



POSITIVE EXPOSURE (1)

The Impact of Reading Material

The *Rambam* writes: *HaShem* commanded us to refrain from studying about an *avoda zara* or its service, for this can cause a person to be drawn after it. Furthermore, anything that can bring someone to question the basis of our *emuna* may not be studied. Since a person's mind is limited, he may think of a question to which he will not find a satisfactory answer, leaving him in doubt about the truth of Yiddishkeit.

(רמב"ם הל' ע"ז פ"ב ה"ב)

Chazal say that whoever reads books of an extraneous nature (*sfarim hachitzonim*) may lose his portion in *Olam HaBa*. The *Rivash* explains that even if he does not believe what is written there, he still forfeits his *Olam HaBa*.

(סנהדרין ק ע"א, שו"ת ריב"ש סי' מה)

The Alter Rebbe *paskens*: Books which arouse the reader to *taivos* are absolutely forbidden because they incite the *yetzer hara*. People who write or publish such books are counted among 'those who cause others to sin'.

Furthermore, a book or magazine which contains forbidden material may not be read at all, for one may come to read the forbidden parts.

(שו"ע אדה"ז סי' ס"ל, קצות השלחן סי' קז בדה"ש מג)

Secular Books

In תרמ"ח (1888), when the Frieddiker Rebbe was only eight years old, the Rebbe Rashab wrote his first will, in which he directed the *Rebbeztzin* concerning the education of their young son.

"Regarding our son *sheyichye*, I request that you watch over him in all matters *begashmiyus* and *beruchniyus*, which nowadays necessitates a special safeguard. Most importantly, he needs to be protected from bad friends, who lack *yiras Shamayim* and an acceptance of the yoke of Heaven. Because of their exposure to inappropriate things, including books

and stories written in Yiddish, which many of them read and lend to one another, they can negatively influence others. Much of such literature can *r'l* cause a person to think foreign thoughts when occupied with matters of *Torah, mitzvos* and *tefila*. They desensitize and cool down one's enthusiasm in anything holy. May *HaShem* have mercy on us and send *Moshiach* speedily, in our days. Amen."

(חגור לנער ע' 26)

During a search that was once conducted in the Tomchei Temimim Yeshivah, secular books were found among the possessions of some *bochurim*. The Rebbe Rashab was extremely disturbed and was most upset with the *bochurim* for allowing such a thing to happen. The *mashpia* Reb Groinem and the *chozer* Reb Moshe traveled to the Rebbe's *datche* to reconcile between the *bochurim* and the Rebbe. They asked him: "Since only a few *bochurim* had these books, why then is the Rebbe so upset?"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the Rebbe. "They are being showered with *Chassidus!*"

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 175)

In תשי"ז (1957), various secular newspapers were being issued in *Eretz Yisroel*, and the Rabbonim there proclaimed that they were forbidden and not to be read.

When a certain Yid questioned the Rebbe about them, the Rebbe replied: "Concerning the secular newspapers, especially those which contain forbidden material, there is no need to elaborate, for the *Shulchan Aruch* explicitly states that reading them is forbidden, and many proclamations have been recently made in *Eretz Yisroel* against them."

(לקו"ש חכ"ג ע' 363)

The *Chiddushei HaRim* would say that just as an infant whose brothers had died from a *bris*, even though the danger is doubtful, secular newspapers which have caused more than two Yidden to desert the proper path should not be read by any Yid.

(בואו חשבון ע' כז)

Kosher Television?

In a *yechidus* with *N'shei Chabad* in תשי"ד (1954), the Rebbe lashed out at the challenge of the time – television. At the time, many Yidden considered television to be an innocent provider of kosher entertainment and numerous *frum* Yidden brought it into their homes. The Rebbe explained that the 'kosher' television was not really so 'kosher' and would only spiral further downward. Children would see their parents using it and would watch other programs, and the adults as well would become lax over time.

The Rebbe said that even if one sees a *frum* or even a *chassidisher* Yid who has a television in his home, one should not learn from him. No one is perfect, and such a person is deficient in this area. No one would want to be blind, though there are successful people with that disability.

