

PREPARING FOR SHABBOS

Planning for the Queen

It is a *mitzva* to honor the *Shabbos* by personally shopping, preparing food and preparing one's home for *Shabbos*. Even a person who has many servants to do this work should endeavor to fulfill the *mitzva* himself. One who never does such work, or who dedicates all of his time to studying Torah, should nevertheless personally do at least one activity in honor of *Shabbos*.

Even the Great *amoraim* devoted time every week to prepare their homes for *Shabbos*. Rabbi Avahu would sit on an costly ivory stool and fan the fire for *Shabbos*; Rav Safra would singe the head of an animal that had been slaughtered for *Shabbos*; Rava would salt a fish; Rav Papa would plait the wicks; Rav Chisda would slice vegetables; Rabba and Rav Yosef would chop wood; and Rav Zeira would kindle the fire.

Rav Nachman ben Yitzchok would organize his house. He would take out the weekday things, and in honor of *Shabbos* would bring in fancier items, clothing and food. In this way he showed that *Shabbos* was important to him, and was worthy of much effort.

The Alter Rebbe concludes, "Everyone should take a lesson from them. No one should say, 'How can I compromise my honored status?' For it is an *honor* to show honor to *Shabbos*."

(שבת קיט ע"א, שו"ע ר"י סי' רנ"א ובקו"א שם סק"ב)

As a young man, Reb Yaakov Yitzchak, later to become the Chozeh of Lublin, arrived in Mezritch on a Friday afternoon. He went into the kitchen and told those who were cooking the *Shabbos* food: "If you don't mind, I am accustomed to personally taking some part in the preparation of the fish that I am to eat on *Shabbos*." He then took up a piece of fish, salted it, put it down, and went his way.

The *talmidim* of the Maggid who saw this were somewhat surprised, and asked each other: "What makes this young man think that precisely this piece of fish is going to be served to him? They are all being cooked together, and it will all be served by the waiters!" And so they

laughed off the newcomer's action.

One of those *talmidim*, the Alter Rebbe, decided to quietly tie a short piece of thread to that piece of fish, in order to be able to track it.

At the *Shabbos* table, he watched the waiters closely, and sure enough, the marked piece was being served to some stranger who was seated next to the Chozeh. But no sooner did he take it up than he was overcome by a feverish trembling, and was unable to eat. He pushed his plate aside—right in front of the Chozeh, who duly ate it.

And that is how the Alter Rebbe removed all doubts as to the stature of his new colleague.

(סיפ"ה ז'ין תורה ע' 220)

Interestingly, it was also the practice of the Maggid to prepare his own piece of fish.

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' תקכ"ה)

On *erev Shabbos* one should set his table and tidy the entire home so that it will be organized and neat when he returns from *shul*. This is regarded as honoring *Shabbos*. We have a custom of keeping the table with a tablecloth the entire *Shabbos* day.

(שו"ע ר"י סי' רסב"א)

Dressing for the Occasion

Everyone is obligated to have nice *Shabbos* clothing, according to his means. There is a *possuk* that instructs us to honor *Shabbos*, and *Chazal* explain that this refers to respectable clothing, which honor a person.

Even if someone is alone he should wear his *Shabbos* clothes, because they are worn not for the sake of other people but in honor of *Shabbos*.

(שו"ע ר"י סי' רסב"ג, קיצושו"ע סי' עב סט"ז)

It's also a *mitzvah* to wash oneself in hot water and to cut one's nails in honor of *Shabbos*. If

one's hair is long he should cut it, so that he will not enter *Shabbos* unkempt.

(שו"ע ר"י סי' רס"א)

Even in prison the Alter Rebbe made a point of wearing special clothes for *Shabbos*. How did he manage that? He would tear two thin strips off his handkerchief and tie them around his socks, to serve as gaiters.

(ס' התולדות אדה"ז ע' קמז)

The Rebbe Maharash had a specific *niggun* for every occasion. When putting on his *Shabbos* clothes he would sing a particular *niggun*, and when he took them off after *Shabbos* he sang another.

(ליקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' קג)

One Friday, shortly after the Alter Rebbe moved to Liozna, chassidim found the Alter Rebbe lying on the floor, his hands and feet spread out. While he was in that rapturous state of *dveikus*, they heard him utter words from *Shir HaShirim: Moshcheini, acharecha narutza* – "Draw me to You; we will run toward You!"

The following evening, on *Motzaei Shabbos*, they again found him on the floor. This time he said other words from *Shir HaShirim: Pashateti kutonti, eichacha elbashena* "I took off my weekday garb; [now that *Shabbos* is over,] how can I put it on again?"

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"ב ע' 37)

CONSIDER THIS!

Why do we clean and dress up for *Shabbos*? Does the *Shabbos* need it?

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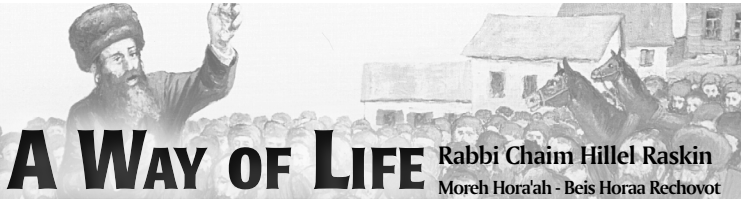


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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Hora'ah Rechovot

Seforim Piles

If I see a pile of seforim with a Chumash at the bottom, am I obligated to rearrange it?

