



Overview

Siman 53 Seif 4:

The *shaliach tzibbur* must be worthy. What is considered worthy? He must be free of sin, does not have a bad reputation from his youth, he should be humble and acceptable by the people, have a pleasant and sweet voice and is accustomed to reading *Torah* נבאים וכתובים.

- ❖ It is appropriate for the *shaliach tzibbur* to wear garments that are long enough that his legs will not be seen. (M.B. 13)
- ❖ The *shaliach tzibbur* should be capable of discussing communal matters and preferably should be a *tzadik* the son of a *tzadik*. (M.B. 13)
- ❖ Physical blemishes do not disqualify a person from serving as a *shaliach tzibbur* but there are those who are stringent when there is another person capable of serving as *shaliach tzibbur*. (M.B. 13)
- ❖ Someone who violates an oath should not be chosen as *shaliach tzibbur*. (M.B. 14)
- ❖ Someone who sinned is unfit to serve as *shaliach tzibbur* even occasionally. Pri Megadim writes that he is disqualified only as long as he did not repent. (M.B. 14)
- ❖ The restriction regarding someone who has a bad reputation from his youth is to appoint him in the first place but if he already holds the position this is not a reason to remove him. (M.B. 15)
- ❖ If a *shaliach tzibbur* develops a bad reputation even an individual may demand his removal. (M.B. 15)
- ❖ One who has a bad reputation from his youth should preferably not be chosen as *shaliach tzibbur* even if we are certain that he has done *teshuva*. (M.B. 16)
- ❖ A *shaliach tzibbur* should avoid becoming involved in a dispute between others and if he has a disagreement he should present the matter to the *rov* or the community to adjudicate. (M.B. 17)
- ❖ It is acceptable for one who is not married to serve as *shaliach tzibbur* but if there is someone who is married he takes precedence. (M.B. 18)

Stories to Share

The Rabbis' Conflict

מ"ב ס' נ"ג, ס"ק י"ז : "וְאִם יָשַׁל שׁוֹם קָטָט וּמְרִיבָה עִם אֲחֵיךְ" ...

We find on today's *amud* that a *chazzan* must do his utmost to avoid *machlokes* and work out all altercations.

Once, when Rav Shlomo Wolbe, zt"l, was in a certain town in Israel, he stayed at the home of one of the *rabbonim* of the town. The *rov* asked Rav Wolbe to accompany him to a *din Torah*. They arrived first, but when the other local *rov* arrived, Rav Wolbe's host refused to stand for him. This seemed strange since the newly-arrived *rov* was far older than Rav Wolbe's host and common courtesy seemed to dictate that the younger *rov* stand or at least make some gesture of respect toward the senior *talmid chacham*.

At this point, a few of the members of the community called

Halacha Highlight

Choosing a *shaliach tzibbur*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 53 Seif 4
שליח צבור צריך שיחיה הגון

The *shaliach tzibbur* should be worthy

Shulchan Aruch writes a community must be careful to choose a *shaliach tzibbur* who is worthy. He proceeds to enumerate numerous traits and characteristics that qualify one as a worthy candidate for *shaliach tzibbur*. The reason why so much emphasis was placed on choosing a *shaliach tzibbur* who is worthy is that it used to be that the *shaliach tzibbur* would say the *tefilos* out loud and discharge the communities obligation to daven. Since he was literally davening on behalf of others, the Gemara in *Taanis* (16b) emphasizes the importance of choosing a worthy *shaliach tzibbur*. Nowadays, that each person daven for himself *Magen Avrohom* (ס"ק כ' ומוaba ב' מ"ב נ"ג) writes that since all the *shaliach tzibbur* does is read *piyutim*, *kaddish* and it is unnecessary for the *shaliach tzibbur* to possess all of the traits enumerated in Shulchan Aruch. *Chasam Sofer* (שוו"ת כת"ס סי' ר"ה) echoes the same sentiment and writes that since each person pours out his own heart to Hashem we are not particular that the *shaliach tzibbur* should possess the traits enumerated by the *Poskim*.

Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"ג) writes that it is preferable to choose as *shaliach tzibbur* one who is a *tzadik* the son of a *tzadik*. *Taz* (ס"ק י"ג) in the name of *Rosh* takes the opposite approach and maintains that it is preferable to draw closer someone who is the offspring of someone who was distant from Hashem. *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* (ס"ק י"ג) explains that since the *tzadik* the son of one who is wicked does not have ancestral merit he is more brokenhearted and this causes his *tefila* to be more readily heard by Hashem. It seems evident from this that they understood that *Rosh* was giving precedence to one who is the son of someone who was wicked. This is in contrast with *Mishnah Berurah* (הנ"ל) who explained that according to *Rosh* it is acceptable if one's father was not a *tzadik* but he didn't go so far as to assert that even if he was wicked it is acceptable and possibly preferred.

over Rav Wolbe and pleaded with him, "Rabbi, please! Can't you make peace between the two rabbis of our town? They haven't spoken to each other in so long."

When Rav Wolbe broached the subject with his host, the man expressed indignation and began to heap abuse on the elder *rov*. He began an impassioned litany of all his grievances against the other man. "How could I consider making peace with someone who acted that way toward me!"

When Rav Wolbe's host finished pouring out all his pent-up venom he concluded, "Only someone like Rav Avrohom Grodzinsky zt"l could be a *rov* in the same city as another great *rov* like Rav Aizik Sher, zt"l, and still treat him like a brother!"

Rav Wolbe retorted, "Don't be so sure! I am certain that it was harder for them to live with each other than for you two here. You must learn to be less judgmental and get along—D'racheha darchei noam!"