

The Weekly Farbrenging



830 • נשא תשפ"ה • לחמן ישמעו
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

PERSONAL KINDNESS (II)

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

The Baal Shem Tov said: The way to recognize lessons in *avoda* from life occurrences is to say a *kapitel Tehillim* with a fiery heart, personally putting in effort to do kindness for a Yid, and having *ahavas Yisroel* with *mesiras nefesh*. These are the keys that open the locks to the chambers of mercy, health, *yeshuah* and *parnassa*.

(ס"ה ש"ק קי"ז ת"ש ע' 73)

One Yom Kippur, in middle of *chazaras hashatz* of *Shacharis*, the Alter Rebbe motioned to the *chazzan* to quicken his pace. After he finished, the Alter Rebbe removed his *tallis*, left the shul and headed towards the home of an ailing woman who had just given birth. Entering the house, the Alter Rebbe took some twigs, lit a fire and cooked kasha for her.

The Rebbe points out that although the Alter Rebbe could have sent others to help the woman, he chose to do it himself. In addition, he put aside his lofty *davening* on Yom Kippur to care for the needs of another Yid.

(רשימת היומן ע' שסא, תר"מ תשד"מ ח"ב ע' 627)

The Frierdiker Rebbe once described what had taken place while he was traveling with his father, the Rebbe Rashab: "One day, after lunchtime, my father was reclining on the couch and appeared to be in another world. He was not asleep but was leaning on his side and had an unusual expression in his eyes. This continued for many hours, until he suddenly awoke and asked me, "What day is it? What *parsha* is it today?" and I answered.

"The following morning, my father said that he needed to take care of a few errands, so I stayed behind in the hotel. A short while later, a package of women's clothing was delivered to our hotel room, and throughout the rest of the day, many more packages were dropped off. In the evening, my father returned and said that we were to pack up and leave for Pressburg.

"Upon our arrival there, we began walking down the street and met a *bochur* on the way, whom my father asked for directions to a specific hotel. The *bochur* directed us and told us that the hotel owner

had just passed away (at the exact time when my father was reclining on the couch) and his family was now sitting *shiva*. We then walked to a nearby *Yeshiva* and went into the *beis medrash*, where my father began a learned discussion in learning with some of the *bachurim*, including the *bochur* we had met in the street. There was one student with whom my father spoke at length, and later praised him highly.

CONSIDER

Is personally doing the kindness an advantage for the provider or for the receiver?

"We then went to the hotel and my father spoke to the widow and her daughters. He encouraged her to marry off her daughters. The woman began to sob, saying that she could not afford clothing for a *chasuna* and didn't know of any appropriate matches for her orphaned girls. My father comforted her and proposed *shidduchim* for them. For the oldest daughter, my father suggested the *bachur* with whom he had spoken to at length at the *Yeshiva*, and for the second daughter, he suggested the *bachur* that we had met in the street. In the end, the *shidduchim* were successful and my father provided the clothing for both of the *chasunos*."

(ס"ה ש"תרפ"ד ע' 62)

NO EXCEPTIONS!

The mother of the chossid Reb Refael Nachman Kahn related: "Once the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe stayed near Liozna, in the town where I lived. One day I headed toward the *shochet*, holding a chicken in one hand and my young son in the other. At that time, I was also expecting a child. Sitting on the porch of his home, the Frierdiker Rebbe saw me struggling, and motioned to me to stop, and though he did not know me, he offered to *shecht* the chicken himself, sparing me from the walk to the *shochet*."

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 193)

One day, while walking along Eastern Parkway toward 770, an elderly man carrying two heavy suitcases approached the Rebbe and said, "Can you please help me with one of my suitcases?"

The Rebbe gladly took the suitcase, and they continued walking together. Hearing the man sigh heavily, the Rebbe asked the man what was wrong, and the man responded, "This suitcase is also too heavy for me." Immediately, the Rebbe took the second suitcase as well.

A passing chossid who witnessed the scene approached the elderly man and whispered to him that the person carrying his suitcases was none other than the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The man was shocked; he stopped in his tracks and cried, "Gevald! What have I done?!" and began apologizing profusely to the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded, "What's with the *mitzva* of helping another? Was that *mitzva* only given to others and not to me?!"

(ראש בני ישראל ע' 142)

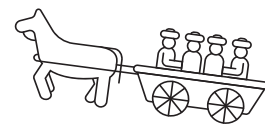
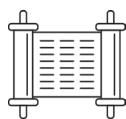
On another occasion, a worker in 770 was carrying a ladder, when he suddenly felt it become lighter. Turning around, he saw the Rebbe holding the other end. He asked the Rebbe to let go of it, but the Rebbe replied, "Does [here the Rebbe said his own name] not have to fulfill the *mitzva* of helping another?!"

(בית חינו ע' 229)

As a young married man, Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev lived in his father-in-law's house. His in-laws, who were wealthy, often hosted many guests, and Reb Levi Yitzchok would personally see to the needs of the visitors, preparing bundles of straw for the bedding and arranging the bed and linen. Seeing this, his father-in-law asked him why he troubled himself when *goyim* could be hired to do such menial work.

"Tell me," said Reb Levi Yitzchok, "is it right to give a *goy* the privilege of doing the *mitzva*, and on top of that to pay him for it?"

(סיפ"ח זיין תורה ע' 66)



AI KOL ISHA

May a man listen to an AI-generated voice resembling a woman?

Halacha forbids a man from listening to the singing voice of a woman who is an *ervah*, even without intention to derive pleasure from it. In addition, any *hirhur* (erotic thoughts) that may result is an *issur d'oraisa* (see additional details in issue 780). The speaking voice of a woman, by contrast, is not considered *ervah*, for one is habituated to it and it's assumed not to cause *hirhur*.¹

Some have argued that the prohibition of *ervah* only applies if one knows and has seen the woman who is singing, as the Gemara rules about seeing the colorful clothing of a woman, that "the Yetzer Hara doesn't lust for what the eyes don't see." Moreover, a recorded voice is an electronic reproduction and not a woman's actual voice.² Both of these arguments would apply with even greater force to an AI-generated voice, which isn't connected to a specific woman.

However, many other *poskim* contend that the distinction of whether one personally knows the woman is specific to garments, and not relevant to hearing her sing which is itself *ervah*. Likewise, a recorded voice resembles the real voice and will likely lead to *hirhur*.³ And independent of the halachic discussion per se, such listening certainly doesn't align with the conduct of a chossid, who would never even ask such a question.⁴

Regardless, *hirhur* is always prohibited, and anything that causes *hirhur* or erotic pleasure is prohibited according to all. The Alter Rebbe rules that even romantic literature is prohibited to read since it arouses a person's *yetzer hara*.⁵ Likewise, non-tznius paintings and AI-generated images would be prohibited due to the *issur d'oraisa* of *hirhur*.⁶

If a woman's voice is digitally altered to sound like a man's voice and doesn't lead to *hirhur*, it would be permissible since there is no *hirhur* and it's not a woman's actual voice (*ervah*). But if a woman naturally has a masculine voice, it remains prohibited as *ervah*.

1. שו"ע אורח סי' ע"ה ס"ו.
2. שו"ת ציץ אליעזר ח"ה סי' ב. שו"ת יביע אומר ח"ט אורח סי' ק"ח אות מ"ג (אבל שם שאסור מדינא בראדיו אם ראה אותה פ"א).
3. שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ג סי' קפ"א וח"ה.
4. שו"ת קצ"ז. שו"ת חלקת יעקב ח"א סי' קס"ג. שו"ת אז נדברו ח"ו סי' ס"ט.
5. תו"מ תשד"מ ח"ג ע' 2124.
6. שו"ת סי' ש"ז ס"ל.
7. ראה שו"ת יביע אומר ח"א אורח סי' ז.
8. שו"ת אז נדברו ח"א סי' נ"א.

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

DEDICATE AN ISSUE

in honor of a simcha or yahrtzeit

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REB HENDEL

Reb Chanoch Hendel Kugel lived in Lubavitch and was a "ben bayis" in the Rebbeim's home for close to forty years. The Frierdiker Rebbe describes him as follows, "Reb Chanoch Hendel came to Lubavitch, to the Tzemach Tzedek, for the first time in the year תר"ג. He had prepared himself for ten years before coming to the Rebbe. His heart burned with a fire of *ahavas yisroel* and he had unparalleled *midos tovos*. His *ahavas yisroel* and *midos tovos* were a product of much work and toil, and not so much from thinking and meditation. It is impossible to describe the love he had for another Yid; he would literally go on *mesirus nefesh* for every individual." When the yeshiva Tomchei Temimim opened, he was appointed by Rebbe Rashab as the leading *mashpia*. He passed away on the 19th of Teves, תר"ס (1900).

When the news came to Lubavitch that the chossid Reb Chonye Marozov was released from his draft service, Reb Hendel began dancing in the yard of the Rebbe, chanting "Chonye has gone out!" He went into the Rebbe Rashab's room, told him the news and started dancing in the room. The Rebbe Rashab got up, put his hand on Reb hendel's shoulder and went around with him three times. Afterwards, he said, "For this, I will say Chassidus for you."

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ליקוט ב' אות י"ח)

Before he became a chossid, Reb Hendel went to the chossid Reb Zishke of Kurenitz to watch the way he conducts himself. He saw that throughout the entire day, Reb Zishke was occupied with his Rabbonus, and had no time to learn himself. Once, at a late hour of the night, when Reb Hendel was preparing to go to sleep, he saw Reb Zishke get up for *Tikun Chatzos* and then watched as he sat and learned for a few hours. The Rov then went to the *mikva* and started preparing for *davening*. Seeing this, Reb Hendel was impressed, but he began doubting his desire to become a chossid, perhaps it would be too difficult.

Later, he saw a woman come to Reb Zishke, telling him about a very seriously ill person, and as she was speaking, he saw tears streaming down Reb Zishke's face. Sometime afterward, he witnessed the Rov going out of his way to request a favor for another *yid*.

Finally, Reb Hendel decided to become a chossid, and he went to Reb Zishke to tell him his decision. "Good," said Reb Zishke. Reb Hendel asked, "But how do I do this? Please don't make it too hard!" "It's very simple," said the Rov. "The very first thing in Chassidus is *ahavas yisrael*." He explained the idea of true *ahavas yisrael*, and then said, "You are also a Yid and you must love yourself, but first you must banish the "goy" that is within you..."

(ספר השיחות תרצ"ז ע' 16)

A Moment with The Rebbe

לזכר נשמת מרת חוה לאה בת ר' שמשון הכהן ע"ה



BASICS FIRST

Before Shavuot 5748, the Rebbe aroused the assembled at the farbrengen to make the necessary preparations for the upcoming Yom Tov.

"Even before learning the meaning of Shavuot in Chassidus," the Rebbe said, "it should be learned simply, as it is in Kitzur Shulchon Oruch."

When Reb Yitzchok Block began returning to Yidishkeit, as one of the early Baalei Teshuva of Dor Hashvi'i, he merited a unique relationship and personal guidance from the Rebbe.

Yitzchok wanted to learn Chassidus, but the Rebbe said to him, "First learn Kitzur Shulchan Oruch."

After learning through it once, he asked the Rebbe permission to begin Chassidus, but the Rebbe didn't allow him. The Rebbe told him to review it, and then a third time. Only then should he begin to delve into the sweetness of the secrets of the Torah.

(Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol 3 p. 355; Yachas Raboseinu Nsi'einu l' Kitzur Shulchon Oruch p. 7)