The Rebbe told the women: "In the past, Yidden were extremely particular to keep their distance from any negative influences, even by walking near a church or the like, but with television, one brings the church *r'l* into their home! One must know that this is all a test from *HaShem*, to see if we indeed love him with all our heart. Make sure that you correct this matter in your respective cities, and here in particular."

(לקו"ש חיי"ח ע' 459, תר"מ חיי"ב ע' 192)

CONSIDER THIS!

- How can objectionable reading cool one's enthusiasm in holiness if he does not accept what he reads?
- Why should Chassidus protect a person from wanting to engage in secular literature?

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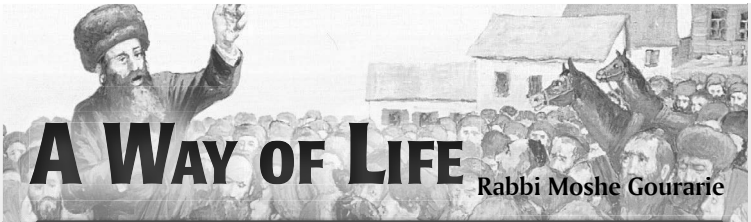
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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Gourarie

Sukkah on Public Property

Can one eat in someone else's *sukkah* without permission? Is one permitted to build a private *sukkah* on someone else's property?

The rule is that people like to have *mitzvos* performed with their possessions on a temporary basis (see A Way of Life - Lmaan Yishmeu 203 on using someone's *Tefillin*). Therefore, there is a difference between eating in someone's *sukkah* without permission (temporary), and building a *sukkah* on someone's property (more permanent).

Eating In a *Sukkah* without Permission

Since people like to have *mitzvos* done with their possessions, one may eat in a *sukkah* without permission. However, if the owner is present, or there is a chance that he will come to the *sukkah*, it is forbidden. This is because *halacha* assumes that people would prefer privacy while eating or doing other private activities. If there is explicit permission, eating is permitting in all instances.¹

Some *Poskim* add² that if the owner uses expensive items in his *sukkah* (e.g. fancy pillows), *halacha* would that he does not want people using his *sukkah* at all without permission. If it is clear to the user that the owner does not mind (i.e. a very close friend), he may use the *sukkah* even in such a case.

Building a *Sukkah* on Someone's Property

It is forbidden to build a *sukkah* on another's property without permission.³ One should not eat in such a *sukkah*. Before building, one must receive permission from the owner or the owner's wife, however, permission from the owner's children is not sufficient.⁴ The same law would apply to erecting a *sukkah* in a parking lot or park.

One may not build a *sukkah* in the public domain, because the property belongs to the public. Even if the city is entirely Jewish and nobody would mind, because the public space is public for people from the **entire world**, including non Jews, and they did not give permission.⁵ Some *Poskim* suggest⁶ that if one gets legal permission from the local authorities he may build his *sukkah* in a public place.

Some *Poskim* write⁷ that a fire escape is considered public property since it is meant for the use of all the dwellers in case of emergency, and therefore one should not build a *sukkah* there.

Poskim write⁸ that one may build a *sukkah* in a courtyard of a *shul* being that it is fair to assume that the congregants give permission.

Based on the above it would seem that a *sukkah* built on a truck must also be stationed on property with permission. If it is parked in a parking lot, the parking lot rules must be followed (i.e. shoppers only, length of time etc.). Otherwise, it is like having built it in on the property without permission. If parked on the street, it must be parked legally for the *sukkah* to be kosher.

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

1. שו"ע אדה"ז ס"ו תרלו"ז ס"ט, וראה משנ"ב
2. כף החיים סקט"ו.
3. שו"ע אדה"ז שם ס"ג.
4. ערוך השלחן ס"ה.
5. שו"ע אדה"ז שם.
6. פמ"ג א"א סק"ג.
7. שו"ת אהל יוסף (להג"ד יוסף אליהו פריד ז"ל) סי' יד.
8. ערוך השולחן ס"ה.

