

## Drush Seminars for Kollel Elyon Fellows

May 18, 2000

### I. Attitude

- ♦ **Remember:** sermons are just another form of הרבצת התורה. Take them seriously. But: difference in style/content betw sermon/lecture/sheur, etc.  
An art form
- ♦ **Aim** to inform and inspire, *not* to impress
- ♦ **Never** come across as arrogant/superior/paternalistic/overly self-assured
- ♦ **מוסר**--sparingly. Use "we," not "you" or "I"
- ♦ **Don't** glower at them < you speak. A smile helps lubricate your message
- ♦ **Some** humor is OK, but *not* belly-laughes or cynicism. Should be witty, more cerebral
- ♦ **In a Word:** *Respect your audience.* Always be prepared; Run Scared: אימתא דציבורא, butterflies

### II. Content

- ♦ Must have a *central idea*
- ♦ Listeners should "*go home with something*"...
- ♦ Must contain דברי תורה--not just secular ideas, your own biases  
דברי תורה should not be simplistic, but also not too recondite-- or too fanciful  
(as: extreme Hasidic). Keep away from elaborate גמטריא. Puns--sparingly
- ♦ A שיעור בהלכה is not a דרשה. Keep it for another venue. *Sermon*→inspire...  
Sermon certainly not book review/summary NYTimes op-ed...
- ♦ Develop your *own style*--eventually... Meanwhile, *imitate* good stuff-- is like trying on a suit <buying it. (Same will be true for "Delivery"--later)
- ♦ **Above all:** *Organize your thoughts* in logical sequence. Sermon must have beginning/middle/end
- ♦ **Beginning:** If you=guest, thank introducer/acknowledge Rav/dignitaries.  
If regular, own pulpit-- never begin with שבת שלום, "Friends," etc.

Forgo lengthy & superfluous introductions. Don't tell how you came to write this sermon. Just give it. Joseph Lookstein: Come in pitching...

"Lamm's 90 second Rule" - *tausion*

- ♦ **Length:** 12-15-18-20 minutes. High Holidays--a bit more than usual

♦ **Concluding:** taper off. don't just sit down abruptly; מסיים בנחמה

♦ **Middle:** *This is it!*

Vary content intensity--don't always shout/whisper/drone on... Content~voice

Look for opportunity for drama--without histrionics

Transitions

Make sure central message is understood. Since sermon=oral, need repetition--but beware of overdoing

♦ **Preparation:** *Everything depends on prep'n.* Don't rely on sudden inspiration...

Preparation should begin well in advance.

David Hollander: Friday morning panic... פי האתון ע"ש עם חשיכה--

*How I prepare:* Random series of ideas/sources/timely elements/phrases.

*Then:* matching up relevant items

*Then:* creative part--begin organization in rational sequence.

*Most difficult part:* cutting! (ST מעק תורה: איך נתיבות וקצוה"ח: איד)

♦ **Where to find source material:** 1<sup>st</sup>--not in "sermon manuals" =pap...

\*Classical תורה שלימה and רבה, תנחומא, ילקוט שמעוני, מדרשים

\*Classical דרשות אל עמ' דרשות הרב/מועדי הראי"ה, as: ספרי דרוש

\*תו"ת, נצי"ב; etc. Of course: רש"י, רמב"ן, בעלי תוס' (תוספות השלם)--as: פרשנות

I like: מהר"ל מפראג/צדוק המרדוך רביעי/הכתב והקבלה etc

(But don't substitute Nechama Lebovitz for!)

\* Commentaries on אבות, סידור, Drush

\* Hasidic, as: בני יששכר, ר' צדוק, ר' יהודה (ליקוטי יהודה), plus many anthologies

\*"yeshivish"/Musar (=mostly on ת"ת), as: ספרות של טלו, מוסרי התורה לר' ירוחם, (משולחן גבוה, לקח טוב) and anthologies

\*Contemporary: very skimpy!... Israel Levinthal ... (RR?)

\*Contemporary material: NYT>Daily News, Post...

Good magazines, as: Commentary, National Review, etc

Any good reading, good style--incl. Abraham Lincoln, Eban,

### III. Delivery

♦ **Language**--not too "educated"--but not slang & beware of *Yinglish* ("by"/say over/on the spot/etc.) and excessive Heb'ms

♦ **Pronunciation and Articulation**

♦ **Voice**--get professional help if necessary

♦ **Posture**

♦ **Gesturing**

♦ **Don't begin** till everyone is silent