

The Weekly *Farbrenge*



לחמן ישמעו • בא תשע"ח • 445
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

WIELDING WORDS (II)

SPIRITUAL EFFECTS

The Alter Rebbe records how his teacher, the Maggid, would speak out any spiritual revelation that came to his mind, even when his listeners were unable to understand it. When a concept is spoken it is drawn down to the world, enabling anyone to reach that concept on his own.

(מאמר אדה"ז הקצרים עמוד ע' תסד)

Once, while in the Baal Shem Tov's shul in Mezhibuzh, someone had an argument with another fellow and shouted that he would tear him to pieces like a fish. The Baal Shem Tov told his *talmidim* to hold hands, and to stand near him with their eyes closed. Then, he placed his holy hands on the shoulders of the two *talmidim* standing next to him. Suddenly, the *talmidim* began to scream in terror, for they saw this fellow actually tearing apart the other man.

(היום יום כ"ט תשרי)

It is *psakened* in *Shulchan Aruch* that one should not tell a child that a dog or cat "will come to take them," for this can *ch"v* bring upon the child evil forces with those names, which can harm their body or their *neshama*.

(ש"ע אדה"ז הל' שמירת הגוף והנפש סי"ב)

POWERFUL WORDS

In the city of Posen, Reb Boruch Batlan, the Alter Rebbe's great-grandfather, lived as a tenant of the goldsmith Avigdor Tuvia and his wife Gittel. Though this couple gave *tzedaka* generously to many people, they were not refined people; he played cards, drank heavily and used bad language, and his wife also spoke in an unrefined way and cursed when she was angered. People would tremble from her curses, for they were known to materialize.

In the year תמ"ב (1682), when Avigdor Tuvia and his wife passed away, without children, their neighbors began to hear wild screams and drunken laughter coming out of their vacant apartment. Jumping and dancing feet shook the floorboards. Reb Boruch and his family moved to another area, because they were unable to fall asleep at night.

On his next visit to his Rebbe, Reb Yoel, the Baal Shem of Zamoshtch, Reb Boruch told him about the haunted house in Posen and about its past residents. Reb Yoel Baal Shem advised him that the only way to drive the *sheidim* from the house was to turn it into a *beis midrash*." He then gave detailed directives: Ten of his

talmidim should fast the following Sunday, *lein Vayechal*, and spend the following night learning Torah. The next morning, five *sifrei Torah* wrapped in *talleisim* should be carried, each by two *talmidim*, and they should walk from the *shul* to the goldsmith's house. At the door, they should call out to the *sheidim*, telling them to leave the house and make way for the Torah. They should then go inside and say certain *kapitlach Tehillim*. *Minyanim* should be held there three times a day, and *shiuim* for young and old should be organized. "Then everything will be in order," concluded Reb Yoel Baal Shem.

CONSIDER

How did the Baal Shem Tov's *talmidim* perceive the man's threat before their vision?
How did they understand it afterwards?
Are forces created through speech or are they the energy of the speech itself?

Meanwhile, the mayor of Posen came one evening to see the situation for himself. When he heard the sounds of screaming, yelling, and clapping of hands, he hurried to ask the local bishop for a special prayer to remove the *sheidim* from the town. The bishop called together his priests, and they walked in a procession, carrying their *tzlamim*, until they reached the house where they sprinkled water on the walls and closed their eyes, mumbling a prayer. The apartment was on the first floor and had four windows facing the street, where the priests were standing. Suddenly, the windows were flung open and terrible faces popped out, so frightening that some priests fainted and many of the onlookers fled in terror.

That Sunday, the *talmidim* did as the Baal Shem had instructed. Hundreds of men and women, both Yidden and *goyim*, crowded outside, waiting to see what would happen. Unafraid, the *talmidim* called out three times for the *sheidim* to leave, and when the noises from the house did not stop, they broke down the door and entered. At that moment, every window pane was

shattered, as the weirdest collection of creatures flew out, escaping for their lives.