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

לזכות הילדה חנה שתחי' דובינס שיגדלוה הורי' לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

לע"נ האישה הצנועה החשובה
מרת לאה בת חוה
נלב"ע כ"ה אלול ת.ג.צ.ב.ה

OUR HEROES

Reb Meir of Primishlan



Reb Meir of Primishlan was a very well know Rebbe. He was a *talmid* of Reb Mordechai of Kremnitz and the Chozeh of Lublin. When he later became a Rebbe in Primishlan, thousands of chassidim flocked to him. He was known as a tremendous *ba'al tzedoka* and *ba'al mofes*. Reb Meir passed away on the 29th of Iyar, תרי" (1850).



The Rebbe, Reb Tzadok Hakohen, was once in Primishlan. At that time, a chossid of Reb Yisroel of Ruzhin was on the way to his Rebbe but on route needed to spend Shabbos in Primishlan. He observed Reb Meir and was very impressed. After Shabbos, the Ruzhiner chossid gave Reb Meir a *kvitel* with a significant sum of money. Reb Meir asked, "Surely you had prepared this money for your Rebbe the 'Ruzhiner'?"

"When I get there I will give again," answered the chossid. Reb Meir was apprehensive about taking the money. He asked for a *beis din* to decide if he could accept the money. Reb Tzadok Hakohen was part of the *beis din*. After some discussion the *beis din* ruled out that Reb Meir could keep the money. As they gave there ruling, the *rebbezin* of Reb Meir entered the room and said, "Meir'l, Meir'! Meat that had a *sha'alah* you don't want to eat, but money with a *sha'alah* you want to take?!"...



Reb Meir once gave the following *mashal*:

"There was once a farmer who was addicted to his alcohol. One day he decided to stop drinking! Every so often he would have a tremendous desire for just one drink, but he controlled himself and did not give in. Once, he just could resist and started heading to the bar. He was already on his way when he thought to himself, 'What am I doing? I will drink and then roll drunk in the gutter?! No way!' He turned to go home. As he enter his yard he was ecstatic. What a hero and warrior he was! "You know what?" he proudly said to himself, "such a warrior is worthy of a good drink!" Off he went to the bar.

The *yetzer hara* has to constantly be held down, concluded Reb Meir, if it is unmonitored for even a moment, it finds a way to come back.

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

The Rebbe's Chol Hamoed



Reb Yosef Yitzchok Groner, Shliach to Charlotte, North Carolina, relates:

"As children, my twin brother Mendy and I would often play in the corridor next to the Rebbe's room. The *bochurim* and Anash revered this corridor, and called it *Gan Eden Hatachton*, but as children of the *mazkir*, this was where we spent our afternoons. Consequently, we would sometimes see things that others did not.

"One picture is stuck in my mind to this day.

"It was a *chol hamoed*, and the Rebbe had just come up from davening, still wearing his *tallis*. The Rebbe rushed into his holy room, took out a large *sefer*, a *Gemara* or a *Shulchan Aruch*, and began learning.

"The image of the Rebbe, still in his *tallis*, his holy face aglow, swaying over the *sefer* is something that will never leave me."

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה



POSITIVE EXPOSURE (2)

Worthy Teachers

In *is paskened* in *Shulchan Aruch* that it is forbidden to learn *anything* from an *apikores* for one may be influenced by his beliefs.

(שו"ע י"ד סי' קע"ט סכ"ג)

The Mezritcher Maggid said that one should not learn from a *sefer* written by a *rasha* even if contains valid ideas, for the reader connects with the *neschama* of the author. One should certainly not learn from books written by *apikorsim*.

(מגיד דבריו ליעקב סה, מעין גנים פט"ו פ"ג)

Reading the 'News'

In a *yechidus* with a group of *chassidim*, the Rebbe expressed his disappointment with those who read newspapers, even for 'good reasons':

"How is it that *chassidim* read the newspaper to find out what is happening in Lubavitch? The papers are for people on the outside; *chassidim* have other ways of knowing about Lubavitch. The fact is that when one looks at one page where there is a write-up on Lubavitch, he comes to read what is written in the second and third page as well..." The Rebbe concluded, "This is such a descent from who we really are..."

