

## BEING EARNEST

### The Need to be Earnest

Shlomo HaMelech writes, "An arrogant sinner is a scoffer," for he will constantly mock others and ignore rebuke.

Leitzonus, mockery, is a negative trait and is forbidden. Rabbeinu Yona explains that a leitz is a person who is constantly involved in idle talk, mocks others, and ridicules what they do and say. This negative trait comes from a lack of *yiras Shamayim* and from *prikas ol*.

(משלי כא, כד וברש"י ומצודות, פי' רבינו יונה)

Chazal say that one word of *leitzonus* can undo the effect of a hundred words of reproof. The *tzaddik*, Reb Mendel Rimanofer, would say, "With *leitzonus* a person can rebuff anything." He once pointed out the window towards the sky and said, "Such a person can even deny that this is the sky!"

(ראה דרך חיים ט, ג, תפלה למשה פ' ויצא)

The Mittlerer Rebbe writes that although *leitzonus* is not an actual *aveira*, it is worse than that. When one commits an *aveira* because his *yetzer hara* wins him over, or even because of a lack of belief that *HaShem* is watching him, it is likely that he will do *teshuva*. However, a person who takes everything lightly will not easily do *teshuva*. Although he may not have evil intentions, his attitude is the complete opposite of fearing *HaShem*, and he therefore is unable to see the *Shechinah* or accept reproof.

(דרך חיים ט, ג)

A *bochur* once told the Rebbe at *yeichidus* that he suffered from speaking *leitzonus*. The Rebbe advised him to learn *Derech Chaim* by the Mittlerer Rebbe and to become involved in the *avoda* of *davening*.

(היכל מנחם ח"ב ע' ריז)

Chazal say that there is one type of *leitzonus* that is good: mocking *avoda zara* and other negative things.

A well-known example of this is the confrontation between Elyahu HaNavi and the false *nevi'im* of the *Baal* on Har HaCarmel. He challenged them to put the truth to the test by seeing which *mizbeiach*, theirs or his, would be answered by fire

from Above. The false *nevi'im* promptly agreed. For half a day they cried out to their *avoda zara*, asking that the fire come down on their *mizbeiach*. When there was no response, Elyahu HaNavi poked fun at them, saying, "Cry out loudly! Maybe he is conversing, or busy in the bathroom; perhaps he is sleeping and you will wake him up..."

(ע"ז מ"ו ע"א, [צדקת הצדיק אות רט], מלכים א יח, כו ופרש"י)

### Poisonous Scorn

Chazal say that every generation has *leitzonim*.

During the time of Dovid HaMelech, scoffers would stand by his window and taunt him, "Dovid, when will the *Beis HaMikdash* be built? When are we going to the House of *HaShem*?" In response, Dovid HaMelech would say that although these people had come to anger him, he was happy that at least they talked about the *Beis HaMikdash*.

(ירושלמי ברכות, פ"ב ה"א)

Eager to gain the support of the Yidden against Moshe Rabbeinu, Korach gathered a crowd and spun a story that was filled with *leitzonus*: "There was once a widow who lived in my neighborhood with her two daughters. She owned a field. When she wanted to plow, Moshe Rabbeinu warned her not to plow with an ox and donkey harnessed together, and when the soil was ready to be planted, he told her not to plant *kilayim*. When the harvesting season arrived, she was instructed to set aside *Leket*, *Shikcha* and *Peia*, and when the grain was ready to be piled up for threshing, Moshe Rabbeinu reminded her to give *truma* and *maaser*, which she did.

"To ease her burden, this widow finally decided to sell the field and buy two lambs, hoping to be able to enjoy the profits of their wool. When the lambs gave birth, Aharon HaKohen came to ask for the firstborn, saying that this was what *HaShem* had instructed. The time came to shear the animals, and Aharon was back, asking for the wool that was shorn first.

"Completely frustrated, the widow cried out, 'I have no more energy for this man! I will just *shecht* the lambs and eat them' – but once they were *shechted*, Aharon asked for certain parts of the meat. On hearing this, the widow moaned, 'Even now that I've *shechted* the lambs, I have no

peace. I'll give them up to *HaShem*. They will now be *cherem*!' Aharon said, 'Now it is all mine, for *HaShem* said that all *cherem* belongs to me.' He took the animals and left the widow crying with her two daughters."

This was how Korach ridiculed everything holy.

