

The Weekly *Farbrenge*

MERKAZ ANASH
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THE KING'S PALACE (II)

HOLY CONSTRUCTION

In preparation to build his *shul*, Reb Shalom of Belz stayed awake for a thousand nights, learning Torah and reaching great *ruchmisdike* heights. His *Rebbetzin* stood nearby attending to his needs, and if he fell asleep for more than half an hour she would wake him up. On the thousandth night he was overcome by a deep sleep, but the *Rebbetzin* did not let him succumb, for on that night he finally attained the level for which he had waited so long.

When the *shul* was finally being built, the *tzaddik* himself would often take part in the construction, laying bricks with deep concentration. His older brother, Reb Leibish Rokeiach, then visiting Belz, expressed his disapproval. Reb Shalom shared with him its significance and concluded, "If I had the ability, I would build the entire edifice myself! But since I don't have the energy to do so, I'm doing whatever I am able to do."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 267, 387)

On a groundbreaking for the expansion of 770 took place, in which the Rebbe participated, wearing *Shabbos* clothing and delivering a *sicha* on the significance of the event. The Rebbe explained that every edifice must be based on a foundation of *kedusha*, and that in order to build there must be a "groundbreaking" – the breaking of one's *yeshus* – the realization that the power to build comes from *HaShem*. The Rebbe then dug a hole in the ground, placed the foundation stone inside, covered it with earth, and finally distributed dollars for *tzedaka* to all those present.

(התועודיות תשמ"ח ח"ד ע' 287)

A BEAUTIFUL PALACE

When discussing the obligation to give *HaShem* the best of our possessions, the Rebbe related this principle to the building of a *shul*. From the *possuk* that says, *Zeh Keili ve'anveihu*, we learn that all *mitzvos* should be fulfilled in a beautiful manner. How much more does this apply to a house of *davening* and learning.

Thus the *Midrash* specifies that gold was created

especially for the *Beis HaMikdash*. That was its prime purpose. From this we learn that only after one has donated some of his gold to *tzedaka* is he himself also allowed to benefit from it. The same applies to a *shul*: after we have built a beautiful *shul*, we may build ourselves a comfortable home.

To this the Rebbe added, "If a person would claim that for *davening* and learning it is enough to have some kind of tent, as *Yaakov Avinu* had, while his own residence is built lavishly... Is that befitting?!"

CONSIDER

Does *HaShem* need a nice home? Why then should we invest so much to beautify it?

Why would *Rashi's* grandfather and the Rebbe clean the *shul* themselves? Was there no one else who could do it?

(שיח"ק תשכ"ו ע' 438)

On another occasion, the Rebbe noted that since enormous sums are spent on building all kinds of other centers, there should be increased efforts to build houses for *davening* and learning.

(תר"מ חל"ד ע' 45)

Chazal say that the *shul* ought to be the most impressive structure in town. A town in which the homes are taller than the *shul* ought to be destroyed (*Rachmana litzlan*).

(שבת יא ע"א, שו"ע אר"ח סי' קנ"ב)

CLEAN AND TIDY

One should show respect to a *shul* by keeping it clean, as is done in the palaces of mighty kings. Indeed, there have been great *tzaddikim* who would sweep the floor in front of the *Aron Kodesh*

with their beard. Some say that by virtue of doing so, the grandfather of *Rashi* was blessed with this illustrious grandson.

(ס' חסידים קכח ובמקו"ח שם, ר"ח שער היראה פט"ו סמ"ב)

The Rebbe often reminded his listeners about the upkeep of the *shul*. He pointed out that a *shul* should be respected, as the *Beis Hamikdash* was, and according to some sources, this obligation is *min haTorah*. Whenever the *shul* at 770 was not properly cleaned, the Rebbe expressed pain over this, and would at times bend down himself to pick up litter.

Once the Rebbe said, "If someone were to leave litter on the floor of his home, he would be perceived as crazy, yet when litter lies on the floor of his *shul*, he does nothing to clean it up?"

On another occasion, he commented, "When a child causes a mess at home, his parents are quick to admonish him. How much more so should this apply to the *kedusha* of a *shul*, which is the home of *HaShem*!"

