

The RYS Daily 3/22/07 Public and Political Action VII

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 1, pages 282 - 283.

From time to time, R. Israel would summon meetings of the great Geonim to take up the status of Russian Jews. He would conduct the entire proceedings. All manner of procedures were considered. Some advocated sending a rabbinical delegation to the Czar and his Ministers, others to send letters of petition. Some recommended the tactics of the patriarch, Jacob, "to send a gift before them..." For this purpose, levies would have to be imposed on the rich, proportionate to their wealth, and an enormous sum of money mobilized. More than once they succeeded in alleviating Jewish suffering and annulling evil decrees. Since the prosecution of such programs required absolute secrecy, it fell to R. Israel and his colleagues, the other great rabbis, personally to go to the homes of the rich to solicit the funds requisite for their purposes. [9]

[9] See Aaron Cohen, Chesed Leavraham, No. 114. R. Israel once arrived in Bialistock, and came to R. Samuel Mohliver for this purpose. The lay-leaders, however, refused to accompany him to solicit contributions from the rich. One offered the excuse that he was ill; the second, that he was tied up in business and was preoccupied with raising loans, and the third, that he was new in the city, and going soliciting would damage his name and reputation. R. Israel called them all together, and said: Of the three of you it is said: 'He that pursues after charity and kindness, finds life, prosperity and honor.' You complained of your health — through this act of kindness, you will achieve health and life. You complained about your business — you will find prosperity and blessing in your affairs. You feared for the loss of your name and reputation. You will achieve praise and honor thereby." The words, spoken with a smile and almost as if in jest, hit the mark. They agreed to accompany him.

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