

The Weekly *Farbrengens*


MERKAZ ANASH
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 EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SEEKING GUIDANCE (I)

NOT RELYING ON ONESELF

During the reign of Yoshiyahu, King of Yehuda, Necho the King of Mitzrayim prepared to pass through *Eretz Yisroel* on his way northward to wage war against Ashur (Assyria). King Yoshiyahu was aware that *HaShem* had clearly promised that even a "sword of peace" would not pass through his land, and therefore warned the King of Mitzrayim to keep his troops at a distance. That warning was ignored. Yoshiyahu thereupon confronted them in battle, where he was showered with arrows and died.

Chazal explain that despite the fact that it seemed so clear in the Torah as he understood it, he should have sought the advice of the Navi Yirmiyahu. He would have been taught that his generation was not worthy of this special promise.

(דברי הימים ב' פ"ה כ-כד, תענית כב סע"א)

On one occasion, when King Yannai was celebrating a great victory, an evil man called Elazar ben Po'ira persuaded the king to believe that the hearts of the *chachomim* were against him. To prove his point, he advised the king to put on the *tzitz* of the *kohen gadol* and watch their response.

When Yannai did as he was advised, one elder spoke up: "Your majesty! It is great enough to be king; leave the *kehunah* for the children of Aharon."

The king, infuriated, expelled all the *chachomim* from the feast. And Elazar ben Po'ira, seizing the opportunity, incited him to kill them all.

Yannai was hesitant and inquired: "What then will become of the Torah?"

Elazar was quick to reply, "The Torah is written and available to whoever wants to learn it."

Yannai, duly convinced, killed all of the *chachomim*, leaving the world void of Torah learning - until R. Shimon ben Shetach eventually restored the Torah to its original glory.

Chazal charge Yannai with *apikorsus* (heresy), for though the Torah *shebiksav* is written, one must have teachers to guide him to a proper understanding of it, through the oral tradition of the Torah *shebe'al peh*.

This, according to some, began the development of the *karo'im*, a group of Yidden who did not follow the *chachomim* and relied upon their own understanding to explain the Torah.

(קידושין סו ע"א, כוזרי מג"ס ס"ה)

CONSIDER

In this day and age, when the Torah shebe'al peh has already been written, does one still need a live teacher to guide him?

Why would the *chassidim* ask to them the Rebbe's words? Hadn't the Rebbe himself spoken directly to them?

Everyone who says *Ashrei* knows those words: *v'es kol haresha'im yashmid* - "and He will destroy all evildoers." Well, there once lived a man who, realizing that he was not particularly righteous, was afraid of cursing himself. He therefore decided to omit the word *haresha'im* ("evildoers"), so that the verse now read, "and He will destroy all." And in due course, his children all baptized. (The root of *yashmid* also denotes apostasy.)

The medieval author of *Sefer Chassidim* explains that although this man's intentions were good, he was punished for not having consulted the *chachomim* of his town. They would have explained to him that though Dovid HaMelech himself had a wicked son, Avshalom, he nevertheless did say this *posuk*, since *HaShem* will do as He chooses.

(ס' חסידים ס' א"ג)

FOLLOWING THE ELDERS

Chazal say: One should always heed the counsel of elders. Even if the elders advise one to demolish and the youth advise one to build, one should listen to the elders, for the "demolition" of the elders is ultimately "building," whereas the "building" of the youth will ultimately bring about destruction.

In this context they point to the following story:

After the passing of Shlomo HaMelech, his son Rechavom ascended the kingly throne. A delegation of Yidden soon approached him, asking that he treat them gently and not overburden them with taxes. Rechavom told them, "Return in three days and I will answer you."

He then turned to seek the advice of the elders who had stood before his father. They told him, "If you treat the people gently, they will serve you faithfully throughout all of their days."

Dissatisfied with this approach, the king then consulted some young friends and they told him, "Be firm with the people. Tell them that you will be even more demanding than your father."

