

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

A CLOSER
LOOK AT
SOME OF
THE REBBE'S
HORA'OS

KEEPING IN TOUCH DURING VACATION

THE REBBE'S HORA'OS FOR
TEACHERS TO REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH
THEIR STUDENTS DURING VACATION

Compiled By: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

Written By: RABBI TZEMACH FELLER

לעילוי נשמת
מרת לאה בת הרה"ח ר' אליהו נחום ע"ה בלאק
נלב"ע שבת קודש כ"ה אלול ה'תשע"ג
ת'נצ"ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י
משפחתה שיחיו

MUCH MORE THAN DURING YESHIVA

I am interested in knowing about the *seder hayeshiva* now, during vacation. Certainly, you'll share good news about this—that you have found a way to influence the students during vacation as well. As I've already said, in certain ways, you can influence the students much more during vacation than when *yeshiva* is in session, for many reasons.¹

ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT IN SUMMERTIME

In a letter addressed to the "administration and teachers of Yeshivos Achei Temimim Lubavitch" and sent to a number of branches of that yeshiva, the Rebbe writes:

In keeping with the change in schedules at some of the *yeshivos* during the summer months, I want to bring your attention to the following matters:

Even during the time when the students are found in *yeshiva* and are diligently laboring over their studies, the responsibility is incumbent on their educators not to divert their attention from their students even during the hours that they are outside the confines of the *yeshiva*. They must try with all their might [to ensure] that their conduct and way of life should be proper at all times and in every moment.

This is all the more important during the days of summer vacation, when extra attention must be paid to the students, to know about each and every one of them, where they're located and what they're busy with, and to help them in all types of ways to go on the proper and straight path. As our Sages taught, even when [the teacher] is not seen by the students, he oversees them and sees to it that his attention be focused on them (Bava Basra 8b, see Maharsha).²

"FOOD FOR THE WAY"

If the *talmidim* must go home for Tishrei, you must give them spiritual "provisions for the way," i.e. directives on how they should behave, and easily-understandable *maamarim*

that they can learn on their own where they are, and especially that they'll be able to repeat or teach in public.

This is only if it is an absolute necessity [to send them home]. However, effort must be made in the opposite direction, that during the *Yomim Noraim*, *Aseres Yemei Teshuva*, and *Yom Kippur*, they remain in the same *yeshiva* through which they are receiving guidance in *Yiras Shamayim*. The great benefit and the publicizing of this will have an inestimable impact on the students and, even more so, on the surroundings.³

GET TOGETHER DURING VACATION

It would be best if they could gather their students a few times during the weeks of vacation. This will create an opportunity to remind them about timely matters like the Three Weeks, preparation for Elul, and so on. You should also remind them of the *dinim* and *minhagim* that are at their level.⁴

I haven't heard from you yet about your plans for how to use the vacation, setting up at least several get-togethers with the students during these weeks, or staying in touch in the proper way.⁵

INFORMAL EDUCATION

It's certainly unnecessary to encourage you about what I have written to the *mosdos chinuch* under my influence: that while there is time, they should prepare "provisions for the way" for the students for vacation. It's best if you find a way to ensure that the connection with them is not completely severed during these weeks. In fact, during vacation, when they don't have to learn secular studies, there is room for additional influence in *kodesh*. We see clearly that things that are taught in an informal way—not in a formal class, but during a conversation or a walk—are absorbed and accepted better and more easily.⁶

STAY IN TOUCH OVER SHABBOS AND YOM TOV AS WELL

It's unfortunately clear from your letter that the teachers did not remain in touch with the students throughout the vacation. While we don't complain about the past, *yehi ratzon* that in a timely fashion they will determine together how to remain in touch with the students during future vacations.

This doesn't apply only to the long summer vacation, but rather how to influence the students during the breaks while school is in session, i.e. on Shabbos, *Yom Tov*, and the like.⁷

Judging by your silence on this topic, the vacation was not utilized properly, and it's possible that you didn't stay in touch with the students. It's a shame that specifically during the time that the students are exempt from secular education, they aren't being given a broad measure of *limmudei kodesh*—even if it wouldn't be by way of formal lessons and *shiurim*, but rather in a way that is befitting vacation.

Yehi ratzon that at least in the future you will put in effort to do this, for, contrary to the prevailing opinion, [influencing students during vacation] is not an unimportant part of school activities—quite the opposite. There is nothing that can stand in the way of willpower, even if there are difficulties in bringing this into actuality.

When I say "vacation," I'm also referring to Shabbos, *Yom Tov*, and the *Tishrei Yomim Tovim*, as [Tishrei] is a "general month" that [has relevance] to the entire year.⁸

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 4 p. 357.
2. Ibid p. 371f. (Translation based on "I Will Write It In Their Hearts" vol. 8, letter no. 1090.)
3. Ibid vol. 7 p. 347.
4. Ibid vol. 11 p. 150.
5. Ibid vol. 13 p. 347f.
6. Ibid vol. 11 p. 225f.
7. Ibid vol. 15 p. 373.
8. Ibid p. 374.