

The Weekly *Farbrenge*

MERKAZ ANASH
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 EDITOR RABBI SHIMON HELINGER

ALL FOR THE GOOD

ABOVE OUR UNDERSTANDING

Reb Yehoshua ben Levi once fasted for many days and *davened* to *HaShem* that he be granted a revelation of Eliyahu HaNavi. His request was fulfilled and Eliyahu appeared to him, saying, "Whatever you desire, I will fulfill."

Reb Yehoshua asked to be allowed to join him, to observe what he did and to learn from him.

"But you will not be able to handle the sights that you will encounter," Eliyahu warned him. He also stipulated that Reb Yehoshua not question anything he did, and if he did, he would not be able to continue with him.

Together they headed out, until they reached a tiny, dilapidated cottage. There they were eagerly welcomed by a poor man and his wife, who treated their guests with the best sleeping accommodations and meals that they could manage. In the morning, after the prophet and the sage took their leave, Eliyahu HaNavi stood next to the couple's only cow and *davened* that it should die. Reb Yehoshua gasped. Was this the only reward for the poor couple's graciousness - to kill their only source of livelihood?! However, recalling the condition, and wanting to continue on with Eliyahu HaNavi, Reb Yehoshua was forced to quell his amazement.

After traveling until evening, they finally reached the home of a wealthy man, who neither greeted them nor invited them to share any crumb of his plentiful provisions. As they were leaving the following morning, Eliyahu HaNavi *davened* that the wall of the rich man's home that had collapsed be reconstructed. Once again Reb Yehoshua was astonished, but said nothing. However, after experiencing a number of such episodes, he was no longer able to contain himself and he asked Eliyahu for an explanation.

Eliyahu then revealed to him that it was decreed Above that their gracious hostess was to die that very day, and he had *davened* that their cow be taken instead - a tremendous kindness to the couple. The wall of the greedy man was positioned above a precious treasure, which would now remain hidden from his eyes.

It thus turned out that not everything was as it appeared to be...

(סדר הדורות ערך ר' יהושע בן לוי)

The Shaloh teaches that one must take great care not to say anything that implies a complaint about the acts of *HaShem*, such as, "How did *HaShem* do such a thing?" This is a serious *aveira*, for one must know that all

occurrences are justified and righteous.

(של"ה שער האותיות שתיקה)

CONFUSING MOMENTS

Two chassidim were once traveling to the Baal Shem Tov when they found themselves slowed down behind the local landowner's wagon that was taking its time rambling down the road. One concerned chossid turned to the other, "If we're going to continue along at this pace, it's highly unlikely that we'll reach Mezhibuzh before *Shabbos*."

"Don't worry," his friend assured him, "I have no doubt that whatever *HaShem* does is for the good."

CONSIDER

*Is it wrong to question
 HaShem's actions, or is
 it foolish?*

*Does it always turn out
 for the good?*

As they were still talking, they reached a very narrow passage that was blocked by a broken-down wagon carrying jugs of milk. The landowner jumped down and ordered its driver to move the jugs to another wagon and to move away the wagon that was blocking the road. His orders were followed and the path was cleared. Soon after they continued on their way, the landowner moved his wagon to the side of the road and the wagon carrying the chassidim was able to pass by and continue on its way.

"Now I see that you were right," said the chossid to his companion. "If the landowner had not been in front of us, we would have had to wait until the milk wagon was fixed. The driver would not have moved the jugs for us as he did for the landowner!"

(אסדר לסעודתא ח"א ע' 157)

Every year, on his way from Petersburg to the annual fair in Nizhni-Novogorod, a certain wealthy chossid of the *Tzemach Tzedek* would first make a stop in Lubavitch, and then in Dobromisl to visit his childhood

melamed. He would leave him a sum of money and then continue on his way.

One year the chossid was delayed, and he left home only after the fair had already begun. Nevertheless, he stopped in Lubavitch, but intended to skip his visit to Dobromisl, and asked the *Tzemach Tzedek's* opinion on this.

"Since this has been your custom for many years," said the Rebbe, "it is not advisable to diverge from it."

