

לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שיי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

## Guiding Others

A Dvar Torah to encourage matters of Yiras Shomayim prepared to be shared and discussed with your family at the Shabbos table

### THE OBLIGATION TO GUIDE

The Torah tells us a number of times about our obligation to guide other Yidden in the right direction. This is included in the mitzvah of אהבת ישראל and is specifically directed by the Torah in the mitzvah of תוכחה (rebuke). Additionally, there is an ערבות (co-responsibility) that all of ישראל have for one another, and a mitzvah or עבירה done by one Yid, affects the others.

The Alter Rebbe paskens in the שולחן ערוך that if someone sees another doing something wrong, he is obligated to guide him on the correct path and to inform him of his wrongdoing. He must repeatedly tell the other of his misdeed ("even a hundred times"), until the other is angered and is not willing to listen.

When rebuking, one must not cause embarrassment. One should speak softly, explaining that one is intending their benefit. In the event of a public עבירה, one may not keep quiet, to prevent a חלול ה'. Even when the other does not listen to the rebuke, one still has the obligation to speak up one time, so that it is not his responsibility.

(שו"ע אדמו"ר הזקן או"ח סי' קנ"ו, תר"ח, הל' אונאה ונגיבת דעת)

אהבה, for all love that does not include תוכחה is not true love. ריש לקיש said that תוכחה brings שלום, for any peace that does not incorporate תוכחה is not real peace.

(בראשית רבה נ"ד)

The גמרא says that one who has ability to raise objection to a wrongdoing and does not, will be held accountable for that עבירה. The head of the household or a person of influence in a city must speak up and fix that which needs fixing.

(שבת נ"ד ע"ב)

### HOW TO GUIDE

For many years, the holy brothers Reb Elimelech of Lyzhensk and Reb Zusha of Hanipoli traveled through towns and villages to arouse Yidden to do תשובה. Whenever they arrived some place for the night, one of them would act as a בעל עבירה coming to the other, his Rebbe, asking for a תיקון. Within earshot of their host, the 'בעל עבירה' would list all the עבירות of which the בעל הבית was guilty. Overhearing this confession, the host would remember that he too had committed such עבירות, and he would be aroused to do תשובה.

One night, the brothers arrived in the house of a certain Yid, and Reb Zusha began to beg his brother for a תיקון for his negligence. He had never had his tefillin checked until recently and the סופר had found that there were no פרשיות inside! All his life, he had never put on tefillin. The host, overhearing the conversation, realized that he himself had never had his tefillin checked, so he quickly went to have a look at his tefillin, and to his alarm, he found that they were empty! Sobbing, he begged the visitors to show him how he can do תשובה.

Reb Elimelech instructed Reb Zusha to write a set of פרשיות for their host, and to have the כוונה that these tefillin draw down a great light, appropriate for one who has never put on tefillin. Reb Zusha took קלף, quill and ink, wrote the פרשיות required, placed them in the בתים (boxes), and returned them to their owner. Many years later, these tefillin were found by the holy tzaddik Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev.

(ספורי חסידים זיון מועדים ע' 66)

merited to be king over the Yidden because he rebuked them in public, but he was punished for doing it in public.

(סנהדרין ק"א)

A farbrengen is one of the fundamentals of דרכי החסידות, where the speakers usually demand improvement from the participants. The תוכחה at a farbrengen is only regarding matters that will not cause embarrassment, and since the earliest days, has been done with love and deep affection.

(היום יום כ"ד תשרי)

The holy Tzaddik Reb Mendel Barrer was a Maggid, who traveled from town to town saying מוסר and pointing out the deficiencies of the townspeople; however, he would only speak where he would be paid. He explained, that when he will go to Hashem, Hashem will ask him, "Who are you to speak like this about my children?" He will answer, that being that Hashem had given him the job of supporting his family, and his only skill was to say מוסר, he had no other choice. However, if he would do this without payment, he would have no excuse...

The Rebbe explained that when rebuking in a manner of חסידות, this is not necessary. For then, one points out to the other what needs to be improved (without highlighting the problems), and this can be done בדרך נועם ובדרך שלום, in a pleasant manner. This way is more successful in having influence on others, and prevents claims from being made against him למעלה, for he is

only bringing the cure for the sickness...

