



RECOGNIZING THE ENEMY (2)

Always on Guard

The *tzaddik* Reb Nochum of Chernobyl lived in acute poverty. Once a chossid brought him a gift of 300 gold rubles, and the *gabbai*, who also oversaw the needs of the home, was glad that the heavy debts would finally be paid up. When this chossid left Reb Nochum's room, tens of other chassidim had their turn, until they stopped in order to *daven Maariv*. After *Maariv* the *tzaddik* closeted himself in his room for a while and then opened the door, asking to see a certain chossid who had been at *yechidus* earlier. After the chossid left, the *tzaddik* continued receiving chassidim late into the night.

After all the chassidim had left, the *gabbai* entered the Rebbe's room to request some money, having already listed the amount he would pay each creditor. Reb Nochum opened the drawer in which he kept the money that had been given for his personal use, and the *gabbai* was stunned to see only a few silver and copper coins. There was no sign of the 300 rubles. The *tzaddik* told him to take all the coins, a total of 100 rubles, but the *gabbai* remained rooted to his place, downcast but unable to say anything. The *tzaddik* asked him why he looked so sad. After all, *HaShem* had sent them money. At this point, the *gabbai* was no longer able to contain himself and asked about the 300 rubles.

The Rebbe replied, "When I received the money I wondered why I had merited such a sum. So when one of the chassidim told me about his utter lack of funds for tuition, rent, and his daughter's wedding, it dawned on me that *HaShem* had given me the special *zechus* of supporting this Yid. In fact, the amount he needed totaled the exact amount that I had received. However, after I had decided to give the 300 rubles to this chossid, another thought came to my mind: 'Why give so much money to one person, when it can be divided between six families?'

"Faced with the dilemma of these two options, I closed myself in my room. After thinking it through, I came to the conclusion that the second idea, to divide the money among a

number of families, did not come from the *yetzer tov*, for then it would have entered my mind immediately. Only after I had thought of the *mitzva*, did this thought come along to trick me." Reb Nochum concluded, "I fulfilled the advice of the *yetzer tov* and gave the chossid the entire 300 rubles."

Upon relating this story, the Frieddiker Rebbe added: "From this we see how important is discernment, always knowing from where a thought is coming. And this discernment can be acquired only by working on oneself."

(ס"ה ש"ת ע"ג ע' 67)

The Rebbe applied this concept: "If one is aroused to help another or to spread *Yiddishkeit*, he must evaluate: If he had been conversing idly, then this inspiration is coming from the *yetzer tov*. However, if this arousal came to mind specifically during his learning, then it is not coming from *kedusha*... Likewise, if during *davening*, one is suddenly inspired to distribute *Siddurim* or to watch someone else *daven*, he should know that at that particular time this is an inappropriate activity."

(תו"מ ח"ל ע' 305)

Cleverly Countering

Shlomo HaMelech writes that one should use clever strategies when waging war against the *yetzer hara*. Some record this as a *mitzva midivrei kabbala*, that is, an obligation derived from *Nach*.

(משלי כ"ד, ס' חרדים פל"ה אות ב', ברכות י"ז ע"א ורש"י)

In this spirit, *Chazal* teach us to always use all kinds of sly tactics in order to attain a fear of *HaShem*.

Dovid HaMelech said to *HaShem*, "*Ribbono shel Olam!* Every morning upon awakening, I would plan aloud, 'Today I will visit some place or someone's home,' and then I would direct my feet to the *beis midrash*, thereby tricking the *yetzer hara* and not allowing him to distract me."

(ברכות י"ז ע"א, רש"י, בן יהוידע, ילקוט תהלים תת"צ)

The *tzaddik*, Reb Naftali of Ropshitz, was known for his quick wit. One day his Rebbe,

the *Chozeh* of Lublin, challenged him: "Isn't it written in the Torah that one should be simple and straightforward (*tamim*) in his *avodas HaShem*?" The *talmid* replied, "To reach the level of *temimus*, one must first have wisdom, as our *chachomim* instructed – to be clever in *yiras Shamayim*."

The Frieddiker Rebbe once said that a person should use the cleverness of Torah, and especially of *Chassidus*, to recognize and counter the slyness of the *yetzer hara*.