Once when the Rebbe came into the *shul*, he noticed some litter that had been pushed under the *bima*. He bent down, picked it up, and placed it on the table where he sat, until someone took it away. The Rebbe commented, "There is no point in hiding litter somewhere, for *HaShem* sees it there as well..."

(שיח"ק תש"מ ח"ג ע' 934, תשכ"ח ח"ב ע' 488, תשורה טיפענברון תשס"ו ע' 25)

In the course of his travels, Reb Meir of Premishlan once went to *daven* in a *shul* that was in a state of dire neglect. As soon as he opened the door, he exclaimed, in the words of *Yaakov Avinu*: *Ma nora hamakon hazeh! Ein zeh ki im beis Elokim!* – "How dreadful is this place! This is no other than the house of *HaShem*!"

The chassidim who accompanied him assumed that with these words the holy Reb Meir was expressing some profound insight. Seeing that they had not understood him, he explained, "This place is indeed dreadful; it is dangerous to walk around in here! It must be the house of *HaShem*, for I see that there is no one responsible for caring about its upkeep – unlike the other homes in this town, which seem to be in proper condition..."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 113)

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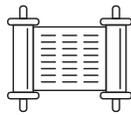
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GOOD NEWS.



FRIDGE LIGHT

I forgot to tape the fridge light switch. Can my child open the fridge for us?

It is prohibited for an adult to “feed” *issur* to a child, whether it is forbidden food, or even by telling a child to transgress a prohibition.¹ According to the Rambam, this applies even to an *issur d’rabanan*, while the Rashba holds that an *issur d’rabanan* is allowed if it’s for the child’s need.² The Alter Rebbe quotes both opinions and elaborates on the second, which infers that one may rely on the lenient view when needed.³

Since opening the door causes the light to turn on, directing a child to open it would be considered “feeding” him an *issur*. If the light is LED, turning it on is only an *issur d’rabanan*. If the child doesn’t know that the light will go on and has no intention for the *melacha*, this would be classified as “*misasek*” (unaware),⁴ which is an *issur d’rabanan* according to some *poskim* (even with an incandescent bulb).⁵ Following the lenient view, in either scenario, one would be allowed to tell the child to open the refrigerator to take out a food that he wants and needs (i.e. his own need).⁶

If the child is doing the *issur d’rabanan* for the adult’s sake, it is only allowed if: (1) It is done rarely, so there isn’t a concern that the child will continue the practice when he grows older; and (2) that a non-Jew would be allowed to do it under the rubric of *shvus d’shvus bimkom mitzva*, (it is an *issur d’rabanan* – *shvus* – plus asking a non-Jew itself is a *shvus*, and this combination is generally permitted for a *mitzva* purpose).⁷ Thus, if the food in the fridge is really needed for the Shabbos meal, this constitutes a *mitzva* and great need and it can be allowed in rare situations.

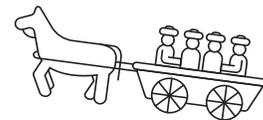
In all these cases, one is to use a child under the age of *chinuch*, since he is truly “*misasek*,” and some *poskim* are hesitant to allow an older child unless his primary food is there.⁸

If the child goes on his own to open the door without anyone telling him to, then if he is the age of *chinuch* (3-4), his father must stop him (see issue 324). If he is under that age, there is no obligation to stop him when he is doing it for himself. If he is opening it for others, some *poskim* are stringent, (like when a non-Jew decided on his own to do a *melacha* for a Jew).⁹ If a child of any age does a *melacha* for others on Shabbos, there is dispute whether one is allowed to benefit from it – similar to when a non-Jew does a *melacha* for a Jew – and we refrain.¹⁰

It is permitted to ask a non-Jew to perform an action that causes a *melacha* to occur as a *pesik reishai* (inevitable outcome).¹¹ Thus, one would be allowed to ask a non-Jew to open and close the door, even if this causes the light to turn on and off, since the light it considered an outcome of the opening and not part of the opening itself.¹²

