

DYNAMIC DEVOTION (III)

Uncontained Enthusiasm

The Baal Shem Tov once asked one of his *talmidim* if he listened to how the *melamid* in his town taught the children. The *talmid* replied that the *melamid* in his town were chassidim and *yerei Shomayim* and so he had no reason to check up on them. The Baal Shem Tov nevertheless instructed him that he should go on Rosh Chodesh and listen.

When the *talmid* listened in on the following Rosh Chodesh, he heard the *melamed* teaching 'borchi *nafshi*,' the supplementary *kapitl* of *Tehillim* recited during the *davening* of Rosh Chodesh, which describes the greatness of *HaShem's* creations. A child then asked, "Why does Dovid HaMelech interject *Ma rabu maasecha HaShem*, ("How manifold are your works, *HaShem!*"), right in the middle of the *kapitl*? Why didn't he say it at the end of the *kapitl*, after describing all of *HaShem's* great works?"

To which the *melamed* replied, "Dovid HaMelech was so excited by *HaShem's* doings that he couldn't contain himself until the end, and he immediately shouted his praise for *HaShem!*"

Sated and elevated, the *talmid* set out for home.

(תשורה רבינוביץ י"ג סיון תשס"ד)

The Alter Rebbe did his *avoda* with great fervor, exhilaration and excitement. While *davening*, he would sometimes unwittingly bang his hands on the wall until they bled (cushions were later affixed on the walls around his *davening* spot). When delivering a *maamar* of *Chassidus*, he would sometimes fall to the floor.

Reb Moshe Vilenker related:

"Once, I couldn't find a place to stand near the Alter Rebbe's table, so I sat under it, and I was passed food and drink there. When the Alter Rebbe began to say *Chassidus*, I neared his feet and heard him quite well. In the middle of the *maamar*, however, he slipped under the table and I heard him murmur, "I want the simple unity. I don't desire your *Gan Eden HaElyon*, nor your *Gan Eden HaTachtan*, just You Yourself! I would have passed on long ago; only your Torah and *mitzvos* kept me here".

(היכל הבעש"ט טז ע' קנז)

While reciting the *Haggada*, the *tzaddik* Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev was fired by tremendous *hislahavus*. When he reached the words *Matzah zu* he would become so carried away in *dveikus* that he would fall from his chair to the floor, overturning the *kaara*, the *matzot* and the wine. By the time he came to, the table would be set afresh, and another long white *kittel* was handed to him to replace the one stained with wine. Putting it on, he would say with visible delight, "Ah! *Matzah zu...*"

(סיפ"ח זיין מועדים ע' 663)

Genuine Excitement

When the Mittlerer Rebbe succeeded his father, the Alter Rebbe, he discouraged the chassidim from expressing emotion during *davening*. Some of the Alter Rebbe's chassidim considered this inconsistent with the manner of the Alter Rebbe who *davened* and taught *Chassidus* with obvious enthusiasm, and they left the Mittlerer Rebbe. Likewise, some of the Mittlerer Rebbe's chassidim thought that any form of emotion in the service of *HaShem* was undesirable, and even made efforts not to become excited.

Addressing this confusion, the Mittlerer Rebbe wrote an essay entitled *Kuntres HaHispailus*, in which he distinguishes between the natural joy of the *neschama* in connecting to *HaShem* and the simulated excitement which arises from personal satisfaction and pride of one's *avoda*. He enumerates a range of levels in true inner *hispailus*, and demands of his chassidim not to strive towards great heights but to serve *HaShem* with sincerity each according to his level.

(סה"מ קונטרסים ע' לט-קפה)

Alive with Chassidus

In a letter Reb Aizil Homiler recounts his journey to satisfy his yearning to recognize the oneness of *HaShem* and his incredible excitement at attaining that recognition:

"I exerted myself tremendously to comprehend this *emuna*, until finally, with the help of the [Alter] Rebbe's son [the Mittlerer Rebbe], my understanding began to increase. However,

I was unable to maintain this perception, and I would write many *tzetlach* to the Rebbe begging him to explain the matter to me in a clear and lucid manner. The Rebbe, however, kept on pushing me off, and this caused me tremendous pain.

