

The Weekly Farbrenging


MERKAZ ANASH
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REVERING THE TORAH (IV)

IN ALL TIMES

The Torah commands us to follow the instructions of the *rabbonim* in each generation. Chazal explain that no matter the greatness of the leading *chachomim*, we are obligated to heed their guidance. Though Yiftach was no comparison to Shmuel HaNavi in greatness, the people of his generation were nevertheless obligated to hold him in equal regard.

The Sefer HaChinuch writes that one who disregards their advice is forfeiting a *mitzvas asei* and deserves great punishment: "For this is a firm pillar upon which the Torah stands, as can be understood by anyone with understanding."

(ס' החינוך מצוה תצה)

Chazal say that one should regard the current *chachomim* just as those from the previous generation. One should not say, "If Rabbi Akiva would be with us, I would learn from him; if Rabbi Zeira and Rabbi Yochanan were alive, I would learn with them." Rather, he should consider the *chachomim* of his own generation with the full respect. This is the meaning of Shlomo Hamelech's words, "Do not justify yourself by saying that the earlier days were better than these."

(קה"ר פ"א, ר"ה כב סע"א)

ALL RABONIM

Chazal say, "One who doubts his Rebbe (*hameharher achar rabo*) is regarded as if he doubted the *Shechinah*."

A chossid of the *Tzemaich Tzedek* once went to hear Reb Yisroel of Vilednik. As the *tzaddik* spoke, he thought to himself, "I don't need to listen to him. He's not my Rebbe; I have a different Rebbe."

Reb Yisroel sensed his thoughts, and said, "*Hameharher achar rabo*... – Whoever frees himself from listening since this isn't his Rebbe, for he has a **different** Rebbe (*acher*), is regarded as if he doubted the *Shechinah*...."

The chossid, who was standing *behind* Reb Yisroel, assured himself, "Reb Yisroel is certainly not referring to me."

But Reb Yisroel added, "*Hameharher achar rabo*... – Whoever has doubts when he is behind (*acher*) his Rebbe is regarded as if he doubted the *Shechinah*...."

(ר' מענדל ע' 110, ספורים חסידים ח"א ע' 49)

CONSIDER

Are we really supposed to believe that the rabbonim today are of the same stature of the rabbonim of old? How then can we have a genuine feeling of respect?

How can one respect a talmid chochom knowing that he has opposing views to one's own Rebbe etc.?

DESPITE DIFFERENCES

The author of *Ketzos HaChoshen*, a staunch *misnaged*, was the rov of Staria, the hometown of many chassidim of the eminent *tzaddik*, the Chozeh of Lublin. Feeling that the chassidim were defying the *Shulchan Aruch*, the rov reproved them, and when they ignored him, he pronounced upon them a *cherem* of 30 days. The townsmen adhered to his ruling and kept their distance from the chassidim, who after a while decided to go off and spend the rest of the 30 days with their Rebbe in Lublin.

However, to their surprise, the Rebbe told his *shammes* not to admit them for another two weeks and a few days – for as long as the *cherem* was still in effect.

When they were finally admitted to his presence, the Chozeh reprimanded them for not fully respecting their rov. He explained that the Torah requires one to respect a *talmid chacham* absolutely, despite his possible lack in some area of *avodas HaShem*

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 406)

After the Mezritcher Maggid passed away, each of his *talmidim* was allotted a region in which to spread the teachings of *Chassidus*. Russia was apportioned to the Alter Rebbe. Reb Shlomo Karliner, one of his colleagues, once considered moving his community of chassidim to a town in the Alter Rebbe's territory, and he asked the Alter Rebbe for permission.

The Alter Rebbe agreed on three conditions – that Reb Shlomo would not speak disrespectfully of the non-chassidic *lomdim*, that he would not belittle the natural *yiras Shomayim* that Yidden have, and that his chassidim would be encouraged to attain *kedusha* on their own and not rely solely on the *kedusha* of their Rebbe. Reb Shlomo agreed to the first two conditions but not to the third, and finally settled elsewhere.

(לקו"ד ח"א ע' 282)

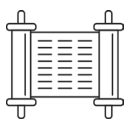
Even when the *chassidim* suffered at the hands of the *misnagdim*, the Alter Rebbe urged his chassidim to treat their *rabbonim* and *talmidei chachomim* with respect, despite their sharp differences in *avodas HaShem*.

After the Alter Rebbe was imprisoned due to a libel perpetrated by several *misnagdim*, the *chassidim* were reasonably angry, and were once again tempted to voice their opinion against the *misnagdim*.

In a second letter to his *chassidim*, the Alter Rebbe warns them not to speak negatively about the *talmidei chachomim* "who are not of our group": "Even if these *talmidei chachomim* speak out against the Baal Shem Tov and his *talmidim*, it is the listener who must do *teshuva*, since it is his own negative behavior which has caused them to speak like this... HaShem is my witness that the above is all true and not *ch"v* a charade due to fear..."

The Alter Rebbe concludes: "I am sure that for the true *chassidim* these words will be enough. However, since there those who profess themselves as *chassidim*, who think they will impress other *chassidim* by speaking negatively about the *misnagdim*, I therefore demand that anyone who hears another speak disrespectfully, even in jest, report it to me, so that I will know to ban them from visiting me."

(אג"ק אדה"ז ח"א ע' ק)



MEZUZAH ON AN AIRBNB

I am renting an Airbnb for an extended period of time. Do I need to put up mezuzos?

For a rental, the obligation of mezuzah is on the renter, whether the landlord is Jewish or not,¹ and even if the tenant expected the Jewish landlord to have a mezuzah.²

In Eretz Yisroel, the obligation for a rental begins immediately, but in Chutz La'aretz, one is exempt until thirty days have passed, as the rental is considered temporary until then.³ (The Rebbe explains that since a Jew anticipates the coming of Moshiach every day, the mere intention to "settle" in Chutz La'aretz doesn't have permanence until time demonstrates so.)⁴

Yet, the Rebbe advised affixing mezuzos on a rental right away, even in Chutz La'aretz, without a bracha. After 30 days, one mezuzah should be removed for checking, and then a mezuzah should be affixed with a bracha.⁵

A step lower than a rental is a "pundak," which is obligated after thirty days in Eretz Yisroel, and, according to some, completely exempt in Chutz La'aretz. Some define *pundak* as an inn, not meant for permanent lodging, but rather for resting during a trip. Others explain it as a place where one merely rents usage rights, but has no right to the room itself and can be moved by the owners at will.

Thus, one renting an Airbnb isn't obligated to affix a mezuzah, unless one rents it for more than thirty days (in which our minhag is to affix without a bracha immediately). Since it may be categorized as a *pundak*, one would not make a bracha even after thirty days.

Would a Jewish owner of an Airbnb be obligated to affix mezuzos?

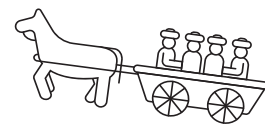
An owner of a house is obligated to affix *mezuzos* with a bracha immediately upon moving in. Thus, a Jewish owner of an Airbnb may be required to affix mezuzos if they ever sleep there themselves, even for just one night.⁶

Some *poskim* hold that keeping furniture in the Airbnb for guests to use is considered usage for dwelling purposes, while others counter that all the items there are only for the guests and it's not considered the owner's usage. Some view it more stringently when the Airbnb is attached to one's regular home.⁷

1. רפ"ב. וראה רשימות חוברת ח' ע' 20 שכתבתי "כ"ק אדמו"ר הרשב"ב שוהה במלון ימים אחדים ה"ל קובע מזוזה.
2. ראה מה שנסתפק בחוברת הדר פ"ג הערה א' אם יש דין של דירת עראי בבית שלו.
3. ראה ערוך השלחן י"ד סי' רפ"ו סמ"ח. שו"ת תשובות והנהגות ח"א סי' תר"ג. חוברת פד"ב ע"ב הא' א' חיי בנימין ח"א ע' קצו.
4. שו"ע י"ד סי' רפ"ו ס"ו.
5. ב"מ ק"א ע"ב. שו"ע י"ד סי' רצ"א ס"ב. וראה שו"ע י"ד תל"ז ס"ז כשהתנה שהבית בדוק מחמץ שיכול המשכיר לטעון קים לי כהסברה שנוח לאדם לעסוק במצות אפילו בממונו.
6. מנחות מ"ד ע"א. שו"ע י"ד סי' רפ"ז ס"ב וש"י שם סק"ח.
7. תורת מנחם ח"ג ע' 350.
8. ראה אג"ק ח"ג ע' קסט וחכ"א ע' 4.

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

Our Heroes



R. SHMUEL GURARY OF CHOROL

R. Shmuel Gurary was a member of the famous Gurary family, descended from R. Nosson, a chossid of the Alter Rebbe. He served as a dayan in the town of Chorol (in the Poltava region) and was known for his incredible powers of concentration in Chassidus and absolute detachment from the material world. (He should not be confused with his cousin, R. Shmuel Gurary of Kremenchug, a *gvir* and fellow chossid of the Rebbe Rashab.)

When he exited his first *yechidus* with the Rebbe Rashab, who was still in his young 20s, R. Gronem met R. Shmuel Gurary of Chorol. R. Shmuel asked R. Gronem if he had come out of *yechidus* happier, and R. Gronem confirmed that he did. R. Shmuel told him, "That's the point of *yechidus*!"

(ניצוצי אור - וויינגארטען ע' 176)

In Chorol, there was a chossid named R. Koppel who had a store where chassidim

would often gather to farbreng.

One Motzaei Shabbos, the chassidim farbrenged there, and R. Shmuel joined them, deep in thought. At midnight, when the farbrengen ended, R. Koppel locked up and the chassidim went home.

R. Shmuel had been oblivious to everything and remained in his place engrossed in his thoughts. His family began searching for him all over. R. Koppel remembered seeing him at the farbrengen, and decided to check the store. Indeed, R. Shmuel was sitting in the same position deep in thought.

R. Shmuel would daven at great length, particularly *maariv*. Once, when he had *yahrzeit*, he davened at the *amud*, and as the whole minyan waited for him to finish Shema, he suddenly blurted out "Ve'ahavta..." [He had been meditating on the first *posuk* all that time.]

(ניצוצי אור - וויינגארטען ע' 199)

A Moment with The Rebbe

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



CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Dr. Robert Wilkes, at the time director of the Child Development Center at the Coney Island Hospital, had an extended correspondence with the Rebbe on the topic of children with special needs.

In one letter, dated 9 Kislev 5741 (1980), the Rebbe explained how preforming mitzvos can help them. "Even if mentally, they may not fully grasp the meaning of these rituals, subconsciously they are bound to feel at home in such an environment, and in many cases could participate in such activities also on the conscious level.

"To cite one striking example," the Rebbe continued, "from actual experience during the Festival of Succos this year. As is well known, Lubavitch activists on this occasion reach out to many Jews with Lulav and Esrog, bringing to them the spirit of the Season of Our Rejoicing... I was asked, what should be the attitude and approach to persons who are senile or confused, etc. I replied—all the more reason to reach out

to them in this tangible way.

"Well, the reports were profoundly gratifying. Doctors and nurses were astonished to see such a transformation: Persons who had spent countless days in silent immobility, deeply depressed and oblivious to everything around them, the moment they saw a young man walk in with a Lulav and Esrog in his hand suddenly displayed a lively interest, eagerly, grasped the proffered Mitzvah-objects, some of them reciting the blessings from memory, without prompting. The joy in their hearts shone through their faces, which had not known a smile all too long.

"One need not look for a mystical explanation of this reaction," the Rebbe concludes. "Understandably, the sight of something so tangible and clearly associated with the joy of Succos evidently touched and unlocked vivid recollections of experiences that had permeated them in earlier years."