

# The Weekly Farbrengens

  
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## IMPACTFUL VISION (II)

### VIEWING KEDUSHA

There are certain holy things which Chazal say one should look at because of their positive effects. For example, looking at the sky causes a person to think of HaShem and arouses yiras Shamayim.

When Czar Nicholas decreed that Yidden were only allowed to wear a hat with a large visor, the Alter Rebbe said, "Kelipa is disturbing people from gazing at the sky, which is a known *segula* for yiras Shamayim; now there will be additional *avoda* – turning around the hat." Indeed, many chassidim turned around their hat, making the visor face the back, so that they would easily be able to gaze above.

(רש"י ברכת ל"ד ע"ב, טעמי המצוות פ' ואתחנן, אג"ק רי"צ ח"ד ע' תלח)

The Shaloh HaKadosh writes that when studying Torah, one should look at the letters, because "osiyos machkimos" – seeing the letters of *lashon hakodesh* makes one wise. This is also a *segula* for remembering what he has learned. Similarly, the Rebbe added, when a person is *davening* he should look inside a *Siddur* – and the letters will enlighten his eyes.

(של"ה שבועות - תורה אור, ס, תר"מ תשמ"ד ח"א ע' 485)

One should gaze at *tzitzis*, as the Torah says this will remind him of the *mitzvos*, and consequently, he will keep them. At the beginning of *Kiddush*, one should look at the *Shabbos* candles, for this is a *segula* to heal eyesight. During *hagba*, one should make a point of seeing and actually reading letters of the Torah – and they will be endowed with a great light. For this reason the Alter Rebbe writes that at that time an effort should be made to come close to the *bimah*.

(שור"ע אדה"ז סי' כ"ד ס"ה, סי' רע"א ס"ט, שער הכוונות דף מה, פסקי הסידור בסוף שחרית)

### APPORTIONING THE POWER

Chazal say that the heart and eyes can serve as "middlemen" for *aveiros*, for they can lead one to sin. HaShem says, "If you give me your eyes, then you are Mine!"

(ירושלמי ברכות פ"א ה"ה)

The Shaloh HaKadosh writes: The eye of a Yid in This World below corresponds to the *ruchniyus'dike* "eye" Above (*ayin tachas ayin*), so that when a person guards

his eyes and looks at proper things, his eyes will be brightened with *kedusha*. If, instead, a person looks at improper things, he separates his eyes from *kedusha* and causes a *p'gam* (blemish) Above.

(של"ה פרשת משפטים ד')

Once Rebbe Yonasan was being chased by *apikorsim*, heretics. He ran away from them until he entered his home and locked the door behind him. Standing behind the door they called out, "Rebbe Yonasan! Go and tell your mother, and compliment yourself, too – that you did not turn around to look at us, for had you done so, you would have been running after us to join us!"

(קהלת רבה א' כ"ה)

*l'avchem v'acharei eineichem... l'maan tizkerul* – You shall not follow your hearts and your eyes... in order that you remember!"

(ספורי חסידים זין תורה ע' 419)

The great chossid Reb Avremke Zhebiner would not look out of his window on *Shabbos*: he didn't want to see *chillul Shabbos*. Though all the townspeople kept *Shabbos*, he was concerned that he might see a *goy* traveling through the town. He would say, "If one sees *chillul Shabbos*, even if it is performed by a *goy*, this blemishes the *neshama*."

(רשימות דברים ח"א ע' רסג)

Chazal list certain things at which one should not gaze, for they bring about negative results:

It is forbidden to gaze at the face of a *rasha*, for this brings a spirit of *tuma* upon the observer and weakens his eyesight. Indeed, Chazal teach that part of the cause for Yitzchak Avinu's loss of eyesight was his looking at Eisav. The *tanna* Rebbe Yehoshua ben Karcha said that he was blessed with long life because he never looked at a *rasha*.

Similarly, one should not look at a person who is angry, for this causes forgetfulness. One should not look at the moon, except for a moment before *Kiddush Levana*, nor at a rainbow, except when reciting the *bracha*, for this harms the eyes. Some sources hold that these restrictions apply only to concentrated staring.

