

... וְנָהוּ כְּעֵינֵינוּ כְּחַגְבֵּים וְכֹן הָיִינוּ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם (במדבר יג: לג).
 ...we were like grasshoppers in our eyes, and so we were in their eyes.

The Rebbe of Kotzk commented that the declaration of "...we were like grasshoppers in our eyes, and so we were in their eyes!" was the root of the spies' sin. They had no right to consider how the giants viewed them. As emissaries of the Jewish people, they should have been focused on their mission, and that they were representing the people of ד', not on what anyone else thought about them.

We are often faced with dilemmas about how to act or react in challenging situations. In the following story, we see the response of one of our great leaders who used the phrase "What will they say?" as a means of motivating himself and others to do the right thing.



R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld נצ"ל, the legendary רב of ירושלים, normally returned home from שחרית by 10 a.m. On most days, he would come home from shul still wearing his טלית and תפלין. He would greet the usual crowd of people who were waiting for him, answer all of their questions, have a short breakfast, and spend the remainder of the day learning. Today, however, he was very late. The group waited patiently and then decided to go look for their "lost" רב.

As they traced the route that the רב normally took from his small home to the shul, they noticed a man in the distance, wearing his טלית and תפלין, standing near a well. Upon closer inspection they realized that the man was none other than their רב; and two water buckets joined by a wooden plank were draped across his shoulders. Apparently, he was drawing and carrying water for someone. But for whom, and why?

Standing next to the רב was a shabbily dressed little boy

and his younger sister. Their shoes were completely torn and their sad eyes told a tale of woe. As the group approached their revered רב one of his followers offered to take the buckets from him.

"רבי, how can you carry these around the streets? It is simply not befitting a man of your stature."

Although he had clearly heard the man's comment, R' Yosef Chaim continued drawing the water, lugging the buckets back and forth, and placing them on a nearby wagon.

To his questioners R' Yosef Chaim explained, "When I passed by the well this morning, I saw this little boy and his sister trying to haul these buckets on their own. I asked them why they were doing such a dangerous job and they informed me that their father has been in bed for the last six months, incapacitated by a debilitating disease. Their mother, who had drawn the water until now, is soon due to give birth and can no longer do the job. So the responsibility had fallen to them. Leaning in and reaching down could have caused the young children to fall into the well. So I decided to do it myself."

The group listened to the רב, but were themselves concerned. After all, R' Yosef Chaim was an elderly, weak man. Besides, they thought, someone of the רב's stature should not be performing such a menial chore.

"רבי," they begged, "what will they say on the streets when they see you doing this?"

R' Yosef Chaim looked at the men, then back at the children. "And what will they say in heaven when they see that I do not do it?"

With that, the elderly רב of ירושלים hauled the last two buckets of water, placed them on the wagon, and helped the children bring them home.

Adapted from: Touched by a Story 3 (with kind permission from ArtScroll)

Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח"ח הלכות רכילות כלל ג' סעיף ג'

לשיבה learning program in their ישיבה night. Levi told Chaim how the בחורים in his grade were all excited to learn and collect for their צדקה, while, at the same time, create a tremendous קדושת ד'. He then said to Chaim, "I heard that R' Mavnenovitz told other staff members that the program organizer, R' Shloma, really has no understanding of בחורים and פורים and this program will never work in a million years."

Is there any אסור if the רכילות is not told to the party concerned?

*Stories adapted from Guard Your Tongue, A Daily Companion, A Lesson a Day and various real-life situations.

Answer: The מפיץ writes that it is a mistake for people to think that they are not violating the אסור of רכילות when the רכילות is not told to the party concerned. It is likely the person will get back to the person, especially if it is about a sensitive issue, e.g. telling a father something derogatory someone said about his son.

Questions of the week

1. How do מצוות remind us of the journey from מצרים to the splitting of the ים סוף?
2. Can you name three מצוות which, if transgressed/performed, are considered as important as all the other מצוות combined?



1. The eight strings of the tzitzit correspond to the eight days that לא ראית ציצית צדקה waited from when they were given permission to leave מצרים. Until they sang the שמע ישראל (שם שם שם שם) (15:38) — 15:38.
2. Three examples are: serving זמן זמן זמן, being ממתן שלטון, and fulfilling the מצוות of tzitzit (15:41) — 15:41.

- It is permissible to wear a reflector; however, one should wear it like a belt. If one's coat has a belt, he should leave the coat's belt untied.
- One may not play games such as kugelach or marbles outdoors, even on a paved surface; however, one may play such games on an indoor floor.

לכות רפואה שלמה חיה מלכה בת-שבע - שליט"א - של ר' Felder

*Since we only discuss 1-3 מצוות, it is important to consider these מצוות in the context of the bigger picture. Use them as a starting point for further in-depth study.

