

The Weekly *Farbrengens*

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנשי

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EVERY SINGLE YID (I)

FOR A SOLITARY LAMB

Before Moshe Rabbeinu was chosen to lead the Yidden, *HaShem* measured his level of caring dedication to his flock. Indeed, when Moshe would take the sheep to graze, he would allow the old and weak sheep to eat the softer grass, while the tougher grass he left for the young and strong ones. This sensitivity to the needs of each group was certainly impressive, but it was not yet enough to show that he was fit to become the Yiddishe leader.

Once, one solitary lamb ran away from the flock and Moshe ran after it. He followed it to a creek where it stopped and drank. Moshe apologized, "I didn't know that you were thirsty. And you are probably also quite tired!"

He lifted it onto his shoulder and returned it to the flock. It was this incident that proved him truly worthy of becoming the *Raaya Mehemna*, the Faithful Shepherd.

Similarly, the Rebbe explains, a true Yiddishe leader is not one who concerns himself only with the grand needs of his community - "*Klal Yisroel*," but one who also sees to the seemingly insignificant needs of each **individual** Yid - "*Reb Yisroel*."

(שמו"ר פ"ב פ"ב, שיחור"ק תשל"א ח"ב ע' 342)

TWO YEARS FOR ONE NESHAMA

Reb Yosef of Beshenkovitch, a *talmid chacham* who knew the entire *Shas* and *Rambam* by heart, earned the greatest honor from the *talmidei chachomim* of his town. In the year תקס"ד (1804), the Alter Rebbe advised him, "For the benefit of your *neshama*, it would be better for you to become a wagon-driver than a *rov*." Ten years later, in תקע"ד (1814), when he was 70 years old, Reb Yosef was offered the *rabbonus* in the town of Liepli. Recalling the Rebbe's advice, he realized that now was the time to follow it, and he declined the offer.

For a month he wavered, confused, not knowing what to do. Eventually he mustered up enough courage to visit the local wagon station. When the wagon-drivers saw him, they asked him where he wished to travel.

"I haven't come to travel," he answered in a low voice. "I've come here to learn how to become a wagon-driver."

They looked at each other in surprise, and began to joke at his expense. One driver, however, saw his insistence and agreed to teach him the trade. In the stall, he was shown how to hitch the horses, attach the saddle and the reins, and how to oil the wheels. While he was busy learning, one of the horses whipped his tail and almost knocked out his eye.

That night, Reb Yosef arrived home dirty and bruised. He changed his clothing, went to *shul* to *daven*, and gave his *shiur*. Returning home, he found his wife in tears, for she had heard of his visit to the stables. However, when he then shared the Rebbe's instructions, she told him, "So if the Rebbe told you this, you mustn't delay even a day. Tomorrow I'll sell my jewelry and you will be able to buy a wagon."

CONSIDER

Why did specifically the care for an individual show that one is a worthy leader?

Hearing her innocent words, Reb Yosef decided to travel to Velizh, where he would learn more about the trade from a wagon-driver who was also a *talmid chacham* and a *chossid*.

Time passed and he became used to his new lifestyle. One evening he stopped over at a Yiddishe inn, and sat down with a *sefer*. The innkeeper introduced him to a guest who needed to travel the following day. The guest, 'Solomon Gamitzki' (earlier known as Shlomo Leib), was a Yid who had deserted the paths of Yiddishkeit, and had become a friend and employee of Count Batchaikov, no less.

"What time will we leave?" asked the guest.

"After *davening*," was Reb Yosef's reply.

"At what *time*?" he retorted. "To me, it makes no difference whether you *daven* or not; I need to know when we will travel, to know when to wake

up, wash, and eat."

"...And *daven*," added Reb Yosef.

"That I leave for you," concluded the guest. When he realized that Reb Yosef would not be ready to leave until 10:00 a.m., he ordered another coach for 5:00 a.m., and went to sleep for the night.

Shortly after midnight he awoke, bewildered. Someone was crying. He opened his door and saw Reb Yosef sitting on the floor, saying *Tikkun Chatzos* by candlelight and weeping. That sight penetrated deeply into his heart. Memories of his youth, his father, his *melamed*, the wife and children he had left, all passed before his eyes. When the night drew to an end, he watched Reb Yosef *daven* with earnest *kavana*, and his eyes filled with tears. At 5:00, the innkeeper came to notify him that his coach was ready, but he decided to travel with Reb Yosef instead. Hours passed, and Reb Yosef was still *davening*. Overcome with anguish, the guest went to the innkeeper, borrowed his *tallis* and *tefillin*, and *davened* too.

