



## LEADERS WITHOUT BORDERS

Sometimes going half-way isn't enough. Whether as a person of faith, or a leader of others, one can't selectively engage with just the enjoyable ideas or the like-minded people.

Otherwise, you're left with nothing.

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TEACHER'S MANUAL



# JEWISH INSIGHTS

A TASTE OF THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS

3RD OF TAMMUZ



MARKING THE 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REBBE'S PASSING

**Book of Bamidbar / Numbers**

*Dedicated by*  
**Marty & Kate Rifkin**  
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Shluchim of the Rebbe to Mumbai India

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## A. Pleasant Torah.....5

A person who learns Torah selectively will eventually lose everything (sources 1-2). The reason for this, the Rebbe explains, is that Torah can't be judged by human intellect and we cannot say that one teaching is "pleasant" and another teaching is not.

There are three types of mitzvot—chukim, edut, and mishpatim (source 3). If a person chooses to observe with joy only the mitzvot he understands, while the rest he observes because he has no choice, he will eventually cease to observe even the understandable mitzvot. The only guarantee for preserving tradition and morality is absolute faith and obedience of G-d's words. As we saw in the recent past, a nation that based its morality on human logic alone deteriorated to the point of the worst possible genocide.

## B. Pleasant Jews.....5

The same is true regarding the Jewish people. Every Jew is like a letter in a Torah scroll. A Jewish leader can't prefer to work with the elite members of society and neglect the simple people. Such a person is unworthy of being a Jewish leader.

This is illustrated by the conduct of the Baal Shem Tov who cherished the simple people and taught that G-d values all Jews equally (source 4 and story).

## C. Pleasant Work.....5

A person that wants to be a leader must first know how to lead himself on the personal level (sources 5-6).

Regarding personal character refinement as well, a person cannot focus only on the more refined and spiritual aspects of his life, while he conducts himself like an animal in his mundane pursuits (source 7).

The Rebbe explains that if a person is not in control of himself while he eats and drinks as well, he will eventually also lose his control over the more sophisticated aspects of his personality, his heart and his mind.

We see an example of this in the conduct of Rabbi Elazar ben Arach. As a result of his preferring to live in a place with fine wines and good bathing facilities, he eventually lost his Torah knowledge (source 8).

D. True Leadership.....5

A true leader, a collective soul, must concern himself with all elements of society, the Rebbe teaches. If he doesn't do so, he is not a true leader (source 9).

We conclude with a story about shlichus in Morocco, and two video clips that express the qualities of a true Jewish leader.

# Introduction

## Introduction

In honor of Gimmel Tammuz, the yahrtzeit of the Rebbe, we will devote this class to the meaning of true leadership.

Why must a leader deal with all members of his community; why must a Jew observe the entire Torah, without showing preference to any particular part; why must a person refine all aspects of his personality, even the most mundane? And what does this all have to do with remote Moroccan villages?

A lesson about the search for perfection.

## השיעור לפרשת קרח

משיחת יום ה' פרשת בלק, י"ב תמוז, ה'תשכ"ו  
בלתי מוגה  
תורת מנחם, כרך מ"ז עמוד 157

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# A. Pleasant Torah

## >> The Rebbe

### Don't Rate

Regarding Torah study we are told, “anyone who says this teaching is pleasant and this teaching is not pleasant” degrades the honor of Torah (and will eventually forget his learning). As the verse states, “a person that keeps company with prostitutes will lose his fortune,” and the Hebrew word for prostitute, *zonah*, can also be read as an abbreviation for *zu na'ah*, “this is pleasant.”

מצינו בנוגע ללימוד התורה ש"כל האומר שמועה זו נאה וזו אינה נאה מאבד הונה (כבודה) של תורה" (וסופה להשתכח ממנו), "דכתיב<sup>1</sup> ורועה זונות (נוטריקון זו נאה וארענה, ואעסוק בה) יאבד הון"<sup>2</sup>.

### Source 1 Proverbs 29:3

A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father, but a person that keeps company with prostitutes will lose his fortune.

Metzudas David

**Keep company:** One who stays close to prostitutes will lose the wealth of his father by spending it on immoral acts, thereby further paining his father.

אִישׁ אֲהַב חִכְמָה יִשְׂמַח  
אָבִיו, וְרַעַה זֹנוֹת יֵאָבֵד הוֹן.

מצודת דוד

ורועה: המחבר עצמו  
לזונות, מאבד הון אביו,  
בתת להם אתנו, ויצער  
עוד את אביו.

### Source 2 Eruvin 64a

Rabbi Acha bar Chanina said: What is the meaning of the verse, “a person that keeps company with prostitutes will lose his fortune” (Proverbs 29:3)? This alludes to a person who says, “this teaching is pleasant [*zu na'a*] but this teaching is not pleasant.” Such a person loses the fortune of Torah.

אָמַר רַבִּי אַחָא בַר חַנִּינְיָא:  
מֵהוּ שְׁנַאָמַר "וְרַעַה זֹנוֹת  
יֵאָבֵד הוֹן" - כֹּל הָאוֹמֵר  
שְׁמוּעָה זוֹ נְאֻה, וְזוֹ אֵינָה  
נְאֻה - מֵאָבֵד הוֹנָה שֶׁל  
תּוֹרָה!

When one sage expressed his affinity for a particular ruling over another one, his fellow sage commented:

Rashi

רש"י

**Company with prostitutes [roeh zonot]:** the words in the verse are an abbreviation for, “This [zu] part of Torah is pleasant [na’ah], and therefore, I will “keep company” and learn it, so I will remember. [Other parts of Torah, however, are not as important].”

