

# The Weekly Farbrengens



**MERKAZ ANASH**  
מרכז אנאש

למען ישמעו • בשלח תשפ"ה • 813  
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## WORTHY MASHPI'IM

### SUITABLE TEACHERS

Chazal say that it is forbidden to learn even Torah from one deficient in *emunah*, lest one be influenced by their ways.

(שבת עה ע"א, שו"ע יו"ד סי' קל)

It once happened that a certain *talmid chacham* conducted himself so inappropriately that Rav Yehuda wanted to place him in *cherem*. However, he was hesitant to do so, for then the local *talmidim* would not be allowed to learn Torah from him.

Rav Yehuda therefore consulted with Rabba bar Bar-Chana, who told him: The *possuk* says that one should learn Torah from a *talmid chacham* "since he is a *malach* of *HaShem*." This teaches us that only if the *talmid chacham* conducts himself like a *malach* should one learn Torah from him. Since this *talmid chacham* is acting as he does, Torah may not be learnt from him. Nothing will therefore be lost by placing him in *cherem*.

(מ"ק יז ע"א, שו"ע אדה"ז הל' ת"ת פ"ד הי"ז)

The Rebbe adds another requirement: one should seek to learn Torah from a teacher who is sensitive to its *kedusha*, to its connection with *HaShem*. Whatever the listener learns from such a teacher will then impact his *neschama* fruitfully.

(שיח"ק תש"כ ע' 195)

### CHASSIDISHE LEADERSHIP

At the *farbrengens* of Simchas Torah תרפ"ט (1928), the Frierdiker Rebbe was speaking of the need to be connected to the "head" (the Rebbe), when he turned to Reb Chatshe Feigin and said, "This is your job, to see that there should be *mashpi'im* in every town."

Reb Chatshe asked if he should find someone locally who could serve as a *mashpia*, and the Frierdiker Rebbe replied, "Yes, with this they will be connected to the head."

Reb Chatshe then asked, "Is that because the *mashpia* is closer to the head?"

The Frierdiker Rebbe gave his confirmation.

(ס"ה ש"תרפ"ט ע' 49)

The Frierdiker Rebbe said: *Mashpi'im* serve a vital function in *darchei haChassidus*. The process of transmitting and imbuing chassidische values can be likened to the planting of a seed. The *mashpia* is the planter; the *chossid/ mushpa/ talmid* is the fertile soil; and the quality of the fruits depends largely on the planter's success in preparing the soil. He cannot afford to be lax in this work, because a fruit that is spiritually rotten not only causes serious damage to his own spiritual life; it can also profane the sanctity of *Chassidus* (*chillul kedushas haChassidus*).

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' תכו)

### CONSIDER

**Why does the personal lifestyle of the teacher matter, if what he is teaching is true?**

**How does one know who is worthy of serving as an example for *chassidim*?**

From the first moment of the *farbrengens* of *Yud-Beis Tammuz* תרצ"ט (1939), it was clear that something was greatly disturbing the Frierdiker Rebbe. After making a *bracha* and saying *LeChayim*, he began to share his pain.

The Rebbe spoke of the difference between the *chassidim* of the past and those of the present: "At *farbrengens* in the past, *eltete* *chassidim* would speak of *avoda*, using vivid stories of a Rebbe or a *chossid* to illustrate their lessons. When admonishing a younger *chossid*, they would handle this with sensitivity and genuine sympathy. Today, when gathering at a *farbrengens*, some older *chassidim* joke at the expense of others and everyone laughs. And so there has arisen a new brand of *chassidim* with unworthy *middos* and inappropriate talk. That was unheard of in earlier generations."

The Frierdiker Rebbe concluded: "Today, as

well, there are B"H many true *eltete* *chassidim* who continue in the way of *Chassidus* as in past generations. It is their obligation to admonish the younger *chassidim* and point out clearly the authentic path of *Chassidus*."

The vital message of this *sicha* was immediately printed and distributed amongst the *chassidim* in Warsaw and then again by the Rebbe in the year תש"ח (1948).

(ס"ה ש"תרצ"ט ע' 342 ואילך, ס"ה מ"תש"ח ע' 251 ואילך)

In a letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe once bemoaned the state of some "*mashpi'im*" who, instead of teaching *Chassidus* of the Rebbeim in their original form, use concepts of *Chassidus* as material for their speeches and entitle them as "*Chassidus*."

In his words: "They justify themselves by arguing that they are doing it so that 'the people should understand,' but in fact they are rebelling against the Rebbeim and dimming the pure light planted by them. It is therefore no surprise that their words have no lasting impact on their listeners. These speakers have brought shame to the *Chassidus* they claim to stand for, by neglecting the crucial point of *avoda shebalev* - heartfelt *davening* and the study of *Chassidus* in a heartfelt manner."

(א"ק מוהר"י צ"ח ע' שמו)

### CHOOSING A RAV

When introducing the initiative for appointing personal *mashpi'im*, in addition to the already-appointed community *mashpi'im*, the Rebbe set criteria regarding whom one should choose as a mentor.

Firstly, said the Rebbe, a *mashpia* must have the three qualities that characterize *Yidden* in general: he must be compassionate, bashful and kind - visibly so, and to a degree appropriate to his position.

Secondly, *Chazal* teach that one should learn Torah from a *rav* who resembles a *malach*. This means that the *rav* should be far removed from personal bias and envy, so that he can advise a fellow *Yid* without any personal interests involved.

