

Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk

Special thanks to Revach L'Neshama for the content

His whole life he waged a war for the truth - the external and internal truth. This was the essence of Rav Menachem Mendel Morgenstern, better known as the Kotzker Rebbe. He was born in 5547/1787 and lived at a time when Chasiddus was making great inroads into the mainstream of Jewish society.

He left no *seforim*, no tales of miracles, and no biography. His lone legacy is his short sharp sayings that he became famous for to the world outside of Kotzk. He did not seek honor, fortune, or fame. He sought to raise Chasiddus to a movement for the elite. He longed to bring Chasiddus into a movement with truly inspired Avodas Hashem and intense Torah learning as its cornerstone.

When the Kotzker was asked why he did not want to write a *sefer*, he said that in Kotzk people work hard all week long. The only time to read his *sefer* would be on Friday night after the meal. At that time, however, a person is tired from the entire week and will lay down on the couch with the *sefer*. He will shortly thereafter fall asleep without reading anything and the *sefer* will fall on the floor. "So why should I write a *sefer* whose only use will be to lie on the floor in shame?" Such was the Kotzker truth.

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Halacha Challenge

Calm Thoughts

In the last issue, we continued discussing the halachos of thoughts on Shabbos, and saw that it's prohibited to think about weekday activities if such thoughts cause a person to become worried or burdened by them. In this issue, we will explore a case where such thoughts don't cause a person to worry or become burdened by them.



Mr. Fienberg is a photographer for the city's newspaper. This Friday was a busy day for Mr. Fienberg - he took pictures of the annual car show that was taking place in the city.

"I still need to take more pictures on Sunday - the last day of the show," thought Mr. Fienberg. "But, at least, most of the project is complete!"

On Shabbos, Mr. Fienberg would occasionally think in his mind about the models of cars that would be good to photograph on Sunday. Even though those thoughts did not disturb him, Mr. Fienberg was debating in his mind whether or not he should try not to have those thoughts in his mind.

Q. May Mr. Fienberg think about the photos that he will take on Sunday?

DEDICATIONS

- Dedicated to Shmuel Leib for continued success in his Avodas Hashem. Happy Birthday!

Special thanks to kehillas *Beis Tefillah Yonah Avraham*



