



פרשת וישלח

כסלו

תשע"ט

YUD DALED KISLEV

A large group of men and bochorim participated in a special shiur held in honour of the 90th wedding anniversary of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin on Yud Daled Kislev.

Rabbi Yonason Johnson guided the participants through a letter sent by the Rebbe's father in which he explains the significance of the date of the Rebbe's wedding according to the teachings of Kabbalah and Chassidus.

CHASSIDUS EVENING FOR ANASH

In preparation for Yud Tes Kislev, members of Anash from all of the different Shules and Minyanim will be coming together to learn Chassidus in an atmosphere of Achdus Ha-chassidim.

This Sunday night, 17 Kislev - November 25. 8:00-9:00pm in the ORZ Mezzanine. Followed by Maariv.

Copies of Yud-Tes Kislev Maamarim will be available to learn with a chavrusa or you can join one of the group shiurim.

A delicious refreshments buffet will be served.

YARCHEI KALLAH 5779

Kollel's annual Summer Learning Program is coming up.

Our guest speaker this year will be Rabbi Ari Shishler. Look out for the full program with all of the details of the amazing topics and speakers who will be presenting.

www.jewishlearning.com.au

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush



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Successful Merchandising

What is the secret of Jewish people's success in business?

מי זאת, עלה מן-המדבר, כתימרות,
עשן: מקטרת מר ולבונה, מכל אבקת רוכל.

Who is it that arises from the desert like pillar of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant? (Shir Hashirim 3:6)

The Midrash teaches that this verse alludes to the three Avos. Just like myrrh is the head (choicest) of all spices, Avraham is the head (first) of all Tzaddikim. The frankincense which was brought along with the Korbanos refers to Yitzchak, who was offered with frankincense at the Akeidah. אבקת רוכל, the powders of the merchant refers to Yaakov.

The connection to Yaakov and powder is found in this week's Parsha. Yaakov is accosted by the Angel of Eisav who wrestles with him until morning. The word used for wrestling is ויאבק, which Rashi connects to the word אבק meaning dust. In their scuffle, they kicked up the dust all the way to Hashem's throne.

The Midrash continues; All merchandising and business which the Jewish people do and are successful in, is in the merit of that dust of Yaakov.

What is the significance of dust being kicked up the Throne of Glory and how is this related to business?

The Zohar distinguishes between אבק (dust) and עפר (earth). Earth possesses a Divine quality that it is able to grow vegetation. Dust on the other hand does not produce.

Earth represents Kedusha which has the ability to generate G-dly revelation. Dust on the other hand represents the forces of impurity and negativity which are like decay and cannot produce holiness.

When the angels came to visit Avraham, appearing as Arab travellers, Avraham asks them to wash the dust off of the feet before entering his tent. They would worship this dust. Avraham saw no redemption or elevation for this dust and asked that it be removed.

But in wrestling the Angel, Yaakov succeeded in elevating this dust up to the Throne of Glory. This is metaphorical for the ability to transform the unholy into holy and elevate even that which is impure.

Tzaddikim do not have the ability to transform negativity, impurity and sin. It is the Baal Teshuvah, with their greater strength and desire, who are capable of elevating and transforming their past into the service of Hashem. Hence our sages teach in the place where Baalei Teshuvah standard, even perfect Tzaddikim cannot stand.

Who is that who arises from the desert? The desert represents a place of spiritual bareness and desolation. Through Yaakov, even the powders (dust) of the desert can arise and be elevated.

The businessmen invests in order to profit. When a Jew engages in business there is a spiritual profit and objective at play.

Entering the spiritually barren business environment is for *Avodas Habirurim*, to elevate the sparks of G-dliness from within the mundane, by utilising the world for the service of Hashem. This is the spiritual profit which we procure.

But engagement in the world is like wrestling the Angel of Eisav. There is the always present danger of succumbing, and instead of elevating the dust, we can become dragged down and dirtied by the dust itself.

Yaakov's wrestle with the Angel was the prototype of the struggle and ultimate triumph of the Jewish business man in the field of Eisav. The Midrash teaches that our strength to prevail in our business comes from Yaakov who paved the way for us.

Through the refinement and elevation of the holiness trapped within the forces of impurity, the אבק becomes an אבוקה, a torch of great G-dly light.

When our business dealings are infused with this spiritual purpose, the merit of Yaakov will ensure that we are successful not only in the spiritual bottom line, but in the material sense too.

Respecting our Shules - Part 2

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Sleeping in Shule

One may not sleep or even nap in a Shule¹. Those who are learning in a Beis Medrash may sleep² there however one may not bring a bed into the Beis Medrash³. This Halacha would be relevant on Shabbaton programs and school trips visiting other Shules. Elya Rabbah⁴ quoting the Shela^h writes that those who sleep in Shule should be rebuked, especially if they do so during the Drasha because in addition to sleeping in a Shule, they are also ‘turning their ear’ from hearing words of Torah.

Sitting

The Ben Isha Chai⁵ writes that even when sitting in Shule for Davening and learning, one may not sit in a disrespectful or casual manner such as reclining or crossing one’s legs.

Other activities.

One should not make calculations in Shule, however one may do so for the purpose of a Mitzvah, for example counting the money in a Tzedaka Pushka⁶. Certainly one may not Shecht animals inside of a Shule⁷.

One should not do Melacha inside of a Shule⁸. Based on this, Ketzos Hashulchan⁹ writes that if one needs to repair benches and tables, it would be preferable (where possible) to take them out of the Shule and fix them there.