(ת"ו תשמ"ז ח"ב ע' 632, 691)



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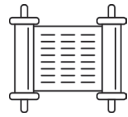
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## OVERFLOWING MIKVAH

**The mikvah is full, and water overflows into the water channel during *tevilah*. Is that an issue?**

For a mikvah to be kosher, the water must be stationary and not flowing (*zochalin*). If a mikvah has a crack in one of its walls and water is leaking out, the Mechaber rules that as long as 40 *se'ah* remain stationary below the crack, the mikveh is kosher. However, the Rama quotes a stringent view that the flow above invalidates the entire mikvah, and we follow this view *l'chatchila*.<sup>1</sup> (There is a third opinion that any leak that isn't flowing like a river doesn't invalidate, but we don't rely on this opinion at all.)<sup>2</sup>

What about *toiveling* under the crack? Some say that the lenient opinion requires one to *toivel* specifically under the crack, while others argue that even the stringent view would allow *toiveling* below the crack.

The Tzemach Tzedek is lenient for *toiveling* below the crack when it contains over 40 *se'ah* and it is the majority of the mikvah's water.<sup>3</sup> Other *poskim* rule stringently and contend that the Tzemach Tzedek retracted his earlier *psak*.<sup>4</sup> Some permit *b'dieved* a *tevilah* below the crack, but invalidate *tevilah* above the crack even *b'dieved*.<sup>5</sup>

If a mikvah is filled to the top and immersing in it causes the water to overflow, some *poskim* permit it since after he has fully entered the water, it stops overflowing.<sup>6</sup> Yet, many others invalidate it, and one should be stringent *l'chatchila*.<sup>7</sup>

If water overflows into the *hamshacha* channel and then returns on its own back into the mikvah, it's not a concern of *zochalin*.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, if the water flows into the *bor hashaka*, many hold it's not a concern.<sup>9</sup>

1. שו"ע יו"ד סי' ר"א ס"ג.  
 2. ראה שו"ת צ"צ ח"ג סי' קע"ו.  
 3. אות ה'. שו"ת אמרי יושר ח"א סי' קכ"ז וסי' קצ"ט.  
 4. שו"ת צ"צ ח"ג סי' קס"ה.  
 5. עמק שאלה יו"ד סי' נ"ה וע"פ שו"ת צ"צ סי' קע"ו ח"ג אות ב' ואילך.  
 6. שמלה ס"ק פ"ז.  
 7. ראה שו"ת יו"ד סי' ר"א סק"ל וס"ק ק"כ, ערוה"ש סי' ר"א.  
 8. סק"פ ה'. וראה פתחי מקוואות פ"ח הע' ט"ז שהרחיב בזה.  
 9. ראה לדוגמא שמלה ס"ק פ"ח. וראה אג"מ יו"ד ח"א סי' קי"ג שו"ת מנח"י ח"י סי' פ'. וראה טהרת מים סי' מ"ט.  
 8. רמ"א שם סי' נ"ג. פתחי מקוואות פ"ח הע' י"ד.  
 9. ראה פתחי מקוואות שם ובהלכה ז' ובמסומן שם.

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

## Our Heroes



### R. ZALMAN VELKES OF DUBRAVNA

Born in Vilna, R. Zalman Velkes lived in Dubravna and was a chossid of the Alter Rebbe and the Mittlerer Rebbe. A great scholar in chassidus, R. Zalman was also a wealthy businessman and renowned for his generosity. His son-in-law was R. Nechemiah of Dubravna, the author of *Divrei Nechemiah*.

Though he grew up in a chassidic home, as a youth in Vilna, R. Zalman was influenced with corrupt beliefs. His father tried bringing him to the Alter Rebbe who even inquired about the youngster, but Zalman refused to come.

When the family moved to Dubrovna, they finally managed to bring him before the Rebbe. The Rebbe's words entered his heart like an arrow, and he was immediately transformed. He devoted himself to the Rebbe and began to study Chassidus and daven at length. So much so, that he could stand through a long winter night learning Chassidus in depth without noticing what was happening around him.

R. Zalman was an exceptional *baal tzedakah*. He designated three boxes of coins: gold, silver and copper. When a person would request *tzedakah*, he take a bulging handful of whichever coins he thought they deserved.

R. Pinchas Reizes, who was himself a great *baal tzedakah*, visited R. Zalman to learn from his ways. He later told the Alter Rebbe that he copied R. Zalman's practice, but with one difference: R. Zalman would give the entire handful without looking, while R. Pinchas gave his handful, but would open it up to see how much is inside...

Before his passing, R. Zalman wrote a *pan* asking the Mittlerer Rebbe to daven that he merit to enter *Gehenom* immediately after his passing. In his will, he wrote that he has nothing to rely on for the Day of Judgement except for the power of the Rebbe and of *tzedakah*.

## A Moment with The Rebbe

לכות ר' שניאור זלמן בן רות חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרף בגשמיות ורוחניות



### CHASSIDIM BENTCH THE REBBE

It was a mere four months after the landmark Yud Shevat 5711, when the Rebbe officially accepted the mantle of the *nesius*. Emotions were still high, as chassidim were becoming more and more connected with their new Rebbe.

At the Shavuot Farbrengen of that year, the Rebbe spoke of the value of a *brachos* that the Friediker Rebbe had given in all areas, children, health and livelihood. "They will certainly all eventually be fully realized," the Rebbe said.

Then, suddenly the Rebbe began to talk of himself.

"When the Rebbe gives a *bracha*, it will certainly come to be. Still, an extra support can't do any harm. And in general, a Yid's *bracha* can't do damage. Therefore, I want to ask of anyone who wishes to, to *bentch* me that the *brachos* that the Rebbe gave me should be *mekuyam*.

All the assembled answered with a thunderous, "Omein!"

(*Toras Menachem* vol 3 p. 157)

לעילוי נשמת  
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