

ניצוצי אור Sparks of Light

בס"ד



No. 61

פרשת מקץ (שבת חנוכה) תשע"ו

Standing before the King (2)

Rabbi Shimon Hellinger, Editor

Ensuring Respect

In the days of the **Sfas Emes of Ger**, there were two daily *minyanim* for *Shachris* in his *shul*. While the second *minyan* began, the *mispalelim* from the first would linger and schmooze amongst themselves. When word of this reached the *Sfas Emes*, he rescheduled the *minyanim* so that the first group would be long finished with their socializing, before the second *minyan* began.

(שיח שרפי קודש ח"ב ע' לב)

Young children should be trained to stand in *shul* with reverence and awe. Those who run around should not be brought at all.

The **Chida** writes that if someone converses about worldly matters in *shul*, it would be better that he not have come at all, since he is a sinner, and causes others to sin.

(שו"ע הרב סי' ככד ס"י, משנ"ב סקכ"ח, פתח עינים להחיד"א)

In the summer of 1823 (תקפ"ג), the community of Paritch asked **Reb Dovber of Lubavitch** to visit them for a few weeks during the upcoming winter, as was his custom. The *Rebbe* replied - via post - that though he wasn't in the best of health, he would fulfill their request on condition that they resolve to rectify an urgent issue - about which he was extremely bitter - that being the perverse, increasingly ominous, talking in *Shul*. In his letter, he recounted the numerous warnings his father, the **Baal HaTanya**, had given on the subject, which unfortunately were going increasingly unheeded.

The *Rebbe* then wrote further: "Therefore let it be known in my name, that in every town and *minyan*, they should *iy"H* make a firm resolution, enforced by a *neder*, not to speak during davening, from the moment that the *sheliach tzibbur* ascends to the *amud*. They should also appoint a trustworthy supervisor who will favor no one, and be willing to disgrace any person who violates the vow. This will literally

revive me from the intense pain that this matter is causing me."

The *Rebbe* explained how in his view, the many tragedies that had befallen the *Yidden R"L* during this time, was the result of improper conversing in *shul*. And due to the talking, even the *tefilos* of the other *mispalelim* in *shul* are not being accepted Above. The *Rebbe* concluded that he was waiting for the townsmen of Paritch to notify him that they had begun to implement the above-mentioned proposals, and then he would gladly visit them.

(אג"ק אדהאמ"צ ח"א ע' רעא)

Reb Eliezer Papu writes in his famous *sefer Peleh Yoetz*:

Some people, who would prefer not to converse in *shul*, feel intimidated by others who might mock their excessive "holiness", so they engage the talkers, until they become insensitive to forbidden talk in *shul* themselves. Now, how would the same people react if they were threatened by a robber or a murderer *r"l*? Surely they'd raise a great commotion, without the slightest embarrassment. Here too, without being bashful, they should clearly answer: I'm sorry, but I don't speak during davening."

(פלא יועץ ערך ביהכ"נ)

Powerful Effect

Eliyahu HaNavi was once seen together with 4000 loaded camels. When asked what they were loaded with, he replied, "With fury and wrath."

"Why so?" the people asked.

"To pour it upon those who converse between *Amen yehei shmei rabba* and *yisbareich*."

(שו"ע הרב סי' נו ס"ז)

It is told, that a certain *Yid*, dreamt about a deceased friend, whose face appeared quite jaundiced. Why are you being punished like this he asked. His friend answered that "it's

because I used to talk when the *shaliach tzibbur* was saying *Kaddish*."

(שו"ע הרב סי' רסח ס"ז)

After the widespread massacres during the years 1648-1649 (ת"ח ות"ט), when tens of thousands of *Yidden* across Poland and the Ukraine were brutally murdered, the great **Tosafos Yom-Tov** fasted and *davened* so that he be told why this had occurred. In a dream it was revealed to him that it was due to idle conversation during davening, for the deleted letter ו from the word *דבור* (*dibbur* - "speech"), leaves *דבר* (*dever* - "plague").

The *Tosafos Yom-Tov* then composed a special *Mi SheBeirach* to be recited every *Shabbos* for all those who refrained from talking during davening, blessing them with health, plentiful *nachas* from their children, & all the *brachos* listed in the *Torah*!

(שי למורא ע' כה)

The **Zohar** teaches that one of the last obstacles delaying the *Geula* is forbidden speech in *shul*, which banishes the *Shechina*. By keeping a *shul* quiet, we invite the *Shechina* and hasten the coming of *Moshiach*.

(זהר אחרי עה, ב)

Consider This

Why should one disgrace those talking during davening? Is that the way to influence another person?!

Would all these tragedies that occurred as a result of talking during davening have happened if people had not *davened* at all?

Sparks of Greatness

Reb Chaim of Sanz

Reb Chaim Halbershtam of Sanz is the author of the "**Divrei Chaim**" and was a world renowned *Gaon* & *posek* and a *Chassidisher Rebbe* to tens of thousands. He learned by **Reb Naftali of Ropshitz** and **Reb Tzvi Hirsh of Ziditshov**. Thousands of *chassidim* swarmed to him and many *chassidic* dynasties trace themselves back to him. He passed away on the 25th of Nissan 1876 (תרל"ו).

When he was a child of four years, he found out that the *Rambam* had compiled a list of all the *mitzvos*. He took this list and reviewed it many times until he knew it by heart. When asked why he had done so, he said, "A soldier in the czar's army needs to know the rules of the army, for how can he be a good soldier without knowing the rules? We are all soldiers in Hashem's army and we too must know all the rules."

During his time, new styles of women's clothing began reaching Galicia. Some of the wives of the *chasidim* began dressing in the new fashion, which embittered Reb Chaim greatly.

Once, at his *tish*, he explained the seemingly perplexing story of *Yitzchak Avinu* wanting to give the *brachos* to *Eisav*. "Why would the *tzaddik* want to do this?" he asked.

He then explained that in truth, *Yitzchak* sensed the potential of *Eisav* as being part of the great holiness of the

Avos, and he wanted to reveal this in him. When "*Eisav*" entered the room with the food, he felt the *kedusha* coming in and was very joyous, thinking that he had accomplished his quest. *Yitzchok* then felt his son's clothes to see if this was truly him, but he felt that they still contained the characteristics of "*Eisav*." Therefore, he said that the voice is *Yaakov's* voice, inside is *Yaakov*, but since the clothing, that which is on the outside, is still *Eisav*, this means there is still work to do.

Similarly, if one dresses in a *goyishe* manner, though it is only external, it shows that he still has within himself what to fix.

While reciting *Krias Shma*, Reb Chaim would be so filled with love for *HaShem* that he would pound his ill foot on the floor continuously. As time went on, his foot also became terribly bruised and sore, and the *tzaddik* had no choice but to visit a doctor. When the doctor heard the full story he questioned the *tzaddik*, "I understand that you must bang your foot, but why don't you switch off between your feet?" "Doctor, doctor," the *tzaddik* replied with a smile, "if I was able to choose which foot to bang with, then I wouldn't be banging to begin with"

Library Sparks

In this week's portion, *Mikeitz*, the *Torah* describes how *Yosef* carefully amassed a great quantity of grain during Egypt's seven years of plenty, later sustaining the entire nation during its seven years of famine.

This grain was stored in a very special way to make sure it did not spoil: "The food of the field, which was round about every city, he laid up within it," the *Torah* relates.

Rashi, the great *Torah* commentator, explains that *Yosef* took some earth from each place the grain was cultivated and mixed it in together with that grain, preserving it and preventing it from rotting.

"The deeds of the Forefathers are a sign for their children."

Yosef's actions comprise an eternal lesson for us, his grandchildren, to apply in our lives. For like our illustrious ancestor, every Jew must accumulate "sustenance" in order to satiate the spiritual "hunger" of his surroundings. How? With the very same admixture of earth that *Yosef* utilized.

The true sustenance of every Jew is the *Torah*; it constitutes our very lives. The *Torah* is called sustenance because, like food, it penetrates one's entire being and becomes an actual part of it. The duty of the Jew is to "accumulate" this vital substance by learning as much *Torah* as he possibly can. We must be careful that the *Torah* knowledge we accumulate does not "spoil" or decay. Our Sages have said that *Torah* study, if not done

in the proper manner, can lead to negative consequences. In order to prevent this, a Jew needs to add some "earth" to his *Torah* learning.

"Earth" is symbolic of humility and nullification before Hashem, as it states, "May my soul be like dust to all." A truly humble person is assured that the *Torah* he learns will last forever.

Furthermore, as we learn from *Yosef*, this "earth" must be from the very "dust of that place" -- the Jew's humility must come from the *Torah* learning itself. Not all humility is positive and productive. A Jew must never feel humbled in the face of the outside world, which scoffs at his beliefs and his *Torah* lifestyle. The Jew must take pride in his Judaism and hold his head high, never "apologizing" to those he fears might be offended by the *Torah's* principles and teachings.

Authentic humility, is attained when the Jew studies *Torah* with the realization that he is partaking of Hashem's eternal wisdom. This humility also becomes the key to preserving what he has learned. Just as Hashem is infinite and eternal, so too is His *Torah*.

The greatest scholar's knowledge is but a drop in the vast infinity of Hashem's endless wisdom. Pondering this truth will lead the Jew to true humility, yet also instilling in him an enduring pride, which enables him to effectively spread *Torah* and Judaism to those who hunger for spiritual sustenance.

Halacha Sparks

Eating on the Job

Rabbi Chaim
Hillel Raskin

May a mashgiach in a winery drink from the wine without paying for it?

The *Torah* allows a worker in a vineyard to eat his fill from the grapes, but not to take any with him when he departs work. *Chazal* explain that anyone who is working with food has permission to eat from the food while he is working.

Although the worker may eat, he may not stuff himself, only he may eat, and it may not be shared even with his own family members. This applies even if he ate minimally or if at all. This *halacha* has many limits: it only applies to fully ripe produce before they're ready for sale (*chiyuv maiser*). For ordinary produce this is when they are packed into boxes, for wine or oil when they are bottled, and grain, when turned into flour ie: when the dough is made (*chiyuv chalah*).

The worker may only eat that which he is working on at the time. If the worker is pressing grapes he may not drink wine, and if he is handling the wine he may not eat grapes.

Shulchan Aruch records a practice that a watchman would eat from fruit, but only that which was detached. Unless there is another established practice this is allowed. A *mashgiach* is like a watchman, and may therefore drink the wine before it is bottled.

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