

The RYS Daily 12/3/06 Early Life of RYS XIII

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 1 pages 194 - 195.

Several ideas occurred to him. He first considered the role of itinerant preacher. This would afford him the opportunity to meet the broad masses and to impart something of his ideas and spirit to them. Implementing his plan, he even went so far as to set up a collection plate whenever he spoke. He held this psychologically important. If the address cost them money, the audience would appreciate it better and become more receptive to his message.^o Later he changed his mind. He realized that the effect was negative. The fact that the speaker derived monetary gain from his address, utilizing it as a source of livelihood, lowered his status and vitiated his influence. He also ceased to regard preaching as the most effective means of advancing his Musar approach. It failed to establish any enduring direct connection with the audience.

He then thought that he could best attain his goal by becoming Mashgiach (spiritual dean) of a Yeshivah. There, inside a limited circle, among young students subject to his authority, he would be able to guide them in his ways and spirit, and from there his influence would emanate and radiate to ever wider circles. No Yeshivah, however, was willing to offer him such an appointment. The post of Mashgiach was not particularly distinguished in those days and it was considered beneath his dignity. Reports have it that in his later years R. Israel applied for the position of Mashgiach of the famous Yeshivah of Volozhin but was turned down for the same reason.

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