

The Weekly Farbrengens

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

למען ישמעו • פנחס תשפ"ב • 680
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

GUIDING GENTLY (II)

AVOIDING EMBARRASSMENT

Yeravam ben Nevat merited his kingship over the Yidden because he rebuked Shlomo HaMelech. Nevertheless, he was punished for doing it in public.

(סנהדרין ק"א)

The *Shaloh* understands the *possuk* in *Mishlei*, "Do not rebuke a fool for he might hate you; rebuke a wise person and he will love you," as an instruction on **how** to rebuke. When rebuking another, do not call him a fool, by reminding him of his deficiencies, for then he will hate you and not listen to what you are telling him. Rather, relate to him as to a wise person, and explain him that his actions are not befitting for someone like him. This way, he will love you and listen to your rebuke.

(של"ה פ' דברים דרך חיים)

The command, *hocheiach tochiach*, is universally translated as "You shall surely rebuke." The Rebbe once advised a rabbinic writer that he should use a more positive word – a verb indicating that the person offering admonishment is not focusing on his listener's faults, but on his good intentions.

(היום יום שעי" שיחות באנגלית הע' 925)

IN A PLEASANT MANNER

In the year תש"א (1941), the Friediker Rebbe sent Reb Sholom Ber Gordon to open a *yeshiva* in Newark, New Jersey. A few years later, Reb Sholom Ber was given the position of *rov* in a big *shul*, where he encountered a number of problems. The members of the *shul* did not observe *Shabbos*, and the president himself owned a movie theater that was open seven days a week. Reb Sholom Ber tried to influence these people by explaining the importance of *Shabbos*

and stressed the severity of its desecration by listing the punishments involved.

He told the Rebbe of his difficulties, and the Rebbe answered, "You were born in Dokshitz, so you are familiar with a *shvitz-bod'* (sauna). In the *shvitz*, after pouring hot water on a person, they beat him with a leafy branch, and the person being hit pleads for more. Suppose you would take such a branch and hit this fellow in the middle of the street, he would scream at you angrily, but in the bathhouse, where he is warmed up, he is happy to receive such treatment. Similarly, in your *shul*, you first have to warm them up with stories, and then they will gladly accept the *mussar*."

(מפי אחיו הר"ר ישראל של גארדאן)

CONSIDER

How can one admonish by speaking positive words?

Is the purpose of admonishment to influence the listener or to object wrongdoing?

For many years, the holy brothers Reb Elimelech of Lyzhansk and Reb Zusha of Hanipoli traveled through towns and villages across Europe to arouse Yidden to do *teshuvah*. Whenever they arrived somewhere for the night, one of them would act as a sinner coming to the other, his Rebbe, asking for a *tikkun*. Within earshot of their host, the 'sinner' would list all the *aveiros* of which the host was guilty. Overhearing this

confession, the host would remember that he too had committed such *aveiros*, and he would be aroused to do *teshuvah*.

One night, the brothers arrived in the house of a certain Yid, and Reb Zusha began to beg his brother for a *tikkun* for his negligence. He had never had his *tefillin* checked until recently, and the *sofer* had found that there were no *parshiyos* inside. All his life, he had never put on real *tefillin*!

The host, overhearing the conversation, realized that he himself had never had his *tefillin* checked, so he checked them immediately. To his alarm, he found that they were empty! Sobbing, he begged his visitors to show him how to do *teshuvah*. Reb Elimelech asked Reb Zusha to write their host a set of *parshiyos*, with the *kavana* that they draw down a great light, a light appropriate for a person who has never put on *tefillin*. Reb Zusha took *klaf*, quill and ink, wrote out the *parshiyos* required, placed them in their *batim*, and returned them to their owner. Many years later, these *tefillin* were found by the holy *tzaddik*, Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev.

(ספורי חסידים זווין מועדים ע' 66)

VOICING OPPOSITION

The Rebbe once explained that when distancing someone from actually committing an *aveira* (*le'afrushei mei'isura*) the obligation to admonish is greater than usual, yet even then one should attempt to do so in a pleasant manner.

The Rebbe also points out that if remaining silent will be understood by others as approval, one must voice an objection, regardless of its possible results. This can be seen from the Torah's teaching to rebuke "even a hundred times", even though one had already tried ninety-nine times without success.

(תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"ד ע' 2126, לקוטי שיחות חכ"א ע' 405)

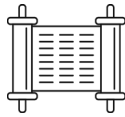
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YICHUD WHEN HUSBAND IS IN TOWN

When does the husband's presence in town permit yichud?