However, so intense were his feelings of regret and *teshuvah* that he became extremely ill. For several days he hovered between life and death. The count sent his own doctor to examine him, but the doctor gave up hope. Reb Yosef remained at the sick man's bedside, fasting and saying *Tehillim*, and helping him with his decision to return to his family and Yiddishkeit. Eventually, Shlomo Leib regained his strength and was able to leave the inn. Reb Yosef traveled home and when he arrived, he saw many *chassidim* preparing to travel to the Mittlerer Rebbe in Lubavitch.

Arriving there, he was greatly surprised to meet Shlomo Leib. He had resigned from his job with the Count, and had now come to Lubavitch to learn and be near the Mittlerer Rebbe. When Reb Yosef entered for *yechidus*, the Rebbe informed him, "My father appeared to me last night and told me that Yosef of Beshenkovitch has fulfilled his mission. My father turned a *lamdan* into a wagon-driver for the sake of one Yid. Now, for the benefit of many Yidden, he instructed me to appoint you as *mashpia* to all the *chassidim* in Beshenkovitch."

(הקדמה לקובץ פוקח עוריים)



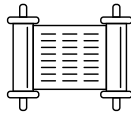
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THE RIGHT ARM FOR TEFILLIN

I eat with my right but write with my left. On which arm should I don tefillin?

The Gemara brings two expositions to teach that tefillin are to be bound on one's left hand: (1) The juxtaposition of "ukshartam" ("you should tie") and "uchsavtam" ("you should write") teaches that the tefillin should be tied with the same hand that one uses to write (writing demonstrates a professional use of the hand), thus they are tied onto the opposite arm; (2) The word "yad'cha" is read as "yad keiha," the weaker hand, which is usually the left.

The question arises if one writes with one hand but does most other things with the other, thus in a way, his "weaker" hand is the hand he writes with. Do we follow the weaker hand, or we solely look at which hand he uses for writing?

If one was born right-handed and later trained himself to write with his left hand, it is clear that he still puts tefillin on his left arm, unless he also trained himself to do everything else with his left hand, in which case he is now halachically deemed left-handed.

Regarding one who from childhood writes with his left and does everything else with his right, Shulchan Aruch quotes dissenting views as to which arm should be used for tefillin, and Rema rules that the hand used for writing (his left) is his primary hand, thus tefillin are placed on the opposite one (his right arm).

The Magen Avraham and Alter Rebbe concur with the Rema, and the Mishna Berura writes that this is the custom of many. Yet, the Tzemach Tzedek differs and sides with the view that the hand used for the majority of activities is primary, and tefillin are placed on his left arm. Some rule that this dispute has no conclusive resolution.

If one writes with his right and does everything else with his left, the Alter Rebbe holds tefillin should be placed on his left arm, while the Tzemach Tzedek holds in this scenario he should don tefillin on both arms—one after the other, or one right after davening.

Amongst Chabad rabbonim, there is a longstanding disagreement how to rule. Although whenever the Tzemach Tzedek differs with the Alter Rebbe we generally follow the Tzemach Tzedek - since halacha follow the later opinion (halacha k'basra'i) who was aware of the earlier opinion's arguments - here he doesn't clearly mention the Alter Rebbe's opinion and the widespread custom seems to follow the Alter Rebbe (although if one wishes to be stringent and don on both hands, there is room for such a hidur). However, every person should ask his personal rov which view to follow.

