

The Weekly Farbrengens



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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

DEALING WITH ANGER (II)

REMAINING CALM

Rambam points out that although with regard to most *middos* the *Chachomim* say that one should take the middle path, not following either extreme, with regard to anger they warn that a person should keep a great distance, never becoming angry.

(רמב"ם הלכות דעות פ"ב ה"ג)

Reb Mordechai of Neshchiz of course already owned at least one *tallis katan*, but he yearned to have one that came from *Eretz Yisroel*. After much effort, his *chassidim* finally managed to bring him a piece of white lamb's wool cloth all the way from *Eretz HaKodesh*. One of them asked to be granted the *zechus* of cutting it to size and sewing its hems. In his excitement, however, he made a false fold and discovered to his horror that while cutting a hole for the head, he had made another wide hole right in the front of the *tallis katan*!

"What will the Rebbe say?" the *chossid* thought. "After waiting for this cherished object for so long, and after all the effort that has gone into getting it, it's now completely ruined!"

When the Rebbe next saw him, and asked whether the garment was ready, he sadly stammered out his story.

"Reb Yid, why are you afraid?" said the Rebbe. "Don't you realize that a *tallis katan* really needs two big holes? One, as usual, to put one's head through, and the other - to test whether Mordechai will 'lose his head'..."

(סיפורי חסידים זון תורה ע' 457)

Reb Yitzchak of Vorki loved all his fellows so warmly that he never got angry at anyone. Once, however, a certain woman bothered him so much that he was forced to rebuke her.

"In order to become angry," he said, "I must first put on a different *kapote*."

So he asked Feivl, his *meshares*, to bring him his other *kapote*. When he had put it on, he said, "Feivl, now rebuke her for me, please."

(סיפורי חסידים זון מועדים ע' 210)

WITHSTANDING THE TEST

Surrounded by his *talmidim*, the Baal Shem Tov took his place at the table for the festive meal of Rosh Chodesh, but his face was serious. They knew from previous occasions how to bring their Rebbe to a more joyous mood, but this time they had no success. They were then joined by a certain villager named Reb Dovid, and the Baal Shem Tov was immediately filled with joy: he treated him warmly, gave him a place to sit, and also gave him a piece of his *hamotzi*.

The *talmidim* were now troubled by questioning

CONSIDER

Is the reason for avoiding even the slightest form of anger in order to stay on the safe side or is that itself the proper conduct?

How does the awareness of HaShem's presence cause one's anger to dissipate?

thoughts. How could it be that the whole Holy Society was unable to arouse such joy, and only a villager, a simple *yishuvnik*, was able to do so?

Sensing their questions, the Baal Shem Tov sent off Reb Dovid to do something or other, and then explained:

"This Reb Dovid works hard, by the sweat of his brow, for every penny he earns. During the year he saves a penny at a time to buy an *esrog* for Sukkos, until he finally assembles the sum and travels to the city and buys an extremely fine one. It gives him great joy. Since he is poor, and his wife is of a bitter spirit, it angered her considerably that he didn't care about the condition of his household,

since he spent money on an *esrog* and rejoiced over it. In her bitterness she broke the *pitom* of the *esrog*.

"Now, besides the money that he spent on the *esrog*, there were many obstacles to bringing it - water to cross, bad roads- so it all added up to a great deal of hard effort. Yet when he discovered what his wife had done he was not angry, but simply said, 'It appears that I am not worthy of having such an *esrog*. Truly, does a simple Yid like me deserve such a fine *esrog*?'"

"From the time of the *Akeidah*," concluded the Baal Shem Tov, "there hasn't been such a test of character. And that's why I treated him so warmly."

(ספר השיחות תרצ"ו ע' 148)

THE KEY TO TRANQUILITY

The Rebbe Maharash had a *meshares*, Bentzion, who was a great *kapdan* - a short-tempered fellow. The *Raza*, the brother of the Rebbe Rashab, used to say, "When I see a wrongdoing, I get angry just as he does. The difference between us is that I put aside the anger for an hour and a minute, and by that time I realize that it is all a *shtus*."

(ספר השיחות תש"ו-ה'שי"ת ע' 107)

In dealing with anger the Rebbe would advise: Learn thoroughly the passage of *Tanya* which explains that everything comes from *HaShem*; don't speak for a while, at least a few minutes; and think about how *HaShem* is standing over you at that moment.

In one letter the Rebbe writes, "As to what you write concerning anger, etch in your mind that which is written in *Tanya* at the beginning of *perek mem-alef* - that *HaShem* stands over every individual and searches his heart. When you recall while you're angry, that *HaShem* is actually standing over you, your anger will surely pass immediately."

(אג"ק חכ"ו מכ"ט תשצ"ה)



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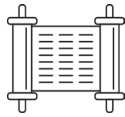
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SMOKING IN A PUBLIC AREA

Is there a problem with smoking in a public area?

