

The Weekly Farbrengens



למען ישמעו • קרח תשע"ז • 415
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELINGER

THE BEAUTY OF MODESTY (IV)

THE FINAL TEST

The Alter Rebbe once interrupted himself in the middle of a *maamar* (with an unrelated remark) and said with his typical *dveikus* and tune:

"Rivka took Esav's clothing and dressed Yaakov," how does it happen that Yaakov wears *goyishe* clothing? The answer is that Yaakov foresaw that a time would come when Yidden would have to wear *goyishe* clothing, and he feared it would affect them (so Yaakov wanted to correct that by wearing that clothing) ... but it didn't help and it affected them."

(קוב' מפ'י חסידים' אות קעד)

One day the Rebbe Maharash summoned a number of *yungeleit* to his room and delivered a *maamar*. It was not a special date, so no one understood why this had happened.

Some time later it all became clear. The Rebbe had heard that in Paris a new – and very immodest – fashion was about to be launched, and due to his delivery of the *maamar*, that plan had been aborted.

(ליקוטי סיפורי התועודיות ע' 299)

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGE

Reb Mordechai (Mottel) Levin was the educational director of the Beis Rivkah Seminary in Kfar Chabad. Once, at *yechidus*, the Rebbe urged him to impress upon the students the particular importance of modest dress.

The Rebbe explained that since in the world at large this virtue is so widely neglected, when a girl "conquers herself" and dresses in a modest manner, this is evidence of her level of *yiras Shamayim*. The Rebbe directed Reb Mottel to consult with a famous educational authority in Bnei Brak in order to receive advice on how to cope with this educational challenge.

(בת מלך פנימה ע' 19)

Reb Uriel Tzimmer and his wife belonged to a Hungarian Jewish community when he was drawn to the Rebbe. The women in the shul where Mrs. Tzimmer *davened* all wore *sheitlach*, and would

tease her for wearing a *tichel*, as is the Hungarian custom. This was happening to the extent that she felt unpleasant in shul on Yom Kippur, despite the holiness of the day. When Yom Kippur was over she told her husband that she wanted to switch to a *sheitl*, because both Lubavitchers and the members of her shul wear it, and she can't stand their mockery. Reb Uriel couldn't resist her, and they concluded they'd consult the Rebbe and follow his recommendation.

CONSIDER

Why did the Rebbe encourage Mrs. Tzimmer to keep her tradition of tznius? Is dressing in modern fashion an inherent problem or is it a sign of something deeper?

They immediately traveled to 770 and submitted their question through the secretariat. They received a call the next day from Rabbi Chadakov and he informed them that the Rebbe wished to respond orally, not in writing. When they entered, the Rebbe explained to them that he was answering directly in order to minimize aggravation, since he intended to recommend that Mrs. Tzimmer keep to her good custom, since they could use more *brachos* of children, health, and livelihood, and the Zohar in Naso teaches us how much *brachos* depend on the care taken with a woman's hair. It is therefore worth keeping to the *chumra* for the extra *brachos*. Hearing this directly from the Rebbe helped Mrs. Tzimmer deal with the pressure.

(משבחי רבי ע' 61)

THE UNDERLYING MESSAGE

In a letter to a school principal in *Eretz Yisroel*, the Rebbe writes: The manner in which a teacher

dresses is extremely important, even in the lower grades – especially in light of the story that occurred in the times of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, when a *shochet* was removed from his post because he wore galoshes. Surely, there is no prohibition against wearing galoshes; however, since at the time they were worn only by *goyim*, they served as an external manifestation of what was transpiring inside.

(אגרות קודש ח"ט ע' 216)

The Frierdiker Rebbe once related: Frankfurt, although it had previously been inhabited by freethinking *maskilim*, was later populated by *frum* Yidden whose *yiras Shamayim* was legendary throughout Germany. All this came about in the *zechus* of three women who were firm in their resolve to wear a *sheitl*, to observe the *halachos* of the home, and to provide their children with a proper *chinuch*. This had an effect on the menfolk, and on other women as well, that it eventually changed the entire community of Frankfurt for the better.

(תור"מ ח"ב ע' 188)

Rabbi Shmuel Chefer, head of the Beis Rivkah Seminary in Kfar Chabad, once shared some sharp words that he had heard at *yechidus*.

"The Rebbe raised the subject of short dresses and skirts that were fashionable at the time and expressed himself in strong terms. He asked me to assemble the students and their mothers and to address this subject, but I was not to tell them that I was speaking on behalf of the Rebbe. The reason: If they knew that, and nevertheless (*chalila!*) disobeyed, 'I would have to distance them from my presence.' Those were his words.

"Finally, the Rebbe said that he had been told that 'the *goy* in Paris' was about to launch the opposite style – long dresses and skirts – and he added: '*Och un vei* ("What a pitiful situation it would be!") if the girls would now change their style of dress to match the new fashion only because 'the *goy* in Paris' so decided, and not because of what is written in the *Shulchan Aruch*..."

(בת מלך פנימה ע' 21)

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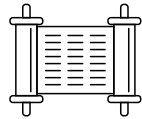
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COVERING STOVE KNOBS

Is it necessary to cover the knobs of a stove for Shabbos?