רועה זונות: נוטריקון -  
זו נאה וארעה ואעסק  
בה, כדי שתתקיים בדי.

The words “zu na’ah” sounds like zonah, and the word “company” in the Hebrew can also mean to occupy oneself with it. Rabbi Achah therefore said that a person who says “this teaching is pleasant (zu na’ah) and I will occupy myself with it” is like a person who keeps the company of harlots (zonot)—he will eventually lose the fortune of Torah.

## >> The Rebbe

When this student says that this teaching is pleasant in his eyes and this teaching isn’t, he isn’t denying that the teaching is true. He knows that the teaching is true, because he believes that it was given to Moses at Sinai, but he still distinguishes between Torah teachings and says that this one lacks a certain beauty. The result of this is “he will lose his fortune,” he will lose his Torah knowledge.

כאשר לומד תורה, ואומר, ששמועה זו נאה בעיניו, ושמועה זו אינה נאה בעיניו - הוא יודע אמנם ש”שמועה זו” היא אמת, כיון שמאמין שניתנה למשה מסיני, אבל הוא מחלק ואומר שחסר בה ענין של יופי - אזי “יאבד הון”, שהתורה לא תתקיים בידו.

## No Pleasant or Unpleasant Torah

The reason for this is that Torah can’t be assessed by human logic. A person can’t say that both matters are true, but, for example, the mitzvah to honor one’s parents is a good and pleasant practice, while a different mitzvah

וטעם הדבר - כיון שהתורה אינה נמדדת על ידי שכל האדם, שיאמר ששני הענינים אמת, אבל, הענין של כיבוד אב ואם, למשל, הוא (לא רק אמת, אלא גם) מנהג נאה ומדה נאה,

that has no logical reason isn't "pleasant" in his estimation. This person understands that he still must observe the non-rational mitzvot, because it is a part of Torah, but he doesn't consider it "pleasant" because it isn't logically understood; it is a decree from G-d that must be observed because He commanded us to. Nevertheless, this person will "lose his fortune," including even the mitzvot that he does consider pleasant, such as honoring parents.

ואילו ענין שקשור עם "חוקת התורה", שאין על זה טעם ושכל, אינו נאה בעיניו; הוא מבין אמנם שצריך לקיים זאת, כיון שזוהי "שמועה" בתורה, אבל אין לזה יופי בעיניו, כיון שאין זה באופן של הבנה והסברה, כי אם, "גזירה גזרת חוקה חקקת"<sup>3</sup>, שצריך לקיימה בעל-כרחו - אזי "יאבד הון", שלא יתקיימו בידו אפילו המצוות שהן נאות בעיניו, כמו כיבוד אב ואם.

*The Torah has three categories of mitzvot: decrees (chukim), testimonies (edut), and mishpatim (laws).*

*Chukim are decrees that have no reason understandable to human logic. For example, the mitzvah to use a red heifer for purification or the prohibition against the shaatnez mixture of wool and linen. Had the Torah not commanded us with these mitzvot, we would not have thought of them on our own. Our observance of them is only because G-d decreed them for us.*

*Edut are mitzvot that commemorate certain events or concepts that can be understood logically. Examples include Shabbat, the festivals, tefillin, tzitzit, etc. While they can be understood, these aren't things we would have thought of on our own had the Torah not commanded us.*

*Mishpatim are laws that logic would dictate need to be observed. For example, don't murder, don't steal, respect parents, etc. Regarding such logical laws the sages said, "had the Torah not been given we would have learned modesty from cats and the prohibition of stealing from ants."*

### Source 3 Deuteronomy 6:20

If your son asks you in time to come, saying, "What are the testimonies, the decrees, and the laws, which the L-rd our G-d has commanded you?"

כִּי יִשְׁאַלְךָ בִּנְךָ מָחָר לֵאמֹר, מָה הָעֵדוּת  
וְהַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
אֲתָכֶם.

*Nachmanides, also known as Ramban, an abbreviation of his full name, Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman (1194-1270), was a halachic authority, commentator, poet,*

The son has observed three categories of mitzvot in the Torah. First, testimonies such as Pesach and other commemorations of the miracles G-d did for the Jewish people in Egypt. Second, decrees—mitzvot that have no known reason. Third, laws that have clear logical reasons.

רוצֵה לומר, שֶהֵבֵן הַזֶּה רָאָה בְּתוֹרָה  
שְׁלֹשָׁה מִיָּנִים מִהַמִּצְוֹת: מֵהֶם עֵדוּת -  
כְּחַג הַפֶּסַח וְשָׂאֵר הַמִּצְוֹת שֶׁהֵם עֵדוּת  
הַנִּסִּים וְהַנִּפְלְאוֹת שֶׁעָשָׂה הַשֵּׁם יְתִבְרַךְ  
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרָיִם. וְהַמִּין הַשֵּׁנִי, הֵם  
הַחֻקִּים - שֶׁהֵם הַמִּצְוֹת שֶׁאֵין טַעַמָּם  
נוֹדָע. וְהַמִּין הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, הֵם הַמְשַׁפְּטִים  
- שֶׁהֵם הַמִּצְוֹת שֶׁטַעַמָּם נוֹדָע וְנִגְלָה,  
מִדְּרַךְ הַסְּבִרָא וְשִׁקוּל הַדַּעַת.

thinker, kabbalist, and doctor. He was one of the greatest Jewish scholars of the Middle Ages, and almost unparalleled in the breadth of his scholarship, covering all fields and aspects of Torah, and the deep influence he had on subsequent Torah scholarship. His works are central to the study of the Torah and Jewish law.

