



KEEPING SHABBOS

Guarding its Holiness

It was late Friday afternoon when Reb Peishe the *baal agolo* arrived in Lubavitch with his passengers. It was already past *licht tzind* when Reb Pesach hurried to drop off the last of his passengers at their lodgings.

During the following week, on one of his daily excursions to the outskirts of the city, the Rebbe Maharash passed the Reb Peishe who was fixing his wagon. The Rebbe asked his coachman to stop, then called over Reb Peishe and tugged his ears. "Rebbe," said Reb Peishe, "I surely deserve it, but I would like to know why."

The Rebbe Maharash responded, "It can happen that you arrive late on *erev Shabbos*, but why did you have to drop off each passenger at his host? You should have left them all in one spot and let everyone pick up their baggage after Shabbos."

(לקוטי סיפורים פרלוב ע' קנא)

Chassidus explains that on Shabbos there is greater revelation of *Elokus*, comparable to standing before a king in his inner chamber, where one must be completely nullified and abstain from all work. Only during the week, when we are outside the palace, are we expected to fulfill the King's wishes and build the world.

(לקו"ש חל"ג ע' 143)

The celebrated chossid, Reb Hillel Paritcher, once arrived in a town where some Yidden kept their stores open on *Shabbos*. Deeply disturbed, he called all the storeowners for a meeting, at which he explained to them why they should close their businesses on that day. They all agreed, but on one condition – that he persuade a particular wealthy man, their most formidable competitor, to close his business, too, on *Shabbos*. Reb Hillel summoned the rich man to come, but to no avail. He called for him a second and a third time, but he did not make an appearance.

Reb Hillel remained in the town for *Shabbos*. In the course of the day, that rich man suddenly felt a sharp piercing pain in his stomach. The pain grew so intense that he screamed. His wife, suspecting that this was connected to his disrespect for Reb Hillel, quickly ran to ask him for a beracha. To her surprise, Reb Hillel remained silent.

Thinking that he was hesitant to wish *refua shleima* on *Shabbos* (in the spirit of the *halacha*), the people present turned to him and begged that he wish her instead, *Shabbos hi miliz'oik u'refua kroiva lavoi* – "It is *Shabbos*, when it is forbidden to cry out; healing will come soon" – but Reb Hillel still remained silent. The woman left empty-handed, and her husband's pain worsened.

On *Motzaei Shabbos*, when Reb Hillel was sitting with chassidim for *Melave Malka*, the door burst open. The businessman's wife stood there crying, begging Reb Hillel to have *rachmonus* and bless her husband with a *refua shleima*. Reb Hillel turned to her and said, "*Shabbos hi miliz'oik u'refua kroiva lavoi*." The chassidim wondered: why now, after *Shabbos*, was he saying this?

Reb Hillel explained: "*Shabbos hi miliz'oik* – if *Shabbos* stops screaming in distress, then *u'refua kroiva lavoi* – the healing will come speedily. Go tell him that if he promises in the presence of three people that he will close his business on *Shabbos*, he will be healed."

Three chassidim stood up and went to his home, where the man gave his word that his store would be closed on *Shabbos*. His suffering immediately eased, within a short time he was completely healthy, and the *kedusha* of *Shabbos* was restored to the town.

(סיפורי חסידים זיון תורה ע' 290)

The Merit of Shabbos

One *Shabbos*, a fire broke out in the vacant home of Yosef ben Simai, the Roman emperor's treasurer. A squad of soldiers was promptly dispatched to put out the flames, but because

of his respect for *Shabbos*, Yosef did not let them act, though they were acting of their own accord. Immediately, rain began to pour, and the fire was extinguished. After *Shabbos*, he sent the soldiers recompense for their efforts.

(שבת קכא ע"א)

Without forewarning, one of the wealthy Yidden residing in Yerushalayim began rapidly losing his riches, until he reached a point of dire straits. One of his acquaintances went to Reb Shlomo'le of Zvil to ask for a *yeshuah*. Said the *tzaddik*, "Had this man not thought about his business matters on *Shabbos* and Yom Tov he would not have lost his possessions."

When the former wealthy Yid heard what the *tzaddik* had said, he admitted, "The Rebbe is correct. I used to do business with Arabic dealers on *Motzoei Shabbos* and Yom Tov, and would therefore plan these transactions during the afternoon hours on the holy days."

From then on, the Yid stopped faring as such, and his financial situation improved.

(אסדר לסעודתא ע' 130)

When the Friediker Rebbe was imprisoned in Shpalerke, he received his *Shabbos* clothing, which were sent from his home, on *Erev Shabbos*.

After dressing himself, the Rebbe checked the pockets as he one should on every *Erev Shabbos*, to ensure that he would not carry outdoors. In his pants pockets he found a slip of paper which he had received on the *Motzoei Shabbos* prior to his imprisonment. The paper contained information that could harm him were it to reach the hands of the investigators.

The Rebbe immediately destroyed it and was thus saved.

(שמו"ס ח"א ע' 204-ב)

CONSIDER THIS!

■ How can the same activity be considered holy during the week, yet forbidden on *Shabbos*?





A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Rov of Kfar Chabad Beis

Crossing the Street on Shabbos

Can I approach a crosswalk in middle of a busy street on Shabbos thereby causing cars to stop for me?

In many countries, there are crosswalks in middle of the street at which drivers must stop if there is a pedestrian nearby. However, when a driver stops a car he performs the *melacha* of extinguishing (*mechabeh*), and when he starts driving again, he performs the *melacha* of igniting (*hav'ara*). To cause a Jew to transgress is a Torah prohibition of *lifnei iveir*, and to merely assist them in transgressing is a rabbinic prohibition of *mesayeia lidvar aveira* (helping one sin).¹

Is standing at the crosswalk causing drivers to increase in *melacha*?