The prohibition of *yichud* precludes members of opposite genders being secluded for any amount of time unless a valid mitigating factor is present, such as an "open door" (see issue 677). Another permissible situation is if the woman is married and her husband is "in the city" at that time ("*baalah ba'ir*").¹

Poskim debate the logic behind this *heter*:

Some understand that the fact itself that the husband is within the city makes his wife subconsciously nervous to act improperly even if it is unlikely for him to show up (e.g. he is at work or hospitalized). Others argue that this only applies if the husband may actually arrive unexpectedly at any moment.²

In practice, we follow the stricter opinion that necessitates a real possibility for the husband to show up. Yet, in certain situations, we may rely on the very fact the husband is local in combination with additional factors.³

Even according to the accepted stricter view, "*baalah ba'ir*" is effective even if the door is locked and the husband does not have the key with him. Although this would not constitute "*pesach pasuach*," it is enough for the woman to be concerned.⁴ If the woman is away from the home, the husband must – according to the stricter view – be made aware of her whereabouts so that he can realistically show up.

If a woman visits a male doctor (see issue 632), even if the husband knows the address, he cannot enter if the door is locked, so it must be left ajar or at least unlocked. Some *poskim* require bringing along another woman whose husband is also in the city, and the double fear is stronger grounds to permit *yichud*. Alternatively, if a female nurse remains in the room together with the doctor, the door may be closed if left unlocked.⁵

The *heter* does not apply to a man if his wife is in town since a man is more likely to sin regardless. When a woman is relying on *baalah ba'ir* to be alone with a Jewish man, she must tell him this, so that isn't doing something which he believes to be forbidden.

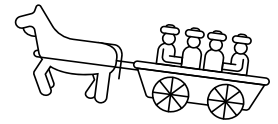
A Jewish man may not be secluded with a non-Jewish woman even if her husband is in town. Yet, if the woman is Jewish, even if she only had a civil marriage, the *heter* of "*baalah ba'ir*" does apply.⁶ *Baalah ba'ir* on its own does not permit a woman to be alone with adopted sons with whom there is a close relationship.

Although "*baalah ba'ir*" is a legitimate *heter*, it is a *midas chassidus* not to rely on it wherever possible.

1. שו"ע אה"ז סי' כ"ב ס"ח, חכ"א כלל ח"ג י"ק פ.
2. חיד"א שיו"ר ברכה אה"ע סי' כ"ב, חזו"א
3. מנח"י ח"ט סי' קמ"ב אות א', שבה"ל
4. ראה דבר הלכה סי' ז' הע' ב'.
5. ראה מנחת איש פי"ח ס"ז.
6. תורת היחוד פי"ז ס"ד הע' י"ח.

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

Our Heroes



R. BEREL NICHAMKIN

R. Berel Nichamkin of Homil was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and a *talmid* of R. Aizel of Homil. A wealthy and busy businessman, R. Berel nevertheless devoted much time to davening.

At the Tzemach Tzedek's instruction, R. Berel and his brother, R. Tzadok, became business partners. They were generous *baalei tzedaka* and would secretly cover the costs of all *simchos* in Homil.

The two brothers were warm *chassidim*, and R. Berel was also learned in both *niglah* and *Chassidus*.

(סה"ש תרצ"ז ע' 271)

When R. Berel visited Lubavitch in 5650, the Rebbe Rashab observed him sitting in thought for ten minutes or so after

davening each morning. When the Rebbe Rashab questioned him about this, R. Berel replied:

"I was in *yechidus* by the Tzemach Tzedek who told me, 'Everyone must engage in *avoda*, even businessmen. In fact, businessmen have it easier, but they must know what they've accomplished and what they're up to. Every day after davening, they should make an assessment of where they're at.'

"Since then," R. Berel concluded, "every day after davening, even if I didn't have time to daven at length with *hisbonenus*, I sit down and contemplate how I davened, how did my davening affect me, and then I make a resolution about what I need to do in the future."

(סה"ש תרצ"ז ע' 260, ניצוצי אור ע' 270)

A Moment with The Rebbe



TRUE REALITY

One of the principal pillars of *Chassidus* is that the world is constantly being created by Hashem. This idea is a cornerstone of the Rebbe's teachings.

"Every *Yid* can and must do everything within his control to understand and appreciate, at least intellectually, that Hashem creates the world every second," said the Rebbe at the 24 Teves 5712 (1952) *farbrenge*n.

"Therefore," the Rebbe continued, "one must conclude that everything – whatever one touches, eats, or drinks –

is truly G-dliness.

"This is not merely a topic discussed in *seforim*, or something that was relevant only in past generations, or a poetic sing-song..."

As the passion in the Rebbe's voice grew, the Rebbe pointed to the table, and then pointed to a plate of cake on it, and exclaimed, "Here, everything in this room – whatever we see or touch – is truly the word of Hashem creating it!"

(For the full *sicha*, see *Toras Menachem*, Vol. 4, Page 258)

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