1. מגו יבמות דף ק"ד ע"א.
2. רמב"ם פי"ז ממאכל"א הכ"ז, רשב"א יבמות שם.
3. שו"ע"ר אור"ח סי' שמ"ג ס"ה-ו.
4. ראה שו"ת חלקת יואב ס"א, וראה חינוך הבנים כהלכתם פמ"ד סמ"ו.
5. ראה ארוחות שבת פ"ל הקדמה לסי"ד.
6. ראה מכתב מהגרש"א בספר מאור השבת ח"ד מכתב מ"ט.
7. שו"ע"ר אור"ח סי' שמ"ג ס"ו-ח. וראה סי' של"ד סכ"ו שאסור לו לכתוב דליקה.
8. ראה ארוחות שבת פכ"ד הע' ל"ו, אבל ראה חינוך הבנים כהלכתם פמ"ד הע' ק"ט צד להקל.
9. ארוחות שבת פכ"ד ס"ג.
10. ראה חינוך הבנים כהלכתם ח"א פמ"ג ס"ה וס"ו.
11. ראה שו"ע"ר אור"ח סי' רנ"ג ס"י ועוד.
12. ראה פסקי תשובות סי' רע"ו סקט"ו.

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



MAHARIL OF YANOVITCH

Reb Yehuda Leib (Maharil), born around 5509 (1749) to Reb Boruch and Rivkah, was the younger brother of the Alter Rebbe. He was the first systematic transcriber of the Alter Rebbe's *maamorim*, and transcribed most of the *maamorim* of *Torah Or* and *Lekutei Torah*. When young men came to learn in Liozhna, the Maharil arranged for them to be tested and set-up for their material needs, in addition to his role of generally overseeing them in learning and conduct. Toward the end of his life he lived in the city of Yanovitch and served as the *rov* there. He passed away in approximately the year 5586 (1826). Many of his responsa were printed in the *sefer Sheiris Yehudah*.

the Maharil did not get his wife's wholehearted consent for the trip. He told his brother, "It seems you do not need to travel. Return home and I will continue alone. Whatever I will receive, I will share with you."

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' 966, בית רבי פ"ב)

Chassidim once asked Maharil, the Alter Rebbe's brother: What was the *zechus* by virtue of which his parents were blessed with four sons who were Torah giants? Maharil told them that it was probably due to the *yiras Shamayim* and the passionate love of Torah of his mother, Rebbetzin Rivka. He illustrated this with the following story:

"My father, Reb Baruch, once traveled on a business trip and brought back an expensive coat as a gift for my mother. Our *melamed's* wife became so envious that she began nagging him to give her gifts as well. This distressed him, and his usual enthusiasm faded. Noticing this, my mother questioned him and he told her of his troubles. Without hesitation, she took out her coat and gave it to the *melamed*, saying, 'Give this to your wife, and continue to teach my sons with enthusiasm.'"

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 198)

In the year 5524 (1764) when the Alter Rebbe was eighteen years old, his brother the Maharil suggested that he travel to Mezritch, contending, "To learn, you know. *Chassidus* however, you do not know at all." With the help of his wife, Rebbetzin Sterna, the Alter Rebbe purchased a horse and wagon and set off for Mezritch together with the Maharil. When they arrived in Orsha along the way, the horse died. The Alter Rebbe discerned that the reason for this was because

A Moment with The Rebbe



AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHASSIDUS

As the *mazkir* Reb Yudel Krinsky drove the Rebbe to *shul* on Chol Hamoed Sukkos 5746 (1985), the conversation turned to the *bris* of his grandson that he had just celebrated.

care and directives from the Rebbe.

When Reb Avrohom's son Yosef Yitzchok was born, he immediately informed the Rebbe of the birth.

"Did the *zeide* recite a *maamar* at the *bris* celebration?" the Rebbe asked him. "What better opportunity is there to deliver a *maamar*, other than at the *bris* of an *einikel*?"

In response, along with *mazal tov* wishes, the Rebbe lent him some *maamarim* of the Rebbe Maharash of the weekly *parsha*, *Parshas Vayechi*, "so that you have something to learn at the *shalom zachar*..."

Reb Avrohom Zeligson, known as the Rebbe's court-doctor, received unique

(Krinsky Teshurah, Tammuz 5769; Toldos Reb Avrohom Harofeh, Page 144)