

ניצוצי אור Sparks of Light

בס"ד



No. 6

פרשת וירא תשע"ה

Holy Business (2)

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Serving HaShem in Work

The **Baal Shem Tov** taught that working in a worldly occupation can be comparable to studying Torah and even greater – for everything in the world was created for the glory of HaShem, and when a person uses worldly things in the way prescribed by the Torah, he is serving their Maker.

A man once came to tell the Baal Shem Tov that he had lost his oxen; he wanted to be told where they were. The *tzaddik* opened a *Zohar*, looked inside, and told him that they were in the market city of Breslau. He later explained that *Chazal* say that there is a "great light" hidden in the Torah that enables one to see from one end of the world to the other, and with that light, those who study Torah properly can see everything.

The lesson from this story: There are those who separate the Torah from worldly matters, thinking that the *Zohar* is a holy part of Torah, while the ox is an ox, and Breslau is a market city.... This is a mistake, for HaShem is everywhere, even in the lowliest things; thus the Baal Shem Tov saw them in the *Zohar*. This can be seen from the special purpose that the oxen filled: they brought this *Yid* to the Baal Shem Tov.

(מאור עינים, שבת, שיחור"ק תשל"ד ח"ב ע' 451)

Chazal say that Chanoch 'sewed shoes' and thereby created spiritual *yichudim* for HaShem similar to those created through wearing *tefillin*. This teaches us a lesson: even while going about their work, an ordinary shoemaker or tailor can produce sublime spiritual repercussions, if they have proper intentions.

(תר"מ תשמ"ט ח"א ע' 247, וראה תר"מ תשמ"ב ח"א ע' 304)

The eminent chassid, **Reb Hillel Paritcher**, served as *mashpia* for the Yiddishe agricultural settlements founded by the **Mitteler Rebbe** of Lubavitch. What motivated this towering intellectual to agree to assume this role?

He once related how he had heard the Rebbe describe the inner stature of these unassuming colonists: "Picture those *Yishuvniks* standing in the field, with their *yarmulkas* and *taleisim ktanim*, planting the soil and lifting their eyes

heavenward and focusing their hopes on HaShem..."

Visualizing that moment is what motivated Reb Hillel to become their *mashpia*.

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 83)

Setting Priorities

In his early years, the **Baal Shem Tov** would travel from one Yiddisher township to the next, gather a crowd in the marketplace, and speak to them about *ahavas Yisroel*. Once, he explained his message with a *maschal*:

There was a man named Reb Yaakov who was *baki* in the entire *Shas*, and thanks to his studious concentration, he was able to recite fluently all of *Rashi* and *Tosafos* by heart. Once while engrossed in a weighty passage of *Tosafos*, his young son interrupted him to relate a clever thought. Though the thought was not profound, relative to his father's level of understanding and scholarship, the father nevertheless stopped to listen.

Similarly, HaShem is occupied with lofty matters, to the point that the *malachim* objected to His creating mortal man who is involved in mundane activities. Yet, when a *Yid* rises in the morning and hurries off to daven with a *minyan*, and then, in the midst of his workday, even though he is busy and preoccupied, he drops everything and runs to shul to daven *Mincha*, then listens to a *shiur* in *Ein Yaakov* and later shares it with his family, HaShem then says to the *malachim*: "You *malachim* have no challenges. But just look how man, who unwillingly has the burden of *parnasa*, lives his life!"

And so HaShem continues to pride himself before the *malachim* with the conduct of a *Yid*.

(תר"מ ח"ג ע' 288)

Learning on the Job

A store-owner was once sitting at a *farbrenge*n of the **Rayatz of Lubavitch** in Russia, when the Rebbe turned to him and said that he wanted to

make a covenant with him. The Rebbe first asked him if he had a *Tanya* in his store and stipulated, "I do not mean a *Tanya* that sits unused, but one that is the focus of all comings and goings."

The Rebbe went on to assure him that if he became more deeply involved in that *sefer*, the communist investigators would not become too deeply involved in his books...

(סה"ש תרפ"ז ע' 116)

Reb Binyamin Kletzker, a prominent *chassid* of the **Baal HaTanya**, had a log business. One day, while calculating his earnings, he wrote out all the entries in the column correctly, but when he reached the Total line, he inadvertently filled in the words, *Ein od milvado* – "Nothing exists apart from HaShem."

Someone asked him, "How can you be involved in Chassidus while you're doing business?"

He replied, "If, while I'm standing before HaShem, thoughts of the logs can enter my mind, then surely holy thoughts can enter my mind while I'm dealing with logs..."

(אג"ק ח"ז ע' רג"ז)

Reb Shlomeh der *Geler*, a chassid of the **Rashab of Lubavitch**, worked as a builder's assistant, and he and the builder would discuss Torah while working. Once, while building a wall, they were so raptly engrossed in their discussion that Reb Shlomeh found himself unintentionally enclosed behind the wall! When they realized this, they had to break it down to take him out.

(סיפורים חסידיים ח"א ע' 201)

Consider This

Why does setting priorities straight, bring additional success in business?

If HaShem wants a *Yid* to do business, shouldn't he put himself entirely into it?

Sparks of Greatness

Chozeh of Lublin

Reb Yaakov Yitzchak Hurvitz is known as the "Chozeh" of Lublin. Starting as a *talmid* of the **Mezritcher Maggid**, **Reb Schmélke of Nikelsburg** and **Reb Elimelech of Lizensk**, he later became a great Rebbe, leading thousands of *chasidim*. He received the title "Chozeh" (seer), for his ability to both see the future and perceive the deepest truths of every person. Many *mofsim* are told of the Chozeh. He passed away on Tisha Be'Av, 1815 (תקע"ה).

The Chozeh once said to a simple but pious man: "I envy your piety for it is greater than mine. I am a leader and whether I like it or not, everyone looks up to me. If I *chas v'shalom* do something wrong, everyone will

say, 'The Chozeh did as follows.' You, on the other hand, work in the shadows; you can act in whichever way you want and yet you remain pious. It is clear that you are a truly pious person."

The Chozeh once wrote to Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev: "When one opens the *sefer Tanya*, 'vert fintzter far di oigen,' everything goes dark" (the world loses its appeal).

Reb Levi Yitzchok connected his comment to the possuk "Yotzer ohr uvorei choshech" - "With the light of the Tanya and Chassidus, the world around becomes dark in comparison.

Library Sparks

In this Weeks *Parsha* we learn about Avraham Avinu's exemplary performance of *midas hachessed*. At the ripe old age of one hundred, three days after his *bris mila* when he felt the most weak & sick, Avraham was sitting at his door front eagerly awaiting guests. On this record breaking scorching hot day, there wasn't a single passerby on the street. Avraham was deeply pained that he was unable to perform the *mitzvah* of *Hachnasas Orchim*. Therefore Hashem sent him the three angels disguised as human beings.

At the opposite end of this spectrum, Sodom at large acted in the extreme opposite manner. People would brutally murder any individual who dared open his home to guests and perform *chessed* (with another).

However, upon being informed by the angel that Hashem is planning to destroy Sodom with all his inhabitants, he prayed, pleaded and begged to nullify the decree.

Avraham could have been thrilled that a nation so wicked will be wiped out, consequently teaching the entire world that severe and harsh punishment follows cruel behavior, and he would now have a chance to spread his teaching of *midas hachessed* globally and with great success.

On the other hand if Hashem would accept his *tefilah* and the people would stay alive, they might never know about the judgment that was hanging over them, and they will never repent. The opportunity to teach the world this lesson might be lost as well.

That's the purity of *midas hachessed* which Avraham practiced. He couldn't watch people suffering. And as for the wicked people of Sodom, he was hoping that with time the righteous among them would be able to influence them.

Hashem told Avraham "*becha chosmin*", with you it will be finalised. Seforim explain that this means that the final redemption will be brought about through practicing and spreading the *middah* of Avraham which is *chessed*. It is obvious that acting with kindness is so prevalent and widespread nowadays. Our communities boast hundreds of *chessed* organizations and *gemachs*.

Along with Avraham's concerns about the physical wellbeing of others he equally strove to do *chessed* with their souls. So too should we apply this in our very own shuls and workplace sby spreading *yiddishkeit* to our less fortunate brothers. Sometimes it can even be done by introducing them to a Jewish website.

Halacha Sparks

Bluetooth during Davening

Is one permitted to wear a Bluetooth device during davening?

The Navi Amos prompted, "*Hikon likras Elokecha Yisroel*," prepare yourself before you daven to Hashem. Chazal derived from this that one should conduct himself during davening as one who stands before an important person. This will change according to the culture of a particular place and the custom of the time.

For example, those who were raised in areas where it was the norm to wear sandals without socks or not to wear a hat and jacket during davening or when standing before important people, they may dress as such during davening. But one who would wear a hat and jacket when speaking to a rov or attending a *chassunah* etc, according to halacha it becomes obligatory for him to dress as such when davening, under the rubric of "*hikon*".

If the time for davening is passing and one is unable to find appropriate garb (*b'shas hadchak*), even if his feet are completely uncovered, he should still daven. Whether one should miss davening with a minyan in order to daven with a hat and jacket is disputed among contemporary poskim and one should consult a rav for a psak.

Poskim caution not to wear gloves while davening. However, if it is cold in the shul and it is obvious that one is wearing gloves due to the cold temperature, poskim write that it is permitted.

Since when entering an important meeting one would remove his bluetooth device, he must also remove it during davening.

עמוס ד"ב, שבת י"א, ברכות
כה ע"א, שו"ע הרב י"א צא ס"י,
משנ"ב שם ס"ק יא יו"ב, שו"ת
דברי יציב ח"א ס"י, שו"ת אג"מ
י"ד ח"ג סוס"י סח, הליכות שלמה

פ"ב אות טו, תפלה כהלכתה פז
הע"פ, ערוך השולחן שם ס"ו,
שו"ת באר משה ח"ד סי' לט,
שו"ת נטע שורק או"ח סי' ו.

We are pleased to inform the public that we are now at the threshold of completing to prepare the English lending library which will feature an expansive collection of the latest and classic Jewish literature.

Our new exciting shiurim program will also be operating soon! Shiurim will be taking place weekly at our state of the of the art library for men. Lectures will be taking place for women as well on a variety interesting & important important topics.

Library Hours: Sunday & Thursday: 2:00 pm - 9:30 pm. Monday - Wednesday: 2:00 pm - 10:30 pm.