Naturally, a person feels a deeper relationship with the rational mitzvot than he does with the super-rational ones. We have greater pleasure when when we observe a mitzvah that we understand than when we do a decree that we don't comprehend. The Torah is telling us that we cannot say "this teaching is pleasant and this teaching is not pleasant." We can't have an approach of love for the rational part of Torah and just accept the super-rational part because we have no choice. If we take this approach, we will eventually "lose our fortune," all of our Torah. The only guarantor for our loyalty to tradition and Torah law – even those that make sense logically – is our faith in G-d and obedience for His commands.

This will be illustrated by the following example.

## >> The Rebbe

### The Lessons of History

We have already mentioned a number of times what we witnessed recently with a nation that built its entire culture around logic and reason, including a logical system of ethics. Since this was all based on human logic, these "ethics" led to stealing, murder, and everything contrary to true ethics.

כמדובר כמה פעמים<sup>4</sup> מה שראינו בדורות האחרונים, שדווקא אותו עם שבנה את כל התרבות שלו על שכל והבנה, וכלל בזה גם חכמת המוסר, הנה כיון שכל זה היה מיוסד על שכל האדם, הביא "מוסר" זה לידי גניבה ורציחה, וכל דבר שהוא היפך "שמועה נאה" - לא רק מצד אמונת ה', אלא גם מצד "מוסר" בפני עצמו.

This is why the Ten Commandments were all given in one utterance, because “I am G-d” cannot be separated from “do not murder.” “Do not murder” is unsustainable if it isn’t associated with “I am G-d.”

וזהו שעשרת הדברות נאמרו "בדיבור אחד"<sup>5</sup>, היינו, שאי אפשר להפריד "אנכי ה' אלקיך" מ"לא תרצח", כיון שלא יהיה קיום ל"לא תרצח" אם לא יהיה קשור עם "אנכי ה' אלקיך".

*We witnessed with Nazi Germany how a “moral” and cultured country that based its morality on human intellect deteriorated to the point of the worst acts of genocide in history.*

*The Ten Commandments are one unit. One cannot choose the interpersonal part without the G-d-focused part because it will ultimately be unsustainable.*

## B. Pleasant Jews

### >> The Rebbe

Just as this is true regarding Torah, the same applies to the Jewish people. The Hebrew word Yisrael is an acronym for the Hebrew phrase, "there are 600,000 letters in the Torah." This means that every Jew is like a letter in G-d's Torah scroll.

When a person distinguishes between Jews and says this Jew is "pleasant" and this one is "unpleasant," he cannot be a Jewish leader. A person may wish to be a Jewish leader but only to deal with the distinguished members of the community. He sees it as befitting him to deal with the wealthy people because they can donate money to support the synagogue, study hall, and charitable institutions, or with the intellectually talented members of the community because they can understand his Torah teachings. But regarding a simple Jew who doesn't excel in any of these areas, who doesn't have knowledge or good character traits, he says that he is "unpleasant."

He agrees that he has some form of relationship with this person, because he is a member of the community in which he serves as leader. But he differentiates between Jews and says, this one is pleasant and this one is not. Such a person cannot be a true Jewish leader.

וכשם שהדברים אמורים בנוגע לתורה - כן הוא גם בנוגע לבני ישראל, ששם "ישראל" הוא ראשי תיבות יש ששים ריבוא אותיות לתורה<sup>6</sup>, היינו, שכל אחד מישראל הוא "אות" בספר תורה של הקב"ה:

כאשר עושים חילוק בין בני ישראל ואומרים שיהודי זה נאה ויהודי זה אינו נאה - הוא רוצה להיות מנהיג בישראל, אבל הוא אומר שמתאים לו להתעסק עם אלו שיושבים בכותל המזרחי, מתאים לו להתעסק עם גבירים, כיון שיוכל לקבל מהם כסף עבור החזקת בית-הכנסת ובית-המדרש ומוסדות צדקה, או שמתאים לו להתעסק עם בעלי-מוח, כיון שהם יבינו מה שילמד עמהם, בתורה שבכתב או בתורה שבעל פה, אבל בנוגע ליהודי שאין בו לא טעם ולא ריח<sup>7</sup>, הוא לא רואה בו לא הבנה והשגה ולא מדות טובות, לא ראש וגם לא רגליים - טוען הוא שיהודי זה אינו נאה.

יש לו אמנם שייכות אליו, להיותו מנהיג ונשיא על עדה בישראל שבין חבריה נמנה גם יהודי הנ"ל, אבל הוא מחלק ואומר שיהודי זה נאה ויהודי זה אינו נאה - אדם כזה אינו יכול להיות מנהיג של עדה בישראל.

## Source 4 Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, Igrot Kodesh, vol. 10, p. 139

Since G-d gave us His holy Torah through Moses, our people have been divided into two types: The intellectual Torah scholars, and the simple people with pure faith.

Until the time of our master the Baal Shem Tov, the Torah scholars set themselves apart from the simple Jews. Then the Baal Shem Tov came and demonstrated the great qualities of the simple Jews.

Initially, even the Baal Shem Tov's students were puzzled by his approach of associating with the simple tradesmen and market vendors. The scholars derisively referred to these people as "Psalms-reciters" and "people that don't understand what they are saying."

In many towns, the Rabbis, Yeshivah heads, and Yeshivah students would set themselves apart. They would barely allow the simple people to serve as chazzan when they needed to recite the mourner's kadish, and would banish them to the side room. This went on until the Baal Shem Tov came and taught about the tremendous qualities of the Jews with simple and pure faith.

...Since then, people have become aware of the great qualities of every Jew, that the simplest Jew is the most valuable treasure. The Alter Rebbe explained that Torah scholars are very precious, but intellectual people are cold by nature and can fall into the trap of being dispassionate. The simple people have pure faith and good character traits.

אז הנחילנו ה' אלקינו את תורתו הקדושה על ידי משה רבנו נתפלג עמנו לשתי כתות: (א) בני תורה בעל[י] [שכל. (ב) אנשים פשוטים בעלי אמונה פשוטה.

ועד מורנו הבעל-שם-טוב נשמתו עזו היו התלמידי חכמים ובני תורה בדלים מן היהודים הפשוטים. ובא מורנו הבעל-שם-טוב נשמתו עזו והראה הפלגת מעלתם של ישראל הפשוטים.

בראשונה הנה גם תלמידי הבעל-שם-טוב נשמתו עזו התפלאו על הנהגת מורנו הבעל-שם-טוב נשמתו עזו לקרב את פשוטי אחינו, בעלי-המלאכות הפשוטים ואנשי השוק. הבני תורה קראום בשם "די תהלים זאגער" ["אומרי התהלים"], ו"דלא ידע מאי קאמר'ניקעס" ["אינם יודעים מה שהם אומרים"].

בכמה וכמה עירות הנה הרבנים, ראשי ישיבות ותלמידי הישיבות היו בדלים לעצמם. ובקשי היו מתירים למחבי קדישים לעבר לפני התבה, והרחיקום מהבתי כנסיות להחדר השני והדומה. עד שבא מורנו הבעל-שם-טוב נשמתו עזו והשפיע מרוחו הקדושה לפרסם מעלתם של הבעלי אמונה פשוטה בישראל.

...מאז נוכחו לדעת הפלאת מעלת ישראל, שהיהודי הפשוט ביותר הוא יקר מכל יקר. והוד כבוד קדשת רבנו הזמן באר הענין: תלמיד חכם הוא יקר ביותר. בעל מוח הנו קר [בטבעו ו]לעיתים קרובות מקרר וצריכים זהירות. אנשים פשוטים הם בעלי אמונה ומדות טובות.

## Story Why does he invest in the simple Jews?

One particular Shabbat, the simple Jews merited special attention from the Baal Shem Tov during his Shabbat meal. To one of them he poured wine from his personal cup and blessed him, to another he gave a slice of challah, and with a third he shared the fish from his plate. The Baal Shem Tov's closest students, great scholars in their own right, couldn't understand their teacher's conduct.

The next day at the second meal, where only the Baal Shem Tov's students were present, he began to deliver incredibly beautiful Torah teachings that filled the students with great joy. The students thanked G-d for the merit of being in the presence of such a great man. However, some of the students couldn't help but think critically about their teacher: Why does he invest so much in inspiring the ignoramuses who can't even understand a word of his deep teachings?

The Baal Shem Tov's face suddenly turned serious. With closed eyes and the tension audible in his voice he said, "in the place where penitents stand, even the completely righteous cannot stand."

Silence fell upon the students. The students that had been thinking critically about their master realized that he had simply read their minds. The Baal Shem Tov opened his eyes and surveyed his students with his gaze, and then instructed them to place their arms on each other's shoulders. He then instructed them to close their eyes and keep them shut until he tells them to open them. The Baal Shem Tov himself put his arms around the students to his right and left. As the human chain sealed, the students were able to "see" those simple Jews who had remained behind in the synagogue singing and dancing in their prayers.

"Dear G-d!" The voice of one of the praying simple Jews rang out in heartfelt prayer, "test me, O L-rd, and try me; refine my reins and my heart."

"Dear Father!" Another supplicant called out, "be gracious to me, O G-d, be gracious to me, because my soul took refuge in You, and in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until the destruction passes."

"Father in Heaven!" A third person sighed as he rocked from side to side intensely, "Even a bird found a house and a swallow her nest..."

The scholarly students trembled when they heard the chapters of Psalms being recited with a pure and overflowing heart. Their eyes still closed, tears of remorse started pouring forth. They were envious of these simple Jews whose Divine service was based only on a pure recitation of the verses of Psalms.

**Rabbi Yosef Yitzhak Schneersohn**, the Rebbe Rayatz (1880-1950) was the sixth Chabad Rebbe, the son of his predecessor Rabbi Sahlom Dovber (the Rebbe Rashab) and Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah Schneersohn. He risked his life with his work on behalf of Russian Jewry, and upon settling in in the U.S. in 1940 devoted himself to American Jewry as well. He was succeeded by his son in law, the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

# C. Pleasant Work

## >> The Rebbe

### Leadership Starts at Home

The same is also true of the initial form of leadership, which is control over one's physical faculties, as the Talmud terms the body, "a small city." A person must be in control of his body and not allow his body to control him.

וענין זה הוא גם בנוגע להתחלת ענין הנשיאות (שהרי בנשיאות גופא ישנן כמה דרגות) - שלכל לראש צריך האדם להיות נשיא על כל רמ"ח אבריו ושס"ה גידיו, כדברי הגמרא<sup>8</sup> "עיר קטנה זה הגוף", והאדם צריך להיות בעל הבית על הגוף, ולא ליתן לגוף לשלוט עליו.

*Before a person becomes the leader of a community or group of people he must first lead himself.*

### Source 5 Ecclesiastes 9:14-15

There was a little city, with few men in it; and there came a great king against it and besieged it and built great bulwarks against it.

Present in the city was a poor wise man who saved it with his wisdom.

עיר קטנה וְאֲנָשִׁים בָּהּ מְעַט, וּבָא אֵלֶיהָ מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְסָבַב אֶתָּהּ וּבְנָה עָלֶיהָ מְצוּדִים גְּדֹלִים.

וּמֵצָא בָּהּ אִישׁ מְסֻכֵּן חָכֵם, וּמָלַט הוּא אֶת הָעִיר בְּחָכְמָתוֹ.

### Source 6 Nedarim 32b

**Rami bar Abba said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "There was a little city with few men in it?"**

**"A little city," this is referring to the body; "with few men in it," this is referring to the limbs; "and there came a great king against it and besieged it," this is referring to the evil inclination; "and built great bulwarks against it," these are sins.**

אָמַר רַמִּי בַר אַבָּא: מָהוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "עִיר קְטַנָּה וְאֲנָשִׁים וּגְוִי".

"עיר קטנה" - זֶה הַגּוּף, "וְאֲנָשִׁים בָּהּ מְעַט" - אֵלּוֹ אַבְרָיִם, "וּבָא אֵלֶיהָ מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְסָבַב אֶתָּהּ" - זֶה יֵצֶר הָרַע, "וּבְנָה עָלֶיהָ מְצוּדִים וְחֻרְמִים" - אֵלּוֹ עֲוֹנוֹת,

“Present in the city was a poor wise man,” this is referring to the good inclination; “who saved it with his wisdom,” this is referring to repentance and good deeds that are caused by the good inclination.

”וּמִצָּא בָּהּ אִישׁ מְסֻכֵּן וְחָכָם”  
 - זֶה יֵצֵר טוֹב, ”וּמִלֵּט הוּא אֶת  
 הָעִיר בְּחֻמָּתָהּ” - זוֹ תְּשׁוּבָה  
 וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים שֶׁהֵיִצֵּר  
 הַטוֹב גּוֹרֵם לְאָדָם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם.

Man and his limbs are compared to a city, and his role is to ensure that his positive inclination rules over this city, and not his negative inclination, G-d forbid.

## >> The Rebbe

### Don't be an Animal

Here too, a person can distinguish and say that he will ensure that his head is occupied with holy matters, but when it comes to eating and drinking, why shouldn't he satisfy his physical desires?

Eating and drinking are areas in which a person has no apparent advantage over an animal. While a person is eating, he argues, he isn't a wise person.

ובגם בענין זה יכול מישהו לחלק ולומר, שהוא ידאג ויבטיח שראשו יהיה מונח בדברים נעלים, אבל כשמדובר אודות אכילה ושתיה - למה לא ימלא תאוות נפשו?!...

אלא מה, ענין האכילה ושתיה הוא מהענינים שבהם "מותר האדם מן הבהמה אין", כמאמר רז"ל<sup>10</sup> "שלשה כבהמה, אוכלין ושותין כבהמה" - הנה בשעת האכילה ושתיה אינו במדרגת "חכם"!!...

### Source 7 Chagigah 16a

Six statements were said with regard to humans: In three ways, they are like ministering angels, and in three ways they are like animals.

In three ways they are like ministering

שְׁשֵׁה דְבָרִים נֶאֱמָרוּ בְּבִנֵי אָדָם:  
 שְׁלֹשָׁה כְּמַלְאכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת, שְׁלֹשָׁה  
 כְּבְהֵמָה.

שְׁלֹשָׁה כְּמַלְאכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת: יֵשׁ לָהֶם  
 דַּעַת כְּמַלְאכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת, וּמְהֻלְכִין

angels: They have intelligence like ministering angels; and they walk upright like ministering angels; and they speak in the holy tongue like ministering angels.

In three ways humans are like animals: They eat and drink like animals; and they multiply like animals; and they emit excrement like animals.

בְּקוֹמָה זְקוּפָה כְּמַלְאָכִי  
הַשָּׁרֵת, וּמְסַפְּרִים בְּלִשׁוֹן  
הַקֹּדֶשׁ כְּמַלְאָכִי הַשָּׁרֵת.

שְׁלֵשָׁה כְּבִהְמָה: אוֹכְלִין  
וְשׂוֹתִין כְּבִהְמָה, וּפָרִין  
וְרִבִּין כְּבִהְמָה, וּמוֹצִיאִין  
רְעֵי כְּבִהְמָה.

*The person that indulges all of his cravings for food and drink says to himself, "So what if during this time I'm like an animal and not a wise scholar?! What's the big deal?!"*

## >> The Rebbe

There is a well-known story in this regard about Aristotle, that when he was caught acting inappropriately he said, "now I'm not Aristotle."

וכידוע הסיפור<sup>11</sup> המובא  
בספרי מוסר בנוגע  
לאריסטו, שכאשר תפסו  
אותו בעשיית דבר בלתי  
נאה, אמר: עכשיו אינני  
אריסטו...

**Arsitotle** (384-322 BCE) was a Greek philosopher. One of the greatest ancient philosophers, he is considered one of the fathers of Western philosophy. He began his career as a student of Plato in Athens.