1. גמ' מנחות ל"ז ע"א.
2. אור התפילין סי' כ"ז חידושים סק"א.
3. שו"ע אורח סי' כ"ז משינ"ב אורח סי' כ"ז סק"ז.
4. שו"ע אורח סי' כ"ז ס"ו, ולפי כללי פסיקה כנה"ג סי' כ"ב מכריע שהוא איטר. אבל ראה צ"צ סי' ד' אות ב' שלומד שהמחבר בשו"ע סב"ל כדיעה השניה. (יוצא דבר דוש שלפי הצ"צ לא אמרינן במחבר יש ויש הלכה ככתרא).
5. מג"א שם סק"ג. שו"ע ר סי' כ"ז ס"ט.
6. מנהג העולם בבבלי אורח סי' כ"ז ד"ה והכי נהוג.
7. שו"ת צ"צ אורח סי' ד-ה וס"י יב, ולהעיר שהצ"צ אינו מציין שם שהוא חולק על אדה"ז רק מול מג"א, וראה שמציין להב"י סי' כ"ז ד"ה ואיטר יד ימינו.
8. פסק"ת אורח סי' כ"ז הע' 111.
9. שו"ע"ר שם ושו"ת צ"צ אורח סי' ד' אות ב'. (מעניין שבמקרה הקודם לא הציע שינתי בשתי ידיו כמו במקרה זה וצ"ע).
10. מפי השמועה (וראה יגד"ת גל' לח - תשרי תשמ"א): כפי אדה"ז - הרב גורליק ע"ה מכפר חב"ד, הרב אשכנזי ע"ה, שמעתי הרב לגדא ע"ה והרב דוורקינן ע"ה; כפי הצ"צ - הרב שמואל לעוויעטען ע"ה, הרב אליהו סימפסון ע"ה, וכן מכריע בס' דיני איטר.
11. כך העירו בשו"ע"ר עם ציונים. וראה הע"ב ג'ל' תשע"ב מענה מהרבי לאחד שזקני רבני חב"ד הורו לו כאדה"ז והתנאל עונה לו הרבי שיש לסמוך עליהם.
12. וראה אג"ק ח"א ע' קמ"ח שלא מברכים בהנחה השניה ובהנחה הראשונה יכוון גם על השניה.



REB SHMUEL MUNKES

Reb Shmuel Munkes, from the town of Kalisk, was one of the great chassidim of the Alter Rebbe. The author of the Beis Rebbi writes about him: "He was a great chossid and clever in his fear of Hashem, and was well respected by the Alter Rebbe. His conduct is well known, and superficially it seemed as if he acted foolishly, but even there one could see his exceptional genius."

handiwork. However, there is a difference: the shoe and garment are hung by the artisan, but the chossid is not hung by the Rebbe but by the chossid himself (as Reb Shmuel did). This means that in order for the Rebbe's efforts to have their effect, the chossid must 'suspend himself,' with total dedication to the Rebbe's directives.

(לקו"ם פרלוב ע' שי"א)

The Radatz Chein related:

Reb Shmuel Munkes once suspended himself from the gate leading to the Alter Rebbe's beis medrash. When the Chassidim questioned him about his strange perch, he told them, "In front of a shoemaker shop, there hangs a shoe; in front of a tailor's workplace, there hangs a garment; in front of a Rebbe's shul there should hang a chossid."

My father, Reb Peretz Chein, once arrived at the home of Reb Shmuel Munkes, and before going to bed he asked Reb Shmuel what time he would be getting up. Reb Shmuel replied that he would rise at 3 a.m. In the morning, Reb Shmuel prepared a cup of coffee for himself and for his guest, but Reb Peretz found the coffee to be incredibly bitter and undrinkable. He rummaged around and discovered that Reb Shmuel had unknowingly placed snuff tobacco instead of coffee grinds.

In his Likutei Sippurim, Reb Chaim Mordechai Perlov notes that Reb Shmuel was a profound chossid and not a joker, and he explains Reb Shmuel's remark as follows:

My father asked Reb Shmuel, "How did you drink from this bitter 'coffee'?" To which Reb Shmuel replied, "Believe me, already thirteen years that I don't taste anything that I eat."

(חסידים הראשונים ח"א ע' 73)

A Moment with The Rebbe



AMERICA IS READY FOR YIDDISHKEIT

In an Iyar 5718 (1958) yechidus, a prominent activist questioned the Rebbe what he thought of the state of Yiddishkeit in America: "Do you think it could be like it was back in Europe?"

In my opinion, very much could be accomplished."

"In a way, America is in a better state than Europe was!" the Rebbe replied.

The Rebbe continued, pinpointing the problem. "The issue lies with the leadership. They feed Yiddishkeit afen shpitz messer (on the tip of a knife) - an abridged version of Torah.

"In Europe, the Haskala movement poisoned the masses with twisted ideas. Here, people are uncontaminated. The ground is fertile, and it is fairly easy to work.

"All of the 613 mitzvos, in their entirety, should be communicated to every Yid. The masses are ready!" (Groner Teshurah Elul 5763)