"Finally on one occasion, the Rebbe acquiesced and said he would deliver a *maamar* of *Chassidus* especially for me. About ten people gathered in the room. Hearing the words of the Rebbe, I stood trembling, oblivious of whether it was night or day. As soon as the Rebbe finished speaking, a bright shining powerful *emuna* shot into my heart like an arrow, and I had a strong desire to run in the streets and shout out this great revelation. For whatever reason, I decided against it.

"By the Name of *HaShem* I tell you that I am not exaggerating even one bit..."

(תולדות יצחק אייזיק ע' 671)

Having spent a few days by the Alter Rebbe, the group of Chassidim was ready to return to their hometown, but their *baal agala* was nowhere to be found. Worse yet, the horse that had brought them to Liozna was in its stall, not having been fed for several days. They set out to search for him in the forests outside of Liozna, and found him walking about and shouting in Russian, "If you were to ask a *goy* 'Do you love G-d?' he too would say 'I love Him!'"

As it turned out, the simple wagon driver listened to the *maamar*, and caught only these words of the Alter Rebbe. This inspired him so, that he completely forgot about everything, and immersed himself in those words.

(לשמע און ע' 62)

CONSIDER THIS!

- What lesson did the student of the Baal Shem Tov learn about excitement?
- Is Chassidus Chabad fond of emotion in *avodas HaShem* or not?

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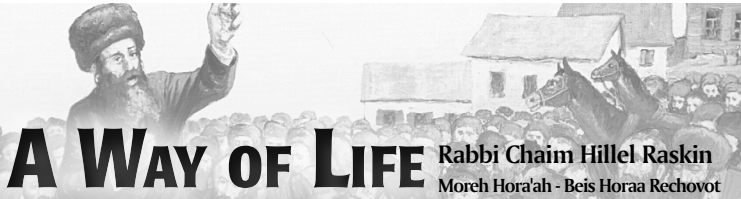
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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Morah Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

Leaving a Job

I was hired for a job and committed for three years. A year has passed and it's too difficult for me to continue. Am I obligated to honor my commitment?

- Hashem says in the Torah, "*ki li bnei yisroel avodim*" that *Yidden* are slaves to Hashem. From this, *Chazal* understand that it is forbidden for a *Yid* to be enslaved to anyone but Hashem. From this we learn two *halachos*:
- (1) A worker is forbidden from selling himself as a slave (*eved ivri*) unless he is completely destitute (doesn't have food¹). A number of *rishonim* say that a hired worker may not commit himself to long-term work or else he is considered enslaved. Some set the limit of hired work at three years², while others set it at six.³
- Since this *halacha* is derived from a slave, it is only applicable when the worker lives in the home of his employer⁴ (e.g. a rabbi in a shul house, a soldier in the army) or, as some *acharonim* add, if his rent is officially paid by the employer (e.g. parsonage).⁵
- If the agreement allows for the worker to take extended vacations or to be off during set times during the year (which isn't done for a slave), there is no problem.⁶ Some argue that one may commit himself to a longer term as long as it is broken into segments of less than three years each.⁷
- (2) For the same reason, a worker who is paid by the day (*sachir*) is allowed to retract at any time without losing pay for whatever time he worked, since otherwise he would be considered enslaved.⁸ Even if the employer will have to pay a higher rate for a replacement to finish the job, the first worker is not responsible (except when it will result in a definite loss – see next issue).
- Whether a worker paid by the job (*kablan*) is allowed to back out is the subject of a *machlokes*. Some say that since he works at his own he is not enslaved, and he may not back out.⁹ Others, including the Alter Rebbe, write that he still cannot be locked into a job¹⁰ (though he will lose pay for the hiring of a replacement).¹¹
- Next issue will discuss when the employer can coerce the employees not to leave.

