

The Weekly *Farbrengens*


MERKAZ ANASH
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GUIDING GENTLY (I)

TRUE LOVE

We read in the Torah several times about our obligation to guide other Yidden in the right direction. This obligation is included in the *mitzva* of *ahavas Yisroel*, and more specifically instructed in the *mitzva* of *tochacha*, rebuke. Additionally, there is an *arvus*, a mutual responsibility, that all members of *klal Yisroel* have for one another. This means that a *mitzva* or an *aveira* (R"l) done by any individual Yid affects all other Yidden.

(ש"רע אדה"ז אר"ח סי' קנ"ו, תר"ח, ה'ל' אונאה וגניבת דעת)

Rebbi Yoisi ben Chanina taught that rebuke brings love, for love that does not include rebuke is not true love. Resh Lakish taught that rebuke brings peace, for any peace that does not incorporate rebuke is not real peace.

(בראשית רבה נ"ד)

The concept of a *farbrengen*, at which the speakers traditionally expect the other participants to mend their ways, is fundamental to Chassidus. Admonishment at a *farbrengen* relates only to matters that will not cause anyone embarrassment, and since the earliest days it has been done successfully, out of love and deep affection.

(היום יום כ"ד תשרי)

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Chazal say that whoever is able to raise an objection to a wrongdoing and does not, will be held accountable for that wrong. Someone in a leadership position, such as the head of a household, a community leader, or a person of influence in a city, must speak up and correct whatever needs correction.

A neighbor of Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya was unlearned in the *halachos* of *Shabbos*, and sent her cow out to graze with a strap tied between its horns - an act which is *osur*. When the *chachomim* saw this happen, they ordered Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya to do something about it, or else they would put him in *cherem*. As a *kapara*, because he had relied on his own individual ruling, instead of accepting - as the Torah dictates - the ruling of the majority, he later fasted so many fasts that his teeth turned black. Since he could have admonished her, he was considered responsible for her actions, to the point that the *Mishna* refers to this cow as 'the cow of Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya.'

(שבת נ"ד ע"ב, ירושלמי פ"ה ה"ד)

The Alter Rebbe *paskens* in his *Shulchan Aruch* that if a person sees another doing something wrong, he is obligated to guide him on the correct path and to inform him of his wrongdoing. He must repeatedly remind the other of the proper conduct required ("even a hundred times," as the *Gemara* says), even if the other is angered and is not willing to listen further.

When rebuking, one must not cause embarrassment. One should speak softly, explaining that the rebuke is intended for the listener's benefit. In the event of a public wrongdoing, in order to avoid a *chillul HaShem* one is not permitted to remain silent. Even when the person involved will not listen to the rebuke, one is still obligated to speak up once, so that it does not become his responsibility.

(ש"רע אדה"ז אר"ח סי' קנ"ו, תר"ח, ה'ל' אונאה וגניבת דעת)

medication, I watched how cautious they were while preparing to do so. They sterilized their instruments, dressed in special gowns, washed their hands, checked their nails, and then poured alcohol over my feet. Having just washed myself, I asked why this extra cleaning was necessary. 'No matter,' they answered. 'The policy is that before any injection is given, the area must be washed with alcohol, sterilizing it completely, because if some bacteria remain, the medicine will be ineffective and may even cause additional infection (R"l).'

Rebuking another is like giving an injection, which heals, but also hurts. If it is to have the desired effect, one must ensure that everything is disinfected. [For example, the words one chooses must be free of any self-righteous or unloving overtones.]

(אג"ק אדהר"י צ"ח ע"ב רצ"א)

CONSIDER

Is guidance given for the sake of the receiver or the giver?

What is the difference between reproof following mussar and Chassidus if both touch upon faults? Why did mussar use its method?

(סה"מ קונטרסים ח"ב ע"ב ש"ח ע"ב)

The Frierdiker Rebbe explains in a *maamar* that when rebuking another, one must speak humbly, since one is pained that the current wrongdoing happened during his time. Moreover, he must include himself in the rebuke by finding some measure of the same fault within himself, even if only *bedakus*, in a subtle form.

Reb Mendel Barrer, a *talmid* of the Baal Shem Tov, was a *maggid* who traveled from town to town giving *mussar* and pointing out the deficiencies of the townspeople. However, he would only speak in places where he would be paid. He explained, "When I finish my mission on this earth, *HaShem* will ask me, 'Who are you to speak like this about My children?' I will answer, 'Since You gave me the job of supporting my family, and my only skill was giving *mussar*, I had no other choice.'" If he would do this without payment, he would have no excuse...

The Rebbe explained that when rebuking in a manner of *Chassidus* (rather than *mussar*), this approach is not necessary. For then, one person points out to another what needs to be improved, without highlighting the problems - and this can be done in a pleasant manner. This mode of rebuke is more successful and effective. It also prevents claims from being made Above against the one who is rebuking, for after all, he is only offering the *cure* for the ailment...

(דרך מצוותיך קצ"ו ע"ב, ת"מ חט"ו ע"ב 143)

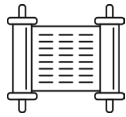
IN ONE BOAT

The eminent chossid, Reb Hillel Paritcher, once said in the name of the *Tzemach Tzedek* that the double expression of rebuke in the Torah (*hochei'ach tochiach*) implies that one must first rebuke oneself and only then rebuke another. Reb Hillel explained that rebuke is effective only when it follows self rebuke.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע"ב 182)

In the year תרצ"ה (1935), the Frierdiker Rebbe underwent a medical procedure and learned a lesson in *avodas HaShem* from the surgeons. In a letter he writes, "Today, as the doctors came to inject some





CLEARING SHELLS AND BONES

How may I clean off the Shabbos table from *muktza* dirt and food remnants?