## A Scholar's Wisdom is Evident in All of His Pursuits

But the truth is that if a person isn't in control of his eating, then his intellect is also lacking. As Maimonides writes in the Laws of Character Development: "Just as a wise person is recognizable in his intellectual pursuits . . . so too must he be distinguished in his actions – eating, drinking, walking, etc." A truly wise person is someone whose wisdom is expressed even when he takes a walk or sits down to eat and drink. A person that says that it's enough for him to occupy

ובכן: אם אינו נעשה בעל הבית על אכילתו ושתייתו - אזי חסר גם בחכמתו, וכמו שכתב הרמב"ם בהלכות דעות<sup>12</sup>: "כשם שהחכם ניכר בחכמתו .. כך צריך שיהיה ניכר במעשיו במאכלו ובמשקו .. ובהילוכו וכו'", היינו, שחכם אמיתי הוא מי שחכמתו ניכרת גם בשעה שהולך לטייל או יושב לאכול ולשתות; אבל אם הוא אומר שמתאים לו להתעסק ולהבטיח רק את השכל

his mind and heart with refined matters, but with his hands he can give someone a slap, and with his mouth he can sometimes eat without a blessing and eat like a glutton, to satisfy his physical cravings—such a person “loses his fortune,” his control over his mind and heart as well.

שבראש והרגש שבלב, ואילו בנוגע לכוח המעשה שבידיים - עלול ליתן סטירה לפלוני, ובנוגע לפיו, עלול לפעמים לאכול ללא ברכה, ובדרך ממילא אכילתו היא בדרך “זולל וסובא”, למלאות תאוות גופו ונפשו - אזי “יאבד הון”, שמתבטלת נשיאותו גם בנוגע לראש ולב.

*A person can't say that he will only rule over his body when he is engaged in refined pursuits such as study, while in the material aspects of life, such as eating and interpersonal relationships, he allows himself to follow his desires wherever they lead him. A person that isn't in control of his desires in the mundane areas of life will eventually “lose his fortune,” his control of the intellectual and spiritual realms as well.*

\*

*The following story shows us the results of such conduct that accords importance only to the realm of intellect but allows all other pleasure-seeking desires to run wild.*

*Rabbi Elazar ben Arach was a scholar who live in the Land of Israel in the late first and early second centuries. He was a student of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai, who appreciated his qualities and considered him his top student. It is told that when Rabbi Elazar and his teacher studied the secrets of Kabbalah together, “Fire came down from heaven and Rabbi Yochanan kissed him on the forehead and proclaimed: ‘How fortunate you are, Abraham our forefather, to have a descendant like Elazar ben Arach’ (Talmud, Chagigah 14b).*

*Rabbi Elazar was also considered an indispensable source of wise advice. His advice was always spot on, to the extent that people asked him if he was a prophet. He responded, “I'm not a prophet or even the son of a prophet. I have a tradition from my teachers that any advice given for the sake of Heaven will be successful” (Midrash Tehillim 1:19).*

*Considering the extraordinary praises that Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai heaped on his student, it would be expected that Talmudic sources would preserve many of his teachings. But surprisingly, this is not the case, and very little is related in the name of Rabbi Elazar. Here is the reason:*

## Source 8 Kohelet Rabah 7:7

Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai had five students. During his lifetime they studied under him, and when he died they moved to Yavneh. Rabbi Elazar ben Arach went to his wife in the city of Emmaus, where there were beautiful springs of water. He waited for his colleagues to come to him, but they didn't come. He wished to travel to them, but his wife didn't allow him. She asked, "Who needs who in your relationship with your colleagues?" Rabbi Elazar said, "They need me." She asked, "Do the mice follow the container or does the container follow the mice?" Rabbi Elazar listened and stayed, and eventually forgot all of his learning.

חַמְשָׁה תַלְמִידִים הָיוּ לוֹ לְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בֶּן זַכַּי, כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהָיָה קִים הָיוּ יוֹשְׁבֵי לְפָנָיו, כְּשֶׁנִּפְטַר הָלְכוּ לְיָבֵנָה. הָלַךְ רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲרַךְ אֶצְלֵ אִשְׁתּוֹ לְאֵמָאוֹס, מְקוֹם מַיִם יְפִים וְנִוָּה יָפָה, הַמְתִּין לָהֶם שֶׁיָּבִיאוּ אֶצְלוֹ וְלֹא בָּאוּ. בֵּינוֹן שֶׁלֹּא בָּאוּ, בִּקֵּשׁ לֵילֵךְ אֶצְלָם, וְלֹא הִנִּיחָתוּ אִשְׁתּוֹ. אָמְרָה מִי צָרִיךְ לְמִי? אָמַר לָהּ הִיא צָרִיכָיו לִי. אָמְרָה לּוֹ: חֲמַת הָעֵכָבְרִים מִי דָרְכוּ לֵילֵךְ אֶצְלֵ מִי, הָעֵכָבְרִים אֶצְלֵ חֲמַת אוֹ הַחֲמַת אֶצְלֵ הָעֵכָבְרִים, שָׁמַע לָהּ וַיָּשָׁב לוֹ עַד שֶׁשָּׁכַח תְּלִמּוּדוֹ.

**Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai** (1st Century) was one of the great Tannaitic sages during the period of the destruction of the Second Temple. He was a student of Hillel, and like his teacher was a man of peace who despised conflict. Tradition relates that he fled the besieged city of Jerusalem and convinced Vespasian to allow him to reestablish the Sanhedrin in Yavneh, where he rebuilt Torah study in the Land of Israel.

*After the passing of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai his students moved to Yavneh, a great center of Torah at the time. But Rabbi Elazar ben Arach went with his wife to Emmaus (near modern day Latrun) in order to enjoy the hot water springs and fine wine.*

*(When he wished to join his colleagues his wife convinced him that since he is greater than them, they need to come to study, and not the reverse. Just like mice follow the food, rather than the food follows the mice...)*

*The Talmud relates that as a result of his residence in Emmaus, Rabbi Elazar forgot his studies and even made mistakes when reading from the Torah (Talmud, Shabbat 147b).*

*We see from here what can happen when emphasis is placed on the intellect and not on character traits and Divine service with the lower faculties of the body as well.*

# D. True Leadership

## >> The Rebbe

### A Great Person or a Leader?

This is also true regarding leadership of the Jewish people.

A person who deals only with the intellectually or emotionally refined people, and says that he can leave the rest for his assistants to deal with, cannot be a leader.

He may be a good Jew, a great and refined person in every respect, but not a leader. The hallmark of a leader is what the Midrash tells us regarding Moses, that as a shepherd he cared for all types of sheep in his flock. This is how Moses proved his ability to serve as the shepherd of the Jewish people.

ועל דרך זה בנוגע לנשיא על בני ישראל:

מי שמתעסק רק עם בעלי מוחין, בעלי שכל, או רק עם בעלי רגש, ואילו בנוגע לשאר בני ישראל טוען הוא שעמהם יכול להתעסק ה"שמש" שלו - הרי זה סימן שאינו נשיא!

הוא יכול להיות יהודי טוב, אדם טוב, גדול ונעלה, עם כל המעלות; אבל להיות נשמה כללית, מנהיג בישראל - הנה הסימן על זה הוא כפי שמצינו במדרש<sup>13</sup> על הפסוק<sup>14</sup> "ומשה היה רועה", שבהיותו רועה צאן דאג לכל סוגי הצאן, ובזה בחנו אותו להיות רועה ישראל.

### Source 9 Midrash on Exodus 2:2

He would hold back the older sheep for the young to be able to pasture in the soft grass. Once they ate their fill, He would allow the older sheep to eat the mildly hard grass. Then the strong sheep would be set off to eat the hard grass that was left. G-d [saw the care he gave for every sheep and] said, "One who knows the needs of every individual sheep should shepherd my nation."

הָיָה מוֹנֵעַ הַגְּדוּלִים מִפְּנֵי הַקְּטַנִּים, וְהָיָה מוֹצִיא הַקְּטַנִּים לְרֵעוֹת, כְּדֵי שְׂיָרְעוּ עֵשֶׂב הַרֶךְ, וְאַחַר כֵּן מוֹצִיא הַזְּקֵנִים כְּדֵי שְׂיָרְעוּ עֵשֶׂב הַבִּינוֹנִית, וְאַחַר כֵּן מוֹצִיא הַבְּחוּרִים שְׂיָהִיו אוֹכְלֵי עֵשֶׂב הַקָּשָׁה. אָמַר הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, מִי שֶׁהוּא יוֹדֵעַ לְרֵעוֹת הַצֹּאן אֵיךְ לְפִי כָחוּ, יְבֵא וְיָרְעָה בְּעַמִּי.

(In the Midrash Rabbah this story is related about King David, but see the Buber edition of Midrash Tehillim 78:152, “Moses would also pasture Yitro’s flock like David did. G-d said, since he knows how to pasture sheep, he should care for my flock, the Jewish people.”)

## >> The Rebbe

Moses paved the way for all the subsequent generations of Jewish leaders, up until the leader of our generation, the Rebbe whose birthday and day of redemption we are now celebrating.

וזו הייתה סלילת הדרך עבור כל רועה נאמן  
בישראל מידי דור ודור, עד לדורנו זה - בעל  
השמחה והגאולה.

משיחת יום ה' פרשת בלק, י"ב תמוז, ה'תשכ"ז  
בלתי מוגה  
תורת מנחם, כרך מ"ז עמוד 157

### **“Our Girls”?**

A well-known Chassidic leader came from Israel and met with the Rebbe. During their meeting, the Rebbe called attention to a particular challenge faced by Jewish girls studying in college that could negatively affect their ability to later build a proper Jewish home.

The Chassidic leader asked the Rebbe, do “our girls” go to such colleges?

The Rebbe replied, all Jewish girls are “our girls,” and we need to care for all of them.

\*

### **A leader of a community or a leader of the Jewish people**

The Tolna Rebbe, a Chassidic leader in Israel, once wrote about the relationship between the Lubavitcher Rebbe and other religious leaders. He argued that in many ways they didn’t have a common language.

He explained:

A regular leader cares for his community. He makes sure that his synagogue is large and spacious, he arranges financial assistance for needy members of the community, cares for the level of education in the community’s school, etc. When he encounters difficulties he consults with fellow community leaders, and when there is a matter of shared concern they sometimes join forces to fight for the cause.

But when such a leader speaks to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and the Rebbe tells him that he’s very worried

about a young Jew in the Far East who has nowhere to celebrate the Pesach seder and we need to urgently send someone there to arrange a public seder, the regular communal level leader simply doesn't understand what he's hearing. Why is this young man in Thailand my responsibility? Did he learn in my Yeshivah? Does he pray in my synagogue?

