

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



למען ישמעו • תזריע-מצורע תשע"ז • 407
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELINGER

HEAVENLY AWE (I)

IN AWE OF HASHEM

In *Tanya*, the Alter Rebbe writes that everyone can have awe for *HaShem* by observing the tremendous *bittul* that the heavenly spheres have, just as a visitor to a palace is struck by the tremendous awe that overpowers mighty ministers in the presence of their king.

The revered *mashpia* in Lubavitch, Reb Groinem, would illustrate this with a story that was well known at the time:

A Yiddishe contractor was hired to build a fort for the Russian government. When it was completed, Czar Nicholas came to inspect it in person, and praised the Yid for his good work. Two weeks later the Yid received an invitation to meet the Czar in Petersburg. Dread fell upon the poor fellow. Had they found something faulty with his work?

When he arrived at the palace and showed the guards his invitation, they allowed him to enter. In the waiting room, he watched as a famous general entered the same room with trepidation, and then he too felt fearful. Soon the king's doorkeeper came out and told the general that it was his turn to enter. The general began shaking from fear, so the Yid, too, began to shake. Hour after hour, officers and dignitaries entered in awe, while each time the Yid sat in his place and trembled afresh.

After the last of the visitors had left, the doorkeeper came out and told the Yid he could now return home in peace. Since at the time that the Czar inspected the fort the Yid had been too relaxed, he had now been invited in order to see how one ought to feel when approaching the presence of the king...

(תניא ספמ"ב, רשימו"ד חדש ע' 266)

What is *yiras Shomayim*?

In *Tanya* the Alter Rebbe explains that *yiras Shomayim* is, not a fear of punishment, but an awe that one should have for *HaShem*.

The most basic fear ("*yirah tataah*"), which is within reach of every person, comes from a realization that *HaShem* is watching his every move. Just as one would not want to be seen by

another person when doing something wrong, so too one will abstain from wrongdoing when he feels that *HaShem* always sees him.

A higher form of this fear results when a person recognizes the greatness of *HaShem*. When one contemplates how *HaShem* gives life and fills the entire universe, he will be in such awe of *HaShem* that he will be afraid to rebel against Him.

A higher level of fear ("*yirah ila'ah*") attainable only by very great people is the recognition that *HaShem* creates this world every moment, and so the person has no true existence besides for Him. This leads the person to feel totally naught before *HaShem*, and surely not transgress his orders.

(תניא פמ"א-רמ"ג)

CONSIDER

*What is the person with yiras Shomayim afraid of?
Is yiras Shomayim a means to an end or an end for itself?*

SIMPLE AWE

The Frierdiker Rebbe related: "In earlier times, even the simplest Yidden had a *yiras Shomayim* that you could feel. Before making a *bracha* they would carefully clean their hands. Once, as a child, I was making a toy boat in the garden, when I heard a gardener say the *bracha Shehakol* with such feeling that I trembled."

The Frierdiker Rebbe added that he was not referring to profound *yiras Shomayim* that grows out of a deep understanding, but rather a simple fear of Heaven. This expresses itself not only in abstaining from wrong and doing good, but also in a *hiddur mitzvah*.

(סה"ש תש"ג ע' 119)

Chazal say that a person should consider these three points and he will abstain from doing wrong: there is an 'eye' above that sees everything he does, there is an ear that hears everything he says and all his actions are recorded in the heavenly chronicles.

(אבות פ"ב מ"א)

When Rebbi Yochanan ben Zakai lay on his sickbed, his *talmidim* came to visit him. When they asked him for a *bracha* he said, "*Yehi ratzon* that the fear of *HaShem* be upon you like the fear of a human being."

The *talmidim* were surprised, "Is that it?!"

"*Halevai!* If only that!" he told them, "For when a person is about to commit an *aveira* he makes sure that no one will spot him. If only he would fear *HaShem* the same way, you would be spared from many sins."

(ברכות כה ע"ב ורש"י)

ACQUIRING AWE

The Frierdiker Rebbe once spoke of the nature of *yiras Shomayim*. Once, at a party, a certain baron portrayed to his fellow noblemen the awesome atmosphere in the king's palace. He described how all the servants in their various ranks stood in dread of the king. And as the baron described this in great detail, he was so overwhelmed that he fainted.

When they succeeded in waking him, they asked: "Were you ever in the king's palace, and did you experience this fear?"

"No," he replied, "I was never even near the palace."

"How then do you know all these details?" they probed.

"My brother was a guard for the king," the baron explained.

The Frierdiker Rebbe concluded from this experience of a man who had never seen the king, that when a Yid contemplates the greatness of *HaShem* and His kingdom, he will be filled with awe.

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 195)

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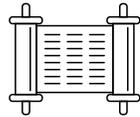
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REWARD FOR LOST OBJECT

May I offer or accept a reward for returning a lost object?

The responsibility to return a lost object to another Jew is both a positive commandment of *hashovas aveida* and a prohibition not to hold on to it.¹ In fulfilling this obligation, one is required to invest all his efforts, but is not required to spend money.²

Halacha states that one who encounters a lost object must return it without charge,³ since one is merely fulfilling a *mitzvah*.⁴ However, since one isn't required to lose money, he may demand compensation of whatever money he put out to retrieve the object (e.g. tow a car).⁵

Likewise, one who takes time off work to return an object, may demand "*schar batala*" payment for that time.⁶ *Schar batala* is calculated as the amount of money he would accept to take off work and not earn his regular income.⁷

Can the owner offer a monetary reward?

Many *poskim* write that although the finder may not charge, there is no prohibition for the owner to set a reward.⁸ Some explain that special allowance was made here to encourage people to actively search for the lost object.⁹ Others draw a comparison to a *mohel* who *halacha* permits to charge so that he will perform a skilled job.¹⁰

Still, other *poskim* argue there is a broad prohibition to accept payment for returning a lost object.¹¹ Thus in practice, a finder should reject the payment, and if the owner insists that he accept it as a gift, he may accept it.¹²

In situations where returning the lost object is an act of *lifnim mishuras hadin* (beyond the exact law), such as an object that was found in a place where the majority of the passerby are not Jewish, one may accept payment.¹³

8. אבן האזל על רמב"ם גניבה אבידה פי"ב ה"ג (מה אני בחינם הוא דווקא בלימוד תורה). יסוד המתירים היא לשון הרמב"ם נדרים פ"ו ה"א. אך ראה תו"ט נדרים פ"ד מ"ב שקאי על שכר בטלה וכיו"ב.

9. תפארת ישראל נדרים פ"ד מ"ב (הפקר ב"ד ע"ד פרוזבול משום צוק העיתים).

10. תו"ה ח"ג סי' תס"ג ע"פ רדב"ז שבועות פ"ו ה"ט.

11. מחנ"א הל' שכירות סי' ט"ו ע"פ הרא"ש ב"מ פ"ב סכ"ד. תו"ט שם.

12. הכרעת ס' הרי הלכות - השבת אבידה פי"ז ס"ב. תו"ה שם. ושם ממליץ לתת הכסף לצדקה.

13. ראה חו"מ סי' רנ"ט ס"ה. ושוע"ד שם סי"ח. אך אם דורש תשלום ה"ל נוגד הלפנים משורת הדין.

1. ראה דברים פרק כ"ב פסוקים א' - ג' . ולהלכה ראה שוע"ר הלכות מצויה פקדון ס"א.

2. שוע"ר הלכות מצויה ס"ג אבל אינו חייב להפסיד ממון.

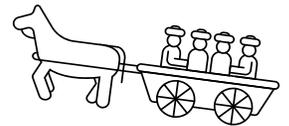
3. רא"ש בב"מ פ"ב סכ"ד (ע"ד פריקה). טוש"ע חו"מ י"ש סי' רס"ה.

4. מחנ"א הל' שכירות סי' ט"ו.

5. ע"פ חו"מ סי' רס"ד סי' וראה סמ"ע שם סק"ז.

6. ב"מ ל' ע"ב. ל"א ע"ב. שוע"ר חו"מ שם.

7. ע"פ הש"ך חו"מ סימן רס"ה סק"א. ויש שכתבו שכר בטלה כאן פירושה בשביל כמה כסף היה מתבטל ממלאכתו ועושה מלאכה זו (רמ"א ס"א).



REB ZISKIND KURENITZER

Reb Ziskind was a Rov in Kurenitz and was the son of Reb Zalman Kurenitzer, a great chossid of the Alter Rebbe. He was very great in Torah and *Chassidus* and was a devoted chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek. He was a great *baal madreiga* and chassidim used to say that he had *ruach hakodesh*.

Later on, Reb Hendel observed Reb Ziskind during the work day. First, a woman came to him and told him about someone who had fallen ill, and Reb Ziskind burst into tears. Later, he saw Reb Ziskind going out to ask someone to do a favor for another Yid in town.

The Frierdiker Rebbe related:

Reb Hendel of Lubavitch told me that when he was a young man, before becoming a chossid, he went to Reb Ziskind of Kurenitz to watch his conduct. It happened that Reb Hendel was going to sleep when Reb Ziskind got up for *tikkun chatzos*, after which he learned for a few hours. He then went to the *mikvah* and started preparing for *shacharis*. Seeing all this, Reb Hendel started doubting if he should become a chossid; it seemed too hard.

Finally, Reb Hendel was ready to become a chossid. He went to Reb Ziskind and said, "I want to be a chossid. How does one do this? ... but don't make it too difficult." Reb Ziskind answered "It is quite simple. The first step in *Chassidus* is *Ahavas Yisroel*." And proceeded to explain to Reb Hendel what is the meaning of *Ahavas Yisroel* according to *Chassidus*.

As we know Reb Hendel became a great chossid, known for his endless *Ahavas Yisroel*.

A Moment with The Rebbe



CARING FOR A CHILD

Reb Dovber Levitin of Eretz Yisroel relates:

"I came to 770 as a child for Tishrei 5739 (1978). Every Monday and Thursday, when the Rebbe came in for *krias haTorah*, I would go to receive a nickel or dime for *tzedaka*.

"One day I was late. As I ran to 770 on Eastern Parkway, I suddenly noticed the Rebbe's car driving next to me. The car was driving at an unusually slow pace, so I kept on running together

with it, and ended up arriving just on time to 770.

"The *mazkir* Reb Binyomin Klein later told me, 'While I was driving, the Rebbe noticed you, and told me that this must be a child from Eretz Yisroel who doesn't want to miss the *tzedaka*, so I should slow down. As I drove, the Rebbe watched you run with a broad smile.'"

(*Techayenu*, Issue 2, page 87)

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