(דעם רבינ'ס קינדער ע' רה)

On *erev Parshas Vayigash* תשכ"ט (1968), the first space shuttle landed on the moon and made headlines in all the media. At the *Shabbos farbrengen*, the Rebbe explained a lesson to be learnt from the event and added, "One should not mistakenly think that he should read the newspapers in order to be able to derive lessons in how to serve *HaShem*. The world would be better off without the papers at all, and it is a *rachmonus* on those who read them.

"There are those who immediately upon arising in the morning listen to the radio to hear the latest news. They then hurriedly buy the paper to read up on all the details, and memorize the names of all the personalities, their families, and so on. Then it's back to the radio to ensure they are updated on any details they may have missed... Entering *shul* on *Shabbos*, they make sure to display their knowledge. After all, one doesn't want to be deemed a '*batlan*' who doesn't know what's happening in the world..."

The Rebbe then related a story: "There was a Yid in Lubavitch who would sit day and night learning in the *beis midrash*, and had no interest in what was happening in the outside world. One day, someone related to him that Czar Nicholas was crowned. The Yid was surprised, 'Didn't they crown him years ago? Why are they crowning him again?'

"It turned out that when he was a child, in the days of the Mittlerer Rebbe, in תקפ"ה (1825), Nicholas the First had been crowned and in his honor they had dutifully lit additional candles in the *shul*. Since then, without this Yid realizing it, two czars had come and gone. When Nicholas the Second was crowned almost seventy years later, in תרנ"ד (1894), the Yid was perplexed by the second crowning of Czar Nicholas..."

The Rebbe concluded, "From this story we can see how in the past Yidden lived long, peaceful years – unlike today, when people need psychologists and tranquilizers to alleviate their stress."

(שיחיו"ק תשכ"ט ח"א ע' 261)

You Are What You Read

When a certain man complained about *machshavos zaros* during *davening*, the Frierdiker Rebbe replied that this was a result of reading newspapers. "Stop reading articles of foolishness and *aveira*, dedicate

yourself to learning, and *HaShem* will help you in your learning and *yiras Shamayim*."

(אג"ק רי"צ ח"ט ע' שעה)

Reb Yoel Kahan related: I was once told by the Rebbe to positively influence a fellow *talmid*, to address his questions and guide him in his *avodas HaShem*. I was dealing with him for a while, and he was progressing nicely. I was therefore shocked to hear him make a comment that implied doubts in his *emuna*. At a loss as to how to respond, I decided to seek the Rebbe's counsel.

The Rebbe said, "I know this person, and there is no need to worry. These words are meaningless and are most likely a result of reading a newspaper before going to sleep. It can therefore be expected that he will speak in such a fashion the following day..."

Needless to add, after we talked it over, that *talmid* realized that he was slipping in his *avoda* solely due to inappropriate reading material. As soon as he stopped reading the newspapers, he was well on his way, back on the right track.

(מפי הרב יואל כהן שי')

CONSIDER THIS!

- Why do secular books cause any more *machshavos zaros* than kosher reading material?

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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Gourarie

Payment for Teaching Torah

Is it permitted to take money for teaching Torah?

- Chazal¹ derive that it is forbidden to take money for teaching Torah, from Moshe *Rabbeinu*, who taught the Torah to the *Yidden* without pay.
- Nevertheless, there are three cases when someone may take money for teaching: (1) A teacher of small children who need to be disciplined. The teacher is paid for the discipline, not for the teaching. (2) A master of a trade that could easily have earned money elsewhere, and spends part of the day teaching. The payment is to compensate for lost earnings ("schar batala") and not for the teaching. (3) One who teaches all day and does nothing else to earn a living. Since if he was not teaching, he would definitely find another way to earn a living and may therefore receive compensation ("schar batala")².
- One who is able to make learning and teaching Torah his main occupation while earning a decent living through working part time may not take money for teaching. He should also not give up his part time job to teach full time and thus be allowed to take money for it, since this permission (see #2) was only for one who cannot earn enough through the part time job³.
- One who has a job that provides an ample income should not take money for giving a *shiur*. However, someone whose only income comes from delivering *shiurim* may do so, since it is clear that he is taking money to be able to continue teaching Torah, without needing to look for another job.
- Some *Poskim*⁴ suggest that since teaching Torah to adults is only permitted when it is clear that he is being paid as compensation, therefore one who teaches Torah at hours when people do not usually work would not be permitted to be paid. However, nowadays, when there are many jobs that can be done at night, one would be able to receive *schar batala* at night if his job could be done at that time.

