

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

594 • ויצא תשפ"א • לחמן ישמעו
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

WORTHY MASHPI'IM

SUITABLE TEACHERS

Chazal say that it is forbidden to learn even Torah from one deficient in *emunah*, lest one be influenced by their ways.

(שבת עה ע"א, שו"ע יו"ד סי' קל)

It once happened that a certain *talmid chacham* conducted himself so inappropriately that Rav Yehuda wanted to place him in *cherem*. However, he was hesitant to do so, for then the local *talmidim* would not be allowed to learn Torah from him.

Rav Yehuda therefore consulted with Rabba bar Bar-Chana, who told him: The *possuk* says that one should learn Torah from a *talmid chacham* "since he is a *malach* of *HaShem*." This teaches us that only if the *talmid chacham* conducts himself like a *malach* should one learn Torah from him. Since this *talmid chacham* is acting as he does, Torah may not be learnt from him. Nothing will therefore be lost by placing him in *cherem*.

(מ"ק יז ע"א, שו"ע אדה"ז הל' ת"ת פ"ד הי"ז)

The Rebbe adds another requirement: one should seek to learn Torah from a teacher who is sensitive to its *kedusha*, to its connection with *HaShem*. Whatever the listener learns from such a teacher will then impact his *neshama* fruitfully.

(שיחור"ק תש"כ ע' 195)

CHASSIDISHE LEADERSHIP

At the *farbrengens* of Simchas Torah תרפ"ט (1928), the Frierdiker Rebbe was speaking of the need to be connected to the "head" (the Rebbe), when he turned to Reb Chatshe Feigin and said, "This is your job, to see that there should be *mashpi'im* in every town."

Reb Chatshe asked if he should find someone locally who could serve as a *mashpia*, and the Frierdiker Rebbe replied, "Yes, with this they will be connected to the head."

Reb Chatshe then asked, "Is that because the *mashpia* is closer to the head?"

The Frierdiker Rebbe gave his confirmation.

(ס"ה"ש תרפ"ט ע' 49)

The Frierdiker Rebbe said: *Mashpi'im* serve a vital

function in *darchei haChassidus*. The process of transmitting and imbuing chassidische values can be likened to the planting of a seed. The *mashpia* is the planter; the *chossid/ mushpa/ talmid* is the fertile soil; and the quality of the fruits depends largely on the planter's success in preparing the soil. He cannot afford to be lax in this work, because a fruit that is spiritually rotten not only causes serious damage to his own spiritual life; it can also profane the sanctity of *Chassidus* (*chillul kedushas haChassidus*).

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' תכו)

CONSIDER

Why does the personal lifestyle of the teacher matter, if what he is teaching is true?

How does one know who is worthy of serving as an example for *chassidim*?

From the first moment of the *farbrengens* of *Yud-Beis Tammuz* תרצ"ט (1939), it was clear that something was greatly disturbing the Frierdiker Rebbe. After making a *bracha* and saying *LeChayim*, he began to share his pain.

The Rebbe spoke of the difference between the *chassidim* of the past and those of the present: "At *farbrengens* in the past, *elters* *chassidim* would speak of *avoda*, using vivid stories of a Rebbe or a *chossid* to illustrate their lessons. When admonishing a younger *chossid*, they would handle this with sensitivity and genuine sympathy. Today, when gathering at a *farbrengen*, some older *chassidim* joke at the expense of others and everyone laughs. And so there has arisen a new brand of *chassidim* with unworthy *middos* and inappropriate talk. That was unheard of in earlier generations."

The Frierdiker Rebbe concluded: "Today, as well, there are B"H many true *elters* *chassidim*

who continue in the way of *Chassidus* as in past generations. It is their obligation to admonish the younger *chassidim* and point out clearly the authentic path of *Chassidus*."

The vital message of this *sicha* was immediately printed and distributed amongst the *chassidim* in Warsaw and then again by the Rebbe in the year תש"ח (1948).