For six weeks, everything went smoothly, but then sounds were heard once again, this time coming from the cellar. The neighbors, who had been enjoying the relief, were horrified to once again hear loud barks and noises, giving them no peace by day or night. One tenant, a dealer in furs, was a *misnaged* to the Baal Shem, and denied the miracle, so when the *sheidim* returned, he was delighted. When the neighbors suggested inviting the Baal Shem himself to resolve the matter, this man was furious and declared he would fight to prevent this from happening. One day, a customer came to see some fur skins, so the dealer sent his son down to the cellar with the customer. As soon as they moved to open the cellar door, it flew open on its own, and out jumped the most frightening creature they had ever seen. The customer went white, the son became crazy, and they both ran screaming into the street, eventually fainting from fright. When they came to, the son had to be tied with rope to be kept under control. Now, even the *misnaged* did not object to have the Baal Shem come and rid them of the *sheidim*.

The Baal Shem traveled to Posen and arranged for the *Beis Din* to hold a *din Torah* with the *sheidim*. The newly-established *beis midrash* in the apartment was prepared, with a special area sectioned off by *mechitzos*, and the Baal Shem called out for the *sheidim* to appear, warning them not to hurt anyone. As soon as the *sheidim* made their presence felt, the Baal Shem began, "I have called you to a *Din Torah*, for you have exceeded the limits *HaShem* has set, by coming among mortals." Strange incomprehensible sounds were heard. At the instructions of the Baal Shem, the head of the *Beis Din* stood up and decreed that one of the *sheidim* be able to speak clearly. "We have every right to come here," the *sheid* countered. "We were created by the curses of Avigdor Tuvia and his wife, Gittel, so we are the lawful heirs, and their house rightfully belongs to us. We left the apartment only because the light of the *sifrei Torah* was too much for us to handle." The *sheidim* crowed and squeaked loudly, terrifying all those present. The Baal Shem called out: "I command you, in the name of *HaShem*, to be silent immediately and to remain hidden from human eyes. You must obey the *psak* of the *Beis Din!*"

The *shul* became perfectly silent and they disappeared. The *Beis Din* immediately *psakened* that they had no right to the inheritance, and they were never heard of again.

(ספר הזכרונות לאדה"ז ח"ב ע' 106)

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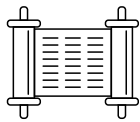


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BORROWING FROM A PUSHKA

May I borrow money from a pushka and pay it back later?

Money placed in an unmarked *pushka* is designated for *tzedaka* (for an unspecified cause). Such money may be borrowed from until it reaches the *gabbai tzedaka* (overseer of the *tzedaka* fund), if he can ascertain that as soon as poor people or the *gabbai tzedaka* comes he will repay. Therefore, one may borrow money from this *pushka* even for personal needs if he writes a note and makes sure to pay it back promptly.¹ Some hold that it is preferable to return more money than he borrowed in order that the *tzedaka* benefit from this arrangement.² Money in a *pushka* may be used to make change as long as the *tzedaka* doesn't lose anything.³

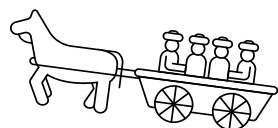
If the money was placed with a specific *tzedaka* cause in mind, or he had marked the *pushka* for a specific cause, it is proper not to switch the funds (see previous issue), though he may borrow from them in the above manner if needed.⁴

Once the money reaches the *gabbai tzedaka*, it is considered acquired by the poor people, and may not be borrowed from (unless it is in the interest of the *tzedaka*).⁵ A *pushka* provided by an organization is their receptacle that is placed with permission in the owner's home, and there is discussion amongst poskim if it acquires the money for the organization. Therefore, money in it should not be borrowed from or used for a different cause without permission from the *gabbai tzedaka*.⁶

However, one may stipulate that the money placed in the *pushkas* in his home shouldn't belong to the intended *tzedaka* causes until actually collected, and he should thus be allowed to borrow from them in the interim or switch them to a different cause.⁷ This stipulation is also beneficial in case money from the various *pushkas* gets inadvertently mixed with each other (as is often the case in homes with small children).

