

The Weekly Farbrengens



למען ישמעו • חוקת תשע"ט • 522
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SIMPLE SINCERITY (I)

GREATEST VIRTUE

The Torah says, *Tamim tih'yeh im HaShem Elokecha* - "Trust HaShem your G-d with simple faith." The *Midrash* interprets the *possuk* as if it were to be read as follows: If you are **tomim**, you will be **im** ("with") *HaShem Elokecha*. That is to say: If you serve G-d with simple faith, your portion is **with** *HaShem*.

To this teaching the Mittlerer Rebbe adds: "Through *temimus* you can connect with the *temimus* of *HaShem* - with the *temimus* of *Atzmus*, which is the simple and undefinable Essence of *HaShem*."

(דברים יג, יא. ספרי שופטים קעג, סה"ש תשי"א ע' 101)

Temimus, the sincerity of simple faith, is a lofty virtue: no other virtue compares to it. Everyone should therefore do his share and serve *HaShem* with a heart filled with simple faith. For even if his actions seem small in his own eyes, they are valuable to *HaShem*.

(משנת חכמים למהר"מ חגיז סי' ריט)

In days of old everything was done with *temimus*, unquestioning sincerity, and this was apparent in the children, the parents and the teachers.

(סה"ש תשי"א ע' 101)

DESIRES THE HEART

In a village near Tarnow in Galicia there lived a simple Yid called Reb Eliezer Lipa. He couldn't study Torah and didn't even know the meaning of the *davening* or *Tehillim*, but he was a sincere person who always *davened* with a *minyán*, made a point of never missing an *Amen*, and he would follow *Krias HaTorah* from a *Chumash*. He never conversed about worldly matters in the *shul*, and he would honor *talmidei chachomim* and *bonei Torah*.

He managed to make a decent living as a water-carrier, since he had four well-to-do merchants who were steady customers and paid him well.

One day, the Baal Shem Tov arrived in Tarnow. At that time, before he had revealed himself to the world, he appeared to be an ordinary traveler. He would befriend the simple folk and tell them stories from the *Aggadah*, and he would describe to them the great pleasure that *HaShem* derives from

the sincere *Tehillim* of a simple Yid.

Reb Eliezer Lipa was once leading his wagon through the center of town, when he spotted his fellow water-carrier Reb Zalman Dov and other friends, listening to a poor traveler. Reb Eliezer Lipa went over to join them. The Baal Shem Tov was telling the following story from the *Midrash*.

"There was once a wealthy man who was taking a fattened ox to the *Beis HaMikdash* for a *korbon*. It was a massive beast, and when it decided, for reasons of its own, to stop still in its tracks, nobody could move it. A poor man was on his way home with a bunch of greens in his hand. Noticing the scene, he held out his greens for the animal to nibble, while he drew it to its destination. That night the owner of the ox had a dream in which he heard a voice saying, 'The *korbon* of the poor man is greater than yours.'

CONSIDER

Why is sincerity so valuable?

Why are a poor man's greens
more sincerely given than a rich
man's animal?

The Baal Shem Tov explained, "What *HaShem* desires is a person's **heart**. The wealthy man was so joyful that he made a huge feast for his family and friends and he distributed gifts to the *kohanim*. He felt very proud of his great *mitzva*. The poor man, on the other hand, felt broken by his poverty. He thought: What worth is my bunch of greens in comparison to the fatted animal of the wealthy man?

"However," concluded the Baal Shem Tov, "the One Above derives more pleasure from the poor man's greens than from the rich man's ox."

The Baal Shem Tov went on to explain to his unsophisticated listeners that whatever *mitzva* a Yid does is measured by its intention. A small act done for *HaShem's* sake, with joy and purity

of heart, is very precious to the Creator. *HaShem* prides himself with it before the *malochim* and says, 'Look at the good deed that my son or daughter has done!' and showers the Yid with *brachos*."