Focus on Middos

Learning Contest ערב שבת

Dear Talmid,

R' Reuvein Fain זצ"ל left home at the age of 13 and traveled to Slonim, where he learned in the ישיבה of R' Shabsi Yogel זצ"ל. At the outset of World War II, R' Reuvein's father brought him to Vilna, where, despite his young age, he was allowed to join the Mir ישיבה. He traveled with the Mir to Japan and Shanghai, China, where the ישיבה remained throughout the war.

During this era, R' Reuvein applied himself to his learning with unusual התמדה and was זוכה to see special סינעתא דשמנא in his learning. He was granted a very unusual request he made from the משגיח, R' Chatzkel Levenstein זצ"ל, who allowed R' Reuvein to begin learning קדשים before others who were many years his senior. He became the חברותא of R' Nochum Partzovitz זצ"ל (later the ראש of Mir), R' Baruch Rosenberg (later the ראש of Slabodka), and many other outstanding חכמים תלמידי חכמים.

R' Reuvein immigrated to ארץ ישראל after the war and

joined Kollel Chazon Ish. R' Reuvein continued to apply himself to his learning with unusual התמדה and again was זוכה to see special סינעתא דשמנא. At one point, he did not have enough money to buy food for the ערב יום on סעודה המפסקת כפור. He looked around the house and found a coin wedged in between his drawers with which he was able to make a meager purchase.

R' Reuvein learned through the sweltering heat in Shanghai and the constant bombings during the war. He struggled with פרנסה in Kollel Chazon Ish. With all his trials and tribulations he was זוכה to become the ראש of ישיבה בארץ ישראל and then (under the suggestion and guidance of the Steipler and Rav Shach) the ראש of ישיבה תורה in New York.

My תלמיד, as we approach בין הזמנים, remember the lesson from R' Reuvein: Learning when it is hard, is the זכות for success!

יהי זכרו ברוך!

בגידות, Your רבי

A letter from a Rebbe – based on interviews

This week's 4-page issue is the last for this season. We will announce the winner of the International ערב שבת Learning Program at the beginning of next season. The contest is still running until פרושת קרח so please continue to fax in your details. The responses from both the parents and boys who participated in this program has been amazing. Try it once, your ערב שבת and שבת will be enhanced forever!

The International Pirchei ערב שבת contest: During the weeks until פרושת קרח, learn at least 45 minutes before מנחה every ערב שבת, in either your ישיבה or local מדרש שבת. Each week that you learn for an hour or more will be considered another entry into the raffle.

There is no specific למוד to learn and you can even review your שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום. However, if you can arrange for a group, and you have a שיעור to learn תורה, especially about קדושת שבת, you will receive an extra chance in the raffle each week that there is a group with a שיעור. This contest is open for all ages up to 12th grade.

Please send in your signed faxes by Monday 2:00 pm to 718 506 9633. Please include your name, grade, ישיבה, city and state, your contact and fax #'s to have your name entered into a drawing for a beautiful set of מקראות גדולות חומשים!

Current contestants:

Grade 1 – *Binyamin Greenberg*, Yeshiva Torah Temimah; **Brooklyn, NY**; *Chaim Dov Jacobowitz*, Politz Hebrew Academy; **Philadelphia, PA**.

Grade 3 – *Chaim Mark*, Yeshiva Bais Mikrah; **Monsey, NY**; *Yehudah Altusky, Yaakov Bell, Yissochar Dov Duskis, Yosef Nisenfeld, Yoshi Yermish*, Politz Hebrew Academy; **Philadelphia, PA**.

Grade 4 – *Yosef Friedman*, Yeshiva Ohr Shraga; **Brooklyn, NY**; *Reuven Fischer, Asher Yeshaya Knopfler*, Fallsburg Cheder School, **Fallsburg, NY**; *Anonymous, YRSRH (Breuers), New York, NY*; *Kalev Bernhard, Daniel Schneider, Yedidya Brand*, Politz Hebrew Academy; **Philadelphia, PA**.

Grade 5 – *Yosef Greenberg*, Yeshiva Torah Temimah; **Brooklyn, NY**; *Gefen Afrati, Avraham Yitzhak Duskis, Yaakov Nisenfeld, Yonah Miller*, Politz Hebrew Academy; **Philadelphia, PA**.

Grade 6 – *Mayer Ozer Greenberg*, Yeshiva Torah Temimah; *Refael Shabtai*, Yeshiva Ateret Torah; **Brooklyn, NY**; *Eli Bell, Elimelech Terebelo*, Politz Hebrew Academy; **Philadelphia, PA**.

Grade 7 – *Refael Yitzchok Friedman*, Yeshiva Ohr Shraga; **Brooklyn, NY**; *Shaya Pinter*, Talmud Torah Bais Avrohom, **Lakewood, NJ**; *Yitzi Levit, Chaim Leib Miller*, Politz Hebrew Academy; **Philadelphia, PA**.

