

The Weekly *Farbrenge*



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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

CHANUKAH

A LUMINOUS TIME

In the household of Reb Dovid of Tolna, *hadlokas haneiros* is a special event. His chassidim would gather excitedly in his house to take part in the lighting of his golden *menora*, which was an elaborate piece of artistic craftsmanship. One year, on the first night of Chanukah, when the *tzaddik* was ready to light it, he turned to one of his chassidim and said, "Your wife is short, isn't she? When you want to speak to her, what do you do? Do you bend over towards her, or does she raise herself up to your height?" Without waiting for an answer, he recited the *berachos* and lit the *menora*. Needless to say, the chossid and all those present were very puzzled.

During this time, Reb Dovid's great nephew, Reb Mordechai Dov of Hornisteipol, was staying at his home, and seeing the confusion of the chassidim, he explained: The *Gemara* says that "The Shechina does not descend lower than ten *tefachim* from the ground." However, there is an exception to this rule, for the Chanuka *menora* is ideally required to be lower than ten *tefachim*, and it brings the Shechina itself here below. Reb Mordechai concluded by quoting from the *AriZal* that this is the deeper meaning of the words of the *Gemara*, 'If your wife is short, you should bend over and whisper to her.'

The following evening, at the time of *hadlokas haneiros*, Reb Dovid again made some puzzling comment to one of his chassidim. Immediately, though he had not been told of the previous night's explanation, he turned to Reb Mordechai and said, "This time, you will not understand as you did yesterday!"

(סיפורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 281)

In *Haneiros Halalu* we say that we have no permission to use the lights, only to look at them ("*elo lir'oison bilvad*"). This can mean that gazing at the lights is actually a benefit, healing any damage the eyes have incurred from seeing improper images, and protects one for the future. In fact many *tzaddikim* would sit and gaze at the *licht* as they burned.

(ש"ת שב יעקב סי' כב, זרע קודש - ראפשיץ)

After kindling the Chanukah *licht*, the Rebbe Rashab

would sit near them for half an hour and learn, though at a slight distance, in order not to benefit from its light. He would learn *Gemara*, wherever he was holding in his learning of Shas.

The Rebbe explained that this practice highlights the special connection of Torah to light, and is a lesson for everyone – Chanukah is a time to increase one's learning. Furthermore, since the Yevanim wished to prevent us from studying Torah, we increase our study.

(רשימות היוגון ע' שכג, תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"ב ע' 618)

CONSIDER

Why is it specifically the lights of Chanukah that draws the Shechinah below ten *tefachim*?

How do we distinguish between "pure Yiddische light" and "contaminated *goyishkeit*" when they both incorporate the study of Torah and the observance of *mitzvos*?

THE WAR OF THE YEVANIM

The goal of the Yevanim was "*lehashkicham torasecha uleha'aviram meichukei retzonecha*" ("to make them forget Your Torah and transgress the decrees of Your will"). As the *Midrash* says, the Yevanim demanded the Yidden write that they have no part in *HaShem*. This was a war against *HaShem*. "Let them study Torah," said the Greeks. "Let them practice the *mitzvos*, *mishpatim*, and *eiduyos*, but they must not mention that the Torah is *HaShem's* and that the *mitzvos* are the decrees of His will. Torah and *mitzvos* must be severed from *HaShem*."

(היום יום ב' טבת)

The Rebbe explained how the goal of the Yevanim and the *misyvanim* was to remove the separation that exists between Yidden and *goyim*, and to educate children to be similar to the other nations. This is more severe than placing decrees against the observance of Torah and *mitzvos*, because its effect remains even after the decree is over. It begins with something 'small', through 'lighting up' the way for a child with 'oil' that is contaminated with *goyishkeit*, claiming that it produces the same light. When one educates children improperly, drawing 'light' from a source which is not pure, this leads a child to become a *Misyaven R"L*.

The lesson from Chanukah is: when lighting up Yiddische homes, one must use only pure Yiddische light, uncontaminated by any *goyishkeit*. By doing so, with *mesirus nefesh* (not giving in to the majority, who also appear to be stronger), we will be victorious, for *HaShem* is on our side.

(לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 438)

CELEBRATING CHANUKAH

Since the primary *nes* of Chanukah was a spiritual one, annulling the decrees of the Yevanim against the observance of Yiddishkeit and the offering of *korbanos*, we commemorate it in a spiritual way, by saying *Hallel* and praising *HaShem*. However, it is also customary to make one's *seudos* finer during Chanukah in order to recall the miracle of winning the war and to commemorate the completion of the *Mishkan* on *chaf-hei* Kislev. During such a *seuda*, one should sing praises to *HaShem* for His *nissim*, thus making it a *seudas mitzva*.

(ש"ע או"ח סי' תע"ד ובהשלמה לשוע"ר שם)

It was customary for the *Tzemach Tzedek*, as it had been for the Alter Rebbe and the Mittlerer Rebbe before him, to hold a gathering on one of the evenings of Chanukah with his family, including his daughters-in-law. This was called a "*latkes ovent*", a *latkes* evening. At this gathering the Rebbes would tell stories, some of which were repeated year after year. The Rebbe Rashab would also set aside time during Chanukah to speak to the children.

(היום יום כ"ח כסלו, רשימות היוגון חנוכה תרצ"ג)

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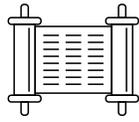
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FLEISHIG LATKES WITH SOUR CREAM

May I eat latkes that were fried in a *fleishig* pan with sour cream?

During cooking, taste is transferred between the food and the utensil. A pot in which meat was cooked has an absorbed taste of meat, and if it is subsequently used for dairy within 24 hours (*ben-yomo*), the meat taste will prohibit the dairy food. After 24 hours, the meat taste is considered stale (*pagum*) and is generally incapable of prohibiting dairy food cooked in it, though it may still not be used for dairy.¹

Pareve food – such as pasta – cooked in a clean *fleishig* pot that is *ben-yomo*, absorbs some of that meat flavor. However, the secondary flavor of meat that is in the pasta, known as *nat-bar-nat* (*nosein taam bar nosein taam* – “a secondary transfusion of taste”), has been weakened, and if it was inadvertently mixed later with cheese, it may be eaten since the *fleishig* taste is considered too “weak” to pose an issue of *basar b'chalav*. Still, since the *ben-yomo* pot has somewhat of a *fleishig* taste absorbed in it, one may not cook food in it with the purpose of even **servicing** it while hot in a utensil of the other type. Thus, initially pasta may not be cooked in this pot to be served while hot on a *milchig* plate, but if it was cooked already without specific intention, it may be served on a *milchig* plate.² Ashkenazic custom is that even so, one may still not **mix** it with actual dairy.³

If the *fleishig* pot is **not** *ben-yomo*, although some poskim hold that one may use it from the outset to cook food that will be mixed with *milchig* (or vice versa), in practice this should not be done unless there is no other choice.⁴ Food that was cooked in such a pot without any specific intent to mix it with the opposite type may be mixed later if one so desires.

Latkes that will be eaten with dairy (e.g. sour cream) should be fried in a *pareve* or dairy pan. If the only option available is a *fleishig* pan that isn't *ben-yomo*, it may be used and the *latkes* may still be eaten with dairy. The same applies if one used such a pan because he didn't yet plan to eat the *latkes* with dairy. However, if the pan was *ben-yomo*, the *latkes* may not be mixed with dairy, but they may be eaten immediately before or after the actual dairy (and if they were mistakenly mixed with dairy, the mixture may be eaten).

Yet, precaution must be taken to ensure that onions used in the *latkes* were cut with a *pareve* knife and not a *fleishig* one. Since onions are a sharp food (*davar charif*), they may not be eaten with dairy if they were cut with a *fleishig* knife (see issue 438). Additionally, if the sharp taste of the onions is dominant in the *latke* mixture – depending on their ratio as well as the strength of taste of the other ingredients – they may not be eaten with dairy if cooked in a *fleishig* pan, even if it was not *ben yomo*.⁵

1. טיגון במחבת - יש מחמירים גם בדיעבד (ראה ש"ך שם סק"ד בשם מהרש"ל ואו"ה סי' נ"ז אות ב). אבל דעת הרמ"א להקל גם בזה וכן משמעות דעת אדה"ז (ע"פ שו"ע"ר אור"ח סי' תמ"ז סמ"ה, וראה בס' פסקי אדה"ז בהל' או"ה כאן).

