



WORKING THE WORLD (II)

Serving HaShem in Work

The Baal Shem Tov taught that working in a worldly occupation can be comparable to studying Torah and even greater – for everything in the world was created for the glory of *HaShem*, and when a person uses worldly things in the way prescribed by the Torah, he is serving their Maker.

A man once came to tell the Baal Shem Tov that he had lost his oxen; he wanted to be told where they were. The *tzaddik* opened a *Zohar*, looked inside, and told him that they were in the market city of Breslau. He later explained that *Chazal* say that there is a "great light" hidden in the Torah that enables one to see from one end of the world to the other, and with that light, those who study Torah properly can see everything.

The Rebbe derived a lesson from this story: There are those who separate the Torah from worldly matters, thinking that the *Zohar* is a holy part of Torah, while the ox is an ox, and Breslau is a market city.... This is a mistake, for *HaShem* is everywhere, even in the lowliest things; thus the Baal Shem Tov saw them in the *Zohar*. This can be seen from the special purpose that the oxen filled: they brought this Yid to the Baal Shem Tov.

(מאור עינים, שבת, שיח"ק תשל"ד ח"ב ע' 451)

Chazal say that Chanoch 'sewed shoes' and thereby created spiritual *yichudim* for *HaShem* similar to those created through wearing *tefillin*. The Rebbe explains that this teaches us a lesson: even while going about their work, an ordinary shoemaker or tailor can produce sublime spiritual repercussions, if they have proper intentions.

(תו"מ תשמ"ט ח"א ע' 247, וראה תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"א ע' 304)

A *dirah b'tachtonim* is built primarily by those in the workforce who use the physical world for the sake of *HaShem*. For this reason, until Moshiach comes, the number of Yidden in

the workforce ('*Zevulun*') greatly exceeds the number of those dedicated to studying Torah fulltime ('*Yissachar*').

Furthermore, by serving *HaShem* despite the challenges of the physical world, a Yid reveals a deeper, essential connection of his *neschama* to *HaShem*. However, this is only revealed when he later dedicates time to *davening* and learning.

(לקו"ש ח"ל ע' 137 ואילך ע"י"ש)

Remembering the Objective

One of the chassidim of the Rebbe Rashab was a man of scholarly stature who invested his excellent mind in the teachings of *Chassidus*. One day he began to manufacture galoshes and in due course he became deeply involved in his business.

Seeing him, the Rebbe Rashab commented, "I have seen *feet* in galoshes, but a *head* in galoshes...?!"

(לקו"ש שיחות א ע' 224)

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes that in earlier times, people would refer to *parnasa* as *chiyuna*, which means sustenance, whereas in America they say that a person is "making a living" (implying that his earnings are the essence of his life).

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 83)

It took many years after the Rebbe Maharash passed away for the Rebbe Rashab to become Rebbe. He later shared what prompted him to consent:

"The Mitteler Rebbe writes that toiling in business faithfully (*be'emuna*) is greater than studying Torah for its own sake (*lishma*). Being so, it is probably more challenging as well. I was therefore afraid to undertake that mission, and I chose this job instead"...

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 78)

Faithful Laborers

Chazal teach: Great is he who supports himself by his own efforts; as the *possuk* says, "He is praiseworthy both in this world and the next." *Chazal* further state that a person should not say, "Since I am of dignified ancestry, it is unbecoming for me to humble myself by *working*" – for long before his time, *HaShem* Himself worked, when He created the world.

(ברכות ח ע"א, זהר חדש ח"א ט ע"א)

Many of the great *tanaim* and *amoraim* worked as menial laborers to earn a living. Hillel was a woodcutter; R' Oshiya, R' Chanina and R' Yochanan were shoemakers; R' Yehuda was a baker; and others worked as blacksmiths, net-weavers, tailors, diggers and porters.

(אוצר האגדה ערך 'אומנים ובעלי מלאכה בין חכמי התלמוד')

The eminent chossid, Reb Hillel Paritcher, served as *mashpia* for the Yiddishe agricultural settlements founded by the Mitteler Rebbe. What motivated this towering intellectual to agree to assume this role?

He once related how he had heard the Mitteler Rebbe describe the inner stature of these unassuming colonists: "Picture those *Yishuvniks* standing in the field, with their *yarmulkas* and *taleisim ktanim*, planting the soil and lifting their eyes heavenward and focusing their hopes on *HaShem*..."

Visualizing that moment is what motivated Reb Hillel to become their *mashpia*.

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 83)

CONSIDER THIS!

- How can serving *HaShem* by working be greater than learning Torah?
- What does it mean to "toil in business faithfully"? Why is it so difficult?



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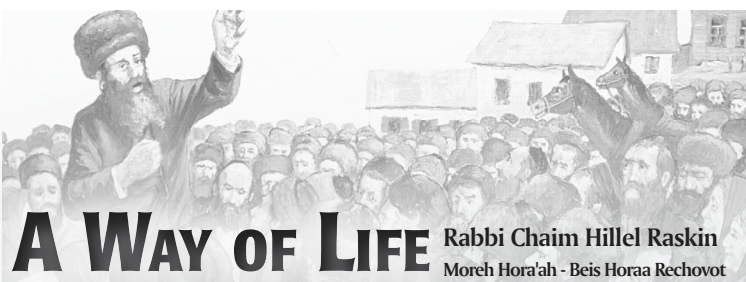


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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Hora'ah Rechovot

Lost Shaitel

I brought my shaitel to the *shaitel-macher* to be washed and now she can't find it. Can I make her pay me for a new *shaitel*?

- The Torah¹ differentiates between an unpaid watchman (*shomer chinam*) and a paid watchmen (*shomer sachar*) regarding their responsibility. A *shomer chinam* is only liable for negligence (*peshiah*), while a *shomer sachar* is also liable if the object disappeared or was stolen (*geneivah va'aveidah*) and is only exempt from an unforeseeable tragedy. A craftsman who receives an item to repair is generally² considered a *shomer sachar*.³
- Furthermore, forgetting where he put the object in the first place is negligence⁴ and even a *shomer chinam* is held responsible.⁵ Some add that forgetting where one placed an item is like actively damaging it, and even one who did not accept any responsibility would be held accountable.⁶
- If a person was asked to deliver a package and he mistakenly left it on the train or the like, some contemporary *poskim* consider him negligent.⁷ Others argue that if he kept the package together with his belongings in a responsible manner, even if he then forgot it, he is not considered negligent. Although at home a responsible watchman keeps record of where he put each watched item, during travel that isn't expected of him.⁸ Some say that if he put it out of sight (e.g. in a compartment), he is expected to make note not to forget it.⁹
- In conclusion: If the *shaitel-macher* misplaced the *shaitel* in her premises all opinions agree that she is considered negligent and is liable.

1. שו"ע חו"מ סי' רצ"א ס"א וסי' ש"ג ס"ב.
2. טור חו"מ סי' ש"ו (שמשתכרין במה שנותנים להם לתקן ולטול שכו). ובביאור ההגדרה ראה סמ"ע סי' ש"ו סק"א שהנאה זה הוא רק בקבלן ולא בשכיר שיכול בעה"ב להחליפו באמצע העבודה, והש"ך שם סק"א ס"ל שגם שכיר נהנה במה שבחר בו. ובמוחנ"א הל' שומרים סי' מ"א כ' שרק כשהפועל עובד ברשות עצמו יש לו הנאה אבל ברשות בעה"ב אין ההנאה נחשבת, וגם אינו לוקח ע"ע אחריות שמירה (שהרי הבעה"ב לא סילק עצמו מהחפץ). ונפק"מ בין טעמים אלו בפועל העובד בשכירות או קבלן בבית בעה"ב.
3. שו"ע שם ס"א.
4. ריטב"א (מיוחס) ב"מ מ"ב ע"א ד"ה כל.
5. ב"מ לה ע"א, שו"ע חו"מ סי' רצ"א ס"ז.
6. נתה"מ ביאורים סק"ד. וראה שו"ת אמרי שפר סי' כ"ד (ס"ל שדווקא שומר הוא פושע משא"כ אדם אחר נק' מזיק בידיים). וראה פת"ח הלכות פקדון פרק ג' הערה ד' שמרחיב בנושא.
7. שו"ת פנים מאירות ח"א סי' נ"ט שו"ת אבני ישפה ח"ב סי' קי"ד בשם הגר"ש וואזנער ע"ה.
8. שו"ת שבות יעקב ח"ב סי' קמ"ח וראה שערם מצוינים בהלכה ח"ד סי' קפ"ה סק"ב.
9. שו"ת זכרון שאול סי' ו' אות י"ז.

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

OUR HEROES

Reb Sholom Sharabi



Reb Sholom Sharabi, known as the Rashash, was a great *mekubal* who originated from Yemen. His father-in-law was Reb Gedalya Chiyun, the Rosh Yeshiva of the Yeshivas HaMekubalim. After his father-in-law's passing, he became the Rosh Yeshiva, and taught many famous *talmidim* including the Chida, Maharit Algazi, and Reb Gershon Kitover, the brother-in-law of the Baal Shem Tov. The Rashash passed away on the 10th of Shvat, תקל"ז (1777).

When the Rashash came from Yemen to *Eretz Yisroel* he hid his greatness in Torah especially in *kabbala*. He offered his services as a *shamosh* in Yeshivas HaMekubalim, headed by Reb Gedalya Chiyun. While doing his work, he listened to the *talmidim* learning and when they encountered a difficulty to which they didn't find an answer, the Rashash would write up an answer and leave it on their table at night. In the morning, the students found the answer to their questions. Eventually the Rashash was uncovered, and was eventually offered the Rosh Yeshiva's daughter, and became the successor of his father-in-law.

In Yerushalayim of those days, there was a very cruel governor who taxed the Jews heavily, including a tax on burials. Since the governor's home overlooked the road to the cemetery, he would personally ensure that the tax was paid. Once, a poor woman passed away and her heirs could not pay the tax, yet the Rashash instructed the *chevrah kadisha* to carry-out the burial. He told them that they need not fear, and he would personally attend the *levaya*.

As the funeral passed the governor's home, the governor put his head through the window bars and shouted threats at the participants. The Rashash motioned for them to just continue on and ignore the governor. The governor became furious, and tried to leave the window to instruct his men to attack the *chevrah kadisha*, however the window bars closed in around his neck, trapping him there. His workers tried to move the bars without success.

In the meantime, the deceased was buried with due respect. Upon their return, the governor his head still between the bars, called to the Rashash. Assuring the crowd that all would be well, the Rashash went inside. He agreed to help the governor out, on condition that he would abolish the burial tax. Left with no other choice, the governor abolished the decree, and the window bars returned to their original position.

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

The Old One Is Fine For Me



The Rebbe's car, in which he would ride home and use for his frequent visits to the *Ohel*, had seen better years. A new car had to be bought, providing the Rebbe more comfort, and ensuring a faster ride. Indeed, in 5746 (1986), a chossid with the necessary means purchased a new car for the Rebbe's use.

The car arrived at 770. The *bochurim* gathered as the Rebbe exited the building, holding his large paper brown bag on his way to the car.

Suddenly, the Rebbe stopped in his tracks. The new car had been noticed. He motioned to the *mazkir*, Reb Yudel Krinsky, who would serve as the driver. He was immediately at the Rebbe's side.

The Rebbe quoted the *possuk* from *Mishlei*: "*Soneh matonos yichye* (he that hates gifts shall live)." He continued, "The old one is fine for me. Please return the car to the donor."

The Rebbe waited on the sidewalk as the old car was brought, and with it he rode to the *Ohel*.

(Toras Menachem 5746, Vol. 3, p. 267)

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