Grade 8 – *Simcha Meir Friedman*, Yeshiva Ohr Shraga; **Brooklyn, NY**; *Boruch Gedalya Heinemann*, Yeshiva Orchos Chaim, **Lakewood, NJ**.

Sage Sayings

R' Reuvein Fain זצ"ל joined the מיר ישיבה at a very young age and was concerned about finding חברותא. R' Chatzkel Levenstein זצ"ל, gave him simple advice that he carried with him throughout his life: "לערן פלייסיג, און יעדער איינער – Learn well, and they will all want to be your חברותא!" There is only one way to see success in learning – you have to learn diligently!

Source: Heard around the שבת table

LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

בס"ד

WHEN RAV YECHIEL MICHEL EPSTEIN FIRST BECAME THE NEW RAV OF NOVARDOK, HE MADE AN UNEXPECTED ANNOUNCEMENT.

AS YOUR NEW RAV OF NOVARDOK, I AM SETTING A NEW MINHAG FOR KABOLAS SHABBOS!

???

STARTING NEXT WEEK THE NEW MINHAG FOR KABOLAS SHABBOS WILL BEGIN AT P'LAG MINCHA (1.25 "VARIABLE" HOURS BEFORE SUNDOWN).*

WHAT! SO EARLY...?

HE'S CHANGING THE MINHAG WE HAD FOR GENERATIONS?

HOW WILL THIS WORK?

*BASED ON THE DAYTIME BEING SPLIT INTO 12 PORTIONS (HOURS).

ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON THE FOLLOWING WEEK...

PLEASE HURRY UP, WE ARE DAVENING MINCHA BEFORE P'LAG HAMINCHA. REMEMBER WE WILL BE DAVENING KABOLAS SHABBOS AT P'LAG HAMINCHA TIME.

OY! I MUST RUN AND REMIND MY WIFE TO HURRY UP TOO...

AFTER DAVENING...

A GUTTEN SHABBOS!

ANOTHER FINE MAN! I WILL STAY AND INFORM ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE WHO WILL COME IN LATER THAT THEY MUST DAVEN AT HOME.

THERE WAS BARELY A MINYAN THIS WEEK!

GUTTEN SHABBOS!

WITH PATIENCE AND PERSISTENCE THE RAV BROKE THE CITY'S OLD HABIT...

REBBE, IT'S AMAZING! OTHER COMMUNITIES ARE NOW SAYING, "NOVARDOKERS ARE READY FOR K'RIAS SHEMAH AL HAMITAH WHEN WE ARE STILL SAYING L'CHO DODI!"

BORUCH HASHEM! I WILL TELL YOU WHY I CHANGED THE OLD MINHAG!

I WAS THINKING ABOUT THE WATER CARRIER THAT REGULARLY NEEDED TO WORK LATE ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON:

SINCE THE RAV CHANGED THE MINHAG, I CAN'T START COOKING SO LATE FOR SHABBOS. PLEASE CAN YOU DELIVER THE WATER EARLIER IN THE WEEK...

SURE!

GEVALDIG! I HAVE NO MORE DELIVERIES ON FRIDAY AFTERNOONS! I TOO WILL NOW HAVE TIME TO PREPARE FOR SHABBOS!

RABBI YECHIEL MICHEL הלוי WAS BORN IN BABRUYSK, BELARUS, TO R' YITZCHOK AHARON AND RASHKA EPSTEIN. THE FAMILY'S ORIGINAL SURNAME WAS BENVENISTI (מספרד). THE SURNAME EPSTEIN CAME FROM A GERMAN TOWN. HE WAS A TALENTED LEADER OF R' ELYOHU GOLDBERG, THE T"R OF BABRUYSK. HE MARRIED MICHLAH BERLIN, THE SISTER OF THE NETZIV. AFTER RECEIVING THE T"R OF NOVARDOK, HE BECAME THE T"R OF NOVARDOK, NEAR MINSK. THERE HE DEVELOPED A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP AND DREW FROM THE ZEK FROM THE ZEK. IN 1863, HE BECAME THE T"R OF NOVARDOK, WHERE HE SERVED 34 YEARS, UNTIL HIS DEATH. HIS MAGNUS OPUS WAS THE EROD HILTON (ON THE ENTIRE EROD HILTON AND EROD HILTON). HE ALSO WROTE; אור לישרים (ספר הישר לר"ת) AND (ירושלמי) מכל המים, (ספר הישר לר"ת) AMONG OTHERS. HE WAS THE LEADING MENTOR IN HIS GENERATION. HIS FAMED MENTORS INCLUDE; R' MELTZER, R' HENKIN, R' ABRAMSKY.

For any inquiries or comments please feel free to call 347-838-0869 • Illustrated by: Yishaya Suval www.leilshishi.com 589 - 5668 1829 - 1908 כ"ב אדר ב'