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Through his popular addresses, R. Israel trained the people in the way of Musar. He taught a total Judaism and reproached his listeners, above all else, about their behavior in interpersonal relationships: that they should studiously avoid taking money not rightfully theirs, be honest in business, refrain from gossip and slander. He encouraged them to earn their livelihood as craftsmen or manual laborers, since these occupations did not involve cheating and duplicity. He expatiated at length on ethical behavior and purity in thought and intention.

His practice was to adapt his address to the level of the congregation, to suit its particular situation. Whenever he described acquaintances among his listeners, he would, it seemed, point his words directly at them and so uncover all their inner conflicts. So great was his influence, that people were even induced to leave their employment and businesses and start their lives anew, once they realized that their original occupation involved infringement of the Halachah.

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