Some contemporary *poskim* say that while one may not actively cause a Jew to stop his car (*lifnei iveir*), one is not required to actively hold them back from choosing to sin. This view is in based on the Mishna's statement that one is not required to mark his *orlah* trees to guard thieves from eating the forbidden fruits (*haliteihu larasha*).² However, others argue that those who don't observe Shabbos nowadays aren't deliberate sinners, and we are obligated to hold them back from transgressing whenever possible, and surely not do anything which would cause them to transgress.³

In practice, one should avoid doing anything that would make drivers stop.⁴ However, if the traffic has already been stopped by a stop sign or a traffic officer, one may cross the street and delay the traffic, since they aren't doing any additional *melacha* as a result.

What about causing a non-Jew to stop his car on Shabbos?

Some consider standing at a crosswalk like telling the non-Jewish driver to stop his car, which would be prohibited on Shabbos.⁵ However, other *poskim* permit even signaling that he wants to cross, and it's not his concern that the non-Jew will stop as a result, since he didn't tell him to stop outright and he isn't deriving direct pleasure from anything the non-Jew did.⁶ In practice, one may wait by the crosswalk (since they stop for their own interest), but one should not motion to them.⁷

What should one do if a Jew ask for directions?

Contemporary *poskim* write that one cannot assist them in driving and one must therefore try to avoid them or act ignorant.⁸ Others suggest that if one says clearly that he wants them to minimize their *chilul* Shabbos by reaching their destination sooner, he may offer directions and is not considered to have participated in their *melacha*.⁹ Both options are acceptable.

1. ראה שוע"ר סי' שמ"ז ס"ג.
2. מעשר שני פ"ה מ"א. אשרי האישי או"ח ח"ב פמ"ד ס"ג.
3. שו"ת מציון תצא תורה שאלה תמ"א.
4. ומהרב מ"א ש"י זליגסון שמעתי שרבינו לא היה נוהר לעבור במדרכה אבל היה רץ מהר לפני שהגיעו מכוניות.
5. חוט שני הל' שבת ח"ג סוף פרק פ"א.
6. הלכות שבת בשבת ח"ב אמירה לעכו"ם הערה 52.
7. הכרעת הגר"מ אהרן שליט"א.
8. ילקו"י סי' ש"ח אות ע"ט, שו"ת להורות נתן ח"ג סי' כ"ג.
9. שו"ת מציון תצא תורה שאלה תמ"ז בשם רבו (כנראה הגרשז"א).

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

OUR HEROES

Reb Asher Nikolayever



The chossid Reb Asher Grossman was a *shochet* in Nikolayev. He was one of the young men who were guided by Reb Hillel Paritcher, and he was a chossid of both the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab. Besides being a great chossid, he was also involved with helping the Rebbe Rashab with community work. He was a talented *ba'al menagen*.

The Rebbe's grandfather, Reb Meir Shlomo Yanovsky, was the Rav of Nikolayev. Once, there was a typhus epidemic and Reb Meir Shlomo fell ill. At that time there was no known cure for the illness. All the victims were quarantined in a building outside the city to avoid spreading the disease, and they were treated by a doctor who visited daily. Very few people returned from the building alive.

When Reb Asher found out that Reb Meir Shlomo was quarantined he came to visit him. He was not allowed to go into the building, so he stood outside, as close to Reb Meir Shlomo's room as possible. He started to read aloud from a Tanya, *Igeres Hakodesh "Lehaskilach Bina"*. In that *Igeres* the Alter Rebbe explains that nothing bad comes from Hashem and if a person is imbued with this awareness, he will merit to see open good.

Reb Asher did not even know if Reb Meir Shlomo heard him or not; he just hoped. He returned every day and read the section of Tanya again.

After a few weeks, Reb Meir Shlomo was discharged from the quarantine, having made a full recovery. When he saw Reb Asher he called to him excitedly, "You saved my life! The reading of those holy words gave me the strength to overcome all the pain and depression and I was able to overcome the illness!"

The Rebbe once related:

Reb Yitzchak Yoel Refolovitch, the *Rov* of Kremenchug, once turned to Reb Asher during a *farbrengen* and exclaimed, "Asher! If I would have your beard I would get paid double"... (Reb Asher had a great 'Hadras Ponim' with a long beard, whereas Reb Yitzchak Yoel had a very short one. Reb Yitzchak Yoel was expressing the irony that the townspeople were he was did not have much appreciation for Torah knowledge and what was important for them was the external appearance). Reb Asher replied, "If I had a head and mind like yours, and it was not submerged in *galoshes*, my understanding of *Chassidus* would be totally different..." (Reb Yitzchak Yoel had a business of *galoshes* to subsidize his *rabbonus*.)

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

To Care For Everyone

When it was discovered in 5743 (1983) that Reb Mendel Vechter, a Williamsburg *rosh yeshiva*, was delivering *Chassidus shiurim*, he was immediately dismissed with animosity and threats. Ultimately it turned to violence. Before long, his wife was also fired from her teaching position, and they moved out of the neighborhood.

One summer day, Mrs. Vechter was summoned by the Rebbe's *mazkir*, *Harav Chodakov*. He transmitted the following message from the Rebbe to her:

"In every class, there are children who need extra attention due to their domestic or personal situations. Often, only the teacher is aware of them. Usually, the principal would arrange a meeting between the old and new teachers, but due to your unique situation, it is your responsibility as the former *mechaneches* to approach the new teachers yourself."

Mrs. Vechter was dumbstruck. "For the first time in my life," she says, "I grasped what a Rebbe is: to care even for a hostile community."

(As heard from Mrs. Vechter)