

The Weekly *Farbrenge*


MERKAZ ANASH
 מרכז איש
 749 • תולדות תשפ"ד • לחמן ישמעו
 EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

EVERY SINGLE YID (II)

WITH MESIRUS NEFESH

Reb Mordechai HaTzaddik, a *talmid* of the Baal Shem Tov, had two close friends from his *yeshivah* days, and he very much wanted to share with them his new path in serving *HaShem*. However, he was hesitant to leave his Rebbe. Besides, who knew if he would be able to find them. And even if he did find them, would they listen to him?

True, the Baal Shem Tov had once taught that "one must have *mesirus nefesh* to do a favor *begashmius*, and even more *beruchnius*, for even a single Yid. A *neshama* can descend to this world and live for seventy or eighty years or more, just to do a favor for even a single Yid." Accordingly, Reb Mordechai nearly resolved to begin the journey and seek his friends, but somehow he could not bring himself to actually leave. He decided to remain with the Rebbe for just a few more days, and then he would go.

After a few days, he considered approaching the Rebbe, telling him the whole story, and asking his advice. Then, by means of his *ruach hakodesh*, the Rebbe could tell him where his friends were now. That would certainly save him time. But a moment later, Reb Mordechai rejected the idea. Hadn't the Rebbe clearly said that "one must have *mesirus nefesh* to do a favor for even a single Yid?" So why ask if he should go? And as to asking the Rebbe to use his *ruach hakodesh* to save him some time - what a *chutzpa!* Furthermore, if Reb Mordechai did know where they were, he would have less *mesirus nefesh*. No - he would not ask! He decided to take to the road and search for his friends.

On the day of his departure he rose very early and prepared himself for *Shacharis*. After *davening* he packed a little bag with his *tallis* and *tefillin* and his belongings, and began the journey. He had already passed the city limits when the Rebbe's *shammes* ran after him with a message: the Rebbe wished to speak with him!

When he entered the Rebbe's room, the Baal Shem Tov said to him: "*Boruch HaShem*, you won your battle with yourself!" The Baal Shem Tov gave him instructions and a *bracha* for success, and Reb Mordechai was indeed successful in his mission. After a long journey he located his friends and brought them to the path of the Baal Shem Tov.

(אגרות קודש אדהר"צ ח"ג ע' קעד)

The Rebbe once spoke of how precious it is to help just

one Yid. One of the *nevuos* of the *Geula* is that *HaShem* will gather together all the Yidden, one by one, and lead them by the hand out of *golus*. Since the *Geula* is dependent on our *avoda* now, we must learn a lesson from this. Some people, when offered the opportunity of traveling on *shlichus*, only want to go to a place that has thousands of Yidden. They feel that anything less would be a waste of their talents. But just as it is befitting for *HaShem* to take a single Yid to *Eretz Yisroel*, so is it befitting for us to go and help even one single Yid, and kindle within him the light of Torah and *mitzvos*.

On another occasion the Rebbe pointed out two advantages of going to a city with a small number of Yidden. Firstly, one should always run to fulfill those *mitzvos* which others overlook. This is similar to the obligation of leaving everything in order to deal with a *meis mitzva*, a dead person who has no friend or relative to bury him. Secondly, working in a big city with a large Jewish population can leave a person with a feeling of *yeshus*, a bloated ego, which could cause him to be satisfied with his achievements and go off to rest. In a small town, where his activities are less publicized, he knows that he must constantly grow and expand.

(שיחור"ק תש"ל ח"ד ע' 385, שיחור"ק תשל"ד ח"ב ע' 280)

CONSIDER

Why are we inclined to dedicate ourselves only for a multitude?
 Why isn't this correct?

AN ENTIRE WORLD

Chazal write: "Whoever saves one *Yiddishe neshama* is considered as if he had saved an entire world."

(סנהדרין פ"ד מ"ה)

In תשי"ד (1954) Reb Yochanan Twersky, the *Rachmistrivka* Rebbe, visited New York for the *chassuna* of his son. He used the opportunity to visit the Rebbe, whom he knew from his youth, when he had been involved in an underground *cheder* in *Nikolayev*.