- One may not place an object with less *kedusha* upon an object with more *kedusha*. For this reason, all *seforim*¹ including *Nevi'im* and *Kesuvim* may not be placed on top of a Chumash. *Torah Shebaal Peh* may not be placed on *Torah Shebiksav*² and *talis* (or *teffilin*³) may not be placed upon a *siddur*.⁴ Some⁵ differentiate levels of *kedusha* within *Torah Shebaal Peh* itself (e.g. *rishonim* on Gemara) but this stringency has not been accepted. The Rebbeim treated a Tanya with the same sacredness as a Chumash.⁶
- The status of a *siddur* is questionable: Some say that is equivalent to Nach because it contains many *pesukim* inside the *tefilos* (and often has a *Tehillim* appended to it),⁷ while others consider it a new entity of *Torah Shebaal Peh*.⁸ Therefore one should not put *Torah Shebaal Peh* on a *siddur*.
- *Rishonim* discuss making a sefer compiled of texts of with various levels of *kedusha* (e.g. Torah and Nach in one volume). Some⁹ deemed it inappropriate since when learning the end of the sefer the middle will be on top of the front. However the majority of *rishonim* argued that this does not constitute a disgrace¹⁰ since it's a new entity, and this is the accepted *halacha*¹¹ (this is the basis for the Chitas).
- If one notices *seforim* piled on a Chumash many *poskim* say that one is obligated to rearrange them,¹² though there are those who are lenient.¹³ The Rebbe would often take notice of stacks of *seforim* on his way into shul and stop to remove a *sefer* placed incorrectly.
- Some *poskim* add that when returning *seforim* to the shelf one may *lechatchila* pile them up in haphazard manner since he is in the midst of caring for the *seforim's* honor.¹⁴

9. וראה ברכ"י י"ד רפ"ב אות ט"ז שהרמב"ם מנע מזה. וראה שבדרישה י"ד סימן רפ"ג סק"א חילק בין קלף שלהם וספרים שלנו.
10. תוס' ב"ב יג ע"ב ד"ה מדביק "אינו גנאי".
11. מרדכי ב"ב סימן תקי"א, רמ"א י"ד סי' רפ"ב סי"ט.
12. שו"ת שבט הקהתי ח"ב סי' ש"א, עיני יצחק דף קצ"ב אות י"ט.
13. שו"ת התעוררות תשובה ח"ב סי' קמ"ה.
14. גנזי הקודש פ"ג אות ל"א. אך ראה משנה הלכות מהד"ת ח"ב סי' רט"ז שהחמיר בזה.

1. שו"ע י"ד סי' רפ"ב סי"ט.
2. יו"ד סי' רפ"ב סי"ט.
3. מנהג רבינו. וראה כף החיים או"ח סי' כ"ה ס"ק ק"א מס' סולת בלולה אות ט' בשם מ"כ עיי"ש.
4. כבוד הספרים ד"ף צ"ט הל' ז'.
5. שמירת כבוד הספרים פרק ג' ס"ע ובהע' שם. וראה מו"א או"ח סי' כ"ח סק"ד.
6. מכתב אדאריי"צ בקיצורים והערות לתניא ע' קית.
7. שמירת כבוד הספרים שם הערה 71.
8. שו"ת שבט הקהתי ח"ב סי' רצ"ט (גם כשמצורף לו תהלים).

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OUR HEROES

Reb Shlomo der Geler



Reb Shlomo Beilin was a chossid of the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab, and a *talmid* of the Rashbatz. He was called "Der Geler" because of his blond beard. He worked as a *melamed* in Nevel, and although he had a hard life, he was always cheerful and happy. During *hakofos* in Lubavitch he would dance vigorously.

Reb Shlomo would make his trips to Lubavitch by foot and would often say, "When chassidim arrive in the World to Come, *Malach* Michael will list their merits, including the fact that they traveled to the Rebbeim in Lubavitch. The horses and wagons which they used to travel will demand their reward as well, and Hashem who does not hold back the reward of even the smallest creatures will repay them too. In my "Lubavitch," horses or wagons will have no share. I myself am the horse and the rider."

(אג"ק הרי"י צ"ח ו' ע' רסט)



Reb Mendel Futerfas related:

In the hard times in Russia there was a shortage of *seforim*, especially of Chassidus. I once saw Reb Shlomo going through the *sheimos* and he emerged with some ripped papers of Chassidus — each from a different *maamar* — and he immediately sat down to learn them. I asked him, "How can you learn like that, with no beginning or end, and no connections between the sentences?"

Reb Shlomo replied, "There are three levels in learning Torah: to understand what is being learned, to toil in Torah, and an even higher level — to study the letters of Torah into which Hashem placed His Essence. The last level of learning is from the *pnimiyus hanefesh*, and through it we connect to Hashem's Essence which is above understanding. So what difference does it make if I don't really understand what it says? The main thing is that Hashem's Essence is in it..."

(ר' מענדל ע' 172)

לע"נ סימא אטא בת ר' משה ע"ה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

How Old Was Moshe Rabeinu?

The Canadian former-senator Mr. Jerry S. Grafstein, B.A., J.D., Q.C. is well-known for his service in Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He relates:

When I was serving as senator, I visited New York and scheduled an appointment with the Rebbe for 11:00pm. On the way, I was stuck in traffic, so I telephoned the chief of police, and told him I am stuck on my way to meet the most important person in New York. With his assistance, I made it to 770 on time.

The Rebbe listened intently to my questions, and patiently guided me as to how to solve my issues. However, the Rebbe probed further, realizing that there was something else on my mind. I explained that I was getting on in age, and I was constantly troubled with thoughts pertaining to what I had accomplished in life, and questions regarding what I will still manage to do.

The Rebbe banged on the table. "Do you know at what age Moshe *Rabbeinu* began his 'career'?" he asked. "Eighty! And you are still far from there."

Whenever I have challenges in my life, my wife and I recall that evening.

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה