ב"ה

# The Weekly Farbrengen

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנ"ש

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

# POSITIVE EXPOSURE (II)

## WORTHY TEACHERS

Shulchan Aruch states that it is forbidden to learn *anything* from an *apikores* for one may be influenced by his beliefs.

(שו"ע יו"ד סי' קע"ט סכ"ג)

The Mezritcher Maggid said that one should not learn from a *sefer* written by a *rasha* even if contains valid ideas, for the reader connects with the *neshama* of the author. One should certainly not learn from books written by *apikorsim.*

(מגיד דבריו ליעקב סה, מעין גנים פט"ו פ"ג)

## READING THE 'NEWS'

In a *yechidus* with a group of chassidim, the Rebbe expressed his disappointment with those who read newspapers, even for 'good reasons':

"How is it that chassidim read the newspaper to find out what is happening in Lubavitch? The papers are for people on the outside; chassidim have other ways of knowing about Lubavitch. The fact is that when one looks at one page where there is a write-up on Lubavitch, he comes to read what is written in the second and third page as well..."

The Rebbe concluded, "This is such a descent from who we really are..."

(דעם רבינ'ס קינדער ע' רה)

On *erev Shabbos Parshas Vayigash* תשכ"ט (1968), the first space shuttle landed on the moon and made headlines in all the media. At the *Shabbos farbrengen,* the Rebbe explained a lesson to be learnt from the event and added, "One should not mistakenly think that he should read the newspapers in order to be able to derive lessons in how to serve *HaShem.* The world would be better off without the papers at all, and it is a *rachmonus* on those who read them.

"There are those who immediately upon arising in the morning listen to the radio to hear the latest news. They then hurriedly buy the paper to read up on all the details, and memorize the names of all the personalities, their families, and so on. Then it's back to the radio to ensure they are updated on any details they may have missed... Entering *shul* on *Shabbos,* they make sure to display their knowledge. After all, one doesn't want to be deemed a *'batlan'* who doesn't know what's happening in the world..."

### CONSIDER

***Why do secular books cause any more machshavos zaros than kosher reading material?***

The Rebbe then related a story:

"There was a Yid in Lubavitch who would sit day and night learning in the *beis midrash*, and had no interest in what was happening in the outside world. One day, someone related to him that Czar Nicholas was crowned. The Yid was surprised, 'Didn't they crown him years ago? Why are they crowning him again?'

"It turned out that when he was a child, in the days of the Mitteler Rebbe, in תקפ"ה (1825), Nicholas the First had been crowned and in his honor they had dutifully lit additional candles in the *shul.* Since then, without this Yid realizing it, two czars had come and gone. When Nicholas the Second was crowned almost seventy years later, in תרנ"ד (1894), the Yid was perplexed by the second crowning of Czar Nicholas.."

The Rebbe concluded, "From this story we can see how in the past Yidden lived long, peaceful years – unlike today, when people need psychologists and tranquilizers to alleviate their stress."

(שיחו"ק תשכ"ט ח"א ע' 261)

## YOU ARE WHAT YOU READ

When a certain man complained about *machshavos zaros* during *davening*, the Frierdiker Rebbe replied that this was a result of reading newspapers. "Stop reading articles of foolishness and *aveira*, dedicate yourself to learning, and *HaShem* will help you in your learning and *yiras Shamayim*."

(אג"ק ריי"צ ח"ט ע' שעה)

Reb Yoel Kahan related:

I was once told by the Rebbe to positively influence a fellow *talmid*, to address his questions and guide him in his *avodas HaShem*. I was dealing with him for a while, and he was progressing nicely. I was therefore shocked to hear him make a comment that implied doubts in his *emuna*. At a loss as to how to respond, I decided to seek the Rebbe's counsel.

The Rebbe said, "I know this person, and there is no need to worry. These words are meaningless and are most likely a result of reading a newspaper before going to sleep. It can therefore be expected that he will speak in such a fashion the following day..."

Needless to add, after we talked it over, that *talmid* realized that he was slipping in his *avoda* solely due to inappropriate reading material. As soon as he stopped reading the newspapers, he was well on his way, back on the right track.

(מפי הרב יואל ע"ה כהן)

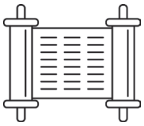
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# Way of Life



**RABBI CHAIM HILLEL RASKIN**

## RESPECTING MITZVAH ITEMS

**Is it a problem if my tzitzis touch the floor?**

Chazal distinguish between two types of mitzvah objects. *Tashmishei kedusha* (e.g., a mezuzah case) serve a holy item and must be placed in genizah. *Tashmishei mitzvah*, such as a sukkah, lulav, shofar, or tzitzis, have no kedusha of their own and do not need to be placed in genizah once their mitzvah is over.[1]

While in use, a mitzvah object may not be treated with disrespect. The Gemara forbids counting money by the Chanukah lights or covering the blood of shechitah with one's foot, "so that mitzvos should not be belittled in his eyes."[2] Likewise, while attached to the garment, tzitzis strings may not be used for a mundane purpose, such as tying something.[3]

The Shulchan Aruch rules that when wearing a tallis, one should be careful not to drag the tzitzis.[4] The Magen Avraham raises a question from Ben Tzitzis Hakeses , a wealthy man in Yerushalayim whose tzitzis dragged on cushions, implying that others' tzitzis dragged on the ground. He suggests that it is mainly a disgrace when they drag as one puts on the tallis, as if sweeping the house with them.[5] The Alter Rebbe, however, writes simply that tzitzis should not drag on the ground, as it is a disgrace to the mitzvah.[6]

This care applies to both a tallis katan and a tallis gadol, whose long tzitzis easily reach the floor when the wearer sits or bends down. A tallis gadol, designated for davening, requires greater care and shouldn't be brought into a restroom (see issue 323).[7]

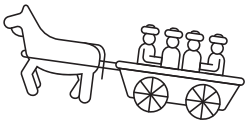
Once its mitzvah is over, a *tashmish mitzvah* may be put to mundane use, though not to a degrading one, such as wiping oneself with a worn-out tallis.[8] Tzitzis strings that came off may be thrown into the garbage, though some forbid throwing them anywhere filthy (i.e., in the dirty garbage). The Alter Rebbe writes that the halacha follows the first view, but one who is careful will be blessed. Some *baalei nefesh* put them in genizah or use them as a bookmark, "to do another mitzvah with them."[9]

After Sukkos, sechach may be used freely, but one should avoid degrading uses and certainly not step on it.[10] One should also avoid stepping on the discarded *aravos* of the lulav.[11] Some make a point of using them for another mitzvah, burning the chometz with the Hoshana Rabbah *aravos* or firing the matzah oven with the lulav's *aravos*,[12] and the Alter Rebbe advises adding the *hadassim* to the *besamim* for havdalah.[13]

1. מגילה כ"ו ע"ב. שו"ע או"ח סי' קנ"ד ס"ג. וראה שוע"ר סי' כ"א ס"א, וסי' מ"ב ס"ו.
2. שבת כ"ב ע"א ("שלא יהו מצות בזויות עליו").
3. שו"ע סי' כ"א ס"א. שוע"ר שם ס"א.
4. שו"ע סי' כ"א ס"ד.
5. גיטין נ"ו ע"א. מג"א סי' כ"א ס"ק ג.
6. שוע"ר סי' כ"א ס"ה. וראה חיי אדם כלל י"א ס"מ ("קרוב שיפסלו ולכן יגבהם ויתחבם בחגורו"). ולאידך ראה ערוה"ש סי' כ"א ס"ז. ולהעיר מהגהות כ"ק אדמו"ר הרש"ב על כה"ח פלאגי אות כ.
7. שוע"ר סי' כ"א ס"ג.
8. שו"ע סי' כ"א ס"ב. שוע"ר שם ס"ב. וראה שוע"ר סי' מ"ב ס"ו, וסי' תרל"ח סי"ט.
9. רמ"א סי' כ"א ס"א. שוע"ר שם ס"א.
10. שוע"ר סי' תרל"ח סי"ט.
11. שו"ע סי' תרס"ד ס"ח. וראה מג"א סי' תרל"ח סוף ס"ק ט, שהשווה לזה עצי סוכה.
12. רמ"א שם ס"ט. שוע"ר סי' תמ"ה סי"ב.
13. שוע"ר סי' רצ"ז ס"ו.

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

# Our Heroes



## R. YERUCHAM GORELIK

R. Yerucham Gorelik was born in Bobroisk, and was one of the founding *talmidim* of Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch. He served as a *chozer* and was known as a great *oved*, davening and reciting *krias shema she'al hamitah* at great length. He merited to have a close relationship with the Rebbe Rashab and Frierdiker Rebbe, and passed away at a young age in 5680, soon after the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rashab.

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R. Avrohom Elye Plotkin related:

One *leil Shabbos*, towards the end of the summer in 5672, the Rebbe Rashab delivered an unusually deep *maamar* from the series of *maamorim* known as 'Hemshech Ayin Beis.' Unable to grasp it, the chozrim asked for a *biur* on Shabbos morning, yet they still grappled with it. At the conclusion of Shabbos, they still didn't have it clear, and they refused to end Shabbos until they clarified it.

As they spoke, the Frierdiker Rebbe, then the *menahel* of the *yeshiva*, strolled by while smoking a ciggarette. Yerucham went over to him and posed to him a question on the *maamar*, but the Frierdiker Rebbe just gave him a confused look and retorted, "Why do you ask me? Ask someone who knows Chassidus!" And with that, he walked off.

That night, I was needed in the Rebbe Rashab's home. As I walked in the hallway, I saw the Frierdiker Rebbe sitting by a table deep in thought and writing something. Suddenly, he stood up and went to another room. Estimating that I had half a minute until he would return, I quickly went over to look at the paper, and managed to read the beginning, "In response to the question of Hatomim Yerucham on my father's *maamar*..." Afraid of being caught, I escaped before reading the explanation.

The next day, I reported to Yerucham what I had seen and advised him to hang around the Frierdiker Rebbe and try to extract something from him. He took my advice and spent the next two days nearby, even raising the issue again, but he didn't manage to get a single word out of him. Such was the Frierdiker Rebbe's secrecy at that time!

(אלה תולדות פרץ ע' 378)

# A Moment with The Rebbe



## MORE DANGEROUS THAN EXPOSURE

Mrs. Luba Gorelik, an educator in Beis Rivkah of Kfar Chabad, related:

During a 5735 yechidus with the Rebbe, I raised a question concerning the textbooks. Some of the books contained objectionable ideas, but I felt our older students, who were preparing to become teachers, needed to be familiar with such material. Wouldn't it be better for them to encounter these ideas in a structured setting, where they could receive proper guidance?

The Rebbe disagreed. "The very fact that these ideas are printed in a book, black on white, gives them a certain respectability and importance. If we bring them under the auspices of Beis Rivkah, we are effectively giving them a stamp of credibility. Afterwards, it is difficult to remove that impression from their hearts."

I then asked whether removing or covering the objectionable passages might actually arouse the girls' curiosity, encouraging them to seek out the missing material.

The Rebbe replied that despite these concerns, it is better to remove the objectionable passages and not sanction them.

The Rebbe suggested photocopying only the appropriate sections, as was done in Beis Yaakov, and encouraged producing suitable kosher textbooks.

*(As related by Mrs. Gorelik - Sipur Ishi, pp. 17–19)*