1. רמב"ם הלכות עבדים פ"א ה"א. ודאה שו"ע ר' חו"מ הלכות שאלה ושכירות סכ"א בקו"א סק"ד.
 2. רמ"א חו"מ סימן של"ג ס"ג. שו"ע ר' חו"מ הלכות שאלה סכ"א. ולהעיר משיטת הסמ"ע סקט"ו עד ג' שנים ולא ליותר מג' שנים.
 3. שו"ת חת"ס או"ח סי' ר"ו.
 4. רמ"א שם ודאה ש"ך בשו"ע שם סק"ז. ודאה שו"ע ר' שם.
 5. חת"ס חו"מ סי' כ"ב וקנ"ב. ודאה שו"ת בצל התכנה ח"ב פ"ז כאשר העובד מוגבל לגור באזור נוסים.
 6. ספר הלכות מעבדי ועובד עמ' תתמ"ו.
 7. שו"ת בצל ההכמה חלק ב' סי' פ"ז.
 8. שו"ע חו"מ סי' של"ג ס"ג.
 9. מחנ"א ה"ל שכרת פועלים סימן ה', שו"ת דברי מלכאל ח"ד סי' קמ"ה.
 10. שו"ע ר' חו"מ הלכות שאלה סכ"א. ודאה גם נתה"מ סי' קפ"א סק"ד.
 11. שו"ע שם ס"ד. ודאה ספר ה"ל עובד ומעביד פ"כ.

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

לע"נ ליבא חי' בת ר' דוד ע"ה

ליום השלושים - ט"ז שבט

נדבת בנה הרה"ת דוד טשעניני ומשפחתו שי'

לזכות הילד יוסף שי' קאריק

לרגל כניסתו לבריתו של אברהם אבינו

שיגדל להיות חסיד ירא שמים ולמדן

נדבת הוריו ר' צבי הירש וזוגתו שי'

OUR HEROES

Reb Baruch Friedman



Reb Baruch Friedman was born in Poland and came to learn in Tomchei Tmimim in Lubavitch. There he was known as "Baruch Polisher." As an older *bochur* he served as *mashpia* of *Chassidus* in Charkov. In 5681 (1921), after World War I, he returned to Poland and was appointed as *mashpia* in Warsaw, then in Lodz, and eventually in Otvozk. During the first two years of World War II he was in the Ghetto of Radom where he continued to serve as *mashpia*. From there he was taken to Treblinka and was killed *al kidush Hashem* during the month of Elul 5702 (1942).



Reb Baruch was a great *maskil* in *Chassidus*. The Rebbe Rashab said about him, "Baruch Polisher understands a *vort Chassidus*." When he would sit and learn, nothing was able to divert his attention. Even when three of his children were sitting on him—one pulling his beard, another pulling his hair and the third sitting on his shoulders—he wouldn't get distracted. Such concentration he demanded from the *bochurim* during *farbrengens*, often expressing, "You should bury yourself in *Chassidus*."

(לקוטי סיפורי התועדויות - רמ"ז גרינגלאס עמוד 43)



Reb Baruch once said, "It is known the importance of saying words of Torah when walking in the street. However, this is only for someone who is not able to think deeply. Someone who is capable should *think deeply* while walking in the street, the reason being that one merely saying words of Torah can be simultaneously thinking of other things, possibly worldly. Not the case when one is thinking deeply into Torah, for then one's mind is fully occupied and there is no room for other thoughts."

(לקוטי סיפורי התועדויות - רמ"ז גרינגלאס עמוד 53)

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

I am Obligated to Openly Protest

A most unfortunate incident, during the summer of 5731 (1971), will never be forgotten by the bochurim of the time. A *bochur* was standing in the lobby of 770, within hearing distance of the Rebbe's room, and talking to his friend. During the course of the conversation, foul language emitted from his mouth.

At the Shabbos *farbrengen*, the Rebbe unexpectedly turned to his left side, where the pyramid of the bochurim stood. The bochurim had never seen the Rebbe so disappointed. The Rebbes face was drawn and his eyes were sad; his voice strained as he spoke:

"In *Tomchei Temimim* such things are not usually discussed publicly, but an exception must be made. It most shocking that a *talmid* should speak that way, yet in public! This is not my job; it is the job of the *mashpiyim*. However, since Hashem decreed that I hear those words, I am obliged to openly protest."

The Rebbe penetrating gaze fell on the *bochurim*, and he said: "I truly hope this is the last time this issue is discussed, so the *farbrengen* could be dedicated to talk of Torah and *yiras shomayim*..."

לזכות הילדה שטערנא שרה פרלשטיין תחי' לרגל יום הולדתה י"ב שבט לשנת הצלחה בגו"ר