At the *yechidus* the Rebbe mentioned a particular student from that *cheder* who had since immigrated to the United States, where he left the path of Torah.

The Rebbe added that *Lubavitcher chassidim* had tried to bring him back but to no avail, and perhaps he would be able to influence him. Then and there, the Rebbe picked up the phone and dialed the man's number. "I have Rabbi Yochanan Twersky sitting here. Do you remember him? He is interested in meeting with you. When can you meet?"

On Friday afternoon, as arranged, the former student and the *Rachmistrivka* Rebbe met, and after exchanging reminiscences, the man offered him a generous check. To his surprise, the *Rachmistrivka* Rebbe declared, "I won't accept a check until we discuss your *Yiddishkeit*." The man protested that he was a respected member of his Jewish community and even went to *shul* occasionally. However, it soon became apparent that he did not observe even the basics of *Yiddishkeit*.

Reb Yochanan's eyes filled with tears. "Was it for a 'Yiddishkeit' like this that we invested so much effort in you in the *chadorim* in *Nikolayev*? Each of your teachers put his life in danger - and for what? So you would grow up to be a *yerei Shamayim* and a *frum Yid*. Just look how far you've strayed . . ." The man was moved, and resolved to do *teshuva* and begin observing *mitzvos*.

He again tried to present the check, but again Reb Yochanan insisted: "I will accept it only after I find out that you have kept your word and have done *teshuva*. And how will I know when I don't live here?" He then answered his own question, "When the *Lubavitcher* Rebbe tells me that you did *teshuva*, only then will I accept your donation."

During his remaining few weeks in New York, the *Rachmistrivka* Rebbe received many people who came to him for *brachos* and advice. One day, the phone rang at his host's house and the *Rachmistrivka Rebbetzin* answered. The voice on the line asked to speak with Rabbi Twersky.

"Who's speaking?" she asked. "*Doh ret-men fun Lubavitch* (I'm calling from *Lubavitch*)."
 Realizing it was the *Lubavitcher* Rebbe, she excitedly gave the phone to her husband, who was happy to hear the Rebbe's update: their former student had indeed begun to observe *mitzvos*.

"Reb Yochanan," the Rebbe added, "you think you came here in order to marry off your son? You came here so that a Yid would do *teshuva*. Now this man is *frum!*"

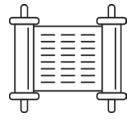
(מפי נכדו הר"ר נחמן יוסף שי' טווערסקי)

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HANDLING A GUN

I'm on the shul's security committee. Can I show off my gun's features to a friend on Shabbos?

Utensils are governed by varying rules of *muktza* depending on their designated usage. A utensil primarily used for Shabbos-permitted activities (*melachto l'heter*) may be handled even to protect the utensil itself (*l'tzorech atzmo*). Utensils with a primary usage that is prohibited on Shabbos (*melachto l'isur*) may not be handled for their own sake, but may be used for a permitted usage (*l'tzorech gufo*) or to enable using its place (*l'tzorech mekomo*).¹

Contemporary *poskim* debate a gun's *muktza* status due to its purpose of wounding/killing. Some posit it is considered a *kli shemelachto l'heter* as its primary purpose is protection – i.e., to scare off perpetrators and protect from life-threatening situations.² (This is especially so if the owner designates the gun exclusively for this purpose.)³ It would also not qualify as *muktza machmas chisaron kis* (expensive items not used for other purposes) since the Alter Rebbe only applies it to utensils with Shabbos-prohibited usage.⁴

Other *poskim* argue that a gun is still categorized as a *kli shemelachto l'isur* due to its usage that is essentially Shabbos prohibited, albeit permitted when used for saving lives. This is akin to scissors, which are primarily used for a Shabbos-prohibited *melacha*, but may be used for a permissible purpose like cutting open a food wrapper.⁵

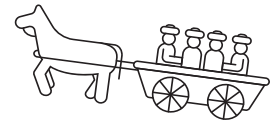
Even according to this more stringent view, a gun may be handled for security purposes even lacking immediate *pikuach nefesh*. In addition, some contend that a gun to protect Yidden throughout the day may be handled like a *milah* knife for a *mohel* who has additional *brissim* that day.⁶ What wouldn't be allowed is handling or moving the gun for reasons that don't involve security. Additionally, when the gun is not in active use, or is a specialty model, it may be considered *muktza machmas chisaron kis* which may not be handled.⁷

While some contend that an unloaded gun or bullets are considered a "broken" vessel which is *muktza*, contemporary *poskim* rule that since their normal function is to be assembled and disassembled, they are not considered "broken." Moreover, an unloaded gun can serve as a deterrent.⁸

Carrying a gun outside where there is no *eruv* is a separate discussion, see issue 747.

