

The Weekly *Farbrengens*

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RECOGNIZING THE ENEMY (I)

ALWAYS ON GUARD

A person must always be wary of the *yetzer hara*, for even when he forgets about it, the *yetzer hara* does not forget about the person. He acts like a friend but in reality, is trying to destroy him completely.

A righteous person once met a troop of soldiers returning from a victorious battle, their arms loaded high with spoils. The man told them, "Now be prepared for the real war." Surprised, they asked him to explain. "That's the war the *yetzer hara* will fight when you celebrate with the spoils," he clarified.

(חובת הלבבות שער יחוד המעשה פ"ה)

The *tzaddik*, Reb Meir of Premishlan, once related: "One wintry day, while traveling with my Rebbe, Reb Mordechai of Kremnitz, our wagon reached an incline. It seemed the carriage would topple over at any moment. Full of youthful courage, I prepared to quickly jump out, but my Rebbe held onto me with his hand and said, 'Sit down calmly; no harm will befall you.' So it was. The wagon passed the incline safely.

"After some time had elapsed, and I had already forgotten about my desire to jump out, the carriage, driving on flat land, turned over, and we all fell out onto the snow. Reb Mordechai laughed: 'Nu, you see?' But I did not understand to what he was referring.

"Quite a while later, I realized he had been intimating a lesson in *avodas HaShem*: Sometimes a Yid is worried that he will *chas veshalom* fall into the clutches of the *yetzer hara*, who is constantly out to ensnare him, and *HaShem* helps him stay safe. However, when a Yid is confidently going along his path, and does not even realize that the *yetzer hara* is ready to pounce, specifically then he is likely to fall into his clutches..."

(תפארת צדיקים)

Chazal warn us that throughout one's entire life, one should not rely on his righteousness, for *Yochanan Kohen Gadol* served eighty years in the *Beis HaMikdash* and then strayed and became a *tzedoki*.

(ברכות כ"ט ע"א)

The *yetzer hara* does not suddenly try to tempt a person to commit severe *aveiros*; he works stage by stage. At first he convinces him about something

small, then he pushes further, until eventually he tries talking the person into serving *avoda zara*.

The Frierdiker Rebbe explains that the *yetzer hara* may even begin by giving his approval to the *mitzvos* being done ("*aseh kach*"), but he rationalizes and limits the extent of their fulfillment. For example, he encourages a person to take it easy and watch his health, to be "normal", to find favor in the eyes of others, and he brings proofs and explanations for all his claims. This cools a person down and enables the *yetzer hara* to push him further into actually committing *aveiros*.

(שבת ק"ה ע"ב, סה"מ קונטרסים א' ע' ל"ז ע"א)

general rule and remember it always. If something actually leads to active *avoda* (in refining one's *middos*) and is met up with opposition, then that opposition, even the noblest, is coming from the *yetzer hara*."

Relating this episode, the Rebbe Rashab added, "When I left that *yechidus*, I changed my *avoda* completely. Until then, I had assumed that the *yetzer hara* could only encourage a person to do negative things, and it is therefore necessary for one to be cautious only concerning those matters. I had never imagined that there could be a *frum yetzer hara*, let alone a *chassidish* *yetzer hara*, who is there just to restrain a person from being involved in his true *avoda*."

(היום יום כ"ג סיון, אג"ק מהר"י"צ ח"ד ע' סז)

Concerning those pious folk who, out of humility, abstain from *avoda*, the Frierdiker Rebbe said: "Even before becoming Rebbe, the *Tzemach Tzedek* would *farbreng* with the *chassidim* for *Simchas Beis HaSho'eiva*, discussing *Chassidus* and *avodas HaShem*. At one such *farbrengen* he said, 'My grandfather the Alter Rebbe and my father-in-law the Mitteler Rebbe have made *chassidim* canny (*klug*), so that they should know how to recognize the *nefesh habahamis* in all his false costumes and clever antics.'

(סה"ש ת"ש ע' 87)

The Frierdiker Rebbe related: "When I was a child, my father, the Rebbe Rashab, taught me *Tanya*, explaining in depth how a *chassidish* child must work to change himself. At that time we learned the letter of the Alter Rebbe, in which he strongly warns his *chassidim* not to scorn those Yidden who had fought with them, nor to regard themselves as being superior to them. My father explained, 'The *nefesh habahamis* convinces a person that such behavior comes from the good *middos* of *kedusha*. His pride in his *avodas HaShem* then fools him into regressing further and further.'

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' כ')

The Rebbe would often quote the Rebbe Maharash: "To fool *HaShem*, you surely can't; others, you also won't be able to fool. Who then will you fool? Yourself! Is it a *kuntz* to fool a fool?!"

(ת"מ ח"ג ע' 130 ועוד, וראה סה"ש תרפ"ד ע' 79 בהערה)

CONSIDER

Why does HaShem make our struggle even more difficult by disguising the yetzer hara?

How does one differentiate between the cleverness of chassidim and the chassidish yetzer hara?

KNOWING HIS TRICKS

At *yechidus*, the Rebbe Maharash once told the Rebbe Rashab: "The *yetzer hara*, though called an 'animal', can at times act slyly, and clothe itself in the guise of a straightforward, humble *tzaddik*, so that one really has to be clever enough to uncover its tricks. The *yetzer hara* manifests itself in each individual according to his nature. One person may suddenly feel a powerful desire to learn *Chassidus* [at a particular time], yet that desire is coming from the *yetzer hara*, who is trying to prevent him from *davening* at length, or the like."

