



THRILLED TO ACTION (II)

Splendor and Fanfare

The *Mishna* describes how the Yidden would bring their *bikkurim* to the *Beis HaMikdosh* with pomp and ceremony:

The people from the little villages would assemble in a central town and would lodge for the night in the streets. Early in the morning, the leader would announce, "Arise and let us go up unto *Tziyon*, to the House of *HaShem*, our G-d!"

An ox whose horns were overlaid with gold and crowned with olive leaves would head the procession, and flute players would play throughout their journey. When the pilgrims neared Yerushalayim, they would send messengers to notify of their arrival, and would adorn their *bikkurim*.

The townsmen of Yerushalayim would then come out to greet them, "Our brethren of such-and-such a place, welcome!" The flute players would continue to play until they arrived at Har HaMoriya, the Temple Mount. Each person would then set his basket upon his shoulders, and carry it up the hill and into the *Azara*.

(ביכורים פ"ג מ"ב וב"ג)

Celebrating the Torah

In this letter the Friediker Rebbe describes the intense joy that used to accompany the completion of a *Sefer Torah* and a *hachnosas Sefer Torah*, and the great value of emotional involvement in Torah and *mitzvos*:

"In reply to your letter concerning the purchase of the *Sefer Torah* which, G-d willing, you are preparing to soon complete and bring to *shul*...

"Various *seforim* expound on the greatness of fulfilling this *mitzva*. They praise, admire, and hold holy every action and minute mark of honor that is shown when beginning to write the *Sefer Torah*, when it is completed, and when it is brought to *shul* with a multitude of people and fanfare, with a *chuppa* and lit candles, with song and musical instruments, the people dressed in their *Yom-Tov* clothes, and in tangible joy with dancing and the singing of hymns.

"One must make every effort to enable all the *Yidden* present, men and women and particularly children, to have the merit to kiss the mantle of the *Sefer Torah* while it is being carried to *shul*. That

is a *segula* for health and long life. Some people used to bring their children still in the cradle to the processional path of the *Sefer Torah*, in order to place the its mantle on the child's face...

"The accepted custom is that a few days before the *Siyum Sefer Torah*, announcements are made in all the *shuls* of the city that on such and such a day there will be a *Siyum*, and all congregants are invited to come to give honor to the Torah. That day was a holiday on which *Tachanun* was not said, and all the townsmen would prepare for the celebration in honor of the Torah. Chassidim and *anshei maase* immersed themselves in the *mikve*, and during the *tefilos*, additional candles were lit in *shul*.

"After the ceremony of the completion – with the sewing of the parchment, placing the mantle and the sash, and the initiation of the *Sefer Torah* with a public reading – it was time for the *tahalucha*, the festive procession. The celebrant and his relatives would surround the *Sefer Torah* under the *chuppa*, and sing , while all those present would bless them with *Mazal Tov!* The celebrant would carry the *Sefer Torah* from his house for a number of steps, and pause. Then the honors of carrying the *Sefer Torah* would begin. They would announce that so-and-so should step forward to honor the Torah, and he would carry it for a few steps. Then a second person would be honored, and a third, until they arrived at the *shul*. A few steps before they arrived, the celebrant would again be given the honor of carrying the *Sefer Torah*. His relatives would form a guard of honor around him, and they would bring the *Sefer Torah* into the *shul*.

"As they prepared to enter, the *gabbai* and his assistants and the *chazzan* of the *shul* would open the *Aron* and take out all the *Sifrei Torah*. Before opening it, the *chazzan* would say: "*Sifrei Torah*, you are requested by all the holy community, the congregants of this *shul*, to allow yourselves to be brought out in order to welcome the *Sefer Torah* which so-and-so has merited to write and to bring in to this *shul*, in an auspicious and successful hour." They would then take out the *Sifrei Torah* and stand in two rows, while the celebrant and his relatives would pass between the two rows with the new *Sefer Torah*.

"After announcing the *psukim* of *Ato Horeysa* as on *Simchas Torah*, seven *hakofos* were made, and during each *hakofa* they would dance with the *Sefer Torah* as on *Simchas Torah*. When the seventh *hakofah* ended,

they said *Sisu vesimchu besimchas Torah*, and while saying this passage an eighth *hakofah* was made, in order to distinguish between the *hakofos* of *Simchas Torah* proper and these of a *hachnosas Sefer Torah*. After *Yehallelu* all the *Sifrei Torah* were returned to the *Aron*, and *Aleinu* and *Kaddish* were said.

