



GUIDING OTHERS (1)

True Love

We read in the Torah several times about our obligation to guide other Yidden in the right direction. This obligation is included in the *mitzva* of *ahavas Yisroel*, and more specifically instructed in the *mitzva* of *tochacha*, rebuke. Additionally, there is an *arvus*, a mutual responsibility, that all members of *klal Yisroel* have for one another. This means that a *mitzva* or an *aveira* (R"L) done by any individual Yid affects all other Yidden.

(שו"ע אדמו"ר הזקן או"ח סי' קנ"ו, תר"ח, הל' אונאה וגניבת דעת)

Rebbi Yoisi ben Chanina taught that rebuke brings love, for love that does not include rebuke is not true love. Resh Lakish taught that rebuke brings peace, for any peace that does not incorporate rebuke is not real peace.

(בראשית רבה נ"ד)

The concept of a *farbrengen*, at which the speakers traditionally expect the other participants to mend their ways, is fundamental to Chassidus. Admonishment at a *farbrengen* relates only to matters that will not cause anyone embarrassment, and since the earliest days it has been done successfully, out of love and deep affection.

(היום יום כ"ד תשרי)

Mutual Responsibility

Chazal say that whoever is able to raise an objection to a wrongdoing and does not, will be held accountable for that *aveira*. Someone in a leadership position, such as the head of a household, a community leader, or a person of influence in a city, must speak up and correct whatever needs correction.

A neighbor of Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya was unlearned in the *halachos* of *Shabbos*, and sent her cow out to graze with a strap tied between its horns - an act which is *osur*. When the *chachomim* saw this happen, they ordered Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya to do something about it, or else they would put him in *cherem*. As a *kapara*, because he had relied on his own individual ruling, instead of accepting - as the Torah dictates - the ruling of the majority, he later fasted so many fasts that his teeth turned black. Since he could have admonished her, he was considered responsible

for her actions, to the point that the *Mishna* refers to this cow as 'the cow of Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya'.

(שבת נ"ד ע"ב, ירושלמי פ"ה ה"ד)

The Alter Rebbe *paskens* in his *Shulchan Aruch* that if a person sees another doing something wrong, he is obligated to guide him on the correct path and to inform him of his wrongdoing. He must repeatedly remind the other of the proper conduct required ("even a hundred times," as the *Gemara* says), even if the other is angered and is not willing to listen further.

When rebuking, one must not cause embarrassment. One should speak softly, explaining that the rebuke is intended for the listener's benefit. In the event of a public *aveira*, in order to avoid a *chillul HaShem* one is not permitted to remain silent. Even when the person involved will not listen to the rebuke, one is still obligated to speak up once, so that it does not become his responsibility.

(שו"ע אדמו"ר הזקן או"ח סי' קנ"ו, תר"ח, הל' אונאה וגניבת דעת)

In One Boat

The eminent chossid, Reb Hillel Paritcher, once said in the name of the *Tzemach Tzedek* that the double expression of rebuke in the Torah (*hochei'ach tochiach*) implies that one must first rebuke oneself and only then rebuke another. Reb Hillel explained that rebuke is effective only when it follows self-rebuke.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 182)

In the year תרצ"ה (1935), the Frieddiker Rebbe underwent a medical procedure and learned a lesson in *avodas HaShem* from the surgeons. In a letter he writes, "Today, as the doctors came to inject some medication, I watched how cautious they were while preparing to do so. They sterilized their instruments, dressed in special gowns, washed their hands, checked their nails, and then poured alcohol over my feet. Having just washed myself, I asked why this extra cleaning was necessary. 'No matter,' they answered. 'The policy is that before any injection is given, the area must be washed with alcohol, sterilizing it completely, because if some bacteria remain, the medicine will be ineffective and may even cause additional infection (R"L).'"

Rebuking another is like giving an injection, which heals, but also hurts. If it is to have the desired effect, one must ensure that everything is disinfected. [For example, the words one chooses must be free of any self-righteous or unloving overtones.]

(אג"ק מוהררי"צ חלק ג' ע' רצ"א)

The Frieddiker Rebbe explains in a *maamar* that when rebuking another, one must speak humbly, since one is pained that the current wrongdoing happened during his time. Moreover, he must include himself in the rebuke by finding some measure of the same fault within himself, even if only *bedakus*, in a subtle form.

(סה"מ קונטרסים ח"ב ע' שנה"ע"ב)

The *tzaddik*, Reb Mendel Barrer, was a *maggid* who traveled from town to town giving *mussar* and pointing out the deficiencies of the townspeople. However, he would only speak in places where he would be paid. He explained, "When I finish my mission on this earth, *HaShem* will ask me, 'Who are you to speak like this about My children?' I will answer, 'Since You gave me the job of supporting my family, and my only skill was giving *mussar*, I had no other choice.'" If he would do this without payment, he would have no excuse...

The Rebbe explained that when rebuking in a manner of *Chassidus* (rather than *mussar*), this approach is not necessary. For then, one person points out to another what needs to be improved, without highlighting the problems - and this can be done in a pleasant manner. This mode of rebuke is more successful and effective. It also prevents claims from being made Above against the one who is rebuking, for after all, he is only offering the *cure* for the ailment...

(דרך מצוותיך קצ"ו ע"ב, תוי"מ חט"ו ע' 143)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is guidance given for the sake of the receiver or the giver?
- What is the difference between reproof following *mussar* and *Chassidus* if both touch upon faults? Why did *mussar* use its method?