(מגילת כח ע"א, מגן אברהם רכ"ה סק"ב, שור"ע אור"ח רכ"ט ס"א)

At a *farbrengens* (י"א ניסן תשל"ח), the Rebbe mentioned the practice of many Yiddishe women to surround a child with images of *kedusha* and *Yiddishkeit* and not *r'l* with non-kosher animals or ammunition. Although adults, too, should not be exposed to such things, he said, this is especially important for children, who are so impressionable.

When the Rebbe spoke of this again (כ' מרחשון תשד"מ), he encouraged everyone to adopt this practice, and added that even pictures drawn for illustration purposes should be completely holy. The Rebbe connected this heightened level of *kedusha* to the imminent *Geula*, when all impurity will be removed from the world.

(שיח"ק תשל"ח ח"ב ע' 140, לקו"ש חכ"ה ע' 311)

**CONSIDER**

Of the various types of negative viewings, what is the order of severity?

Why did the Rebbe only mention non-kosher animals and ammunition, and not any of the other negative sights?

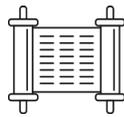
Reb Aharon of Karlin, once said: "It's no surprise that the younger chassidim are unable to uplift themselves! It is because they make light of the 'small matters.' We, however, turn away from even a slightly immodest sight, and we thank HaShem for his kindness..."

(קדושת עינים ע' שמו)

A scholarly chossid once complained to Reb Menachem Mendel of Kotzk about his weak memory in Torah.

"The Torah itself gives us a *segula* to improve memory," said the *tzaddik*. He then quoted the two adjacent *p'sukim* from *Shema*: "V'lo sosuru acharei





## CALCULATING MAASER

### How do I calculate maser?

*Tzedaka* is a very great *mitzva* that brings the *geula* closer and is an exemplary trait of the Jewish people.<sup>1</sup> Separating a tenth (*maaser*) or fifth (*chomesh*) of one's earnings is a special manner of giving *tzedaka* (see issue 546 for the scope of this obligation). The Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya that by giving *tzedaka*, a person elevates all of his earnings to Hashem, just as *korbanos* elevated the entire animal and plant kingdoms.<sup>2</sup>

*Maaser* is calculated from one's earnings, or the profits from one's business. Business expenses, which detract from the gross earnings, may be deducted before calculating *maaser*. However, any expense that one would spend regardless of the work or business may not be deducted.<sup>3</sup>

Business expenses include salaries for workers, rent of the facility, taxes (property and income), purchase or rent of tools and merchandise, and the like.<sup>4</sup>

Even expenses that a person must spend to enable him to do business, such as clothing needed for the job—e.g., presentable suit or *sheitel*—can be considered a business expense. A vehicle that is needed to get to work or to impress potential investors is considered a business expense if he wouldn't have purchased it otherwise.

Babysitting and cleaning help to enable the parents to go out and work can be deducted, provided that one wouldn't need these services otherwise. If one would use these services less if not working, the added expenses due to work could be deducted.<sup>5</sup>

When calculating profits, one can also take into account inflation and the depreciation of furniture and vehicles that got worn out due to their use for the business.<sup>6</sup>

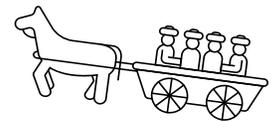
Since business can fluctuate with gains and losses, *poskim* recommend having set times during the year—every quarter, half-point, or at least once a year—to make the *maaser* calculation based on the balances at that time.

If one has a several different business ventures, does he calculate everything together or evaluate each business independently? If one business venture had no profit and only losses, must he still give full *maaser* from another business that profited?