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

1. נדרים לז ע"א.
 2. הלכות ת"ת לאדה"ז פ"א ה"ב.
 3. שם פ"ד הט"ז. ולכאורה פשוט דהבמואר בפ"א שם הוא במי שאין השעות המועטות של המלאכה מספקת פרנסתו, והחידוש שמותר לו ליקח שכר בטלה על השעות שמלמד תורה הוא דקס"ד דרך במי שאינו עוסק בשום מלאכה מותר. ולפ"ז אין מקום למה שהקשה בהערות וציונים שם והלק באופנים מחודשים ביותר.
 4. שו"ת תורה לשמה (לבעל בן איש חי) סי' שט"ז.

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

לע"נ נסים בן יעקב

OUR HEROES

Reb Binyomin Kletzker



Reb Binyomin Kletzker was one of the greatest chassidim of the Alter Rebbe. Originally from a family of big *misnadgim* in city of Shklov, Reb Binyomin eventually became a chossid. He was a profound *maskil* in *Chassidus* and a great *ba'al madrega*. He was a businessman and gave a lot of *tzedaka*. He was brothers-in-law with the chossid Reb Pinchas Reizes.



Reb Binyomin had the ability to be so deeply engrossed in *Chassidus* that he would be oblivious of what was going on around him. Once, while walking home from *shul* holding his *tallis* and *tefillin*, he got lost on in thought. It was a market day and he put down his *tallis* bag on one of the wagons of the *goyim* merchants. He rested his foot on the axle of the wagon and carried on thinking. In the mean time, the *goy* finished his business, loaded his wagon and drove away. So engrossed in thought, Reb Binyomin stood with his foot that had been on the axle now up in the air, and after a while lowered his foot, though still lost in thought. Only the need to *daven mincha* in time woke Reb Binyomin from his thoughts.

As the wagon driver was leaving town, he offered some of the produce that he was selling to a passing-by Jew. The man noticed the *tallis* and *tefillin* and managed to retrieve them and return them to Reb Binyomin.

The Friediker Rebbe emphasized the strength of *yiras Shamayim* in this story. Even though Reb Binyomin was so engrossed in thought, he nevertheless sensed that the time for *davening mincha* had come!



One of Reb Binyomin's business enterprises was lumber. Once he was standing in a forest surrounded by workmen who were waiting for instructions, but Reb Binyamin was engrossed in thought. The workmen gently nudged him and asked for the next instructions. Reb Binyamin said, "wait a bit", and carried on thinking. After quite a while they nudged him again saying, "Reb Binyamin! Everything has its time! The time to think *Chassidus* is during *davening*, not now!" Reb Binyamin responded, "Is that so? When thoughts about lumber come in middle of *davening*, that's not so terrible, but when thoughts of *davening* come in middle of the lumber it causes such a commotion!"

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

True Mesiras Nefesh



In accordance with the Rebbe's wishes, every year, thousands of bochurim and *bale-batim* go on *tahalucha*, often walking great distances. The Rebbe sent the foot soldiers on these long Yom Tov walks in order to bring extra *simcha* to *shuls*.

One year, after *Simchas Torah*, a Rabbi of a New York shul was in *yechidus*. He thanked the Rebbe profusely for the liveliness the bochurim had brought to his shul, and added with great admiration that the bochurim deserve much credit for their *mesiras nefesh* to walk such a great distance!

The Rebbe smiled and responded, "The walk is not their *mesiras nefesh*. Their sacrifice is that they know that there is a *farbrengen* here in Seven Seventy, and they forgo this for other *Yidden*."

With that, the Rebbe continued, "and for me too, it is a sacrifice to be separated from these *bochurim* at the *farbrengen*."

(As heard from Rabbi Leibel Groner)

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה