ב"ה

The Weekly Farbrengen

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

FEELING PROUD (III)

STRONG IDENTITY

The *chossid* Reb Michoel Teitelbaum once related:

My father, Reb Chaim Moshe, dealt in logs and would travel by train regularly. As a young boy, I accompanied him on one of these long trips. When the sun rose and it was time to *daven Shacharis*, my father took out his *tallis* and *tefillin* and began to prepare himself. The car was filled with noisy Russian peasants, but my father was completely oblivious to his surroundings. As he stood up to put on his *tallis*, the car suddenly fell silent. My father *davened* at his usual pace and during the entire time nobody spoke. As soon as he finished and sat down, the loud talking resumed. I of course shared my surprise with my father.

He later told me that when he first began travelling by train he consulted with the Rebbe Rashab. At that time it was dangerous for a *Yid* to travel by train since it was common for hooligans to throw Yidden out of the door as it was moving. My father asked the Rebbe if when he was *davening* on the train he should perhaps cover his *tallis* and *tefillin* with a coat and a hat. The Rebbe replied, "If *you* won't stand proud in your *Yiddishkeit*, of whom can we expect it?"

From that day on, my father *davened* on the train without embarrassment, and the *goyim* accordingly respected him for it.

(מפי השמועה)

In a *sicha* addressed to women, the Rebbe spoke about the importance of keeping separate by wearing distinctive clothing:

The *zechus* which enabled the Yidden to leave Mitzrayim was that the men and women held onto the Yiddishe way of dress, and were not influenced by the garb, nor by the behavior of the *mitzriyim* around them. Knowing that they were an *am echad*, it was self-understood that as Yidden, they should not lower themselves. For, does it make sense that just because a *mitzri* has decided to wear certain clothing, a Yid should copy him?! We can learn from this that we must not change our dress in order to imitate others. The nations amongst whom we live will then respect us, for they will see that we stand by our principles, and through this we will be lead out of *golus*.

(לקו"ש ח"ח ע' 223)

CONSIDER

Why is finding common ground with secular society, quoting secular proofs and inviting a goyishe speaker expressions of a weak identity?

Is withstanding ridicule an easy test or a difficult one?

In a letter, the Rebbe stresses that since Yidden are a minority and are in danger of being influenced by their surroundings, effort must always be made to retain their Yiddishe identity. This is done by emphasizing positive Yiddishe traits and playing down the common ground with the *goyim* around them.

The Rebbe likewise bemoans the habit of those rabbis who use secular sources as proof of an idea, even when that idea is found in Torah sources. They imagine that this will impress the listeners, by demonstrating that they are well versed in secular literature and culture.

In a similar manner, at events in support of Yiddishe organizations, the Rebbe writes that emphasis should be placed on preserving Yiddishe values, instead of bringing a *goyishe* personality as a speaker or honored guest.

(היכל מנחם ח"ג ע' צד)

IGNORING SCOFFERS

Yehudah ben Teima said: "Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a deer, and strong as a lion, to carry out the will of your Father in heaven." 'Bold as a leopard' means that one should not to be embarrassed by people who mock his service of *HaShem*. On the other hand, one should not respond with brazen words, so that he will acquire a brazen nature.

(אבות ה,כ, שוע"ר מהדו"ק ס"א ס"ג)

The Rebbe pointed out that the beginning of the entire *Shulchan Aruch* is, "*Al yeivosh mipnei hamal'igim*" – do not be embarrassed by scoffers, for that is the basis for observing the whole of the *Shulchan Aruch*. Since it is recorded in the *Shulchan Aruch*, it has the status of an obligatory *halacha*.

(אג"ק ח"ו ע' שמ ועוד, לקו"ש חכ"א ע' 287)

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes: At the end of *galus*, before *Moshiach* comes, there are many who disturb and ridicule those who fear *HaShem*. This is very challenging, particularly when the scoffers are people whose only interest is to indulge in worldly pleasures, and they mock great scholars. However, *HaShem* gives people the power to prevail over them, even more than during the times of the *Beis HaMikdash*.

(סה"מ תש"ט ע' 118)

The Rebbe said: "Due to the weakness of the *neshamos* in our generation, *HaShem* has given us only one small test – to withstand ridicule. People today are afraid of being laughed at. Actually, what do you care if a fool will laugh at you? It should only confirm that whatever you've been doing is right, for they don't laugh at fools..."

On the other hand, the Rebbe noted that since this can be quite a challenge, it is placed at the very beginning of the entire *Shulchan Aruch*.

(שיחו"ק תש"ל ח"א ע' 295, תו"מ תשמ"ח ח"א ע' 246)

The Rebbe once remarked: "Some people make every effort to hide their meticulous observance of *mitzvos* out of fear that they will be dubbed a *farfrumter* (someone who is overly *frum*). Instead, one should observe his *mitzvos* publicly and disregard any scoffers."

(תו"מ ח"ח ע' 231)

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RABBI CHAIM HILLEL RASKIN ROV OF ANASH - PETACH TIKVA

BISHUL YISROEL

Do corn flakes need to be *bishul yisroel*?