(ס"ה"ש תרצ"ט ע' 342 ואילך, ס"ה"מ תש"ח ע' 251 ואילך)

In a letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe once bemoaned the state of some "*mashpi'im*" who, instead of teaching *Chassidus* of the Rebbeim in their original form, use concepts of *Chassidus* as material for their speeches and entitle them as "*Chassidus*."

In his words: "They justify themselves by arguing that they are doing it so that 'the people should understand,' but in fact they are rebelling against the Rebbeim and dimming the pure light planted by them. It is therefore no surprise that their words have no lasting impact on their listeners. These speakers have brought shame to the *Chassidus* they claim to stand for, by neglecting the crucial point of *avoda shebalev* – heartfelt *davening* and the study of *Chassidus* in a heartfelt manner."

(א"ג מוהרי"צ ח"א ע' שמו)

CHOOSING A RAV

When introducing the initiative for appointing personal *mashpi'im*, in addition to the already-appointed community *mashpi'im*, the Rebbe set criteria regarding whom one should choose as a mentor.

Firstly, said the Rebbe, a *mashpia* must have the three qualities that characterize Yidden in general: he must be compassionate, bashful and kind – visibly so, and to a degree appropriate to his position.

Secondly, *Chazal* teach that one should learn Torah from a *rav* who resembles a *malach*. This means that the *rav* should be far removed from personal bias and envy, so that he can advise a fellow *Yid* without any personal interests involved.

(ת"מ תשמ"ז ח"ב ע' 632, 691)



Yoseph Shomer
Certified Public Accountant

Personal and professional tax services for businesses

YSHOMER@SHOMERCPA.COM | SHOMERCPA.COM



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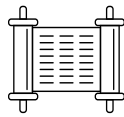
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GOOD NEWS.



RAFFLE BLUNDER

We made a fundraising raffle and one person's name was left out. What do we do?

Raffles are meaningful and have significance according to Torah. When Eretz Yisroel was divided amongst the *shevatim*, the 12 names and 12 land portions were written on tickets and each *nasi* picked two tickets out of the box. That choice was binding for everyone.¹

Is every raffle binding?

A Torah raffle is effective when used to define how to split something jointly-owned, such as two partners who are splitting up their partnership or sons who are dividing an inheritance and want to decide who should get what.

The Rambam and R. Yosef Karo rule that the raffle accomplishes a *kinyan*, transfer of ownership, and the winner of the raffle automatically acquires the portion allotted to him. This is due to all participants agreeing to give it to the winner.² The Rosh, however, holds that only the raffle on Eretz Yisroel caused ownership since it was guided by the Urim VeTumim. By other raffles, the winners still must make a *kinyan* on their portion but they don't need the consent of their counterparts to do so.³

When a raffle is held for a prize to go to the winner, or for the right to choose first, these raffles don't have halachic bearing per se since they are unlike the raffle by the division of Eretz Yisroel.⁴ There is nevertheless halachic basis for such raffles as they have acquired the status of a *kinyan* established by society (*situmta*).⁵

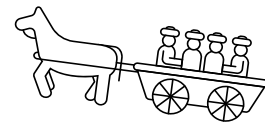
Halacha sets that if a person makes a commitment based on a hope that he will be able to come through (i.e. betting), the agreement is not binding since he never really committed as he was assuming that he would succeed. (This type of commitment is called an *asmachta*.) When a prize is being raffled off, each person is buying a ticket in hope that they will win. Why then isn't it considered an *asmachta* and not binding?

Some differentiate that since by a raffle both the buyer or the raffle organizer cannot control the outcome, they submit to the results completely.⁶ Others add that when the raffle is for a *mitzva* or *tzedaka* organization, one's primary intent is to give *tzedaka* and he's not depending on winning.⁷

If a mistake occurred during the raffle—e.g. the name one of the participants was mistakenly omitted or there was an extra entry—the raffle is invalid and doesn't have halachic bearing, even if that person says he doesn't mind. One reason given is that for the goral to reflect a special divine providence, it must be done completely flawless.⁸ This is certainly so if any of the raffle participants request a redo.⁹

1. ראה במדבר פכ"ו, פסוקים נד-נו ופרש"י.
2. ראה רמ"א חו"מ סי' ר"ו סי"ג.
3. ראה פת"ח ח"ח פכ"א הע' ל"ב, וראה שד"ח כללים מע' ג' פאה"ש סי' י"ד שהאר"י בדינים אלו.
4. ראה ביאור הגר"א חו"מ סי' קע"ג סק"ד.
5. פת"ש חו"מ סי' קע"ג סק"ב (וראה נתה"מ סי' קנ"ד סק"ו).
6. ארחות משפטים דיני גורל כלל כ"א סק"ב, וראה ע"ז בערך שי חו"מ סי' קע"ג.
7. שו"ת חו"מ סי' קע"ה סק"א, אבל ראה שו"ת מהר"ל דיסקין קו"א אות ז' שמחלק שאם אין מקור ההגרלה מההלכה והטעות אינה קלקול בהגרלה לא יבטל, וצ"ע.

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



REBBETZIN FRAIDA

Rebbetzin Fraida, a daughter of the Alter Rebbe, was an illustrious woman and was very dear to her father, who would recite *Chassidus* privately for her. Her brother, the Mittlerer Rebbe, would often ask his sister Fraida to ask their father a question about *Chassidus*, and then he would hide in the room to listen. Rebbetzin Fraida married R. Elyahu Schneerson. She passed away on the 17th of Sivan, תקע"ג (1813), and is buried in Haditch near her father.

(Likutei Sipurim p. 46)

On one occasion of private *Chassidus* from the Alter Rebbe to Rebbetzin Fraida, when the Mittlerer Rebbe was hiding in the room, the Alter Rebbe spoke about the *bigdei kehuna* (the clothing of the *kohanim*). When it seemed to the Mittlerer Rebbe that his father was concluding without having explained the *avneit* (the belt), the Mittlerer Rebbe quickly took off his *gartel* and threw it towards his sister. Fraida took the cue, and asked the Alter Rebbe "Is there no explanation about the *avneit*?" The Rebbe responded, "It seems that someone else is in the room besides the two of us..."

In a letter to her brother, the Mittlerer Rebbe, Rebbetzin Fraida explained the meaning of the "kaitz" and the *avoda* required to usher it in: The *geulah* is a great spiritual revelation which will cause everyone to perceive *Hashem* as the only true existence (*Yichuda Ila'a*). "Kaitz" refers to the end of material wants – as the *posuk* says, "kaitz kol basar," the end of all flesh – which is necessary to perceive *Elokus*. In preparation, we need to reduce our material desires through *Iskafya*. In his *Reshimos*, the Rebbe explains that to achieve this "Kaitz" and rid oneself completely of physical wants, one must have *bittul* to a Rebbe. The people of Ephraim "calculated the kaitz" on their own and left *Mitzrayim* without Moshe. They therefore fell amongst the frivolous and degrading *Plishtim*, since *yeshus* actually leads to becoming selfish and undignified. Their dry bones were ultimately revived by Yechezkel, who was a humble prophet.

(Reshimos 176 p. 12)

A Moment with The Rebbe



HOW TO BUILD A HOME

When one Lubavitcher *chassan* was overly engrossed in choosing an apartment and furniture, the Rebbe addressed him with this handwritten note:

"Your letter was shocking and painful, and it caused me anguish.

"With marriage, a new period in life begins. A period in which one utilizes everything that he has learned and absorbed until then. A period in which one ceases to be only a recipient of his environment and society, but begins to give back, to return a debt that he has to his parents, teachers and surroundings.

"With marriage, a person begins to prepare for the greatest responsibility: educating his children that Hashem

will bless him with, whose entire responsibility is on him.

"This is in addition to the fact that one has taken responsibility of another person's life, namely his wife.

"And despite all of the above, you have sunken into a deep slumber. You have put your conscience into a deep sleep, and together with it your spirituality and even your very personality. You are investing energy in finding a fancy apartment and furniture, as if this is the purpose of man, and how he differs from an animal. And in this way you will educate, *Rachmana litzlan*, your family?!"

(Kuntres Michtovim Uma'anos, Tammuz 5774)