Items that are neither a utensil nor edible even to animals – e.g. dirt and pebbles – have the status of *muktza* in the absolute sense and may not be moved on Shabbos in the normal way.¹

Food crumbs less than a *kezayis* may still be removed from the table, since they are fit for animals and birds. The same would apply to any sort of bones, pits, or peels that are fit for dogs or other animals in that locale. Although this change of status – from human food to animal feed – classifies them as *noled*, it is nonetheless allowed on Shabbos. On *yom tov* it would be *muktza* (see issue 587).²

Peels, pits, or shells that aren't edible to animals in that locale are total *muktza*, just like pebbles.³ While some *poskim* allow sweeping them with something else – e.g. a spoon or knife – the Alter Rebbe considers these utensils as simply an extension of one's hand.⁴

The prohibition of moving *muktza* applies only to normal handling with one's hands. Abnormal handling of *muktza* (*kil'achar yad*), such as kicking it with your foot or moving it with your elbow, is always allowed. Thus, one could sweep the *muktza* shells into a garbage can using the back of one's hand.

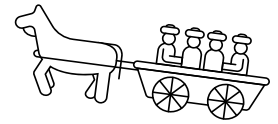
Moving a plate or table cloth containing these items is classified as indirect handling (*tiltul min hatzad*). Whenever the purpose can be accomplished by shaking off the *muktza* right there, one must do that. However, when one doesn't want the shells on the floor, or if the table also contains *challa* – to which the shells are considered insignificant in comparison – one may carry the whole tablecloth and shake it off elsewhere. The tablecloth is not a *basis* for the *muktza* since it was placed there after Shabbos began.⁵ (The above principles are also applicable when peeling for a salad over a plate or bag.)

Repulsive or foul smelling items that are in a location where they bother people have the status of *graf shel re'i* (a pail of sewage), which Chazal allowed to be removed even if they are *muktza*.⁶ If leftover pits, shells, fish bones or the like fit these criteria, they may be moved even directly. Once one has removed some of it to the point that it is no longer disgusting, the *heter* fades, so one should remove it all together.⁷

1. שוע"ר סי' ש"ח ס"ח. 2. שוע"ר סי' ש"ח ס"ח. 3. שוע"ר סי' ש"ח ס"ח. 4. שוע"ר סי' ש"ח ס"ח. 5. שוע"ר סי' ש"ח ס"ח. 6. שוע"ר סי' ש"ח ס"ח. 7. מאור השבת ח"ג ע' ת"ד בשם הגש"ז א. סמ"ב. 8. דלא כט"ז סק"ח, וראה באה"ט סקל"ד

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

Our Heroes



R. MEIR PAHARER

R. Meir Paharer was a chossid of the Mittlerer Rebbe and the Tzemach Tzedek. He demanded the highest standards of authenticity in Chassidus and Avodas Hashem, and was known for his sharp tongue.

daughter of R. Gershon Ber Paharer, and he remembered R. Meir well.

R. Gershon Ber was sent to Pahar by R. Hillel Paritcher to serve as a mashpia while he was still a young man. Once, when R. Gershon Ber repeated a maamar, R. Meir commented that he says it as though he's playing notes from a musical box. He meant that R. Gershon Ber had not fully internalized the Chassidus he was repeating.

When R. Shmuel Levitin, the son of R. Volf and grandson of R. Gershon Ber, shared this story at the Frieddiker Rebbe's table, the Frieddiker Rebbe laughed hard, since he held R. Gershon Ber in high regard.

(ניצוצי אור - וויינגארטען ע' 256)

R. Meir would daven quietly with deep concentration. Before *krias shema*, he would tie a handkerchief around his forehead to help him concentrate better. The Tzemach Tzedek was reported to have said about R. Meir, "Are there many 'Meirs'?"

His style was sharp and demanding. During one *farbrengen*, as R. Meir was speaking about the greatness of the *neshama*, as he often did. Suddenly, he stopped and turned to his son Nachman and asked, "Nachman, does Hirshel Volf have a goat?" R. Nachman answered that he doesn't know. "You chunk of meat!" R. Meir responded sharply. "Why don't you know if he has a goat? Why are you not concerned about his financial state?!"

On another occasion, soon after the chossid R. Bereh Volf Kozevnikov of Yaketrinaslav got married, Reb Meir rebuked him and said, "Have you already stopped learning?"

Soon afterwards, R. Bereh Volf injured his leg, and he attributed it to R. Meir's *kpeida* (displeasure).

(ניצוצי אור - וויינגארטען)

R. Volf Levitin, the Mashgiach of the yeshiva in Lubavitch, was married to the

A Moment with The Rebbe



MECHITZA

One of the early battles of the Rebbe was for the installment of proper *mechitzos* in *shuls*. Some chassidim were encouraged to be active on this front, while others were directed to leave a rabbinic or *chazan* position when improvement wasn't possible.

they are fooling?"

In another instance someone asked the Rebbe how high a *mechitza* should be.

The Rebbe responded, "A *mechitza* should be a partition, in the literal sense. A person standing his full height should not be able to see what is happening in the women's section, as this is one of the reasons that a *mechitza* is necessary."

(Teshurah Simpson, Tammuz 5768)

In one sharp response from 20 Kislev 5720 (1959), the Rebbe addressed a case where the top half of the partition was made of glass: "They are making a joke out of themselves; who do they think

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