



## PERSONAL KINDNESS (2)

### Personal Involvement

The Baal Shem Tov said: The way to recognize lessons in *avoda* from life occurrences is to say a *kapitl Tehillim* with a fiery heart, personally putting in effort to do kindness for a Yid, and having *ahavas Yisroel* with *mesiras nefesh*. These are the keys that open the locks to the chambers of mercy, health, *yeshuah* and *parnassa*.

(סה"ש קי"ת"ש ע' 73)

One Yom Kippur, in middle of *chazaras hashatz* of *Shacharis*, the Alter Rebbe motioned to the *chazzan* to quicken his pace. After he finished, the Alter Rebbe removed his *tallis*, left the shul and headed towards the home of an ailing woman who had just given birth. Entering the house, the Alter Rebbe took some twigs, lit a fire and cooked kasha for her.

The Rebbe points out that although the Alter Rebbe could have sent others to help the woman, he chose to do it himself. In addition, he put aside his lofty *davening* on Yom Kippur to care for the needs of another Yid.

(רשימות היומן ע' שסא, התועדויות תשד"מ ח"ב ע' 627)

The Friediker Rebbe once described what had taken place while he was traveling with his father, the Rebbe Rashab: "One day, after lunchtime, my father was reclining on the couch and appeared to be in another world. He was not asleep but was leaning on his side and had an unusual expression in his eyes. This continued for many hours, until he suddenly awoke and asked me, "What day is it? What *parsha* is it today?" and I answered.

"The following morning, my father said that he needed to take care of a few errands, so I stayed behind in the hotel. A short while later, a package of women's clothing was delivered to our hotel room, and throughout the rest of the day, many more packages were dropped off. In the evening, my father returned and said that we were to pack up and leave for Pressburg.

"Upon our arrival there, we began walking down the street and met a *bochur* on the way, whom my father asked for directions to a specific hotel. The *bochur* directed us and told

us that the hotel owner had just passed away (at the exact time when my father was reclining on the couch) and his family was now sitting *shiva*. We then walked to a nearby *Yeshiva* and went into the *beis medrash*, where my father began a learned discussion *in learning* with some of the *bachurim*, including the *bochur* we had met in the street. There was one student with whom my father spoke at length, and later praised him highly.

"We then went to the hotel and my father spoke to the widow and her daughters. He encouraged her to marry off her daughters. The woman began to sob, saying that she could not afford clothing for a *chasuna* and didn't know of any appropriate matches for her orphaned girls. My father comforted her and proposed *shidduchim* for them. For the oldest daughter, my father suggested the *bachur* with whom he had spoken to at length at the *Yeshiva*, and for the second daughter, he suggested the *bachur* that we had met in the street. In the end, the *shidduchim* were successful and my father provided the clothing for both of the *chasunos*.

(סה"ש תרפ"ד ע' 62)

### No Exceptions!

The mother of the chossid Reb Refael Nachman Kahn related: "Once the Rebbe Rashab and the Friediker Rebbe stayed near Liozna, in the town where I lived. One day I headed toward the *shochet*, holding a chicken in one hand and my young son in the other. At that time, I was also expecting a child. Sitting on the porch of his home, the Friediker Rebbe saw me struggling, and motioned to me to stop, and though he did not know me, he offered to *shecht* the chicken himself, sparing me from the walk to the *shochet*."

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 193)

One day, while walking along Eastern Parkway toward 770, an elderly man carrying two heavy suitcases approached the Rebbe and said, "Can you please help me with one of my suitcases?"

The Rebbe gladly took the suitcase, and they continued walking together. Hearing the man sigh heavily, the Rebbe asked the man what was

wrong, and the man responded, "This suitcase is also too heavy for me." Immediately, the Rebbe took the second suitcase as well.

A passing chossid who witnessed the scene approached the elderly man and whispered to him that the person carrying his suitcases was none other than the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The man was shocked; he stopped in his tracks and cried, "*Gevald!* What have I done?!" and began apologizing profusely to the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded, "What's with the *mitzva* of helping another? Was that *mitzva* only given to others and not to me?!"