"They would then celebrate with a festive meal in honor of the *mitzva*, complete with Torah teachings, and words of inspiration. Together they would resolve to set aside fixed times for the group study of Torah, for the dissemination of Torah with *yiras Shamayim*, and undertake to support those who study Torah..."

[Parallel to the obligation to study the Torah, there is an ideal called *shimusha shel Torah*, which in this context means a total and loving involvement in everything that the Torah stands for.]

"The study of Torah and *shimusha shel Torah* are not only of equal importance, but in our generation we have clearly seen the tremendous moral deficiency that results from abstract study alone. Even in the eyes of those who cherish the text of the Torah, and believe in its holiness, it is like a body without a soul. Thus, *Chazal* have said that sometimes *shimusha shel Torah* outweighs the study itself, since it is specifically *shimusha shel Torah* that upholds the study."

The Friediker Rebbe then speaks of the importance of *shimusha shel Torah* that is communicated through *chassidische* stories and at *chassidische farbrengens*, and the superiority of genuine feeling (*regesh*) over understanding. He then concludes:

"Even the external honor of the Torah with its great beauty and the multitude of people can arouse the feelings of the soul, like all matters of beauty and splendor. Besides this, the glory and honor of the Torah arouse the *pintele Yid* that is present within every man and woman. This arousal is precious in itself, and can spark an arousal of *teshuva* that will bring a person to choose the ways of Torah and *mitzvos*."

(אג"ק אדהרי"צ ח"ו ע' עג ואילן)

CONSIDER THIS!

■ Why is this ceremony not seen as an artificial form of celebration?

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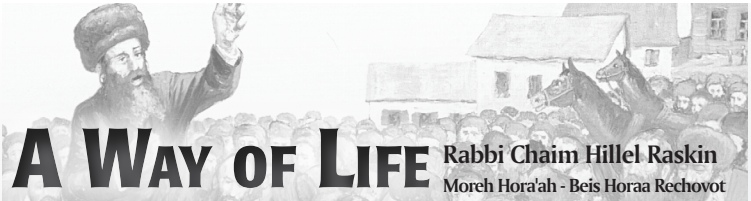


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A WAY OF LIFE

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

Sick Days

In middle of the school year a *melamed* came down with bronchitis and during his absence a qualified replacement was hired at a slightly higher rate. Does the *cheder* have to pay the *melamed* for sick leave, or does the *melamed* have to pay the *cheder* for the extra teacher costs?

- The *halacha* says that if an employee backs out of a job and caused a loss, he is held accountable (see previous issue for details). Since lost time of learning is certainly a *davar ha'aveid* (any future learning is necessary on its own right), the *melamed* should be held responsible.¹ However, since in this case the reason the *melamed* did not teach was due to an *ones*, a situation of duress, he does not carry the responsibility².
- Although he need not pay the difference, the *cheder* also need not pay him for the time he didn't work. If he was paid for that time, some *poskim* claim that he cannot be required to return the money since we assume that the administration decided to give it to him anyway. Furthermore, if he continues his job without an explicit notice otherwise, we assume that the administration agreed to pay him for the sick days.³ However, many disagree with this premise and hold that even if he was given the money he must return the pay for the time he didn't work.⁴
- If the local practice is to allow a certain number of sick days, *halacha* follows that practice (whether paid or unpaid), unless a different agreement was made.⁵
- If the *melamed* is unable to teach, but offers to do other work around the school, some say that he must be paid for all those days, since he was available for work.⁶ However, many *poskim* argue that he was hired specifically to teach and is not needed for anything else and is thus considered unavailable.⁷
- In a situation which is a dispute among the *poskim*, the defendant can claim *kim li*, "I side with the opinion who rules in my favor."⁸ Therefore, neither side can be required to pay out of pocket.

Since the details are numerous and complex, one must consult a *rov* who is knowledgeable in these *halachos*.