At the end of three days the people returned, and the king answered them as his young friends had advised. Infuriated, the people rebelled against him and chose Yerovam as their king.

(מלכים א' יב, לקח טוב שמות ד, כח, מגילה לא ע"ב)

When the Rebbe established Tze'irei Agudas Chabad in order to utilize the energy of the young *chassidim* in spreading *Yiddishkeit*, he discreetly requested some of the *eltire* *chassidim* to supervise their activities and offer advice.

The Rebbe writes to them in a letter: "If *Chazal* say that the 'demolition' of elders is ultimately 'building,' how much more so the 'building' of elders. However, your advice should be given in a gentle manner that won't make the young men feel unimportant."

(היכל מנחם ח"א ע' קלו)



Yoseph Shomer
 Certified Public Accountant

(718) 301-7014 | SHOMERCPA.COM



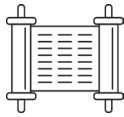
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MIKVAH 'BOR AL GABEI BOR'

What is a Chabad 'Bor Al Gabei Bor' mikvah and what is the significance of it?

In earlier times, mikvaos were often natural springs (*maayan*) that flowed from under the ground. However, as Yidden spread out to live in many places where springs weren't accessible for *tevilah*, the need to build rainwater mikvaos grew.

The issue with such a mikvah is that when the rainwater gets dirty, it can't be cleaned or switched easily. The solution is to connect a pool of regular water to a pool of rainwater, thus making it kosher. This way, the immersion pool (*bor hatevila*) can be clean, and it will still be considered as immersing in kosher rainwater.

In general, there are three methods of kashering the regular water:

(1) *Zeriah* ("sowing") – the city water flows over a pit containing 40 *se'ah* of rainwater and then continues on its path into the *bor hatevila*. Every time one needs to refill the mikvah, the same procedure can be used.

However, if the city water flowing over the *zeriah* pit doesn't stop to rest, some question if it kashers the water.¹ Also, when relying on this method alone, the *bor hatevila* must be completely dry before each time it's filled up.²

(2) *Hashaka* ("kissing") – the two full pools are connected with a hole the size of *shefoferes hanod* (the opening of a waterskin), big enough for two fingers to rotate. The hole is usually kept sealed with a plug to prevent the waters from interchanging. However, some require the connection to be open during *tevilah*.³

The challenge with this method is that if one forgets to open the connection, the immersion pool won't be kosher.⁴ Additionally, the water in the two pools must be connected when the water levels are equal; otherwise, the connection is via *zochalin* ("flowing water") and is invalid.⁵

According to the Raavad, the pool of rainwater can only *kasher* the city water as long as the majority of 40 *se'ah* of the original rainwater remains. In both of the abovementioned methods, the rainwater pool will be replaced by city water within a short period of time.⁶ While this opinion is not codified in Shulchan Aruch, we try to be *mehader* to have a mikvah meet all standards.

(3) *Bor al gabei bor* – a bottom pool holds the rainwater, the top pool has city water, and they touch through a hole (preferably a *tefach* by *tefach*).

With this design, championed by the Rebbe Rashab, the static connection is top to bottom and warm to cold, causing the water to mix at a much slower pace, satisfying the Raavad's concern.⁷ (Additionally, since they are top to bottom, it's like one big mikvah, and one is considered to be immersing in the actual rainwater.⁸)

Yet, since the water does mix over time, if one wishes to achieve this benefit, one must change the water from time to time (the exact timing is questionable). Yet, it should only be done under the supervision of a knowledgeable mikvah expert, since doing it wrong can invalidate the mikvah entirely.

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

Our Heroes



REB CHAIM AVRAHAM BEN ADMOR HAZAKEN

Reb Chaim Avraham, the Alter Rebbe's second son, was a very talented person, a serious *masmid*, would *daven* at great length, and would not speak more than necessary. He had refined character traits and would always greet people with a smile. Reb Chaim Avraham had an awesome appearance and looked similar to his father.