(ראש בני ישראל ע' 142)

On another occasion, a worker in 770 was carrying a ladder, when he suddenly felt it become lighter. Turning around, he saw the Rebbe holding the other end. He asked the Rebbe to let go of it, but the Rebbe replied, "Does [here the Rebbe said his own name] not have to fulfill the *mitzva* of helping another?!"

(בית חיינו ע' 229)

As a young married man, the *tzaddik* Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev lived in his father-in-law's house. His in-laws, who were wealthy, often hosted many guests, and Reb Levi Yitzchok would personally see to the needs of the visitors, preparing bundles of straw for the bedding and arranging the bed and linen. Seeing this, his father-in-law asked him why he troubled himself when *goyim* could be paid to do such menial jobs.

"Tell me," said Reb Levi Yitzchok, "is it right to give a *goy* the privilege of doing the *mitzva*, and on top of that to *pay* him for it?"

(סיפור ח זוין תורה ע' 66)

### CONSIDER THIS!

- Is personally doing the kindness an advantage for the provider or for the receiver?
- Is one always obligated to personally care for others?
- How will there be time left for learning?

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# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Gourarie

## OUR HEROES

כ"ו אייר

### Reb Peretz Chain



Reb Peretz, a renowned chossid, served as rov first in Nevel, then in Beshenkovitz and later in Tchernigov. He merited seeing six Rabbeim. As an infant he saw the Alter Rebbe and thereafter all the Rabbeim until the Frieddiker Rebbe, whom at that time was a child. After the passing of the Mittlerer Rebbe, Reb Peretz played an instrumental role in the Tzemach Tzedek accepting *nesius*, as well as the later Rebbe Maharash accepting *nesius*. Known by numerous names, including Peretz Beshenkovitzer, Peretz Nevler, and his bochurhood name Peretz Smilianer, Reb Peretz passed away on the 26<sup>th</sup> of Iyar, תרמ"ג (1883).

At one point, the Mittlerer Rebbe instructed Reb Peretz to perform "Tikun Chatzos." At his next Yechidus, Reb Peretz informed the Rebbe of his stopping. "To say Tikun Chatzos with a truthful heart, I am incapable of, and to lie to myself and say it anyway, this I do not want to do..." The Rebbe accepted his decision.



Right up until he passed away, Reb Peretz maintained his regular avoda. Three days before what would be his passing, Reb Peretz called on his son, the Radat"z:

"Many years ago my mother appeared to me and relayed three things: (1) 'I have been sent from shamayim to tell you that your *chazarah* of what you have already learned is more precious than the learning for the first time.' (2) '*Machshavos zaros* during *davening* are equal to *piggul* (a *karban* brought with the incorrect intentions, thus rendering it *posul*).' (3) She revealed all the major episodes of my life, until the end of my days.

"Now, my son, the last episode happened today. I know my end is near."

The Radat"z left the room white and trembling.

That Shabbos, Reb Peretz davened for an exceptionally long time. During his davening, he instructed his family to start the *seudah* without him. Everyone understood unique events were unfolding, and ate their *seudah* quickly, gathering afterwards to hear the davening of Reb Peretz. The recitation of Shema and Boruch Sheim alone extended for an hour and a half. After finishing Musaf, Reb Peretz sent Reb Shalom Reb Hillel's (a talmid of Reb Hillel Paritcher) to visit a nearby Shul, as Reb Shalom was a *kohen*. Reb Peretz then began davening mincha, and as he finished Shmoneh Esreh of Shabbos *mincha* his *neschama* left his body.

(שמו"ס ח"א ע' 276)

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

### The Bracha of 'Mishaneh Habriyos'

Is there a *bracha* to be recited when visiting a zoo?

