

You shall observe My commandments, you shall not desecrate My holy Name. (22:31, 32)

One would assume that *chillul Hashem*, profaning Hashem's Name, occurs only when one commits a transgression, thereby demonstrating that he has little regard for his spiritual dimension. What about an individual who performs *mitzvos*, but his attitude is lacking? He does what he absolutely must do to fulfill the *mitzvah*, but does not go the extra mile? He buys a simple *Esrog* "off the rack" with no regard to its beauty. *Hiddur mitzvah* means beautifying the *mitzvah*, showing how much it really means to him; dressing for *Shabbos* as if he were attending a wedding; glorifying the *mitzvah* as if it were really important to him. When an individual does not engage in *hiddur mitzvah*, explains **Horav Doniel Moshovitz, zl**, it is a form of *chillul Hashem*, since people viewing his attitude see an individual who really does not take *mitzvah* observance seriously. It does not carry much significance for him.

Furthermore, at times we convince ourselves that we may pick and choose *mitzvos* at will, in accordance with our proclivities. It can go so far that we may even delude ourselves into believing that the end justifies the means. One allows himself to be lenient in areas that he should not, all because he is performing a *mitzvah*. This occurs when Torah study is carried out at the expense of *davening*. Anytime one does not fully exert himself in the execution of a *mitzvah*, employing the excuse that he is involved in another *mitzvah*, is profaning Hashem's Name. By his action, he is indicating that not all *mitzvos* are his priorities.

Applying the "end justifies the means" card demonstrates a lack of respect for all *mitzvos*. Every *mitzvah* comes from Hashem. There is no such thing as pushing one aside at the expense of another. One does not have the right to allow himself to act inappropriately or unethically as a means for achieving a greater good. It has gotten to the point that we permit ourselves to ignore the sensitivities and emotions of others who might be in the way of progress. Just because rabbi "so and so" established this organization and gave his life and blood to maintain it, now it is time to remove him. He is in the way. It is all for the "greater good." Well – a "greater good" at the expense of another Jew is not very "good."

The **Alter, zl, m'Slabodka** was a *mechanech*, educator, par excellence. He is considered by many to be the father of the Lithuanian *yeshivos*, because he saw to it that whenever there was a need, he sent his most accomplished students to bolster other *yeshivos*. (Imagine that happening today.) Furthermore, many of the *roshei yeshivah*, *mashgichim* and *rebbeim* had been his students. Following World War I, a *yeshivah* that was going through a difficult period sought his help. He dispatched a young *mashgiach*, an individual replete in Torah scholarship, who was both charismatic and pious, a prolific speaker, who could inspire large groups as well as penetrate the individual hearts of the most self-absorbed, hard-to-reach young men. He turned the *yeshivah* around. In a short time, students were flocking to hear him, to be in his proximity, to study from him and to apply the inspiration which they garnered from him to their personal lives. This young

mashgiach did not enter the halls of the *yeshivah* in a vacuum. The *yeshivah* already had a full complement of staff – *mashgichim*, *rebbeim*, etc. – who were getting on in age and had lost touch with the students and with the times. In other words, the arrival and immediate success of the young newcomer was not necessarily welcomed by everyone.

The tenure of the young *mashgiach* at the *yeshivah* came to an untimely end with his sudden passing. He had been there just a short time. The *Alter* was devastated. This student meant so much to him. He had had such a bright future in Torah education. What a tragic loss to his family, to his students, to the entire Torah world. The *Alter* ruminated and made a startling comment, “Who knows? Who knows whether the immediate success of this young *mashgiach* did not in some way infringe upon the sensitivities of the older *rebbeim* and *mashgichim*? Veritably, his intentions were pure and innocent, but his success may have come at the expense of others. The end never justifies the means. Perhaps a more diplomatic and sensitive approach should have been employed in introducing him to the *yeshivah*’s faculty.”

Horav Shmuel Aharon Yudelevitz, zl, author of the *Meil Shmuel*, possessed many exemplary qualities. He was a Torah scholar whose depth in *halachah*, as well as analytical dialectic, was peerless. A holy, righteous person, he was wholly devoted to the Yerushalayim community. As the capstone to a remarkable Torah giant, he was an orator who could move and inspire large audiences with his pearls of wisdom and dramatic delivery. His devotion toward reaching out to Jews of all stripes motivated him to travel far and wide to inspire audiences with his lectures. When told that he was not in the physical condition to undertake such strenuous and time consuming trips, his reply was that: *Zikui ha’rabim*, bringing merit to the multitudes, reaching out to Jews who required his “vocal” embrace, outweighed the temporary deprivations.

Rav Shmuel lived in the Batei Horodna development in Yerushalayim, which was home to a large contingent of committed Jews. He *davened* in the main *shul*, which was under the leadership of a capable *Rav*. One year, the *Rav* suddenly became ill, and, after a short while, passed away. The many worshippers petitioned for *Rav* Shmuel to deliver a *mussar*, ethical, discourse prior to *Kol Nidrei*. What better time for effective inspiration than prior to *Kol Nidrei*? His words would pierce the most recalcitrant heart and pave the way for their *teshuvah*, repentance. It was a hard sell; *Rav* Shmuel refused to speak. Although this was the most propitious time of the year to reach people, to do what he did best – he refused to capitalize on the opportunity. He would not speak.

Finally, he revealed the reason that he had demurred. Apparently, the recent widow of the *Rav* would be sitting in her usual place in the women’s section. As she had done many times before, she would look forward to the *Rav* ascending the pulpit to deliver his address; only, this time, it would not be her husband – but a stranger. Can you imagine the pain she would experience? He could not be party to such callousness. One does not look at the benefits when it means hurting a fellow. The end does not justify the means. Moshe *Rabbeinu* refused to go to Egypt to assume the leadership of *Klal Yisrael* if it would entail hurting his older brother, Aharon *HaKohen*. Once he heard that, indeed, Aharon was enthusiastic about Moshe’s appointment – he accepted. *Rav*

Shmuel stood his ground and did not speak to the congregation – that year.