2. הרמ"א יו"ד סי' צ"ה ס"ב (להיתר) ובחכמ"א כלל מ"ח ס"ב (אסור אא"כ אין לו כלי אחר וא"א להשיל).
3. ראה רמ"א שם ס"ב ופרמ"ג משב"ז סי' צ"ו סק"ט.

1. ראה שו"ע יו"ד סי' צ"ג ס"א, ועוד (טעם של ששר לתוך חלב). סי' צ"ח ס"ד (טעם של איסור).

2. ש"ך יו"ד סי' צ"ה סק"ג (לאכול עם כותח אפי' לשיטת המחבר) ובפרמ"ג יו"ד סי' צ"ה משב"ז סק"ד (אפי' בכלי חולבת). ובנוגע השאלה באם עשה במכוון האם קניסין ליה, ראה שו"ע"ר אור"ח סי' תמ"ז סמ"ה שמשמע שלא קניסין במזיד בזה.

3. שו"ע רמ"א יו"ד סי' צ"ה ס"א וס"ב, לגבי צלי או



REB PINCHAS REIZES

Reb Pinchas Reizes, one of the greatest chasidim of the Alter Rebbe, was an incredible *gaon*. The Rebbeim trusted him fully, often involving him in private and clandestine activities involving themselves or chasidim at large. Reb Pinchas was also a wealthy and influential resident of Shklov and did a great deal for the Alter Rebbe in that respect. While in the Rebbe's court, Reb Pinchas served as a *chozer*, renowned for the precision of his *hanachos* (transcriptions). The Mittlerer Rebbe called Reb Pinchas the “field marshal” of *chasidei* Chabad.

Though Reb Pinchas's father was a great *gaon* in Shklov, his last name, Reizes, was taken after his mother-in-law Reizah. This came about after the following story:

His mother-in-law, an especially wealthy woman, was greatly impressed by the Alter Rebbe after his visit to Shklov. “Look,” she said, “A *maggid* hailing from Vitebsk shows up riding a horse with no entourage, and yet, when he discussed Torah issues with the *geonim* of Shklov, he could respond to everything they

asked, while they couldn't answer three of his four questions.”

She had three sons-in-law and promised that whoever would spend time learning by the “Magid of Liozna” would inherit all her wealth, and Reb Pinchas agreed. When he arrived in Liozna he discovered that the Alter Rebbe was traveling through various towns to speak before the simpletons. He waited four months for the Alter Rebbe to return and then spent three months learning under the Rebbe. He brought his mother-in-law a letter affirming that he had learned by the Rebbe and true to her word, she gave him all her wealth.

Reb Pinchas took the money and gave it to the Alter Rebbe for public matters. The Alter Rebbe blessed him with Torah and riches.

(סה"ש תרצ"ו ע' 126)

The Alter Rebbe once complained to Reb Pinchas, “Pinchas, Pinchas! You say that I am a *tzaddik*, but if so, why do I feel so ‘cold’?”

(למען ידוע ע' 253)

A Moment with The Rebbe



AMERICANS' SHORTCOMING

Almost immediately after the *histalkus* of the Friediker Rebbe, pressure was put on the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*. One of the reasons the Rebbe declined was because he was occupied with the financial state of Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch.

During the summer of 5710 (1950), the Rebbe called a meeting in his room of various Lubavitch activists in order to inspire others to share the monetary load.

During that meeting the Rebbe said, “We must know that the work of Merkos, the known and the

concealed, must continue without disruption. Therefore, if the current state of affairs continues, I cannot be available for other duties. The only solution I see is that others take on some of the responsibilities.”

The Rebbe then added, “The Rebbe the Shver once said that Americans have a shortcoming: *m'vert gich varem, un m'vert gich kalt* (they are rapidly warmed, and rapidly dispirited). We must see that today's inspiration lasts.”

(Toras Menachem, vol. 1, p. 116)