- The Gemara<sup>1</sup> states that one who sees a monkey or elephant should recite the *bracha* "meshaneh habriyos," praising HaShem who creates strange creations. The Me'iri<sup>2</sup> explains that these two animals are singled out since in some way they appear to a human: an elephant doesn't have hairy skin and uses its trunk in similar way that a human uses his hands, and a monkey has an appearance similar to that of a human and uses his hands like a human does. Another explanation given<sup>3</sup> is that at the time of the *mabul*, HaShem punished many evil people by turning them into monkeys and elephants.
- There is a *machlokes* amongst the *Poskim* how often this *bracha* may be recited. Some say that the *bracha* can only be recited the first time in one's life that he sees these animals<sup>4</sup>, whereas others contend that he can recite it when he hasn't seen these animals in the last thirty days<sup>5</sup>. The Alter Rebbe *paskens* like the first opinion<sup>6</sup>.
- *Poskim* discuss one who visits a zoo and will see both a monkey and elephant, whether he may recite the *bracha* on the monkey and have in mind the elephant that he will see later, or is a separate *bracha* required for both animals?
- On one hand this can be compared to a garden with many trees, that the *bracha* made on the fruit of the first tree is sufficient for the rest, though they are not in front of him when he made the *bracha*. Similarly, the *bracha* one makes upon seeing the monkeys should cover the elephants further on in the zoo. On the other hand one can distinguish since: (1) the animals are each in their own cage, which can be compared to eating fruits from two gardens in which case one must make a separate *bracha*, (2) the zoo does not belong to him and there is a slight chance that he may not be allowed to view the elephants (should the zoo close or similar)<sup>7</sup>.
- Therefore, later *poskim* suggest<sup>8</sup> that to avoid any *halachik* doubts, one should specifically have in mind when making the *bracha* on the monkey that he does not include the elephant, so that he can make another *bracha* on the elephant without any question.

The above is for discussion only. For '*halacha lemaaseh*' one should consult his Rov.

1. ברכות נח, ב.
2. כ"ה דעת רמ"א שם.
3. על הגמ' ברכות שם.
4. סדר ברכות הנהנין פרק י"ג הלכה י"ג.
5. מולקאת שלמה כלאים ח, ו, ע' סנהדרין.
6. נמוקי או"ח סי' רכ"ה ס"ח.
7. ס' אהליך באמיתך (לבעל שו"ת בצל קט, א).
8. כ"פ המחבר בשו"ע או"ח סי' רכ"ה ס"ט. החכמה ח"א סי' פ"ז, י.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות הילד מרדכי מאיר הבהן שי'

שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

נדבת הוריו הרה"ת יהודה ארי' לייב הבהן ורעייתו חנה סטרי שיחיו כהנוב

לע"נ מרת שרה בת הרה"ח שניאור זלמן משה (היצחקי) ע"ה

אשת הרה"ת אברהם דרייזין (מאיאר) ע"ה

נלב"ע י"ט אייר ה'תשנ"ז

נדבת חתנם ובתם הר"ר יעקב ורעייתו לאה שיחיו רובין

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### The Rebbe asks permission

A *ba'al teshuvah* from Alaska was offered a *shidduch* with a graduate of Machon Chana. Upon deciding to get married, the two chose *Yud-Gimmel Tishrei* for their *chassunah*, two days before Sukkos.

The day before the *chassunah*, Reb Chatzkel Kornfeld, Shliach to Seattle and mentor of the *chossan*, received an urgent phone call from the Rebbe's *mazkirus*.

The Rebbe wished to *farbreng* on *Yud-Gimmel Tishrei* in honor of the *yartzeit* of the Rebbe *Maharash*. However, he would only do so with permission from the *chossan* and *kallah*, as such a *farbrengen* would attract guests from their *simcha*.

When Reb Chatzkel later relayed their consent, the *mazkir* extended an invitation from the Rebbe for the new couple to celebrate their *shevah brochos* at the *farbrengen*.

That year, the *Yud Gimmel Tishrei farbrengen* celebrated the *chassunah* as well.

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה