



SPEAKING WITH CARE (2)

Proper Speech

One should speak in a 'clean' language, using positive expressions instead of negative ones. Thus, when HaShem told Noah to bring the animals into the *teivah*, He told him to include pairs of animals 'that are not pure,' instead of simply saying, 'the animals that are *tamei*.'

Two *talmidim* were once grappling with a difficult subject in the presence of the *amora*, Rav. One *talmid* later commented, "This learning has left me feeling like a tired *davar acher* ("pig"). The other used the term, "a tired goat." Rav did not speak to the first *talmid* any more.

Similarly, a certain *kohen* in the *Beis HaMikdash* once described his modest portion of the *lechem hapanim* as "the size of a lizard's tail." They investigated and found out that this *kohen* was possul.

(פסחים ג ע"א וע"ב)

As he was walking, a great *rov* passed a dead dog which produced a horrible stench. One of his *talmidim* commented, "How bad is its smell!" The *rov* replied, "How white are its teeth!" and his *talmidim* felt embarrassed for having spoken negatively. He had taught them a lesson: one should not speak negatively, even about a dead dog, and certainly not about a living person.

(חובות הלבבות שער הכניעה פ"ו)

The Rebbe was especially careful with his words, using phrases such as 'opposite of good', 'opposite of life' etc. When the Rebbe quoted words of Chazal which were of a negative nature, he would only hint at them, not wanting to spell them out. In this spirit, the Rebbe suggested that in *lashon hakodesh*, a hospital should not be referred to as a home of the sick but rather as a home of healing, emphasizing its positive aspect. The exception to this, is when a lesson is being taught, for then things must be spelled out clearly, leaving no room for doubt.

(תו"מ תשנ"ז ח"ב ע' 37, לקו"ש ח"י ע' 26)

At a *yechidus* with the supporters of Tomchei Temimim, one of those present mentioned the deficiencies of a certain city, to which the Rebbe responded, "In discussing a deficiency, there are two approaches: one can either specify the problem, or highlight the positive, and the problem will be understood on its own. For example, if a person is missing his left hand (*chas veshalom*), one can either state that this person's

hand is missing, or one can speak about how much accomplishes with his right hand, from which it is understood that his other hand is missing. This is the way one should speak."

(תו"מ חכ"ד ע' 198)

Clean Speech

Chazal caution that one should speak in a clean manner, and warn that unclean speech can bring many tragedies upon the Yidden, and *tefillos* may go unanswered.

(שבת לג ע"א)

Chazal compare a worthy person who speaks coarsely to a palace with a dirty and foul-smelling tannery in it, causing all passersby to exclaim, "How gorgeous is this palace! How unfortunate it is that a tannery has been set up in it." If one gains respect by the "bad smell," how much more respect would he gain if he would emit a beautiful perfume, so to speak.

(מס' דרך ארץ בן עזאי פ"א ה"ג)

For many years, the chossid and *shadar* (traveling *shliach* of the Rebbe) Reb Leib Hoffman lived in Vitebsk. At *yechidus*, a certain chossid once told the Rebbe Maharash that he did not go to hear Reb Leib *chazzering chassidus*. The Rebbe advised him to go and listen to Reb Leib, "Since he has a clean mouth."

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 260)

One summer day in תשל"א, a few bochurim were conversing near the Rebbe's room, and one of them used inappropriate language. The Rebbe overheard it and his face paled.

At the next *farbrengen*, the Rebbe raised the subject and spoke about it with pain in his voice. The Rebbe appeared very serious and he looked intently at the *bochurim*, pleading that he should never have to mention the subject again.

"Though in general these matters are not discussed, but once in a while, they must be mentioned. The negative effects of unclean speech are far-reaching and an objection must be made. Though it is not my job, since I heard it, I must say something. Future *farbrengens* will no doubt be reserved for matters of Torah and *yiras Shamayim*."

(דעם רבינס קינדער ע' קצט)

The Rebbe also said that improper speech can have negative effects on one's *avodas Hashem*, and

added that improving it will help one overcome certain internal struggles.

(תו"מ ח"י ע' 68, אג"ק ח"ט ע' רעג)

Positive Speech

Chazal say that even when one must mention something negative, he should at least begin with a positive remark. When the Torah discusses the non-kosher animals it begins with those which have one kosher sign.

Dovid HaMelech began *Tehillim* with praise for those who refrain from following bad ways, as opposed to starting with a negative comment about those who do.

(בר"ר פל"ב, ירושלמי מגילה פ"ג ה"ז, ילקוט שמעוני תהלים א)

One should also conclude on a good note. In those *seforim* of *Nach* which end with something negative, the second to last *possuk* is repeated in order that our reading should end on a positive note. When the Rebbe spoke of something negative, he would always conclude with something good, or at least add the words, *Umesaymim b'tov* - "and let us conclude on a positive note."

(ברכות לא ע"א, התועודיות תשד"מ ח"ב ע' 632)

In תשל"ב (1972) the Rebbe's *Haggadah* was expanded to include his *sichos* and letters relating to Pesach. When the printed volume was presented to the Rebbe, he noticed that the final words of the concluding note were "the pain of the child." On the Rebbe's instructions, a rubber stamp was promptly made with the words, *LeShana habaa biYerushalayim*. All the copies were duly stamped and were thus enabled to end on a positive note.

(מפי הרב יהודה לייב שי' שפירא)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is positive speech a means to promote positive thoughts or is it also an end in itself?
- What is wrong with mentioning the negative elements of life? Are we denying their existence?

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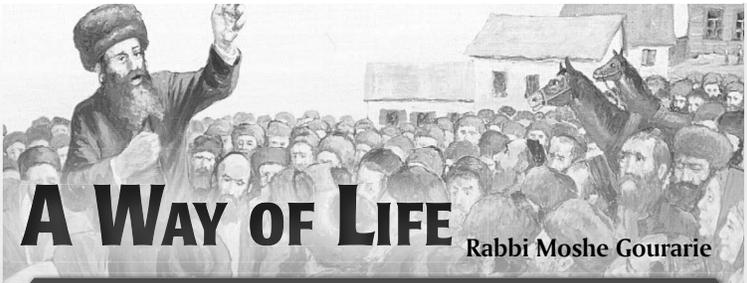


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OUR HEROES

Reb Pinchas Reizes



Reb Pinchas Reizes, one of the greatest chasidim of the Alter Rebbe, was an incredible *gaon*. The Rebbeim trusted him fully, often involving him in private and clandestine activities involving themselves or chasidim at large. Reb Pinchas was also a wealthy and influential resident of Shklov and did a great deal for the Alter Rebbe in that respect. While in the Rebbe's court, Reb Pinchas served as a *chozer*, renowned for the precision of his *hanachos* (transcriptions). The Mittlerer Rebbe called Reb Pinchas the "field marshal" of *chasidei* Chabad.



Reb Pinchas traveled to the Alter Rebbe for four months each year: Elul, Tishrei, Nissan and Sivan. Once, Reb Pinchas fell ill and was unable to make the journey for Tishrei. Later in the month he felt better, but because the winter had already set in, he remained in Shklov. While sitting in his *sukkah* on Shmini Atzeres, he suddenly cried out, "Oy Rebbe!" and said to those present that the Rebbe had just thought of him.

At this same time, the Alter Rebbe was sitting at his *seudah* in his *sukkah*, and he said: "Pinchas Reizes needs his body to be cured. What I cannot give him; I cannot give. But a bodily *refuah* I can give him."

The *chassidische* young men from Shklov were very surprised to hear the Rebbe suddenly mention Reb Pinchas in middle of the Shmini Atzeres meal. Upon returning to Shklov, they immediately went to the home of Reb Pinchas. As they were speaking, they discovered that at the same time the Alter Rebbe had mentioned him, Reb Pinchas had screamed, "Oy Rebbe!"

Chasidim have always been averse to outwardly showing one's greatness through displaying *ruach hakodesh* and the like, and reprimanded Reb Pinchas for such behavior. Reb Pinchas declared, "It was not me. The first time I went for *yechidus*, I gave the Rebbe my *nefesh*. The second time, I gave him my *ruach*, and the third time, my *neshama*. Being that my entire *neshama* had been given to the Rebbe, what happened was out of my control."

The Rebbe explained that some aspect of story is attainable today through total dedication of the *neshama* to the Rebbe. However, this level is reached only after intense learning and toiling in *avoda*, like that of Reb Pinchas.

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' נב, חסידים הראשונים ח"א ע' 64)

לע"נ הרה"ח ר' יצחק דוד בן הר"ר מרדכי אברהם ישעיהו ע"ה גראנער

Chinese Auction Tickets with Maser Money

Is one permitted to use *ma'aser* money to buy tickets in a Chinese auction being held for a *tzedaka* cause?

- The *halacha* is that one may not invest *tzedaka* money for his own benefit, even when there will not be any loss to the *tzedaka*. Therefore, it should be forbidden to use *tzedaka* money to purchase tickets in an auction, even though the money is going to *tzedaka*.
- However, *Poskim*¹ differentiate between auctions with a limited amount of tickets in the raffle and when there is no limit. When there are only a certain amounts of tickets sold for a specific prize (e.g. 1,000 tickets sold for the chance of winning \$10,000), then we consider the ticket to be something of "worth" because the chances of this ticket to win the prize can be clearly evaluated (i.e. 1/1,000 chance of winning \$10,000), and therefore *ma'aser* money may not be used. However when there is no limit to the amount of tickets sold, then the ticket has no real value, and we consider that the ticket was only purchased to donate to *tzedaka*.
- In the case that one wins the prize, there is a dispute amongst *Poskim* to whom the prize belongs. Some hold² that the prize belongs to *tzedaka*, since otherwise it would turn out that one used *tzedaka* money for one's personal benefit. Some add³ that one may also not make a condition (*tnai*) that if he wins, then the money spent on the ticket should be his own, and if he does not, it will be a donation from *ma'aser*, since by doing so he is still using the *ma'aser* money (i.e. buying the ticket in order to *potentially* win, with no concern for loss in the scenario that he does not win).
- However, others⁴ hold that one may keep the prize, since it was not offered in exchange of the ticket payment, but as an incentive for people to donate. Therefore, although *ma'aser* money was used to purchase the ticket, the incentive goes to the one who *caused* the *ma'aser* money to be donated to this organization, namely the buyer. Nevertheless, they suggest that one repay *tzedaka* for the cost of the ticket.
- It should be noted⁵ that regarding *tzedaka* one should always try to go "*lifnim mishuras hadin*", and that will result in that *HaShem* will pay him back "*mida keneged mida*" and treat him "*lifnim mishuras hadin*".

Please note that the above may not be applicable for your situation. Consult your Rov for a final psak.

1. שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ד סי' עו. וראה גם ס' צדקה ומשפט להגר"ר יעקב בלוי ע' כ"ט ואילך.
2. הגרש"א ז"ל (דעתו הובאה בועלהו לא יבול ח"ב ע' ק); הגרי"י פ"ש ז"ל (שו"ת אבן ישראל ח"ח סי' ס"ד); הגר"ח ק
3. ראה דרך אמונה שם.
4. שו"ת אג"מ שם.
5. הזכר פעמים רבות ע"י רבינו, ראה לדוגמא שיחת ש"פ ראה תשי"ב ובכ"מ.

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

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Preparing For the Ohel



Reb Binyomin Klein relates:

"The Rebbe's preparations before going to the *Ohel* were extremely serious. Even after going for forty years, the preparations still felt like the preparations of *chodesh Elul* for *Rosh Hashanah*.

"The day before the trip, the atmosphere reflected that 'tomorrow is *Ohel* day.' Everything was different. There was a sense of urgency. The Rebbe's answers would be shorter, and answers of a non-urgent nature were left for later".

Reb Leibel Groner relates:

"In *Elul* of 5719, Reb Moshe Schneerson, a distant relative of the Rebbe, was *niftar*. The Rebbe joined the *levaya* until the *beis hachayim*, but did not enter. The Rebbe explained to me: 'I cannot go into the *beis hachayim* without going into the *Ohel*, but I cannot go into the *Ohel* without the appropriate preparations...'"

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה

מוקדש לחיזוק התקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורינו ולזכות הת' צבי גרשון פלברבאום וב"ג דבורה לאה דרו שיחיו לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשעטומי"צ ולזכות הוריהם הרה"ח אלעזר ורעיתו שיחיו פלברבאום הרה"ח יואל ראובן ורעיתו שיחיו דרו