(דרך מצוותיך קצ"ו ע"ב, תו"מ חט"ו ע' 143)

The chossid Reb Hillel Paritcher once said in the name of the Tzemach Tzeddek, that the double expression הוכח תוכיח implies that one must first rebuke oneself and then rebuke another. Reb Hillel explained that the rebuke is effective only when it follows self rebuke.

(לקוטי דיבורים חלק א' ע' 182)

The אל תוכח לך פן ישנאך, explains the possuk "Do not rebuke a fool for he might hate you; rebuke a wise person and he will love you", that this is an instruction as to how one should give rebuke. When rebuking another, do not call him a לץ, by telling him his חסרונות, for then he will hate you and not listen to what you are telling him. Rather, treat him like a חכם, and tell him that his actions are unbecoming for one like him. This way, he will love you and listen to your תוכחה.

(של"ה פ' דברים דרך חיים)

In the year תרצ"ה, the Frierdiker Rebbe underwent a medical procedure and took a lesson from it in עבודת ה'. In a letter he writes: Today the doctors came to inject some medicine, and I watched how cautious they were when preparing for it. They sterilized the tools, dressed in special gowns, washed their hands, checked their nails, and then poured alcohol over my feet. Having just washed myself, I asked why this extra cleaning was necessary. "No matter," they answered, "The policy is that before any injection is given, the area must be washed with alcohol, sterilizing it completely, because if some bacteria remains, the medicine will be ineffective and may even cause additional sickness ר"ל."

Rebuking another is like giving an injection, for this sharp poke brings healing, but causes pain nevertheless. Therefore, it is necessary to make sure that all is clean, to enable the injection to have the desired effect.

(אג"ק מוהר"י צ' חלק ג' ע' רצ"א)

In the מאמר which begins "אם רוח המושל", the Frierdiker Rebbe explains that when rebuking another, one must act humbly and be pained that this has happened during his time. He must include himself in the rebuke by finding some measure of the wrongdoing within himself בדקות (in a slight form).

(ספר המאמרים קונטרסים ח"ב ע' שני"ח ע"ב)

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In the year תש"א, the Frierdiker Rebbe sent Reb Sholom Ber Gordon to open a Yeshiva in Newark, New Jersey. A few years later, Reb Sholom Ber was given the position of Rov in a large shul, where he encountered a number of problems. The members of the shul were not שומרי שבת and the president of the shul had a movie theatre that was opened on Shabbos. Reb Sholom Ber tried to influence them by explaining the importance of Shabbos and stressed its severity by listing the punishments given for desecrating it.

He told to the Rebbe of his difficulties, and the Rebbe answered, "You were born in Dokshitz and are familiar with a שוויץ בוד (sauna). In the שוויץ, after pouring hot water on a person, they beat him with a leafy branch, and the person being hit pleads for more. Suppose you would take such a branch and hit this fellow in middle of the street, he would be greatly angered and scream at you, but in the bath house, where he is warmed up, he is happy to receive such treatment. Similarly, in the shul, it is necessary to warm them up with stories, and they will then gladly accept the מוסר."

(מפי אחיו ר' ישראל שני גארדאן)

The Rebbe explained, that when stopping someone from actually committing an עבירה the obligation is greater (לאפרושי), yet one should still attempt to do so in a pleasant manner.

(תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"ד ע' 2126)

## LISTENING TO GUIDANCE

One should love נחת רוח, for תוכחה brings נחת רוח, goodness and ברכה to the world, and chases away negativity.

(תמיד כ"ח ע"א)

The Rebbe Rashab writes in one of his letters: cherish criticism (ביקורת), for it will place you on the true heights.

(היום יום י"ב סיון)

At a Farbrengen (יום שמח"ת תשט"ז) the Rebbe said, "The גמרא tells of the people who lived in the times of the שופטים, who when rebuked about some wrongdoing, would respond 'You have an even greater problem!' This is no excuse at all, for if the accusation is not true, then say so, and if it is true, it will not minimize by attacking the admonisher..."

(תו"מ חט"ו ע' 143)

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