A Shule should not be used for doing business or selling merchandise. This include money or currency changing. Sales which are being done for a Mitzvah such as the sale of Chametz, Seforim, Aravos, Mitzvah objects (Tashmishei Kedusha) etc. can be done in Shule¹⁰. Still it is preferable to do this outside of the Shule in the foyer or courtyard.

The same applies with all forms of casual, light-headed or disrespectful activities. One may not smoke¹¹ or bring newspapers into the Shule¹².

One should not enter Shule wearing a sword or large knife¹³. This is because Tefillah lengthens a person’s life whereas a sword is made to shorten life¹⁴. The same logic applies with any other type of weapon. According to Elya Rabbah¹⁵ the concern is only if the sword is exposed. If it is covered by one’s clothing it can be permitted. Obviously where a weapon is required for Pikuach Nefesh, it is permitted.

Private Shules

Most of the above Halachos, including last week’s edition, apply to Shules and Batei

Medrash that were designated or built for public or communal use. If a person designates a room in his home for his personal use – for example a study to learn in – these strictures do not apply. Nonetheless, one should still not act in a disrespectful manner in these rooms¹⁶.

Cleanliness

One has to take great care to maintain the cleanliness of a Shule and not throw rubbish on the floor. One should treat the Shule and maintain its cleanliness no less than one would for their own home¹⁷. For this reason, one should take care to clean their shoes before entering Shule¹⁸. It is preferable not to enter a Shule wearing soiled clothing¹⁹. The floors and walls of the Shule should be cleaned regularly²⁰.

Technically, one is allowed to spit²¹ on the floor in Shule if required. However one should rub it into the ground with their foot so that it is not noticeable²². On Shabbos where one should not rub their foot on the ground, one should cover the spittle over with their foot until it is absorbed²³.

Lighting candles

It is customary to light candles in Shule²⁴. Lighting candles is in honour of the Shechina²⁵. This should be done before people come to the Shule to daven. Mishna Berura²⁶ suggests that the candles allude to the presence of the Shechina. The Midrash²⁷ teaches that Hashem says to the Jewish people “if you illuminate My candle, I will illuminate your candle (the Neshama)”. Reishis Chochma²⁸ explains that this refers to lighting candles in Shule. Lighting the candles in Shule is a great honour and for this reason many Kehillos ‘sell’ the rights to participate in this Mitzvah. Donating candles to the Shule is a known Segulah.

Since they are for honour, the candles should be lit even during the daytime. Some sources²⁹ write that the candles should be left burning and not be extinguished after davening (provided there is no safety concern). There are different customs concerning how many candles should be lit.

Kids in Shule

The Shela^h³⁰ writes that children under the age of Chinuch should not be brought into a Shule or Beis Midrash because they will run around and dirty the Shule and behave in a disrespectful manner³¹. They also distract people who are davening or learning³². The bigger concern is that if children become accustomed to behaving like this is Shule, even as they grow to become adults, they will not have the proper respect for Kedushas Beis

Hakneses.

Once children have reached the age of Chinuch, they should be brought to Shule and taught ‘the way of life’ to sit with awe in Shule. They should not be left to move around and they should be taught to answer Amen to Kaddish and Kedusha³³.

One is not allowed to kiss their child in Shule. This is in order to show that there is no love like the love of Hashem³⁴.

On top of the Shule

One should not use the attic or rooms above a Shule for a fixed activity which would be disrespectful such as sleeping³⁵. Other mundane activities are also possibly problematic. This is similar to the Beis Hamikdash where the chambers above the Kodesh and Kodesh Hakodoshim were also sanctified³⁶.

Living on top of a Shule is a serious Shaalah³⁷ and one should consult a Rav because there are different cases and nuances. These Halachos applies irrespective of how many levels separate the dwelling from the Shule³⁸. Extra care should be taken in the floor-spaces above the Aron Hakodesh³⁹ which should not be used for any mundane purposes and cer-

1. Shulchan Aruch 151:3
2. Ibid. Mishna Berura writes that this allowance is only for a nap. Talmidei Chachamim who learn full time in the Beis Medrash may also sleep there.
3. Magen Avraham 151:4
4. 151:6
5. Yisro Halacha 9
6. Shulchan Aruch 151:1 based on Rambam Hilchos Tefillah 11:7
7. Magen Avraham 151:1
8. Mishna Berura 151:1
9. 29:8
10. Ketzos Hashulchan 29:2
11. Aruch Hashulchan 151:5, Shaarei Teshuva 154:8, Ben Ish Chai Vayikra 5, Kaf Hachaim 151:10
12. Imrei Emes of Gur
13. Shulchan Aruch 151:6
14. Levush 151:6.
15. 151:1
16. Levush 151:1
17. Shaar Hatziyun 151:15
18. Aruch Hashulchan 151:10
19. Levush 151:8
20. ibid
21. For example the Chabad custom of spitting to the ground in Aleinu after saying that the idolaters bow down to nothingness.
22. Levush 151:7
23. Elya Rabbah 151:11
24. Shulchan Aruch 151:9
25. Yalkut Shimoni Behalosecha
26. 151:27
27. Vayikra Rabbah 31:4
28. Shaar Hayirah 15:64
29. Magen Avraham 514:14
30. Volume 2 p83b
31. See the Shela^h who describes how they play as they do in the streets; running, fighting, shouting, singing. They drop and ruin the Siddurim that are given to them.
32. Also quoted by the Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch 98:1
33. Mishna Berura 88:3
34. Rem^a 88:1. Shulchan Aruch Harav 88:1
35. Shulchan Aruch 151:12
36. Avraham Azulai on Levush 151:12
37. See Ta^z who records how he personally suffered from having lived on top of a Shule.
38. Avnei Nezer 32
39. Mishna Berura 151:40 and 42 based on Shu^t P’er Hador - Rambam 74