Even in the comfort of one's home or yard, some things may not be done since they cause disturbances to neighbors. Shulchan Aruch lists four types of such damages: smoke, smell, dust, and shaking of the ground.¹

If a person has interfered with his neighbor's rights for some time, he generally develops a *chazaka* and can claim that his neighbor relinquished his right to object. However, with these four nuisances, Chazal established that they are intolerable and he must stop once the neighbor objects (unless the neighbor made a *kinyan* to accept this disturbance). A *chazaka* can't be established for these damages because the damaged party may claim, "I thought I could tolerate it, but I can't."

A factory that produces smoke which bothers nearby residents can be stopped. Even if the factory was there first, it would need to relocate (though, in that case, at the neighbors' expense).² Even if only one neighbor complains, they must stop.³

It follows that one is not allowed to smoke in a public area when this causes pain or discomfort to people in that area. In addition, it has been shown that secondhand smoke actually harms others as well.⁴ Even when people say they don't mind, it is often not wholehearted permission. Chazal say that causing nuisance and discomfort to others is something that Hashem brings to judgment.⁵

Areas that originally allowed smoking—e.g., workplaces—due to unawareness of the dangers may reverse their policy later based on current medical knowledge.⁶

Smoking in a *shul* carries an additional issue, as it falls into the category of *kalus rosh*, which is forbidden in a *shul* even when not a time of davening.⁷

It goes without saying that we are not discussing the halachic issues of smoking itself per se, which is the topic of a separate discussion.

1. שו"ע חו"מ סי קנ"ו והלאה.
2. דרכי חושן רט"ו - ר"ז.
3. שו"ע חו"מ סי קנ"ה סמ"א.
4. שו"ת אג"מ ח"ב סי י"ח, צ"ץ אליעזר חט"ו סי ל"ט, שו"ת שבה"ל ח"י סי רצ"ה.
5. קהלת י"ב י"ד. חגיגה ה' ע"א.
6. צ"ץ אליעזר שם.
7. שו"ע אור"ח סי קנ"א. שאילת יעב"ץ ח"ב סי ט'. ספר החיים לוי חיים פלאגי סי מ"ה אות ה. ערוך השולחן סי קנ"א ה'. כף החיים סי קנ"א אות י"ג.

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



REB AHRON OF KREMENTCHUG

Reb Ahron was the son of Rebbetzin Freida, daughter of the Alter Rebbe. He married Rebbetzin Sarah, the youngest daughter of the Mittlerer Rebbe, in her second marriage (after her previous husband Reb Ahron ben Reb Moshe of Shklov passed away); therefore he was the step-father of Rebbetzin Rivka, wife of the Rebbe Maharash. He lived in Kremenchug and was an immense *lamdan* and *davened* at great length. He was extremely adored by all and he greeted everyone with a smile. After a few years of marriage, Rebbetzin Sarah passed away.

Reb Boruch and Reb Shmuel Tamares, chassidim in Kremenchug, did not treat Reb Ahron with proper respect. Once while learning *Chassidus* in depth Reb Shmuel fell asleep and saw the Mittlerer Rebbe who ordered him, "Go out of my *daled amos*." The next day Reb Shmuel asked Reb Boruch if he also saw something, but Reb Boruch answered that he had not. Later however, Reb Boruch dreamt the same thing, and they concluded that the reason behind it was their lack of respect to Reb Ahron. They decided to go and appease him. At first out of his profound humility Reb Ahron wondered what they wanted

from him. When they began begging, he told them that the Alter Rebbe appeared to him in a dream and instructed him to be *mekarev* the chassidim Reb Shmuel and Reb Boruch. Reb Ahron continued, "I told the Alter Rebbe, 'I should be *mekarev* them? I would be happy if they would be *mekarev* me!" Reb Shmuel and Reb Boruch then understood what the Mittlerer Rebbe meant in their dreams.

(ספר השיחות תש"א ע' 42)

Reb Ahron used to *daven* privately at home. Sometimes he would *daven* in an unusually pleasant, melodious voice, at other times he would *daven* silently. One thing was certain: while he *davened* he was oblivious to everything happening around him. Once a fire broke out in the house and everyone began to scream. Reb Ahron remained locked in his room and heard nothing. In the end, the rescuers had to break down the door, and upon entering, they discovered that he was still *davening*! They carried him out through the window but he still remained completely unaware of the situation. When he finally finished *davening*, he asked in surprise, "Where am I? What happened?"

(דברי ימי הרבנית רבקה ע' כח)

A Moment with The Rebbe

לזכות שניאור זלמן בן חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות



FOCUS ON THE LEARNING

In the early years, the Rebbe would be *mesader kiddushin* outside 770. There were times when there were limits set on how many pictures of the Rebbe should be taken.

Reb Mordechai Shusterman, the longtime *baal korei* at 770, related:

My son Gershon had a camera. Once, as the Rebbe was walking up the stairs after the *chuppa*, Gershon approached to snap a picture.

The Rebbe turned to Reb Menachem

Mendel Tenenbaum, the principal of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva where Gershon learned, and asked him to take the camera away from him.

"Test him on something," the Rebbe said, "and if he passes, he should receive the camera back."

Gershon was tested, and his camera was returned.

(L'maan Yeid'u p. 142)