



LOVING EACH OTHER (5)

The Foundation of Our People

A group of prominent and wealthy chassidim visiting the *Tzemach Tzedek* in Lubavitch desired that the Rebbe should deliver a *maamar* of *Chassidus* for them, instead of spending so much of his time receiving the simple local townsmen at *yechidus* that often concerned mere physical matters. They positioned themselves near the Rebbe's room and began singing the Alter Rebbe's *Niggun*, knowing that this would often open his heart to deliver a *maamar*.

Hearing them, the Rebbe opened the door and asked: "What do you want?"

"We want *Chassidus*, not *yechidus*," they replied. The Rebbe agreed – on condition that no locals would be present.

The locals were immediately asked to leave, and when the Rebbe came out he asked, "Is there no one here from Lubavitch?" The guests assured him that they had all gone.

"If so," he said, "what am I doing here? I too am from Lubavitch!" With that the Rebbe returned to his room, dismayed by the visitors' insensitivity to the plight of the poor townsmen.

(מגדל עז' ע' רי)

A certain chossid once hesitated to help his fellow because of an old dispute. Hearing of this, the Rebbe Rashab wrote him a long letter on the importance of unity and kindness. He asks: "How can your complaints against him hold you back from feeling united, when our entire Torah and our people, especially now, are based on unity and *tzedaka*?"

The Rebbe Rashab goes on to explain how, according to *Chassidus*, our unity below creates unity Above, thereby channeling *brachos* below. Even wicked men, like those who built the Tower of Babel, are energized by their unity. However, their harmony is short-lived, for it opposes *HaShem's* innermost will. By contrast, *achdus* amongst those who observe *mitzvos* draws down positive spiritual energy from *HaShem's Achdus* – and *brachos* of that kind endure forever.

The Rebbe Rashab concludes, "It is thus self-understood that the continued existence of our people depends on *achdus* amongst those who observe *mitzvos* and thereby draw down everlasting *bracha* in all good ways. This *achdus* is especially important amongst those who are close to each other, since they come from one source ... How hard did our Rebbeim toil for *Anash* with *mesiras nefesh*, spending countless hours discussing with them their personal matters and implanting within them good and upright *middos* in the spirit of our holy Torah. Woe to eyes that witness all their efforts being lost *ch"v* because of such divisiveness as *not helping a fellow in a time of trouble!*"

(אג"ק רש"ב ח"א ע' צא ואילך)

No Exceptions!

The Alter Rebbe told his son the Mittlerer Rebbe: Grandfather (the Baal Shem Tov) said that one must have *mesiras nefesh* in *ahavas Yisroel* even towards a *Yid* whom one has never seen.

(היום יום ט"ו כסלו)

The Rebbe once said:

With regard to the actual performance of the Torah and its *mitzvos* everyone is equal, but when it comes to the feelings behind them, there are differences: one acts out of love for *HaShem*, another out of awe, and a third out of *kabbalas ol*.

The *talmidim* of Rabbi Akiva were truthful people, and their *avoda* penetrated them so fully that it seemed to each of them that only his path was the right way and anyone else was missing out, with the result that they were not able to respect each other as they ought to have done.

This teaches us that a person is obligated to regard every *shomer Torah u'mitzva* positively and to respect him greatly even if his path is not the same as one's own – because that person too is serving *HaShem*. The differences are merely whether his service is prompted by love or fear and so on.

(לקו"ש ח"ז ע' 243)

Despite Differences

The Baal Shem Tov taught: In every generation there is a *tzaddik*. Some people don't have many *mitzvos* to their credit, but they have *emuna* in the *tzaddik*, while others, who do many *mitzvos* to their credit, don't believe in the *tzaddik*.

The reason for this is the following: Since *neshamos* today are *gilgulim*, the above distinction depends on the source of an individual's *neshama*. If the source is refined, that person is given the merit of believing in the *tzaddik*. If not, he is lacking in *emuna* and sometimes does not even know of the *tzaddik* at all. We, therefore, who know and believe in the *tzaddik*, are not at all superior to those who don't know and believe in *tzaddikim* and may even oppose them, since possibly those people do even more *mitzvos* than we do. It is not proper to separate ourselves from them; rather, we should be together *be'achdus*.

(מגדל עז' ע' שמד)

At a *Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen* the Frierdiker Rebbe said:

All the improper ways and actions that brought about the arrest of the Alter Rebbe need not be mentioned and should be forgotten. We need to joyfully relate that there were painful events and there was *mesiras nefesh* which eventually resulted in a *Yom-Tov*. Although according to the Torah, at a joyful event one should recount the story of the miracle being celebrated with all of its details, the Alter Rebbe in his holy letter that begins *Katonti* warns us and teaches us how to conduct ourselves and how to attain the highest level of refined *middos* by not paying back people who wronged us. For these reasons it is better not to recount the story at all.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"ג ע' תשסא)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is the love towards a *yid* with a different way of *avodas Hashem* despite his way of service or because of it?