Heeding this advice, the chossid traveled to visit his *melamed*, who greeted him with a warm welcome. Being in a great hurry, however, he planned to leave immediately after *Mincha*, but while he was *davening*, the sky darkened and a fierce storm set in. The *melamed* invited him to remain at his home overnight, but the chossid insisted on keeping to his original schedule. However, when he was then beset by a severe headache, he had no choice but to agree.

The following morning, the chossid awoke feeling very ill, suffering with high fever. A doctor was summoned from nearby Orsha. When he was diagnosed with typhus, a message was immediately sent to his family, and to the *Tzemach Tzedek*, so that he should *daven* on the chossid's behalf.

After eight difficult weeks, he was finally well enough to travel to Lubavitch. The fact is, however, that he felt a sense of grievance toward the Rebbe who had advised him to visit the *melamed*, for it had been on the way to Dobromisl that he had contracted the fever. Indeed, as soon as he entered the *Tzemach Tzedek's* study, he cried out, "Rebbe, why did you send me to Dobromisl?"

The *Tzemach Tzedek* replied by quoting the *Gemara*: "A man's legs may be depended upon to take him to the place to which he is summoned" - that is, to where *HaShem* has ordained that his life should end. The word for summoned (*demisbo'ei*) can also be understood to mean *daven*. That means that 'A man's legs may be depended upon to take him to the place where there is someone who is able to *daven* for him.' You owe your life to the *tefilos* of your *melamed*!"

(סיפ"ח זיין תורה ע' 71)

A young chossid suffered from terrible stomach pains. Unable to find a cure, he traveled to the Rebbe Maharash to ask for a *bracha*. The Rebbe told him, "With regard to the army draft, stomach pains are an advantage." Sure enough, he was soon called for the draft, but set free because of his stomach ailments. And the pains promptly disappeared.

(שמרו"ס ח"ג ע' 183)

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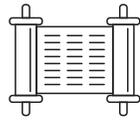
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NEKUDOS IN THE MEGILLAH

I don't have anyone to read the *megillah* for me and I am not proficient in how to read it. May I write *nekudos* inside?

Nekudos (vowels) may not be added to a *sefer Torah*, and doing so would render it invalid.¹ The way the word is written in the Torah without the *nekudos* (*masores*) is a part of *Torah Shebaal Peh*, and many *halachos* are learned from this alternate vowelization.² Adding *nekudos* would limit the vocalization to one reading.³ Others explain that the Torah must remain exactly as it was given to Moshe.⁴

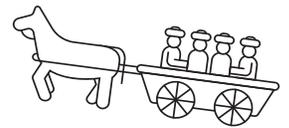
What about a *megillah*?

While the Gemara mentions that a *megillah* must be written with ink, parchment and *sirtut* (embossed lines under the writing), it doesn't specify the other laws of a *sefer Torah*, such as *tagin* (crowns on certain letters) or whether the parchment must be prepared for the intended purpose (*ibud lishma*).⁵ *Rishonim* are divided on whether a *megillah* is bound by those laws as well.⁶

Shulchan Aruch rules that *nekudos* do not invalidate a *megillah*.⁷ *Poskim* explain that even those who equate a *megillah* to a *Sefer Torah* would allow for adding *nekudos*, since: (a) *Megilas Ester* wasn't given at Har Sinai, (b) unlike a *Sefer Torah*, a *megillah* which has extra or missing letters is *kosher bdi'eved*.⁸ Likewise, *trup* (cantillations) or a sign near words that may read incorrectly would not invalidate it.⁹

In practice, *nekudos* should not be added except in case of need,¹⁰ particularly since there are some opinions who invalidate it.¹¹ However, even if there isn't anyone who knows the *trup*, it should not be added in.¹²