(ילקוט שמעוני פ' קרח)

### Staying Clear

Rebbi Akiva would advise: "Do not spend time among *leitzim*, so that you will not learn from their ways." And Rabbeinu HaKadosh instructed his children: "Do not live in *Shechanziv*, for that city is inhabited by *leitzim*, and you may learn from their ways."

(אבות דרבי נתן פרק כ"ו, פסחים ק"ב)

*Rambam* writes: Whoever is interested in cultivating proper behavior should keep his distance from *leitzim* and not converse with them. For scoffers and wicked people begin with foolish talk, and eventually come to speak derogatively about *tzaddikim*. This leads them to speak about the *nevi'im* and find fault in their words, and in the end they come to speak against *HaShem* himself.

(רמב"ם הל' טומאת צרעת בסופו)

The Rebbe often spoke of the need to ignore scoffers. The Rebbe pointed out that the first *se'if* of the first *siman* of the first *sefer* of *Shulchan Aruch* says, *Al yeivosh mipnei hamal'igim* – "One should not be embarrassed by scoffers," for observing this principle is the foundation for the observance of the entire *Shulchan Aruch*.

(אג"ק ח"ו ע' שמו)

## CONSIDER THIS!

- Why is mockery spiritually poisonous? Why is it more necessary to stay clear of mockers than from sinners?
- Did Korach give a logical argument against Moshe Rabbeinu? How then did he succeed in riling up his followers?

# OUR HEROES

## Reb Yosef Yitzchok of Avrutch



Reb Yosef Yitzchok was born to his father the Tzemach Tzeddek in approximately the year 5579 (1819), in the city Lubavitch. He married his first cousin, the daughter of Reb Yaakov Yisroel of Tcherkas who was a son in law of the Mittlerer Rebbe. After his *chassunah*, he settled in Horonsteipel near his father-in-law who supported him, and would visit his father and brothers in Lubavitch from time to time. Around the year 5617 (1857) he was appointed by his father-in-law to be the *Rov* in Avrutch and lead the Chernobler Chasidim there as a Rebbe. He became known for his *mofsim* and people flocked to Avrutch to see him. After 18 years of leadership, he passed away on 18 Kislev 5646 (1886). His daughter Rebbetzin Shterna Sara married the Rebbe Rashab.

Reb Yaakov Yisroel once asked his son-in-law what his custom is in regards to *davening*. Reb Yosef Yitzchok answered that he tries to *daven betzibur* and Reb Yaakov Yisroel was happy with the response (in Reb Yakov Yisroel's circles, *davening* at length was not the custom). Reb Yaakov Yisroel once sent a messenger to call Reb Yosef Yitzchok but he was found still *davening*, although the minyan was long over. The messenger was sent again a while later but once more, he was found still *davening* and so it happened several times. When he finished *davening*, his father-in-law asked him, "Didn't you tell me that you *daven 'betzibur'?*"

Reb Yosef Yitzchok responded that he heard from his father, the Tzemach Tzeddek, in the name of the Alter Rebbe, that the idea of *tefila betzibur* is to collect and gather (*tzibur* means gathering) all of one's *kochos hanefesh* (inner faculties) and sparks of *kedusha*. Now that takes a lot of time.

(תו"מ חכ"ד ע' 277)

The *chassunah* of Reb Yosef Yitzchok took place in the year 5596 (1836) and was attended by the Tzemach Tzedek and many Lubavitcher chassidim, as well as by the grandfather of the *kallah*, Reb Mottel Chernobler along with many Chernobler chassidim. When the Lubavitcher chasidim asked the Tzemach Tzedek to say *Chassidus*, the Chernobler Chasidim protested saying that Avrohom Avinu said "*yukach na me'at mayim*" implying that Torah (which is compared to water) is best kept short. The Lubavitcher chassidim argued that those words were said to people that appeared like Arabs. Yidden, however, need an abundance of Torah.

Reb Hillel Paritcher resolved their dispute by saying that the entire Torah is called a '*kad*,' a pitcher of water, since there are 24 *seforim* in Tanach (כ"ד). Thus, however much Torah will be said, it will always be 'a little.'

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' קפב)

# A WAY OF LIFE Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin Rov of Kfar Chabad Beis

## Kiddush During the Seventh Hour

We're having guests for Shabbos who can't wait long. Can we recite *kiddush* during the seventh hour?