(דור דעה ע' רל"ז, ס"ה ש"ת רצ"ו ע' 223)

Towards the end of one of his personal fasts, the *tzaddik*, Reb Dovid of Lelov, was out on the road and felt an extreme thirst. Suddenly, noticing a spring of cool bubbling water, his thirst intensified to the point that he was about to break his fast and drink. He stood still for a moment to consider the matter and found strength within himself to overcome his burning thirst. Continuing on his way, he felt a great rush of joy, for he had succeeded in subjugating his *yetzer hara*! However, a moment later he said to himself, "This joy is not coming from the *yetzer tov*, but from the *yetzer hara*. He's trying to get me to be filled with pride!" To avoid falling into the trap, Reb Dovid returned to the spring and drank his fill.

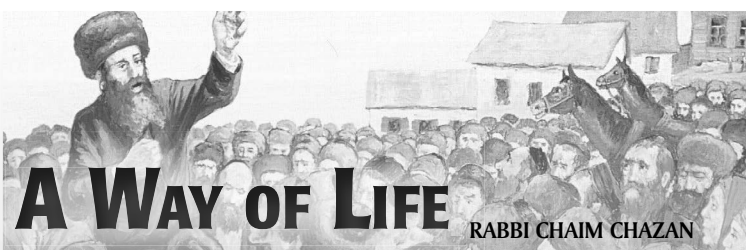
(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 527)

When some people tried to bring proof from the Torah that children should be taught worldly matters at a young age, the Rebbe disputed their claim, explained their misunderstanding, and added, "One should not be fazed when someone quotes a Torah source to prove something which is known to be wrong. It must be recognized that within this pious 'silk cloak' hides the *yetzer hara*."

(תו"מ חכ"ז ע' 103)

CONSIDER THIS!

- How can a positive inspiration be not good? How can we identify it when it is presented with holy reasoning?
- How does *Chassidus* and *avoda* make one more perceptive of the *yetzer hara*'s tactics?



A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

Dreams and Halacha

Does Halacha lend significance to information obtained in a dream?

■ Chazal¹ say that fasting on the day one has a bad dream is an antidote against it. However, there is no obligation to fast after suffering from a bad dream, and on the contrary, one who does not attach any significance to dreams they indeed contain no significance². Therefore, fortunate is one who is not fazed by dreams. Chazal permitted fasting a *taanis chaloim* on Shabbos, but require one to atone for failing to honor Shabbos by fasting again during the week.

■ There are many opinions when exactly is it permissible to fast on Shabbos and whether it is applicable at all in later generations. Some say just as nature has changed with regards to health advice given in the *Gemara*, the same is true with regards to the interpretation of dreams. The Alter Rebbe³ *paskens* that since a *taanis chaloim* is not an obligation and the scope of the permissibility to fast a *taanis chaloim* on Shabbos is a matter of dispute, whereas in general abstaining from pleasure on Shabbos by fasting is forbidden *mideoraisa*, one should not fast on Shabbos at all, unless the dream has rendered one so miserable the he has more pleasure from fasting than from eating out of fear of the dream. But if one isn't fearful to that extent, or he is, but fasting is difficult and he would suffer from fasting more than the suffering from the fear of the dream, it is prohibited to fast.

■ However, if one dreamt about a matter that crossed his mind during the day, the dream has no significance and it would be prohibited to fast on Shabbos.

■ The issue of when to take notice of information transmitted in a dream is discussed at length in *seforim*, indeed entire *seforim*⁴ have been written on the subject. Chazal⁵ say if one was informed in a dream that certain money in one's possession is *masei sheini*, one need not pay attention to the dream and the money does not attain the status of *masei sheini*. The same is true⁶ for an *aveira* committed in a dream. Another example⁷ is we would not allow moving a grave because the *niftar* came in a dream and asked to be moved. However, there are many examples where *poskim* lent significance to dreams that warned of danger and suggested various means with which to arouse Divine mercy⁸.

■ Although caution must be used when deriving general policy from a personal letter of the Rebbe to an individual, as the Rebbe himself made clear on many occasions, in a letter⁹ discouraging concern over dreams, the Rebbe makes a statement of general nature. When all the details of a person's life are dictated by Torah, his dream also has some meaning, albeit with nonsense mixed in. In contrast, the dreams of a person from our generation, much of whose speech and thoughts are devoid of content, are likewise insignificant. It should be pointed out that in certain other letters¹⁰ the Rebbe does advise specific action to be taken as a result of matters related in dreams. It¹¹ obviously depends on other factors as well.

