

The RYS Daily 12/14/06 Vilna VII

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 1, page 203.

Here R. Israel wrought a revolution. He discovered the opportunity afforded by the public address of meeting With the masses, and its possibilities as an instrument to influence and guide them. All his genius and scholarship could not induce him to remain in his ivory tower. Instead he descended to the level of the ordinary people to give them moral reproof. His addresses were unique both in form and content, and even accomplished scholars found interest in them. Thus by changing its entire nature he restored the art of public address to its pristine glory.

He encouraged others to follow suit. One of his maxims gained wide currency: "Not everyone who can, should speak in public; but everyone who does, should know how." He imparted his techniques to his disciples. Scholars that they were, they, too, did not consider it below their dignity, but instead utilized the medium to extend their influence.' Many great Torah scholars and rabbis of the time specifically trained themselves in public speaking and some became masters of the art.

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