Reb Eliezer Lipa continued on, but his mind knew no rest. How he longed to be able to do a *mitzva* like the poor man in the story, with pure intention and a heart overflowing with joy. He shared with his wife what he had heard from the traveling guest, and told her how every *mitzva* they performed was like a *korbon*.

Weeks passed and still Reb Eliezer Lipa knew no peace. One day, as he delivered water to a wealthy customer, an idea fell into his head. He was excited. His four wealthy customers provided him with half of his livelihood, since they paid him far more than the going rate for a barrel of water. On the other hand, his friend Reb Zalman Dov supplied the town's four *shuls*, which paid him half-price for their water. "I can exchange four of my customers for four of his," thought Reb Eliezer Lipa. "Four wealthy homes for four *shuls*." He shared the idea with his wife, and she immediately agreed.

Reb Zalman Dov accepted the offer, and the two switched without anyone noticing a difference. There were days when Reb Eliezer Lipa's wife went to the river to participate in the *mitzva* of drawing the water for the *shuls*. As they hauled the water, they would concentrate on the *mitzva* of preparing water for their fellow townsmen to wash their hands with before *davening*.

They were blessed with two sons, who did not succeed in learning. The parents would often recite *Tehillim* together in tears, with Reb Eliezer Lipa reading word for word and his wife repeating each word after him. Every Friday she would distribute two *challos* to the poor, and light two candles so that their two sons should shine in Torah. At times they also fasted, and distributed the value of their meals to *tzedaka* in the merit of their sons.

A short time after they began supplying the water for the *shul*, word reached them that their sons began to succeed in their studies. Eventually they both grew up to be the great *tzaddikim* - Reb Elimelech of Lyzhensk and Reb Zusya of Anipoli.

(סה"ש תשי"א ע' 309. ויקרא רבה פ"ג, ה.)



Perspectives
TWENTY THREE

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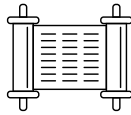
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SELLING A HOME TO A GENTILE

May I sell my house in a *frum* neighborhood to a gentile who is by far the highest bidder?

Halacha states that a home or property with Jewish neighbors must be sold to a Jew, for doing otherwise can be detrimental to the remaining neighbors by introducing a neighbor who might be a nuisance.¹ This applies even if a gentile is offering a higher amount.² (The general idea of giving preference to a Jewish buyer ("*mimkar la'amisecha*") doesn't necessarily apply when there is a substantial price difference.³)

While some *poskim* hold that this prohibition applies even when there is no Jew willing to pay its appraised value, other *poskim* rule that it may be sold to a gentile in this case, and so is the *halacha*.⁴ If, however, the sale is clearly detrimental to the Jewish neighbors in the vicinity, even if they aren't next-door neighbors —e.g. causing them to feel unsafe, move out, or causing the value to fall—all *poskim* agree that one may not sell it, even if no Jew is offering a decent price.⁵

The same laws apply to **renting** a home to a gentile. If, however, one purchased a home from a gentile who was neighboring a Jew, he may then rent it to a gentile—lessening the permanency of the gentile residency—as long as there is no apparent harm to the neighbors, but not sell it to him.⁶

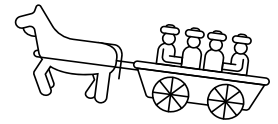
If one sold or rented a home to a gentile contrary to *halacha*,⁷ the sale is valid, but we coerce the seller or landlord by way of *cherem* to accept financial responsibility for any damage or monetary loss that the Jewish neighbors may incur as a result. (This particularly applies to damages or annoyances that are permissible according to secular law but prohibited under Jewish law).⁸ If, however, he didn't take this responsibility and a damage occurred, he need not compensate the neighbor.⁹

Even when generally allowed, if it seems to the *beis din* that the gentile is trying to infiltrate the Jewish neighborhood, one may not sell him the property.¹⁰ The Rebbe spoke very strongly on this issue and underlined that the sale in some cases can cause direct and immediate damage to the neighbors, thus much precaution must be exercised.¹¹ The Rebbe also discussed the issue of causing shuls to close down and the effect that the gentiles will want to take over more neighborhoods. The *sicha* was published in the Torah journal *Hapardes* in 1969, and in the next issue, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein wrote that he agrees and that there is nothing to add after the Rebbe's words.¹²

