



Investing Where It Counts

In the early years of Chassidus, parents of children who went to learn Chassidus would often sit *shiva*.

Tzvi's in-laws were no exception.

Tzvi was supported by his father-in-law and lived with him in town. Slowly, over time, he had become familiar with the teachings of Chassidus and felt that this was the path he would like to take. However, he was afraid of making his decision to travel to Liozna and learn with the Alter Rebbe public, for he knew that his family and the townspeople would not take it lightly. Eventually however, he did travel to the Alter Rebbe.

After sitting *shiva* and "mourning" the loss, his father-in-law, who was a reasonable man, decided that he would travel to Liozna himself and assess the situation. At present, his daughter was a veritable *aguna*; he reasoned that if indeed Tzvi had chosen a

good path to follow then he would let him return home. But if not, he would demand that he give his daughter a *get* and free her to marry again.

After spending some time in Liozna Tzvi's father-in-law realized he had been mistaken and encouraged Tzvi to return home. Tzvi, however, refused to do so because he was scared of the repercussions he would get from the family and townspeople.

Not sure how to proceed, he went to the Alter Rebbe and asked him to return his son-in-law.

The Alter Rebbe replied. "Am I holding him back? Take him if you want."

"He is afraid they will harm him."

"So make sure that they don't lay hands on him," concluded the Alter Rebbe.

"I now see," continued the man, "that my son-in-law has taken the proper path and the ways of the Chassidim are the right ones; however, I have one

matter that disturbs me. The Gemara says that a person should divide his daily Torah learning into three parts. A third in Mikra, a third in Mishna and the final third in Gemara. Now, if Chassidus is part of the first one then this should only be a third of the day, yet I have seen that my son-in-law spends two thirds of his time learning Chassidus and he learns Gemara for only one third."

"Tell me," the Alter Rebbe asked, "How much money is invested in the store you own to make a livelihood?"

"Two thousand ruble," the man answered.

"And how much of that is yours?"

"Only 500 of that sum belongs to me, the rest is from loans."

The Alter Rebbe continued: "You are transgressing the words of the Gemara. The Gemara states that a person should divide up his assets into three parts. One third in

business, the second in real estate and the third should be cash, available on hand. Not only haven't you divided your money accordingly, you've put all your money into one asset, and even taken out loans many times that amount for your store!"

The man replied, "This is indeed true and following that advice would be good, but in these days, even with all the many loans, business is still tough."

The Alter Rebbe then concluded his thought, "The same applies here. In the times of the Gemara, if someone followed that learning schedule they would become true G-d fearing individuals; now, however, things are different. Even if one were to invest a tremendous amount of time to learning Chassidus, it would only be through great difficulty that they would become true G-d fearing people..." **1**

(*Reshimos Devarim vol. 1, p. 89*)