1. ראה שו"ע ר' א"ח סי' ט"ו ו"ט"ו. סי' ש"ח סי"א ו"ש. ויש לעיין בהמובא ועוד.
2. בקו"א לאדה"ז סי' רנ"ט סק"א.
3. ראה שו"ע ר' א"ח סי' ש"ח ס"ד.
4. שו"ע א"ח סי' ש"ח ס"ב. וראה שו"ת באהלה של תורה ח"ב סי' לב.
5. שו"ת דבר חברון א"ח סי' דש.
6. ראה שו"ע ר' סי' ש"ח ס"ה.
7. מכתב הגרש"א שם.
8. כלי שמלאכתו להיתר. ראה שו"ע ר' א"ח

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



REB AVROHOM ABBA PERSON

Reb Avrohom Abba Person grew up in the city of Kresleva (Vitebsk). His family members were chassidim of the Mitteler Rebbe and the Tzemach Tzedek. Before the Rebbe Rashab founded the *yeshiva* of Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, he gathered the group of *bochurim* that would start the *yeshiva*. The Rebbe wanted the most excellent *bochurim*, so he sent the group of ten to Kenigsburg to be under the supervision of Reb Avrohom Abba, instructing them to learn from his behavior and chassidische customs. Reb Avrohom Abba was like a *mashpia* to them, and he would *farbreng* with them and report to the Rebbe Rashab on each of them individually.

From a young age he was fascinated by *chassidische* stories, and he would collect them like diamonds. He married the granddaughter of the famed chossid of the Alter Rebbe, Reb Velvel Vilenker, whose custom was to *farbreng* every *motzai Shabbos* with the local chassidim. Reb Avrohom Abba began joining these events and later on described it: "When

I remember those *farbrengens*, those memories chase any feeling of pain and sadness out of me. A *chassidische farbrengen* is the 'chotzer' (courtyard) of Chassidus, through which one enters the 'azoros' and 'kodesh hakodoshim.' During those *farbrengens*, the elder chassidim's faces would shine brightly and their words would affect the listeners incredibly, in a way he would never forget."

(התמים ח"ב חוברת ו')

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes: "I really enjoyed learning *mishnayos* by heart, and the *sedorim* I knew already I would review lovingly, quickly though not skipping a letter. Reb Avrohom Abba Person once told my father that the Tzemach Tzedek told him at his first *yechidus*, 'Learn *mishnayos* by heart- the word *mishna* has the same letters as the word *neshama*. By saying *mishnayos* by heart the *neshama* illuminates the body and the body shines.' Reb Avrohom Abba Person was fluent in *shisha sidrei mishna* and *Tanya* in an astounding way."

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"ד ע' 1384)

A Moment with The Rebbe



WHAT IS CONSIDERED 'LEARNING CHASSIDUS'

Reb Shimon Neubort relates:

At my first *yechidus*, 27 Shevat 5724, I asked the Rebbe whether I should transfer from my *yeshiva* at that time to a Lubavitch *Yeshiva*, to which the Rebbe said no.

Then the Rebbe asked, "What's with learning Chassidus?"

"I learn the daily *Tanya*," I responded.

"Chitas is like Alef Beis," the Rebbe said to

me. "But it's not a serious study that can be considered 'learning Chassidus.' You should start learning some *maamorim*."

"I will try to find the time," I said.

"Eretz Yisroel stretches according to its inhabitants, because of her holiness," the Rebbe replied. "The time set aside for Torah is the same. Due to the holiness of torah, the time stretches as necessary."

(Ovinu Roeinu p. 41)

לע"נ ר' חיים מרדכי ב"ר משה ע"ה

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