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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Gourarie

OUR HEROES

Reb Zev Volf of Zhitomir



Reb Zev Volf of Zhitomir (also known by the name of his *sefer* "Ohr Ha'Meir") was one of the great talmidim of the Mezritcher Maggid. He also learned under Reb Pinchas Koritzer, Reb Michel Zlotchuver and others. Reb Zev went on to become a Rebbe and many flocked to hear his Torah and learn from him. Reb Zev passed away Erev Shavuot, תקנ"ז.

Before he became a Rebbe, Reb Zev owned an inn where he would sell liquor. Once, a Jew came in and ordered a cup of liquor. As soon as his order, he mumbled a *brocha* and drank it down. He was on his way out when Reb Zev called him, asking, "Do you know the concept of *gilgul*?" Reb Zev explained that some time a *neschoma* is sent down ("nisgalgal") into a material object in order to be elevated by a Jew using it for a *mitzvah*. Sometimes a *neschoma* could be "nisgalgal" in a barley. It hopes and prays that it should not go to waste during the alcohol-making process, wishing to end up brimming in a cup held by a Jew who will make a *brocha* on the drink. Every stage of the making is another scare for the *neschoma*, lest it never reach its preferred destiny. Reb Volf described at length the trepidation of the *neschoma* until it reaches the final stage where it may be elevated, in the story Reb Volf related, the *Yartzeit* meal of the soul's previous life, held in the very hand of his son who was presiding over the ceremony.

As Reb Volf spoke, the man remembered that today was the *Yartzeit* of his father. He started to realize why Reb Volf was telling him all this and he fainted. When he awoke, he became a full *ba'al teshuva*.

A chossid once came to the Maggid and complained about "Machshavos Zaros" (incorrect thoughts) that were constantly bothering him. The Maggid sent him to Reb Zev. "He will help you," said the Maggid. The chossid arrived at the home of Reb Zev on a cold rainy evening. He knocked at the door but there was no response. He knocked again, this time louder, but still there was no response. Finally, after a long knocking, Reb Volf opened the door. When he explained what he came for, Reb Volf replied, "The answer you got already. You are the owner of the "house" – your mind. You decide who to let in and who to keep out. I showed you that if you don't want someone coming in, he just does not come in..."

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

Checking Tefillin and Mezuzos

How often must one have his *tefillin* and *mezuzos* checked?

- Strictly speaking, *tefillin* that were checked properly before the first time they were put on never need be checked again. They are assumed to retain their original kosher status (*chazaka*), until we know otherwise. *Tefillin* only worn occasionally require checking twice in every seven years since they can become moldy. If the box of the *tefillin* becomes damaged or falls into water immediate checking is required¹. Halacha suggests checking all *tefillin* twice in seven years because they can become damaged through perspiration².
- Mezuzos* on a private location are required to be checked twice in seven years. *Mezuzos* of a *shul* or similar communal structure³ are required to be checked twice in fifty years⁴. Since the wall to which the *mezuzah* is affixed can sometimes give off moisture, we are more concerned about its damage⁵. The checking requires making sure all the letters intact and not cracking. The checking does not require reviewing that spelling, ⁶ provided that the *mezuzah* was initially checked in a thorough manner by a reliable *sofer*.
- It is written in *seforim* that those scrupulous in *mitzvos* (*anshei ma'ase*) have the custom to check their *tefillin* and *mezuzos* each year, and prefer to do that, as well as check all other *mitzvos*, during the month of Elul to ensure that they are performing those *mitzvos* properly⁷. The Rebbe encouraged people to keep and publicize this *minhag*⁸. This *minhag* perhaps has more importance in recent times when it is common that many *tefillin* and *mezuzos* were never checked properly in the first place.

Please note that the above may not be applicable for your situation. Consult your Rov for a final psak.

1. שו"ע אדה"ז סי' לט סי"א.
2. ראה שו"ע אדה"ז שם. חיי"א כלל יד.
3. לאפוקי בית של שותפים – ראה פתחי תשובה לס"י שבהע" הבאה סק"ג.
4. שו"ע יו"ד סי' רצא ס"ט.
5. ראה תשובות בעלי התוספות סי' עז.
6. שו"ת ח"ס יו"ד סי' רפג.
7. מטה אפרים סי' תקפא ס"י.
8. ראה ספר השיחות תשמ"ח ח"ב ע' 610.

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

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ריוויר

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Like Last Year?



The Rebbe instituted a *minhag* to distribute *mashke* on *Simchas Torah* to those who took upon themselves a *hosafa* in *limmud hachassidus*. The following story took place on *Simchas Torah*, 5715 (1954).

The hour was late, and the single file line was passing by the Rebbe to receive *mashke*. When one *bochur* approached, the Rebbe suddenly stopped. The Rebbe peered into his face, and asked in a stern voice "like last year?"

The *bochur* began trembling, and did not answer.

The Rebbe continued, "Last year you took upon yourself a *hosafa* in learning *Chassidus*, and what happened? Six *ma'amorim* in *Likkutei Torah* and two and a half *maamorim* of *Somech Vov*? This is a *hosafa*!?"

The Rebbe then motioned with his hand, and said, "zol zain azoi" (so be it), and poured the shaken *bochur* a *l'chaim*...

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה