

The Weekly *Farbrenge*

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

למען ישמעו • ויגש תשפ"א • 598
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

REVERING THE TORAH (II)

AVOIDING DISRESPECT

R. Yehuda said that Yerushalayim was destroyed only because the Yidden were disrespectful to *talmidei chachomim*. Rav said that there is no remedy for the punishment awaiting a person who insults a *talmid chacham*. And R. Elazar said that a person who doesn't show his respect for a *talmid chacham* by rising in his presence will forget his Torah learning and won't live long.

(שבת קי"ט ע"ב, קידושין ל"ג ע"ב)

The *Mishna* says that an *apikores* doesn't merit a share in *Olam HaBa*. The *Gemara* explains that the term *apikores* includes the following people: one who insults a *talmid chacham*; one who insults another in the presence of a *talmid chacham*; one who says, "What benefit do the *talmidei chachomim* bring? All their learning is only for themselves!" - for he doesn't admit that the ongoing existence of the world depends on the study of Torah; or one who says, "What benefit are the *rabbonim* to us? Whatever they *pasken* is clearly written in the Torah" - for he doesn't recognize the breadth of knowledge involved in *paskening* a *shaila*.

Why is even a person who is not particularly disrespectful also considered an *apikores*? As *Rabbeinu Yona* explains, that person's lack of respect shows that he is also lacking an appreciation for *HaShem's* Torah.

R. Papa once inadvertently referred to some *chachomim* as "those *rabbonim*" (instead of "our *Rebbs* in that city") and then fasted as a *kapara*.

(סנהדרין צ' ע"א וצ"ט ע"ב ואילך, שערי תשובה ח"ג פ' קנה)

Every *motzaei Shabbos*, it was the custom of Reb Hillel Paritcher to partake of a chicken that had been *shechted* and prepared that night. Once, while visiting *Kremenchug*, he was hosted by Reb Yosef Tumarkin, the *av beis din*, and the *rebbeitzin* wanted to have a chicken prepared for him for *motzaei Shabbos*. Of the two *shochtim* in *Kremenchug*, Reb Hillel preferred the Polisher *chossid* over the *Chabad* *chossid*, so *Rebbeitzin* Tumarkin sent him the chicken. However, by that time he was not at home: he had already left to go and *shecht* for the following day. The *rebbeitzin* decided that since she had no choice, and since even her husband ate from the *shechita* of the *Chabad* *chossid*, she would send the chicken to him. Yet when they sat down for their *melaveh Malka* and were served chicken and soup, Reb Hillel did not touch it. Reb Yosef, his host, concluded that there must have been some *shaila* with the chicken and asked his wife what it had been.

"There was no *shaila*," she said. "He's probably not eating it because it was *shechted* by the *Chabad* *chossid*."

Her husband then asked Reb Hillel to explain his reasoning, so that he would know whether the *shochet* could be trusted. Reb Hillel assured him that there was nothing wrong with his *shechita*. However, since he had once heard him embarrassing a *talmid chacham*, he didn't want to eat from his *shechita*. Reb Yosef asked how this could be corrected if the offended party had already passed away, and Reb Hillel advised that the *shochet* should go with ten other men to the *talmid chacham's kever* and ask for forgiveness. Once that was done, he would eat from his *shechita*.

(רשימות דברים [חדש] עמ' 246)

CONSIDER

What is so severe about disrespecting a *talmid chacham*: the shame caused or the underlying cause for the disrespect?

How was the *chossid* expected to know that Reb Yissachar Dov saw *Eliyahu HaNavi*?

SEVERE CONSEQUENCES

For many years, a certain *chossid* of the Alter Rebbe was not blessed with children. Whenever he asked for a *bracha*, the Alter Rebbe would respond that he was unable to help him. Once, however, after giving his usual response, he added the advice that he visit Reb Shlomo Karliner. That *tzaddik* would be able to help him.

When he arrived in *Karlin*, he was told to wait until the *tzaddik* traveled out of town and then to accompany him on his journey. A few days later, Reb Shlomo in fact left *Karlin*, and gave permission for anyone who had a request to join him on his trip.

As they passed through a certain town, the *tzaddik* told this *chossid*, "If you contribute money (and he named a large sum), you will merit having children." The *chossid*, not being a man of means, felt he could not fulfill that weighty request.

Disappointed and saddened, he returned home. Some time later, when he next visited *Liozna*, and the Alter Rebbe asked him what had transpired, the *chossid* told him how he had refused to fulfill the *tzaddik's* formidable demand.

The Alter Rebbe said, "You once embarrassed a *talmid chacham*, and that is why you are childless. Since the *talmid chacham* has already passed away, you cannot ask him forgiveness, and according to the *Gemara*, 'One who embarrasses a *talmid chacham* must pay a significant sum of gold as an atonement.' Reb Shlomo traveled with you to the *kevarim* of those *poskim* who hold that this *kapara* can be attained even after the *talmid chacham* has passed on. That is why he demanded so much money - but now it is too late."

The *chossid* protested, "I have never insulted a *talmid chacham*!"

The Alter Rebbe queried, "Didn't you once insult Reb Yissachar Dov, the *rov* of *Lubavitch*?"

"Eh! Reb Yissachar Dov... I wouldn't consider him a *talmid chacham*," said the *chossid*.

The Alter Rebbe responded, "*Eliyahu HaNavi* revealed himself to Reb Yissachar Dov every day - and you do not respect him as a *talmid chacham*?! I can't help you, nor can I forgive you for speaking to him dishonorably, for I was his *talmid*."

(המשפיע ע' קכו)

The following painful episode was reported by Reb Shmuel Nimoitin, the *chossid* who served as the contact between the *Friediker Rebbe* and the *Rogatchover Gaon*: "Before the *Friediker Rebbe* went to *Leningrad*, he dispatched me to the *Rogatchover Gaon*, the leading *rov* of the city, to receive his permission, not wanting to cause him any disrespect. However, three *chassidim*, fired with misguided zeal for the Rebbe's honor, apparently said something to the *Rogatchover* that caused him to leave the city.

"When the *Friediker Rebbe* heard about this, he told them to ask the *Rogatchover* for forgiveness. He warned them that they were playing with fire. One of them followed the Rebbe's strict instructions, and was forgiven. Of the other two, one passed away within the year. The other, who had been a *tamim* in *Lubavitch* and a well-reputed *chossid*, strayed from the path of *Yiddishkeit*.

Although after ten years he did *teshuva*, none of his offspring remained *frum*."

(הצפנת פענח במשנת הרבי עמ' ס"א, הרוגוצ'ובי עמ' 221)

YS
Yoseph Shomer
Certified Public Accountant

Personal and professional tax services for businesses

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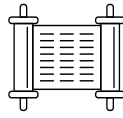
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GOOD NEWS.



E-COMMERCE ON SHABBOS

I'm an Amazon seller. Is it a problem that some online sales take place on Shabbos?

There are various potential issues, and each one must be addressed individually:

Kinyan - It is prohibited midrabanan to buy (acquire), rent, or sell on Shabbos due to the concern that one may come to write. Others prohibit it due to involving oneself with mundane activities on Shabbos ("mimtzo cheftzecha").

What if you aren't actively taking part in the sale on Shabbos? A precedent for this is a Jewish-owned vending machine. Poskim ruled that if there's not much concern that the buyer will be a Jew - most people in the area aren't Jewish or the Jews there keep Shabbos - there's no issue of kinyan, since the Jewish owner isn't actively partaking in the sale on Shabbos. (Though it should not be on the seller's property since then it would be like he is taking part in the sale.)

Lifnei Iver - One isn't allowed to cause, or assist, another Jew to transgress. As long as one isn't actively helping them, and they are acting on their own volition, one isn't responsible. Thus, poskim allowed leaving an answering machine running on Shabbos to accept messages.

Moreover, if it's certain whether a Jew will use it, one is not in prohibition of lifnei iver. Yet, if most of the users are Jews, poskim recommend disabling the vending machine before Shabbos. Likewise, an online retail website whose clientele are primarily not Jewish does not involve lifnei iver, though if the site is geared to Jews, it should be closed, and one should most certainly not advertise to Jews on Shabbos.

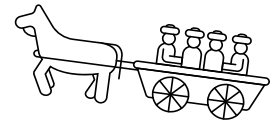
Schar Shabbos - One isn't allowed to benefit from profit made on Shabbos. Seemingly this apply to online sales, yet some poskim understand that payment for an item or usage - e.g. mikvah use - is not considered "profit," and may be charged (to be paid before or after Shabbos). Similarly, money put into the vending machine or paid for online purchases are in exchange for an item and wouldn't be "schar Shabbos." Even though a portion of the price is profit (more than the cost value of the item), it is halachically "absorbed" into the sale. However, a website that sells non-physical data can be more problematic.

Maaseh Shabbos - One may not benefit from a melacha done on Shabbos, even if it was done by a non-Jew for the sake of a Jew. If so, how could one fill an order that was processed on Shabbos? Some poskim say that one may never benefit from the melacha, while others write that the prohibition is only to benefit directly from the melacha - e.g. eating food cooked on Shabbos for the Jew - but an indirect benefit is allowed.

In practice, when all these issues are avoided, it is permissible to keep an online store open on Shabbos. Though one should also ensure that there are no issues of disgrace of the spirit of Shabbos (zilzul Shabbos). In any case, it goes without saying that one may not process the order on Shabbos.

- 1. רמב"ם שבת פ"ג ה"ב (שמה יכתוב), רש"י יקנו בשבת ביצה דף ל"ז ע"ב ד"ה משום (ממצוא חפצך).
2. ראה מהרש"ג ח"ב סי' ק"ז, וראה שש"כ פכ"ט הע' ע"א.
3. ראה ארוחות שבת פכ"ב סקמ"א. והע' נ"ד וראה שש"כ פכ"ט הע' ע' שיש לתלות שמא לא

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



R. MICHEL OPOTZKER

R. Yechiel Michel Opotzker was a great chossid of the Alter Rebbe, and one of his first. He had a tremendously deep mind and was a very great masmid. He was a great gaon with thorough knowledge of Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi, the poskim and their sources in the Rambam and Rashba, as well as works of Kabbala. R. Michel was known to be a great baal madreiga who had ruach hakodesh and gilui Eliyahu. He was mentor of the famous chossid and mashpia Rashbatz.

(רשימות חוברת קכ"ב, לקוטי סיפורים עמ' נ', התמים ח"א עמ' 78)

R. Michel's father, R. Meir Zalman, was a hidden tzaddik during the time before the Baal Shem Tov revealed himself. On his 90th birthday, the Baal Shem Tov told R. Meir Zalman:

"The Mishnah states that at age ninety, one begins to speak (לשוה). You know how speak yet you are silent. You should know that your son Michel will speak for you too.

"He will be a talmid of my talmid's talmid (the Alter Rebbe) who will reveal a new way of serving

Hashem: that proper davening is a prerequisite to the understanding and knowledge of Torah, and how even a simple person is able to attain service of Hashem with ahava and yirah, love and fear."

(ספרה"ש תש"א עמ' 96)

When someone who had come from Lubavitch would pass through his town, R. Michel would go out to greet him, grab his beard and peyos and plead to be told whatever this man had heard in Lubavitch.

While listening to the report, he would become excited and clap his hands together.

(רשימת היוזמן עמ' שע"ט)

R. Michel had a wealthy brother who lived in Liozna. When R. Michel was once visiting, the brother started to brag about his home and furniture. R. Michel responded, "There is a type of animal that sits entirely in the mud, but this is not enough for it, as it also wishes to bury its head in the mud..."

(רשימו"ד החדש עמ' 239)

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE BYSTANDER

A person once wrote to the Rebbe that although he generally doesn't interfere or get involved in the hafotzas hamaayanos work, as an observant bystander he wishes to share his "constructive criticism" on the activities.

The Rebbe's answer was pointed: "From between the lines of your letter, it is implicit that you consider being a bystander, and not getting involved, a perfectly upright attitude.

"I wonder if you also take this approach regarding your materialistic needs.

"In any case, Rachmona litzlan (Hashem should protect us) from such a view. Especially since it leads to abstaining from the work that will bring Moshiach.

"Perhaps, when Moshiach will come, you will also be a bystander..."

(Kuntres Michtovim Uma'anos, Tammuz 5774)