1. שבת יא ע"א, תענית יב ע"ב, שו"ע סי' קכ"ב, הערות וביאורים אה"ת גל' תקפ"ב-תקפ"ד בענין החלומות.
2. שלי"ה דף קלה ע"א, שו"ת חת"ס ח"א א' או"ה סי' קמ"ח דף קלה ע"א ועוד.
3. סי' רפ"ח סי' ז'.
4. לדוג' ספר משנת החלומות מאת הר' בועז שלום, ועוד.
5. סנהדרין ל ע"א.
6. ראה מה שאסף וחקר הג"ר אליהו מטוסוב.
7. אג"מ יו"ד ח"ב סי' קנה.
8. ראה מה שליקט בפסקי תשובה סי' רפ"ח ור"כ.
9. אג"מ ח"ז עמ' רצ.
10. שם ח"ו עמ' רע"ז ועמ' תמד.
11. ראה משי"כ בזה הר' מטוסוב שם.

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

לזכות הילד מענדל שיי

שיגדלוהו חוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט
נדבת ר' לוי יצחק ורעייתו שיחיו דיסקין

OUR HEROES

Reb Moshe ben Admor Hazaken

Reb Moshe, the Alter Rebbe's youngest son, was extremely gifted. The Alter Rebbe loved him dearly. At the end of his life, he secluded himself and led a very rigorous lifestyle (see Igros Kodesh of Friediker Rebbe Vol. 7 page 16).



Towards the end of his life, Reb Moshe adopted the lifestyle of a *porush*. He only ate "*suchares*". During the week, he ate ones made with corn flour, and on Shabbos ones made with wheat flour. In the town where he resided, he was known as "*der hoiche zeide*," the tall grandfather. Once, an elderly man asked him, "*Zeide! Is it not a mitzvah to eat meat on Shabbos?*" Reb Moshe replied, "*It is not an obligation. And in general, it is not so terrible to be less stringent regarding those mitzvos that involve eating and drinking.*"



The Friediker Rebbe recounts a miracle that happened to Reb Moshe:

Czar Alexander once visited the city of Babinovitch. The governor of Mohilev introduced the Mittlerer Rebbe and his brother Reb Moshe to the Czar, though he did so only after introducing a group of local squires. Reb Moshe felt that due honor was not given to the Rebbe, and speaking several languages, told off the governor. The bishop of the city of Smolensk overheard and responded with an insult to Reb Moshe and to the Jewish religion. Reb Moshe retorted with a stinging comment. The situation escalated until the bishop demanded a religious debate. The date was set for Cheshvan 1815 (תקע"ו).

The debate was held in the fortress of the church in Yartzva, a town near Smolensk. It lasted a full month and was attended by the head *galachim* of Smolensk and Niezhin. During that time, Reb Moshe was under the full control of the *galachim* and was not free to move where he wanted. When he won the debate they decided to move him to a church in Vladimir. Reb Moshe was taken with an armed escort and two *galachim*. On the fourth day of their travel, they stopped at a village near Moscow. There, Reb Moshe's escorts fell into a deep sleep, giving Reb Moshe a chance to escape. Hashem gave him the strength to withstand the bitter cold and snow and run to the city of Ariel where he hid at the home of a chossid. The night of his escape was the night of Yud Tes Kislev.

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שיי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Understanding Others

For the Shabbos following Shavuot 5745, the Aleph institute brought a group of eighteen Jewish prisoners to Crown Heights for a *shabbaton*. Naturally, the Rebbe's Shabbos *farbrengen* was the weekend highlight.

Minutes before the *farbrengen* began, Reb Leibel Groner approached Reb Sholom Ber Lipskar, the *shabbaton* coordinator. He instructed him to disperse the group so that each person stands separately.

Reb Sholom Ber replied with a questioning look. He already made arrangements for everyone to stand as a group, and changing the plans would be a logistical challenge. Reb Leibel explained that this was the Rebbe's explicit request. The Rebbe felt that if the prisoners seated as a group, it would attract attention and people may talk about them. The prisoners would certainly feel uncomfortable.

"For this reason," Reb Leibel continued, "the Rebbe has also said that he will not be giving them *mashkeh*, as was the Rebbe's practice to other groups. The Rebbe does not want to draw any extra attention to them, in order to prevent them from feeling embarrassed."

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה

לע"נ ר' ישראל סנדל בן יבלחט"א ר' יעקב אליעזר - ב' אייר

לזכות הילדה מושקא שתחי' דייקאבס שיגדלוהו חוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

לזכות הילדה חנה שתחי'

שיגדלוהו חוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט
נדבת ר' שניאור זלמן ורעייתו שרה שיחיו לנצח