The Rebbe Maharash concluded, "My great-uncle Reb Chaim Avraham was then seventy-seven years old and was completely removed from all worldly matters. Yet on the night of Shavuos, he wept for the revelation of the Fiftieth Gate. This left me with a deep impression."

(ספר התולדות אדמו"ר מהר"ש ע' 73)

"Once," related the Rebbe Maharash, "on the first night of Shavuos, I went to say *Gut Yom-Tov* to my great-uncle Reb Chaim Avraham, son of the Alter Rebbe. I found him sitting with his hands covering his tear-stained face. I asked him why he was crying on *Yom-Tov*. He explained that the Baal Shem Tov said that when one prepares himself properly during *Sefiras HaOmer*, he is found worthy on Shavuos of being admitted to the Fiftieth Gate of *kedusha* – "and I can't feel it," concluded Reb Chaim Avraham.

Reb Chaim Avraham once saw a man running in the street, and he grabbed hold of him and said to him, "Rasha! Where are you running?" The man then admitted that he was on his way to sin.

Chassidim expressed amazement at Reb Chaim Avraham's miraculous powers, but he brushed it off, "When I saw the man running, I unexpectedly thought of the *possuk* (Mishlei 19:2), "One who hurries with his feet is a sinner!"

(רשימות דברים חדש ע' 231)

A Moment with The Rebbe



לזכות ר' שניאור זלמן בן רות חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות

IN THE POCKET OF YOUR HEART

The theme of chapter 41 in Tanya, that Hashem is standing over us, is to arouse fear of Heaven. However, the Rebbe applied this idea in many areas of Avodas Hashem, including as a way to find calm and peace, by trusting in Hashem.

downheartedness was felt.

Reb Aharon Leizer Tzeitlin, the legendary Shliach to Tzfas, was under great financial pressure, with the preschool network that he ran. He wrote to the Rebbe, sharing his situation. Between the lines, his

"Your letter was received," the Rebbe responded in his holy handwriting. "And it is surprising that you don't know verbatim, and in your heart, the words of the Tanya Perek Mem Alef: Behold Hashem is standing over you, etc."

The Rebbe ended with a clear directive. "Place these words in your pocket, and in the pocket of your heart."

(*Techayeinu Issue 9*)

לע"נ ר' מנחם מענדל ב"ר מרדכי צבי ע"ה - יאהרצייט ח"י שבט
נדבת משפחת בערקאוויטש שי

1. ראה מהרש"ם ח"א קכ"ב קמ"ה. שו"ת בית שלמה ח"ב י"ד סי' פ"ו. טהרת מים על קפ"ג.
2. בשיעור ג' לוגין או רביעית - וראה מנח"י ח"ה סי' צ'.
3. ראה יו"ד סי' ר"א ש"ך ס"ק קי"ב. וראה שו"ת צ"צ יו"ד סי' קע"א ושלחן מנחם ח"ד ע' 145.
4. ראה שו"ת חת"ס סי' ר"ז. וראה טהרת מים על קע"ב.
5. ראה שמלה סי' ר"א סצ"ד.
6. ראה ש"ך סי' ר"א ס"ק ס"ג. שו"ת דברי חיים יו"ד ח"ב סי' צ"ח.
7. ראה שו"ת אמרי יוסף ח"א סי' קנ"א (אלא ששם נקב שפופרת הנוד). ובמ"ל הרב הלל פכונר ע"ה בס' תיקוני מקוואות ע' קלט שאיסור נסות"ס הוא רק למראית העין וזה אינו במקוה בענ"ב.
8. ראה אגרות קודש חכ"ב ע' 67. ראה רשימה של הגו"י לגדא ע"ה הודפס בס' תיקוני מקוואות ע' מ"ט וכן בהוספות לטהרת מים (וראה בתיקוני מקוואות שם כל הציונים למכתבי הרב). מקוה מים על סא.