Chazal set guidelines for leaving food on the fire on Shabbos, out of concern that one might come to stir the coals to increase the flame.¹ One had to either sweep the coals out of the oven (*gerufa*), or throw dirt over the coals to extinguish it somewhat (*ketuma*), to indicate that one had no intention of bringing back the flame.²

In today's stoves, there is likewise a concern that one will come to raise the flame so that it will cook faster. The widespread custom is to place a metal sheet (*blech*) over the burner which lessens the heat and serves as an indication that one isn't interested in a higher flame.³

What about the knobs?

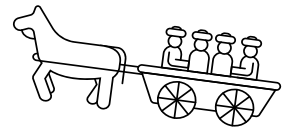
Whether one must cover the knobs as well is a dispute amongst contemporary halachic authorities. R. Shlomo Zalman Aurbach held that once one has indicated his resolution not to raise the flame by covering it, he need not do anything more.⁴ R. Moshe Feinstein writes that *lchatchila* one should cover the knobs as well.⁵ R. Shmuel Vosner held that covering the knobs is essential since that is how the fire would be intensified.⁶

In practice, one should cover the knobs, but if they weren't covered, one may be lenient⁷ (especially when the food is half-cooked before the onset of Shabbos⁸).

It should be noted that all opinions agree that one must cover the actual fire as Chazal established.⁹

1. שבת י"ח ע"ב, שו"ע ר"ג ס"א.
2. שבת שם, שו"ע ר"ש ס"א.
3. במצוות שבת גרוסה סימן ה' ענף א' (דלא כהחזו"א סי' ל"ז סק"א שאינו משוהו קטום).
4. ש"ש כ"א הע' ר"ח. וכן פסק בשו"ת אבן ישראל ח"ח סי' כ'.
5. שו"ת אג"מ ח"א סי' צ"ב.
6. שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ב סי' מ"ט.
7. ראה שבת כהלכה פ"ח סי"ב, ובביאורים סק"ח שכשמכסה רק בנייר כסף דק יש לכסות שיהיה לו היכר פטי.
8. שאז כיוני האש אינו חיוב לשיטתינו - שו"ע ר"ש שם ס"ט (והוא דלא כמשנ"ב בב"ה"ל ד"ה נהגו להקל שהקולא הוא רק בדיעבד). אלא שבסי' רנ"ד ק"א סק"א נותן רבינו מקום לחוש להאומרים שמותר רק במצטמק ורע לו.
9. שבת כהלכה שם.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



REBBETZIN FRAIDA

Rebbetzin Fraida, a daughter of the Alter Rebbe, was an illustrious woman and was very dear to her father, who would recite Chassidus privately for her. Her brother, the Mittlerer Rebbe, would often ask his sister Fraida to ask their father a question about Chassidus, and then he would hide in the room to listen. Rebbetzin Fraida married Reb Eliyahu Schneerson. She passed away on the 17th of Sivan, תקע"ג (1813), and is buried in Haditch near her father.

In a letter to her brother, the Mittlerer Rebbe, Rebbetzin Fraida explained the meaning of the "kaitz" and the *avoda* required to usher it in:

The *geulah* is a great spiritual revelation which will cause everyone to perceive Hashem as the only true existence (*Yichuda Ila'a*). "Kaitz" refers to the end of material wants - as the *posuk* says, "kaitz kol basar," the end of all flesh - which is necessary to perceive *Elokus*. In preparation, we need to reduce our material desires through *Iskafya*.

On one occasion of private Chassidus from the Alter Rebbe to Rebbetzin Fraida, when the Mittlerer Rebbe was hiding in the room, the Alter Rebbe spoke about the *bigdei kehuna* (the clothing of the *kohanim*). When it seemed to the Mittlerer Rebbe that his father was concluding without having explained the *avneit* (the belt), the Mittlerer Rebbe quickly took off his *gartel* and threw it towards his sister. Fraida took the cue, and asked the Alter Rebbe "Is there no explanation about the *avneit*?" The Rebbe responded, "It seems that someone else is in the room besides the two of us..."

In his *Reshimos*, the Rebbe explains that to achieve this "Kaitz" and rid oneself completely of physical wants, one must have *bittul* to a Rebbe. The people of Ephraim "calculated the kaitz" on their own and left Mitzrayim without Moshe. They therefore fell amongst the frivolous and degrading *Plishtim*, since *yeshus* actually leads to becoming selfish and undignified. Their dry bones were ultimately revived by *Yechezkel*, who was a humble prophet.

(*Reshimos* 176 p. 12)

(*Likutei Sipurim* p. 46)

A Moment with The Rebbe



LEAVE YOUR EGOISTIC CONFINES!

The *fabrengen* of *Shabbos Mevorchim* Iyar 5712 (1952) will long be etched in the hearts of chassidim. The Rebbe made many *lechayims* and the words flowed freely.

his understanding.

At one point the Rebbe held onto Reb Berl Junik's beard and exclaimed "Such *yungeleit* will bring *Moshiach!*" The Rebbe didn't let go throughout the *sicha*, and also had some direct words for Reb Berl:

"He shouldn't think about himself. When one is obsessed with self-perfection, even in *kedushah*, it is egoistic. In a certain way, it's worse than self-obsession with worldly matters, because then there is at least more of chance he will realize what it is and do *teshuvah*..."

"When will we accomplish that Berl Junik should free himself from his limitations? He does everything with his intellect, with

"You, Berl Yunik! Your *shlichus* is to fulfil the *kavona* of *Atzmus Ein Sof Boruch Hu!*"

(From Reb Berl's Diary)