1. ש"ך ס"ק כ"ו חו"מ ס"י של"ג.
 2. וראה משפטי חושן סי' של"ג אות מ"ט והע' קל"ב ש"א שאם הפועל התחייב בקנין א"א לחזור אפילו באונס, ויל"ע.
 3. רמ"א שו"ע חו"מ ס"ה ע"פ תשו' מיימוני קנין סי' ל', וראה קצוה"ח חו"מ שם סק"ט.
 4. ש"ך שם סק"ה עי"ש. וראה תוס' קידושין י"ז ע"א ד"ה חלה. וראה משפטי חושן סי' של"ג הערות אות י"ט.
 5. משפט הפועלים פרק י"ב פתיחה וסעיף א'.
 6. שו"ת מורה"י ברנא סי' קל"ד וראה שו"ת צ"ח אליעזר ח"ב סי' כ"ו.
 7. פתחי חושן פ"א הערה מ"ט ונשאר בצ"ע, וראה משפט הפועלים שם הערה כ"א שהכריע הכי.
 8. כנה"ג סי' של"ג הגה"ט אות ט"ז וראה משפט הפועלים פ"ב הערה ט"ז שד"ך בזה.

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

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לזכות הרך הנולד שי' למשפחת רייטפארט

שיזכו להכניסו לבריתו של אאע"ה

נדבת הוריו ר' יוסף וזוגתו דבורה שיחיו רייטפארט

OUR HEROES

Rebbetzin Devorah Leah

Rebbetzin Devorah Leah was one of the Alter Rebbe's three daughters, and was as extremely dedicated to her father as one of the great chassidim. Her husband was Reb Sholom Shachna (son of Reb Noach Altshuler, a chossid of Reb Mendel Horodoker), and they had one son: the Tzemach Tzedek. She had great *mesirus nefesh* to annul the decree against *Chassidus* by giving up her life in the place of her father. She passed away at age 26 on 3 Tishrei 5553 (1792) and is buried in Liozhna.



The Tzemach Tzedek related:

In 5603 (1843) when I was called to the conference of *rabbonim* in Petersburg, I went to the resting place of my mother in Liozhna. There she told me that as a result of her *mesirus nefesh* for chassidim and *Chassidus* she was granted the merit to be in the chamber of the Baal Shem Tov to arouse mercy for me. There she requested from him that he should give her a *segula* with which I will *b'ezras Hashem* be able to stand strong against the opponents of *Chassidus*. The Baal Shem Tov told her, "Your son is fluent in all of the letters of the five books of Torah, Tehilim and Tanya by heart. It is written "*Vayehi chitas Elokim*." *ChiTaS* is an acronym of Chumash, Tehilim and Tanya, and one that is versed in all of its letters breaks all concealments.

(קיצורים והערות בספר התניא ע' קכו)



Before she passed away she requested from her father that he himself should educate and guide her only son. The Alter Rebbe fulfilled his promise and every day, including *Shabbos*, *yom tov*, and even *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*, he would learn with his grandson, saying that by doing so he pays up his obligation to his daughter. Reb Moshe, the Alter Rebbe's youngest son, writes in one of his diaries of the year 5555 (1795) that the Alter Rebbe spoke about the elevation the *neschama* of Devorah Leah receives through their learning. He continued to explain at length the great spiritual goodness that children cause for their parents through learning Torah and conducting themselves with good *midos*.

(ספר השיחות קיץ ת"ש ע' 40)

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Sensitively Inflexible

It was a sunny Shabbos afternoon, and two little girls were playing in the courtyard of 770. Just then, the Rebbe had to pass through on his way to the library, where the Rebbe and Rebbetzin would stay for Shabbos. However, the Rebbe could not walk in between the two girls, as *halocho* dictates.

The Rebbe called over one of the girls, and said to her, "Please go over to your friend, and wish her a *gut Shabbos*." The girl happily obliged, their feelings were not hurt, and the path was cleared for the Rebbe to walk.

On 20 Adar 5749 (1989), the Rebbe held a general *yechidus* with the supporters of the Machane Yisroel Development Fund. After the Rebbe's short *sicha*, each one of the supporter's families had the opportunity to talk to the Rebbe for a few moments.

One woman, unacquainted with the *halocho*, offered her hand for a handshake with the Rebbe. The Rebbe raised his hand in the air, and said with a smile: "I already gave my hand to your husband, with you in mind..."