- In *Shulchan Aruch*, the Alter Rebbe quotes the Arizal's practice to avoid reciting *kiddush* during the seventh hour on Friday night.<sup>1</sup>
- Each hour of the day is dominated by the spiritual power of one of seven *mazalos* (planets), and the sign of the seventh hour on Friday evening is *Maadim* (Mars), which corresponds to the attribute of *gevura* (harshness) and negative forces. Since wine is also associated with *gevura*, it can further incite the negative forces. The Arizal's practice was actually to make *kiddush* before that hour (during the hour of kindness) but, for the same reason, once it has arrived, one should wait for that hour to pass.
- How do we calculate the seventh hour? The hours for this purpose are regular 60 minute hours (not halachic hours), and are counted from the median midday.<sup>2</sup> For example, in New York the earliest *chatzos* is 11:39 and the latest *chatzos* (in standard time) is 12:10, thus the median *chatzos* is 11:54. The seventh hour would thus be 5:54-6:54. In the summer, when the clock is moved an hour forward, the seventh hour is 6:54-7:54, reflecting that change.<sup>3</sup>
- What about white wine? All wines are associated with *gevura* and the custom pertains to all wines.<sup>4</sup> Making *kiddush* on *challah* or other beverages is halachically problematic (except in dire circumstances), and it would be better to make *kiddush* on wine during the seventh hour if necessary.<sup>5</sup>
- Chazal say that one who fulfills a *mitzva* will know no evil as a result (*shomer mitzva lo yeida davar ra*). For this reason, some *poskim* aren't concerned with making *kiddush* during the seventh hour,<sup>6</sup> especially if one is also fulfilling the *mitzva* of *hachnosas orchim*.<sup>7</sup>
- The *minhag* is not to recite *kiddush* during the seventh hour.<sup>8</sup> This is true even when one is hosting guests, since the guests themselves need the protection.<sup>9</sup> However, if one has guests or children who cannot wait, one may be lenient on this custom.<sup>10</sup> One need not be *matir neder* for an exception, unless one wishes to change his custom on a permanent basis.

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### The Path to Follow...

In a *yechidus* on 27 Adar 5728 (1968), the Rebbe told a *bochur*, "It is important to be particular with the times of eating and sleeping. There is plenty of time, aside from these times, to grow in *avodah*."

A *bochur* once wrote a four-page letter to the Rebbe, describing his daily schedule in detail. He wrote of his great diligence in learning *nigleh* and *Chassidus*, and he described his immense enjoyment from doing *mitvzoyim*, to the degree that he felt he could do it on the account of eating, since the *mitvzoyim* is his source of life.

He finished with a wish for the Rebbe to derive *nachas* from him, affirming "This is the path I should follow."

The Rebbe took a pencil, and circled the words "path I should follow," and added "to devastation."

1. שוע"ר סי' רע"א ס"ג, ממג"א שם סק"א. וראה ערוה"ש סי' רע"א ס"א.
2. ראה ליקוטי מהר"ח ח"ב סדר קידוש ליל שבת ד"ה ועיין ("גדול כוח מתנת עניים שמהפכים מדין לרחמים").
3. וראה קובץ יגדיל תורה נ"ג. גליון 2 עמ' 15 מיחידות מורב משה לברטוב ע"ה. וראה קצות השלחן סי' עז בדה"ש ס"ק ט"ו שכך נהגו בלובאוויטש. וראה מענה רבינו המודפס בס' עבודת הקודש אצל הרבי מליובאוויטש ע' טז.
4. שולחן מנחם ח"ב ס"ו סק"א.
5. ראה מ"ש לאחרונה הר"ל נחמסון שליט"א בהעו"ב גליון א'ק"ז. וראה אג"ק ח"ג ע' ק, ובפרט אם הוא לאחר (או לפני) שבע שעות מחצות האמיתי - נתינים בשדה השליחות ח"א פ"ו הע' 2.
6. וראה משמרת שלום סי' כ"ז אות ג' וע"פ זוהר "ולית שולטנא אחרא בכלוהו עלמין".
7. וראה קובץ יגדיל תורה נ"ג. גליון 2 עמ' 15 מיחידות מורב משה לברטוב ע"ה. וראה קצות השלחן סי' עז בדה"ש ס"ק ט"ו שכך נהגו בלובאוויטש. וראה מענה רבינו המודפס בס' עבודת הקודש אצל הרבי מליובאוויטש ע' טז.
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לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה