

The Weekly Farbrengens



487 • למען ישמעו • תולדות תשע"ט
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

GUIDING GENTLY (II)

AVOIDING EMBARRASSMENT

Yeravam ben Nevat merited his kingship over the *Yidden* because he rebuked Shlomo HaMelech. Nevertheless, he was punished for doing it in public.

(סנהדרין ק"א)

The *Shaloh* understands the *possuk* in *Mishlei*, "Do not rebuke a fool for he might hate you; rebuke a wise person and he will love you," as an instruction on **how** to rebuke. When rebuking another, do not call him a fool, by reminding him of his deficiencies, for then he will hate you and not listen to what you are telling him. Rather, relate to him as to a wise person, and explain him that his actions are not befitting for someone like him. This way, he will love you and listen to your rebuke.

(של"ה פ' דברים דרך חיים)

The command, *hocheiach tochiach*, is universally translated as "You shall surely rebuke." The Rebbe once advised a rabbinic writer that he should use a more positive word – a verb indicating that the person offering admonishment is not focusing on his listener's faults, but on his good intentions.

(היום יום שע"י שיחות באנגלית הע' 925)

IN A PLEASANT MANNER

In the year תש"א (1941), the Friediker Rebbe sent Reb Sholom Ber Gordon to open a *yeshiva* in Newark, New Jersey. A few years later, Reb Sholom Ber was given the position of *rov* in a big *shul*, where he encountered a number of problems. The members of the *shul* did not observe *Shabbos*, and the president himself owned a movie theater that was open seven days a week. Reb Sholom Ber tried to influence these people by explaining the importance of *Shabbos*

and stressed the severity of its desecration by listing the punishments involved.

He told the Rebbe of his difficulties, and the Rebbe answered, "You were born in Dokshitz, so you are familiar with a *shvitz-bod*' (sauna). In the *shvitz*, after pouring hot water on a person, they beat him with a leafy branch, and the person being hit pleads for more. Suppose you would take such a branch and hit this fellow in the middle of the street, he would scream at you angrily, but in the bathhouse, where he is warmed up, he is happy to receive such treatment. Similarly, in your *shul*, you first have to warm them up with stories, and then they will gladly accept the *mussar*."

(מפי אחיו הר"ר ישראל שי' גארדאן)

CONSIDER

How can one admonish by speaking positive words?

Is the purpose of admonishment to influence the listener or to object wrongdoing?

For many years, the holy brothers Reb Elimelech of Lyzhansk and Reb Zusha of Hanipoli traveled through towns and villages across Europe to arouse *Yidden* to do *teshuvah*. Whenever they arrived somewhere for the night, one of them would act as a sinner coming to the other, his Rebbe, asking for a *tikkun*. Within earshot of their host, the 'sinner' would list all the *aveiros* of which the host was guilty. Overhearing this

confession, the host would remember that he too had committed such *aveiros*, and he would be aroused to do *teshuvah*.

One night, the brothers arrived in the house of a certain *Yid*, and Reb Zusha began to beg his brother for a *tikkun* for his negligence. He had never had his *tefillin* checked until recently, and the *sofer* had found that there were no *parshiyos* inside. All his life, he had never put on real *tefillin*!

The host, overhearing the conversation, realized that he himself had never had his *tefillin* checked, so he checked them immediately. To his alarm, he found that they were empty! Sobbing, he begged his visitors to show him how to do *teshuvah*. Reb Elimelech asked Reb Zusha to write their host a set of *parshiyos*, with the *kavana* that they draw down a great light, a light appropriate for a person who has never put on *tefillin*. Reb Zusha took *klaf*, quill and ink, wrote out the *parshiyos* required, placed them in their *batim*, and returned them to their owner. Many years later, these *tefillin* were found by the holy *tzaddik*, Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev.

(ספורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 66)

VOICING OPPOSITION

The Rebbe once explained that when distancing someone from actually committing an *aveira* (*le'afrushei mei'isura*) the obligation to admonish is greater than usual, yet even then one should attempt to do so in a pleasant manner.

The Rebbe also points out that if remaining silent will be understood by others as approval, one must voice an objection, regardless of its possible results. This can be seen from the Torah's teaching to rebuke "even a hundred times", even though one had already tried ninety-nine times without success.

(תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"ד ע' 212, לקוטי שיחות חכ"א ע' 405)



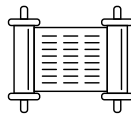
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PURITY FOR JUNIOR KOHANIM

May a *kohen's* wife have a checkup in a hospital with a morgue?

It is biblically prohibited for a male *kohen* to become impure by touching, carrying or being under the same roof as a corpse (and it is proper to be stringent even with a non-Jewish corpse). It is rabbinically prohibited for them to enter a cemetery and stand within four *amos* of a grave (or four *tefachim* when there is a partition). These prohibitions apply even in the present age when everyone is anyway impure.¹

Chazal derive from the *posuk* that there is a prohibition to bring even junior male *kohanim* to a state of impurity. Therefore, one may not bring even a baby *kohen* into a cemetery or hospital where it is forbidden for a *kohen* to enter, and even if the impurity is only rabbinical in nature.²

If a junior *kohen* is sleeping in a place where there is impurity from a corpse, it is debated amongst *poskim* whether he must be woken. In practice, although there is no obligation to do so, it is the proper thing to do for his *chinuch*.³ Yet, if he doesn't understand and still needs his mother (i.e. under six years old), he needn't be moved out.⁴

What about the pregnant wife of a *kohen*? May she go to a hospital for routine checkups? Can a fetus contract impurity? And do we have to be concerned that it might be a boy?