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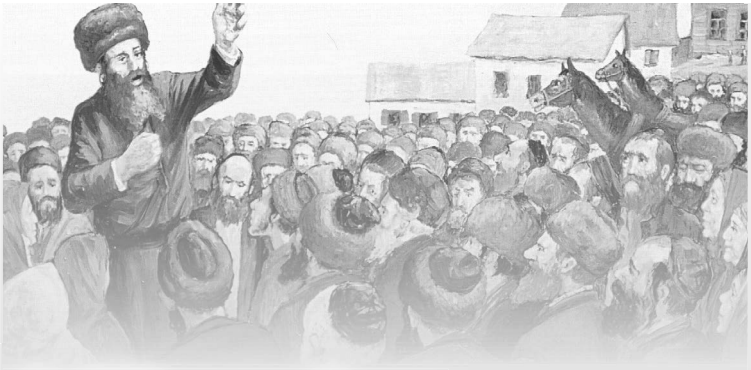


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OUR HEROES

Reb Shlomo Zalmen – the Magen Avos



Reb Shlomo Zalmen was the eldest son of the Maharil, and a grandson of the Tzemach Tzedek. He was born circa 5590 (1830), and in 5607 (1847) he married the daughter of Reb Yaakov Aryeh Leib Luria from Lepli. For the first few years after his *chasuna* he lived in Lepli, studying diligently while being supported by his father-in-law. In 5615 (1855) he returned to Lubavitch where he gleaned much from his grandfather the Tzemach Tzedek and great chassidim. After the Tzemach Tzedek's *histalkus*, Reb Shlomo Zalmen followed his father to Kopust, where he was eventually appointed by the chassidim to take his father's place upon his passing in 5627 (1866). He led the Kopust chassidim until his own departure from this world on 27 Iyar 5660 (1900). Although there were differences in practices and philosophy between the chassidim of Lubavitch and Kopust, his *maamorim* followed the Chabad style and some of them were printed in the sefer *Magen Avos* after his passing.

In a letter to a *mashpia* who requested to be exempt from his task of *chazering Chassidus* publicly, Reb Shlomo Zalmen writes: Prior to *chazering Chassidus* for a big crowd, if *Hashem* will help you, (and surely He will), firstly remove all ulterior motives and selfishness, thinking deeply about one's lowliness. Then draw down upon oneself fear of *Hashem's* kingdom — at least in thought — by remembering the subject about which you are talking: *Kudsha Brich Hu*, *yichud Havaye* and *Elokim, sovev* and *memalei*. Like the Rambam writes regarding *davening*, think that you are a low creature standing in front of the great Almighty. Behold, this is a great and special *avodah* that brings pleasure that is a thousand times greater to our Creator than would your isolation. Words that emanate from the depths of the heart will penetrate the hearts of others.

(מגדל עז ע' שי')

The *yeshiva* Tomchei Temimim was founded in Lubavitch at the end of 5657 (1897), and the *seder* included learning *Chassidus* four hours every day: two hours in the morning before *davening* and two hours at night after *nigleh*. Concerning this practice Reb Shlomo Zalmen declared: "At first when I heard that young *bochurim* were learning four hours of *Chassidus* daily, it didn't sit well with me. But now I see that he (the Rebbe Rashab) was correct. *Di velt falt oif shaois* (the world is deteriorating by the hour) and he will be very successful."

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' שמת)

A WAY OF LIFE Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

Burnt Food

I was at home on Friday afternoon and my neighbor asked me if I could turn off her fish in fifteen minutes since she would like to step out. I agreed, but forgot and the fish burnt. Must I repay her for the fish?

■ Damages caused are divided into two categories:¹

Garmi: Direct cause such as burning loan documents, for which one is responsible to pay.

Gramma: Indirect cause such as leaving poisonous food near an animal, for which one is exempt legally (*bdinei adam*) but is obligated morally (*bdinei Shomayim*).

■ There is much discussion amongst the *poskim* about the definition of direct and indirect damage. These are two distinctions given:²

(1) Direct means that it was done actively to the damaged object (burning the documents), while indirect was passive (leaving the poison).³

(2) Direct means that the damage that resulted was certain (burnt documents), while indirect damage is when the damage is uncertain (the animal may not eat the poison).⁴

■ In your situation, the burning of the food was passive, but it was certain. Thus, according to many opinions you are legally exempt,⁵ but according to others you are responsible, especially since they were relying on you.⁶ Some *acharonim* claim that even if it is considered direct (*garmi*), you are still exempt since it was unintentional.⁷

■ Since in monetary matters the defendant can claim "I side with the lenient opinion" (*kim li*) you cannot be obligated to pay. Regardless, you are obligated *b'dinei Shomayim*, like any other indirect cause.

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|--|---|
| 1. חושן משפט סי' שפ"ו. | 5. ראה חושן משפט סי' של"ג ס"ו, נתה"מ סי' של"ג סק"ד. |
| 2. ראה בארוכה אנצקלופדיה תלמודית ערך גרמא. | 6. רמ"א חושן משפט סי' של"ג ס"ו וראה משפטי התורה ח"א סי' ו'. |
| 3. תוס' ב"ב כ"ב ע"ב ד"ה זאת. | 7. ראה ש"ך חו"מ סי' שפ"ו סק"א וסק"ו. |
| 4. רמב"ן בדינא דגרמי. | |

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

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

You Also Have Plans...

Reb Immanuel Shochet related:

"When I was in my teens, I had my mind set on pursuing a secular education, and had already paid for the college entrance exam. Even after the Rebbe publicly spoke of being entirely devoted to Torah, and even after our teacher Rabbi Mentlik spoke to each of us individually, my mind was still set.

"However, after a correspondence with the Rebbe, and a most inspiring *farbrengen* where the Rebbe explained the dangers of being in spiritually unstable surroundings, I did not take the exam. I was convinced to delay the decision by a year.

"Towards the end of the year, I had already decided to move to another *yeshiva* with a secular program. However, during the *Shavuos farbrengen*, the Rebbe began speaking of the troubles of people's plans for the summer when they are lax in *Yiddishkeit*. They say 'after Labor Day, when the year begins, we will return to a full Torah lifestyle'.

"The Rebbe then turned to me with a smile and said, 'Immanuel, you also have plans for after Labor Day... say *lechaim* and drop them.'

"I was stunned. I had kept my plans to myself, yet the Rebbe knew. I said *lechayim*, and relinquished my college aspirations."

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

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