amar*. Your father merited to hear the *ma'amar* as well..."



At the time of the arrest of the Alter Rebbe, all the chassidim were busy trying various ways to save the Rebbe. Among other things, the chossid Reb Moshe Yitzchak bought potatoes and began making *mashke* from them. He explained, "It is beyond any doubt that the Rebbe will soon go out of jail and there will be a great and wondrous *geulah*. There will be a great need for *mashke*, so I am starting on it already..."

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

A Better Shidduch

"I feel a personal responsibility," the Rebbe once confided to Reb Berl Junik, "to care for the *bochurim* who follow the Torah true way. I spoke to *Harav* Chodakov and to [the *shadchan*] Reb Yitzchok Goldin to care for the *shiduchim* of these *bochurim*."

Indeed, throughout the *nesius* the Rebbe spent countless hours advising, guiding and encouraging *bochurim* and girls regarding their *shiduchim*.

In the following case, the Rebbe vetoed a proposal for a girl who had not even written directly:

A potential *shiduch* was proposed to her, and she was not sure whether to go ahead with it. Through her brother she got an explicit answer from the Rebbe: to pursue other ideas.

The surprised girl wrote to the Rebbe that she had received the answer, to which she received the reply, "From your brother's letter, I understood that you were unsure. If this is not true, then disregard my answer, and do as you feel."

"However," the Rebbe continued as a father cares for his child, "one of the reasons I answered in the negative is since it would be advisable for you to pursue a *bochur* who is a greater *lamdan*."

(Hiskashrus, Issue 706)