Chazal prohibited food cooked by a gentile (*bishul akum*), either to prevent socialization that could lead to intermarriage, or to avoid being served non-kosher food (see issue 574). There are two primary exceptions: (1) Food that is regularly eaten raw in that locale; and (2) food not fit to be served at a royal feast. People generally don't invite others to eat unimportant types of food, and the concerns behind the prohibition aren't relevant.[1]

These determinations follow the current standards. Thus, although potatoes weren't considered a royal food in previous times, today they are. While some *poskim* measure by what is served even at a fancy meal (e.g. Shabbos *seuda*), others follow the letter of the law, what it is eaten at royal feasts.[2] Some present-day *rabbonim* have called the White house or Buckingham palace to hear if certain foods are served there.[3]

Contemporary *poskim* debate whether the determination follows whether this food is served at royal feasts in any form, or specifically in the way it has currently been prepared. A prime example where this debate comes to play is potato chips, where majority of contemporary *kashrus* agencies are lenient, however some are *machmir*, והמחמיר תע"ב.[4]

Canned food is not automatically exempt, and it depends on whether the specific food meets the above criteria.[5] Canned beans, for example, do not require *bishul yisroel* as they are not served at royal feasts. Canned fruit are also exempt since they can be eaten raw.

The taste of certain fruits and vegetables varies from place to place and what is eaten raw in one location may not be in another. In these cases, the requirement for *bishul yisroel* follows the local eating custom.[6]

Some types of corn are eaten raw, while others aren't. Baby corn is eaten raw in some locations and not others. *Poskim* explain that baby corn is edible raw and eaten that way where it's available fresh, while in the other places it's not available fresh. (An additional factor that some use to permit any canned corn is that corn isn't served at royal feasts in the canned version.)

Hearts of palm, which is not available raw in America or Eretz Yisrael, is eaten raw where it grows. It is accepted to follow the place where the vegetable is actually cooked, which is the land where it grew, thus hearts of palm do not require *bishul Yisroel*.[7]

Corn flakes (and corn flake crumbs) have additional reasons for leniency since the corn from which corn flakes are made from is a lower quality corn than that served by royalty. (This could depend on the various companies.) Furthermore, corn flakes are not served at royal meals in that form.[8]

1. ראה שו"ע יו"ד סי' קי"ג ס"א. פר"ח שם סק"ג. וראה ערוה"ש שם סי"ב.
2. ראה בית ועד לחכמים ע' 303.
3. ראה שו"ת ישיב משה יו"ד סי' ו'. וראה האתר של ה-Star K.
4. ראה שו"ת שבה"ל ח"י סי' קכ"ד להחמיר, ומנגד שלחן הלוי ע' ס"ז והלאה להקל.
5. ראה שו"ת חשב האפוד ח"ג סי' כ"ט.
6. ראה שלחן מלכים שער ב' פ"ז ריבוי פרטים בזה.
7. ס' שלחן מלכים שער ב' הע' 104 מפי הגר"מ יוסף בשם אביו הגר"ע יוסף ע"ה. וראה מאמר ב Kosher Spirit מהרב הכהן הנדל.
8. ראה ס' בישול ישראל ע' קע"ח.

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

Our Heroes

REB BARUCH FRIEDMAN

Reb Baruch Friedman was born in Poland and came to learn in Tomchei Tmimim in Lubavitch. There he was known as "Baruch Polisher." As an older *bochur* he served as *mashpia* of *Chassidus* in Charkov. In 5681 (1921), after World War I, he returned to Poland and was appointed as *mashpia* in Warsaw, then in Lodz, and eventually in Otvotzk. During the first two years of World War II he was in the Ghetto of Radom where he continued to serve as *mashpia*. From there he was taken to Treblinka and was killed *al kidush Hashem* during the month of Elul 5702 (1942).

Reb Baruch was a great *maskil* in *Chassidus*. The Rebbe Rashab said about him, "Baruch Polisher understands a *vort Chassidus*." When he would sit and learn, nothing was able to divert his attention. Even when three of his children were sitting on him—one pulling his beard, another pulling his hair and the third sitting on his shoulders—he wouldn't get distracted. He demanded the same level of concentration from the *bochurim*, and would often say during *farbrengens*, "You should bury yourself in *Chassidus*."

(לקוטי סיפורי התוועדויות - רמ"ז גרינגלאס עמוד 34)

Reb Baruch once said, "It is known the importance of saying words of Torah when walking in the street. However, this is only for someone who is not able to think deeply. Someone who is capable should *think deeply* while walking in the street, the reason being that one merely saying words of Torah can be simultaneously thinking of other things, possibly worldly. Not the case when one is thinking deeply into Torah, for then one's mind is fully occupied and there is no room for other thoughts."

(לקוטי סיפורי התוועדויות - רמ"ז גרינגלאס עמוד 35)

A Moment with The Rebbe

WHERE THE BAGGAGE GETS SHREDDED

Reb Yekusiel Zalman Levin and his family were one of the few *chassidishe* families who remained trapped behind the Iron Curtain, long after most chassidim had left. After years of exile, and then more years of waiting, they finally fled in 5732 (1972).

When they arrived in New York in Nissan, the Rebbe received him, his wife and his daughter Leah, for a twenty-three minute *yechidus*.

They first sought advice on their future plans, where to settle and how to plan Leah's education, and then Mrs. Levin spoke up. "After all that we've been through in Russia," she said, "my husband carries heavy baggage on his heart."

The Rebbe answered with a smile, "He should leave his *pekel* (bag) here in this room. Everyone leaves their baggage here."

The Rebbe then added, "Leaving it here won't hurt me either; *doh vert es alts tzuribben* – here it all gets shredded."

(Levin Teshurah, Nissan 5769)

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