1. שו"ע יו"ד סי' רע"ד ס"ז.
2. סוכה דף ר' ע"ב.
3. ב"י סי' רע"ד ע"פ רבנו ירוחם. וראה תשובות רמב"ן מיוחסות סי' רל"ח.
4. מקדש מעט סקמ"ג. וראה שו"ת מהרש"ל סי' ע"ד.
5. שו"ע או"ח סי' תרצ"א ס"ב.
6. ראה שו"ע שם ס"א.
7. או"ח סי' תרצ"א ס"ט ע"פ תשובת הרשב"א ח"א סי' ש"ע.
8. שו"ת באר שבע סי' מ"ז (ולכא' לא כו"ע סב"ל כן כדלהלן).
9. שו"ת ב"ש שם, מג"א סק"י. והחת"ם כתב שינויי הנוסחאות (ב-ל-פניהם) בין השורות.
10. משמעות המחבר ("אינה נפסלת בכך"). וראה פרמ"ג א"א סק"ט.
11. משמע מהמרדכי פ"ד מגילה סו"ס תתל"א שפוסל כשהאיתיות כתובים לפני.
12. ראה מג"א סק"י. אך בערוה"ש סי' תרצ"א סי' ד שמוטב לקרותה בלי טעמים שיוצא בדיעבד (משא"כ בהוסף טעמים שיש פוסלים).



REB SHMUEL GURARY

Reb Shmuel was one the 'Yoshvim' (young men who learned) in Lubavitch in the times of the Rebbe Maharash, and was instructed by the Rebbe to go into business. He was the trusted agent of the Rebbe Rashab in community work. He was devoted to the success of *Tomchei Temimim* and many other things that the *Rebbeim* stood for and he supported them financially.

with the Rebbe and, for a second, forget about his entire business.

Reb Chonyeh Marozov HY"D related:

In the summer of תר"פ (1920), the economic situation in Kremenchug toppled and many of the wealthy residents left the city. Because of this, the situation of the *Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim* in the city went from bad to worse, reaching a point that on some days there was simply no food for the *bochurim*. At that time, the Friediker Rebbe was in the year of *aveilus* for his father, and he made every effort to help the *yeshiva*. The *yeshiva* was transferred to Rostov and loans were taken out to provide minimal portions of food for the *bochurim*.

The chossid and *gevir* Reb Shmuel had moved to Rostov the previous year (saying that he could not be far from the Rebbe) and dedicated himself to supporting the *yeshiva*. At this point, Reb Shmuel was not a rich man. In fact, he had lost everything in the revolution and the economic ruin. Reb Shmuel took out loans and sold many expensive possessions, giving all the money to the *talmidim*. The *yeshiva* with all sixty of its *bochurim* continued for another full year thanks to him.

The Friediker Rebbe related:

In the year תרע"ד (1914), my father was in Wiesbaden for Pesach, and the chossid Reb Shmuel Gurary came for all the *seudos*. During the *seudah* of *Shvi'i Shel Pesach*, my father discussed the *Chazal* that, "Even a simple maidservant witnessed more during *Krias Yam Suf* than even the Navi Yechezkel would see," and added, "We should not be less than the 'least of the least'; even they saw (*Elokus*) at the sea." And tears flowed from the Rebbe's eyes. These words made a huge impact on Reb Shmuel; they broke his heart. Long afterwards, whenever someone would refer to someone in business as 'the lowest of the low', he would flashback to the special moment

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE ENGAGEMENT PERIOD

From the time of the engagement, the Rebbe instructed that the *chossan* and *kallah* should refrain from even being in the same city. Often, at their *yechidus*, the Rebbe would inquire as to their planned whereabouts until the *chassuna* before bestowing a *bracha*.

In a similar vein, the Rebbe wrote to a *chossan*, "It is well known that from after the engagement it is desirable that the *chossan* and *kallah* not be in the same city." (*Teshura Sorkin-Simpson*)

Rabbi Chaim Farrow relates that after his engagement, the Rebbe instructed him to go study at the Brunoy *yeshiva* in France, so that he be away from his *kallah*. Even when he wanted to return to New York for his *chassuna*, the Rebbe didn't allow him to travel until eight days before the wedding date. (*Teshura Gopin-Havlin, 17 Adar II 5757*)

The Rebbe once wrote to a *kallah* who was planning a Chanukah trip to Eretz Yisroel that it is out of the question since her *chossan* was there. "It is inconsistent with the spirit of *Yiddishkeit*, and even less so with the spirit of *Chassidus*." (*Shiduchim Venisuin, 5752 Edition, page 93*)