In practice, two separate businesses should be calculated independently. Yet, if they are all related to the same general business—e.g., different branches of a store—they can be calculated together.<sup>7</sup>

1. ראה רמב"ם מתנות עניים פ"י באריכות.
2. בהע"ש בשם הרבנים אלישיב וואזנר וקרליץ ע"ה.
3. תניא פל"ד.
4. ראה ט"ז יו"ד סי' רמ"ט סק"א.
5. ראה חוות יאיר סי' רכ"ד, ערוה"ש יו"ד סי' רמ"ט ס"ז. וראה שו"ת אג"מ יו"ד סי' קמ"ג.
6. ראה חוות יאיר סי' רכ"ד, ערוה"ש יו"ד סי' רמ"ט ס"ז. וראה שו"ת אג"מ יו"ד סי' קמ"ג.
7. ראה צדקה ומשפט פ"ה ה"ט ובהערות שם, פת"ש יו"ד סי' רמ"ט, וראה ברכ"י שם. וראה שו"ת נהרי מאיר יו"ד ח"א סי' מ"ה.

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



## R. AVRAHAM SCHEERSOHN OF KISHINEV

R. Avraham Schneersohn was born in Lubavitch, to his father Harav Yisrael Noach, the Tzemach Tzedek's son in 5620. After his marriage he lived in Kishinev, and when his father passed away, he refused the entreaties of his chassidim to fill his place in Nezhin. In 5757, the Friediker Rebbe married R. Avraham's daughter, Rebbetzin Nechamah Dinah, and R. Avraham developed a close relationship with his *mechutan* the Rebbe Rashab. He was a businessman, but he devoted much of his time to learning Torah and *avodas Hashem*. He passed away on 2 Cheshvan 5698.

with him for half an hour. R. Avrohom then said to the Rebbe: "*Fetter*, I came to have *yechidus*."

"Last night," said the Rebbe Maharash, "I was in terrible pain. A vein burst and I had to stop the bleeding with a piece of my shirt. But that suffering is nothing compared to the difficulty of *yechidus*. Today, I can't; tomorrow *im yirtzeh Hashem*." And he had *yechidus* the next day.

On his return, R. Avraham visited his father in Niezhin. "Nu, did I give you good advice?" his father asked.

(לשמע אהרן ע' 70)

The Rebbe Rashab told the Friediker Rebbe, "Truth and humility can be learned from your father-in-law, R. Avrohom."

(אג"ק מוהררי"צ ח"ד ע' 485)

When R. Avrohom was a young man, he once traveled to Niezhin and told his father, R. Yisroel Noach: "*Tateh*, I don't want to shake your hand. I'm not coming to you as a father, but as a Rebbe." R. Yisroel replied, "You want advice? My advice is that you travel to your uncle in Lubavitch (the Rebbe Maharash)."

The Friediker Rebbe repeated what his father-in-law, R. Avrohom, had said about the Rebbe Rashab, "I have seen great people – my father and my uncles – but they don't have his [the Rebbe Rashab's] *mesiras nefesh*. His very first step forward in *avoda is with mesiras nefesh*."

"My uncle, the Rebbe Maharash, told me about his son, the Rebbe Rashab, '*Emes and mesiras nefesh* are two pillars of light. No one can grasp the level to which they can bring, especially when coming from a *neshama klalis*."

"That's when I knew that the Rebbe Rashab would fill his father's place."

(סר"ש תש"ו-תש"י ע' 144, לקו"ד ג-ב ע' 116)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



### MORE THAN I BELIEVE IN TELEVISION

For many decades there was a Canadian television series called *Man Alive*, which focused on faith and spirituality. Reb Simcha Zirkind of Montreal once arranged that Chabad of Quebec be the focus of one episode.

"more than I believe in television!"

As the filming came to a close, the interviewer asked the *shliach* Reb Simcha whether he believes that Moshiach's coming is indeed imminent.

After the program aired, with that answer as the closing, the *shluchim* sent the recording into the Rebbe with a transcript of the content.

"Yes," replied Reb Simcha affirmatively, and with his impish smile he added,

One of the *mazkirus* reported back to them that the last piece of the program caused an expression of pleasure to spread over the Rebbe's face. The Rebbe said, "*Simcha hot gut gezogt!* Simcha said it well!"

(As heard from his family)