5. ראה לקו"ש ח"ו ע' 351 ע"פ שו"ע חו"מ סי' קע"ו ס"א וסי' קע"ה סמ"א. וכסף הקדשים על ס"מ, ובהרחבה בשו"ת נטע שעשועים שמוכר ביהודים ע"ה ח"ב ע' 351.
6. שו"ת חו"מ סי' קע"ה ס"ק ל"ו.
7. וראה בטור ד"ש מחלקים שלפרנסה מותר אם מקבל ע"ה כל אונס, אבל הרא"ש מותר בלי שיקבל ע"ה - ראה פת"ש סקט"ו.

8. שו"ת חו"מ סי' קע"ה ס"מ.
9. רמ"א שם כשיטת הראב"ד דלא כהרא"ש ששכ"ל שמ"מ חייב דהר"ל מזמין בגיירה דיליה.
10. שו"ת חו"מ סי' קע"ה סמ"א.

11. ראה שיחת אחש"פ תשכ"ט, הודפס בחלקו בלקו"ש ח"ו ע' 350 ואילך, וכן בתו"מ חנו" ע' 132 ואילך (עם הוספות מע' 141).
12. שיחת הרבי נדפסה בקובץ הפרדס שנה מג חוברת ז' (ע' 5 ואילך) ובאותו שנה בחוברת ח' (ע' 5) נדפס מכתב הגרמ"פ.



REB ALTER SIMCHOVITCH

Reb Chaim Alter Nissan Shimon Simchovitch (known as Reb Alter Potchiper) was an outstanding *chossid* of the Rebbe Rashab and Frieddiker Rebbe. He served as a *mashpia* in various branches of Tomchei Temimim, including Toras Emes in Yerushalayim and Tomchei Temimim in Warsaw. For a while, he was the *chozer* of the Rebbe Rashab. Reb Alter passed away on the 7th of Nissan תרצ"ט (1939).

The *bochurim* in Toras Emes once asked Reb Alter to repeat for them a *maamar* and to *farbreng* with them. Reb Alter replied that he could only do one of the two, since each one required eight hours of internal preparation.

At one point, Reb Alter contracted tuberculosis and he suffered terribly. He once turned to the students

sitting around his bed and shared what he was thinking, "Hashem! You create the world every moment anew. Does the fact that yesterday you created a sick set of lungs mean that you should continue to do so every moment?"

Once, while in Yerushalayim, someone referred to the Lithuanian Yidden who lived in Batei Broida as "*misnagdim*."

Reb Alter retorted: Those aren't "*misnagdim*"! In Russia we saw *misnagdim* who weren't particular about wearing a *talis katan* and other "small" *mitzvos*. These people are very particular with *mitzvos*; they are careful to avoid speaking *lashon hara* and they study Torah diligently. These are "*baal-shemske Yidden*"!

(אוצר החסידים - רוסיא ופולין ע' 361, 335, 464)

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE INCRIMINATING DOCUMENTS

At one Yud Beis Tammuz *farbrengen*, the Rebbe turned to the warm *chossid* Reb Zalman Duchman. Since he was present at the arrest of the Frieddiker Rebbe in 5687 (1927), the Rebbe asked him to share some memories.

Reb Zalman stood up, and began to relate:

"During the arrest, there was a grave risk that some incriminating documents would be found. I

remember how the Rebbe, then the Rebbe's son-in-law, spent that entire frightful evening concealing the papers. Some of them, I watched him chew and swallow..."

At this point, the Rebbe motioned with his hand, that enough was said. Reb Zalman obeyed, but couldn't control himself from adding, "Oh, you were always modest..."

(Who's Who in Lubavitch, page 59; see also Otzar Hachassidim NY, page 469)

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