*This is the difference, the Tolna Rebbe writes, between a good and effective community leader and a true leader of the Jewish people, who feels that every Jew is his child.*

\*

*In a Sichah (10 Shevat 5722) the Rebbe quotes from the Kohelet Yaakov (by the author of Melo Haroim) that the Hebrew word nasi, leader, is an acronym for "a spark of our forefather Jacob."*

*The Rebbe asks, why specifically Jacob? Why not Abraham or Isaac? The Rebbe explains that Abraham had a son Yishmael, and Isaac had a son Esau. Jacob however was blessed that all of his children followed in his path.*

*This is the difference between a communal leader and a leader of the generation. A regular leader cares for his community, and doesn't see himself as responsible for other Jews.*

*A leader of the Jewish people, however, is like Jacob, whose children all followed in his path. This is a leader that can't fall asleep at night if there is a Jew somewhere in the world that is in need of spiritual or physical assistance.*

## **Story** The Shliach on the Donkey

We are all familiar with the Rebbe's shlichus initiative, which now encompasses 10,000 shluchim and shluchos all over the world. Today I want to tell you a story about the first shluchim, Rabbi Shlomo and Pessya Matusov.

The Matusovs went on shlichus to Casablanca, Morocco in 1951. Upon arrival, they immediately focused on education, opening schools for boys and girls. Over the following years they expanded their circle of influence to other cities in Morocco, including Marrakesh, Arfud, and others.

A few months after their arrival, Rabbi Matusov discovered that there are many more Jews that no one is caring for, Jews that live in small isolated villages. These villages were distant from modern civilization. There was no running water, the children ran around barefoot and in torn clothes, and the only way to reach these villages was by donkey.

**Rabbi Shlomo Matusov** (1917–2007) was the first shliach sent directly by the Rebbe. He was the representative of Merkos Le'inyanei Chinuch in Marseille, France and was then sent by the Rebbe to Casablanca, Morocco, where he worked for 50 years. His wife Pessia was the daughter of Rabbi Yehudah Leib Karasik.

Rabbi Matusov was undeterred, and like our forefather Abraham before him, he rode a donkey from village to village over the course of several weeks, and established schools for the local boys and girls. He would find a local person who was relatively well educated, commit to paying him a monthly salary, locate an available room for rent in a village house, and thus the village would have its own small school.

The network of Chabad-established schools in Morocco in those years reached 90 branches in cities and villages all over the country. There were large, modern schools in the big cities, and small, simple schools in the smaller villages.

During this time, Chabad was collaborating with the Joint Distribution Committee who contributed the funding for this large operation. The Joint once decided to send a delegation to visit the Chabad schools in Morocco. When they saw the schools in the large cities they were very impressed and complimented Rabbi Matusov on his wonderful work. But when they continued on to the small villages and saw the terrible living conditions, the children sitting on the floor in torn clothes learning the Hebrew alphabet from a man wrapped in the traditional jalabiya, they were shocked.

The Joint representatives recommended that Chabad focus its efforts on the large cities, and even promised to increase the budget for those schools, but the small village schools were to be closed.

Rabbi Matusov sent the Joint's proposal to the Rebbe, and as you can probably guess, the Rebbe was vehemently opposed. The Rebbe maintained that we cannot focus on the "good children" from "good homes," even though working with them is much easier and more rewarding. The Rebbe argued that every Jewish child is important. Even the children of the isolated villages need to learn and grow. The Rebbe said that on the contrary, additional funds should be directed towards buying clothing and blankets to help the village children in the material sense as well.

**Summary:**

The Rebbe paints a picture of what a true leader is, and along the way teaches us what true Torah study is, and what genuine personal character refinement is.

In all three realms we cannot be selective. Truth encompasses everything, without distinctions.

- A person who is studying Torah properly can't say that one part of Torah is pleasant and another part is not.
- A person working on personal character refinement can't say that there are certain areas he wishes to exert control over and others that he doesn't.
- A person that wishes to be a true leader can't say that he only wants to have a relationship with certain people, and not with others.

In all three of these areas, if a person is selective the result will be a total loss.

- A person who learns the parts of Torah he understands and enjoys and neglects those he doesn't will eventually distort the meaning of the understandable part (we saw an example of this with Nazi Germany).
- A person who works to refine only the intellectual and moral elements of his personality while ignoring the element of day to day life will end up with a distorted logic and morality.
- A leader who only concerns himself with the intelligent and wealthy people and isn't interested in caring for the simple people simply isn't a leader.

To conclude the class, the following JEM clip is recommended (until 2:50):



<https://videos.jem.tv/video-player?clip=484&produced=63>

Another recommended clip is the story of Mr. George Rohr and the beginners minyan he told the Rebbe about (8:15-10:45)



<https://jemtv.page.link/bLoF>

- (1) משלי כט, ג.
- (2) עירובין סד, א (ובפרש"י). וראה גם תו"מ חכ"ט ע' 245 ואילך. וש"נ.
- (3) מדרש תהלים (באבער) ט, ב.
- (4) ראה תו"מ חמ"ג ריש ע' 401. וש"נ.
- (5) מכילתא ופרש"י יתרו כ, א.
- (6) מג"ע אופן קפו.
- (7) ויק"ר פ"ל, יב.
- (8) נדרים לב, ריש ע"ב.
- (9) קהלת ג, יט.
- (10) חגיגה טז, א.
- (11) ראה גם תו"מ חל"ח ע' 255.
- (12) רפ"ה.
- (13) שמו"ר פ"ב, ב. וראה לעיל ע' 118. וש"נ.
- (14) שמות ג, א.