The Rebbe Maharash concluded, "Take this as a

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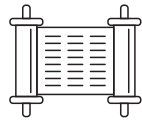
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FISH AND MEAT

Must I have separate dishes for fish and for meat?

Halacha records a prohibition to eat meat with fish as it is harmful to one's health.¹ Poskim write that it applies to chicken as well,² even if the two foods weren't cooked together.³

Does a small amount of fish that fell into a meat dish, or vice versa, become nullified? While some are of the opinion that a harmful ingredient cannot be nullified,⁴ the consensus of poskim rule that it is no worse than non-kosher food which is nullified (*botel*) in sixty times another food.⁵

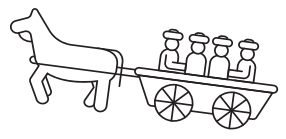
Can I cook fish and meat in the same oven? One may use the same oven for fish and meat provided that the oven is clean of drippings. To cook them at the same time, one of the dishes must be covered, so that the aroma (*reicha*) of one doesn't penetrate the other.⁶ If both dishes were not covered, it is permissible *b'dieved*.⁷

Can I use a meat pot to cook fish? The widespread custom is to be lenient with using clean dishes which contain only residual flavor in the dish.⁸ Some are *mehader* to have separate pots (but not other dishes), since cooking draws out the flavor more.⁹ Likewise, it is permissible to cook an onion that was diced with a *fleishig* knife together with fish, however it is preferable to use one that hasn't been used for meat in 24 hours.¹⁰

While according to *halacha* they may both be on the table at the same time, the custom is to remove the fish before bringing out the meat as an extra precaution.¹¹ Between eating fish and meat one should make sure his hands are clean and rinse his mouth,¹² (many have the custom to say a "*l'chaim*"¹³), and some also rinse their fingers.¹⁴

8. ראה הגה רעק"א סי' קט"ז סק"א.
 9. שו"ת שבה"ל ח"ו סי' ק"א אות ד'.
 10. ראה דרכ"ת סי' קט"ז סק"ב שהוא חמור מבישול שהיתרא בלע והוי נ"ט בר נ"ט של היתר. משא"כ בדבר חריף שמחמורים בני"ט. אמנם מסקנתו שאפשר להקל שילל שכל האיסור הוא דווקא כשהוא בעין. כ"ז בב"י, ולומר שמחליא לשבח הוא חומרה יתירה.
 11. שבה"ל שם אות ג'.
 12. רמ"א יו"ד שם סי' ג'. וראה קובץ מבית לוי ח"ג, שלחן הטהור סי' קע"ג ס"א.
 13. כף החיים או"ח סי' ק"ע סק"ט ע"פ פסקי תוס' מו"ק אות ל"ו. בדרכי חיים ושלום אות שצ"ו טעם לזה ע"פ הסוד.
 14. וראה הליכות ומנהגים בענייני שבת קודש עמ' 20 ועמ' 71 שאדה"ר"צ הקפיד על מים אמצעים, ולפעמים גם רבינו.

Our Heroes



REB CHAIM YONAH LUTZKI

When Reb Chaim Yonah was a *bochur* in Tomchei Temimim he was known as 'a cut above the rest'; a *ba'al madreiga*, an *oved* and *maskil* of a lofty caliber. He was very much cherished by the Rebbe Rashab who gave him rare '*kiruvim*'. At one point he began concealing his greatness by conducting himself in an unusual manner. He passed away young after a difficult illness.

Reb Nochum Goldshmid related: There were always rumors going round that Chaim Yonah was a great '*maskil*' of *Chassidus*. But there was no way to verify this, as he never spoke with anyone about '*haskalah*' in *Chassidus*. I too would try and speak to him about *Chassidus* but could not get anywhere.

One day, I was walking down the street and I saw Chaim Yona carrying two large suitcases. I seized the opportunity and I went over and said, "Let's make a deal. I will take those cases to wherever you need, but as payment, I want to talk with you in *Chassidus* for one full hour." Not having a choice, Reb Chaim Yonah agreed. For one hour, Chaim Yonah spoke about the deepest concept in *Chassidus*. After sixty minutes, and not a minute more, Chaim Yonah stopped and said, "That's it. An hour has passed. I did not promise more than that."

Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman would occasionally speak about Reb Chaim Yonah. He related that as an older *bochur* he would sometimes *farbreng* for the younger *bochurim*. In preparation, he would stand and think for six hours straight. You could see how his entire being was involved in preparing for that *farbrengen*.

A Moment with The Rebbe



YOUTH NOVELS

Shmuel Argaman was one of the first authors of *frum* Hebrew children's novels, paving the way for many to follow. In 5738 (1978), he published *The Submarine Submerged at Midnight*, which included some science fiction. It tells the story of a group of *Yidden* fleeing Russia, and how they battle a terrorist organization who seeks to rule the world using death-rays.

to be packaged just right so that they are drawn to it, being that they are children, if the messages the author wishes to transmit are too obscured, they may be overlooked.

"One cannot rely on youth to pick up the subtleties, when so little text is dedicated to the message. Especially since it is not an integral part of the narrative."

He sent his book to the Rebbe, asking for constructive criticism.

On a practical level, the Rebbe advised: "Enough text must be devoted to *yiras Shomyim* ideas, and pictures or sub-headings would also help direct their attention to them."

After thanking Shmuel for sending in the book, the Rebbe wrote: "While it is true that children's educational stories ought

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