The Rokeach (a *rishon*) ruled that she may enter a cemetery due to a double doubt: it might be a girl, and even if it's a boy, there is small chance that he will not live to birth R"l. Others say that a fetus is absorbed inside the womb and doesn't contract *tuma*,⁵ and the Rokeach's need for the double doubt is interpreted to refer to the ninth month where there is concern that she might go into labor in the cemetery.⁶ Based on this explanation, entering a hospital with an attached morgue for a checkup or to give birth would be permissible. However, if an ultrasound confirmed that it is a boy, this ruins the double doubt, and one would have to try finding a medical facility without the issue of *tumas meis*.

Yet, many halachic authorities rule that one may rely on the opinion that an unborn fetus cannot contract impurity, and we needn't be concerned ahead of time with what will happen once the baby comes out. In this case, one should endeavor to enter the hospital before the active birthing process has begun, for once the baby is ready and exiting, he can already contract impurity.⁷

It is important to note that *pikuach nefesh* overrides this prohibition and in any life-threatening situation, a *kohen* may enter such a facility. Yet, when choosing a hospital in advance, one should look for one that doesn't have such problems whenever possible.⁸

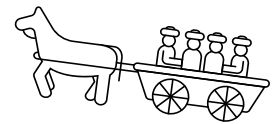
Once the baby boy is born, he need not be removed from the hospital as long as he needs his mother who is there. One shouldn't delay in the hospital unnecessarily (for new *tuma* might come to the hospital in the interim, and every time they open the doors to the baby's room this might allow *tuma* to enter),⁹ however, she needn't rush out of the hospital.¹⁰

Generally, the father (a *kohen*) may not visit a problematic facility unless it's medically needed.¹¹ If the baby was born prematurely and needs to remain in the hospital attended to by his parents, the father can be there as it is *pikuach nefesh*.¹²

In any case, one should do prior research of the available medical facilities with a *rov* who is familiar with these issues.

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RADATZ

The *gaon* and chossid R. Dovid Tzvi Chein, known among chassidim as the Radatz, was a son of the great chossid R. Peretz Chein of Tchernigov. Radatz was one of the extraordinary chassidim of the Rebbe Maharash, the Rebbe Rashab and the Frieddiker Rebbe. He was an unusual *gaon* in both *nigleh* and Chassidus and served as the *rov* in Tchernigov. In the year תרפ"ה (1925), he traveled to Eretz Yisroel and passed away about nine months later on the 24th of Kislev, תרפ"ו.

A *seder* for Jewish Russian soldiers was arranged one Pesach in the main *shul* of Chernigov. The Radatz was to deliver opening remarks at the *seder*, but when he started talking he burst out in tears of pity for these soldiers who were away from their families for Pesach, in a state of danger, and having a hard time practicing *Yiddishkeit*. He tried speaking three times, but each time he could not continue.

Finally, he managed to share this thought:

"The *posuk* in Hoshea says 'Mimitrayim korosi libni.' [Literally: from Egypt I have called to my son.] A deeper meaning is as follows: From Mitzrayim, which can refer to 'meitzarim' – constraints, pain and hardship, 'korosi libni' – the

son within a Jew is called forth." (Meaning that the constraints on *Yiddishkeit* while serving in the army should be a catalyst for strengthening the bond of a son that every *Yid* has with Hashem.)

With that he resumed sobbing and could not go on.

(למנחם עמ' 27)

Radatz's holiness was evident to all, even to the local gentiles.

There was once a meeting of *rabbanim* in Chernigov, and a Russian artist came to find a rabbi who "looked like the patriarchs" to paint. The artist went around greatly disappointed as he could not find what he sought. That is until the Radatz passed by him. He froze in his spot and was totally overwhelmed. He then went to the Radatz's home to ask that he be permitted to paint his image. His sons did not bother asking their father, since they knew he would not consent.

The artist lamented that he found only one rabbi who looked as Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov must have looked, but he could not approach.

Likewise, one of the Czars who met the Radatz was also deeply impressed by his persona.

(למנחם עמ' 39)

A Moment with The Rebbe



SETTING THE STANDARD

In the 5710's (1950's), a *chasuna* with a *mehitza* was considered an Eastern European concept. Besides for a few families who held onto the *alter heim* traditions, the mainstream *frum* community did without. 770 *bochurim*, with the Rebbe's encouragement, began to penetrate this barrier. In Montreal, Reb Elye Gross's *chasuna* in 5714 (1954) paved the way.

In Manchester, UK, when Reb Avrohom Jaffe insisted on having a *mehitza* at his own *chasuna* in 5724 (1964), it created an uproar. His father Reb Zalman, and future father-in-law Mr. Sydney Beenstock,

were both highly respected in secular circles, and many of their friends planned to attend. Additionally, a prominent *rosh yeshiva* had made a mixed-seating wedding a week earlier, and this would be an affront.

The Rebbe was contacted, and a 20 Tammuz letter followed, encouraging a *mehitza* of "due dignity and splendor," even if it were to instigate financial complications. (Mr. Manchester, page 152)

That closed the case. "Since my *chassuna*," says Reb Avrohom, "it has become the norm in Manchester."