If an organization's *pushka* was left for multiple years without being collected, and one did not make the above stipulation, one should try to have the money brought to its intended cause (and he may deduct any shipping expenses from the *tzedaka*).⁸ If this isn't feasible, *Hataras nedarim* should be made for this particular designation of the funds and the money should be given to another *tzedaka* (preferably with a similar cause). The same applies if the original organization no longer exists. However, any money placed in the *pushka* after that point constitutes a mistaken vow and may be given to a different *tzedaka* cause without *hataras nedarim*.⁹

1. שו"ע יו"ד סי' רנט"ט ס"א. וראה פסקים ותשובות יו"ד שם סק"א וסק"ג ובמסומן שם.
2. שו"ת משנה הלכות ח"ז סי' קנ"ז.
3. ראה צדקה ומשפט פ"ח סק"ב.
4. אם אמר בדיבור - ראה פסקים ותשו"ש שם הע' מ"ח אחרונים בזה, וראה מחנה אפרים הל' צדקה סי' ב' שלמרות אמירתו לנבואה נ"מ מותר להלוות ולהחזיר.
5. ע"פ שו"ע יו"ד רנט"ט ס"א וראה אג"ק אדה"ז ע"ג (מצווה הבא בעבירה, עוון פלילי).
6. ראה חו"מ סי' ר' ס"ג ובש"ך שם סק"ז. אלא שהנתינת"מ סק"ח חולק שצריך לומר זיל קני. חצר הממותרת רק לדעת הגותן - ראה שו"ע חו"מ סי' אלעזר חט"ז סי' כ"ט.
7. וראה שו"ת צ"ץ



REB CHAIM BER WILENSKY

Reb Yitzchak Chaim Dovber HaLevi Wilensky ("Reb Chaim Ber Kremenchuger") was born around 5597 (1837) and was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab. He was one of the "Kremenchuger Beralach," a group of great chassidim in Kremenchug named DovBer after the Mittlerer Rebbe. He was a phenomenal *maskil* and a reserved but firm leader. Reb Chaim Ber passed away on the second night of Chanukah, 5653 (1892) and is buried in Kremenchug.

good, so he had what to work with, but he didn't take anything from my additions (those last words the Rebbe said with a smile). The skill of listening, I saw in him. He listened without making a single move, yet all of his limbs heard. He listened with his entire being, until he became red behind his ears."

In another section, the son writes: Everything about him gave the opposite impression of who he really was. Starting from his outward appearance—which mostly had nothing to do with him—he didn't look like a "chossid": He was a tall man with hardened facial features, a beard as neat as if it were trimmed, and he was extremely particular about the cleanliness of his clothes.

In a questionnaire which the Frierdiker Rebbe sent to Reb Michoel Wilensky to fill out about his father, he writes what he heard from the Rebbe Rashab at a gathering of *Simchas Beis Hashoeiva* in the year 5654 (1894):

First the Rebbe spoke about the previous chassidim of Kremenchug, and then he said "*Olam HaTikkun* [the realm of correction and stability] began with Chaim Ber." He continued to speak of how wary my father was of behaving in a manner that might make him look pretentious: how much he deliberated until he decided to wear a *gartel* for *davening*.

He looked as though he were a cold and calculated man who is impressed by nothing, someone who knows his value and is confident in himself. So much so that people would joke that he was a man whom death could not reach, due to his healthy body and nerves of steel. The truth, however, was quite the opposite, and those who were close to him, dubbed him, "the cold firebrand."

He then added, "He was here for several years. I had then repeated my father's *maamar* for him with my own 'introduction.' My father's words are

For the full questionnaire and other stories, see "*The Cold Firebrand - The Life of R. Chaim Ber Wilensky*" in *Perspectives Fifteen*.

A Moment with The Rebbe



ARICHUS YOMIM

On the historic Yud Shevat of 5711 (1951), when the Rebbe officially accepted the mantle of the *nesius*, Reb Yudel Chitrick and *Harav* Kahanov presented the Rebbe with the *ksav hiskashrus* from the *Anash* community of Montreal, Canada. As they handed it to the Rebbe, the Rebbe's eyes became moist, and he looked away so that it should be less noticeable.

Canada, Reb Yudel told the Rebbe that the landmark *maamar* "*Bosi Legani*" from the previous evening had been well received by the Chassidim.

The Rebbe responded with a *brocha* for *arichus yomim*. Reb Yudel was surprised, since this *brocha* wasn't used by the *rebbeim* commonly, and Reb Yudel was only 51 at the time.

The next day, before returning to

Indeed, Reb Yudel lived to the ripe old age of one-hundred and six.