

The Weekly Farbrengens



840 • עקב תשפ"ה • לחמן ישמעו
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

REFRESHING OURSELVES (II)

A QUALITY VACATION

When the Rebbe Rashab went out to relax, which he often had to do for health purposes, he would take off his *kapota* and, holding onto his *tzitzis*, he would sit down and say, "This is *datche*" (Russian for "vacation").

Explaining the inner meaning of vacation, he pointed out that in *Lashon HaKodesh* a vacation site is called *נאות דשא* – "a pleasant pasture," a place where one grows just as grass grows. How does grass grow? In its description of the Six Days of Creation, the *Midrash* tells us that each individual blade of grass decided to grow separately, although *HaShem* had not clearly instructed so. Similarly, there are times when every individual *Yid*, though he may be busy with others during the year, should be occupied with his own personal growth in the ways of *HaShem*.

(סה"ש תש"א ע' 150)

The Frierdiker Rebbe recalled his summertime memories of *תרנ"ג* to *תרנ"א* (1891-1893):

In Lubavitch, chassidim follow the local summertime custom of "*datche*" from after Pesach. They would sit in the courtyard, breathe the fresh air, and exchange stories about chassidim of bygone generations. Generally, the Rebbe Rashab would not join them, for he was preoccupied with *avoda*, *davening* every day until five o'clock in the afternoon. Occasionally, though, he would come out and comment on the stories.

(סה"ש תש"ב ע' 120)

The *Gemara* relates that when Rebbe Zeira felt weak and could not concentrate, he would relax near the entrance of the Yeshiva of Rebbe Nosson bar Tuvia, so that when the *chachomim* passed by, he would be able to rise in their honor.

(ברכות כח ע"א)

The Rebbe taught that the true reason for vacation is so that one should be able to learn the entire day. This is true for children as well as parents. When children see their fathers increasing their learning time during their vacation, they will do the same. And since a *Yid* was created to learn Torah and do *mitzvos*, this is the only way that he truly feels happy and at ease.

(שי"ח"ק תשל"א ח"ב ע' 367)

YIDDISHKEIT YEAR ROUND

In earlier generations, in Europe, children would be in *cheder* throughout the entire year, learning all through the day and even into the night. Thus, they were constantly in an atmosphere of *kedusha*. Arriving in America, Yidden began following the local custom of taking regular breaks from school. Their children, who already learned very little in the day schools, would have vacation every weekend, as well as a few weeks in the winter and a couple of months in the summer. At that time, a number of camps opened, yet none really focused on raising the standards of these children *beruchniyus*.

CONSIDER

What defines a Yiddishe vacation: that one observes halacha while on vacation or that the relaxing itself is done differently?

How can one continue learning throughout the summer? Won't this ruin the opportunity to relax?

At a *farbrengen* on Shavuos תשט"ז (1956), the Rebbe addressed this topic:

"Once, children would have days off from *cheder* only twice a year, on Pesach and on Sukkos, and that system produced children who were healthy *beruchniyus* as well as *begashmiyus*.

"Today, especially in America, this has changed. The children, being too 'tired' from the few hours they learn, must regularly travel away for the 'weekends,' while some are even '*mehader*' to leave a day earlier... This happens even more during the summer, when one 'must' relax from the Fourth of July, and then upon returning, relax some more to recover from the trip..."

The Rebbe concluded, "And from such an approach, people expect to raise children properly?!"

The Rebbe therefore suggested that an institution be opened, which on the outside would appear as a camp, but in truth would be exactly like a *cheder*. The Rebbe pointed out that the summertime can have an additional advantage over the rest of the year, for during this time children will have more time for *kedusha*, being free of secular subjects, and in a few weeks they will be able to learn what would usually take them a couple of months. In addition, they will be spared any negative influences from home, as well as the excessive spoiling that their parents may shower upon them.

(בנאות דשא ע' 2, 15)

At the *farbrengen* of תמוז תשמ"ה (1985), the Rebbe spoke of the lesson we should learn from the *mesirus nefesh* of the Frierdiker Rebbe for the *chinuch* of children. In recent times, the Rebbe said, a strange custom has been introduced – closing the *cheder* during the summer. Such a practice is not only contradictory to *frumkeit*, but is wildly irresponsible (in Yiddish: a *vildkeit*)! The life of a *Yid* is Torah, and one cannot take a break from life. What kind of message does this relay to children?

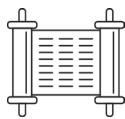
The Rebbe added that even in those places where they do learn something, this is done in a burdensome way, as if only to fulfill an obligation, and not as *life*. The Rebbe explained that the source of this problem is the adults' misconception that Torah is meant *chas veshalom* to burden a *Yid*, when in truth, it was given in order to better his physical life! It is merely the darkness of *galus* that prevents a *Yid* from accepting this concept. We must do everything possible, the Rebbe concluded, to ensure that children's summertime studies should not be reduced, and indeed should be enriched.

(ת"ר תשמ"ה ח"ד ע' 2450)

On numerous occasions the Rebbe spoke about the need to continue learning as usual throughout the summer, and called the break from learning a "strange" and "distasteful" custom.

(ראה ת"ר תשמ"ז ח"ד ע' 105, 135)





SCARY DREAMS

Is my dream a message to me? Should I be doing something?

In Tanach and in the Gemara, we find many instances of dreams serving as a form of messaging from Hashem and portending future events. In this context, there is an idea of performing *hatavas chalom* for a negative dream (to “interpret it” positively), as well as fasting a *taanis chalom*.¹

Yet, the Gemara relates that when Shmuel would have a negative dream, he would quote the posuk in Zecharya, “The dreams speak falsely.” The Gemara also notes that a person dreams at night about what he was thinking during the day. And in another context, Chazal say that dreams are meaningless (*divrei chalomos lo maalin velo moridin*).²

More recent *poskim* note that for the average person, dreams are meaningless and are no reason for concern,³ though the Alter Rebbe lists a few dreams that are problematic even in the present age (e.g. Sefer Torah or tefillin that fall down *ch”v*).⁴

In general, the Rebbe would advise people not to get caught up in worrying about negative dreams, and that it could even be a tactic of the *yetzer hara* to distract a person from important matters.⁵

Still, there were times when the Rebbe did give reference to certain dreams, especially when it came to dreams about people who passed away (where he would bring up whether the burial and *aveilus* were done according to halacha, and asking forgiveness).⁶

In addition, the Rebbe would encourage doing things to prevent bad dreams, including checking the mezuzah of the bedroom, giving tzedakah every morning, mikvah for men, saying *krias shema* and *hamapil* with *kavana*, avoiding idle talk before going to sleep, and reading stories about the Rebbeim and chassidim before going to bed.⁷

The Rebbe also sometimes mentioned the *hatavas chalom* said during *birkas kohanim* that once it was said, there is no reason to think about the dream anymore.⁸

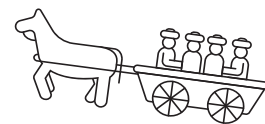
1. ברכות נה ע”ב. תענית יב ע”ב שו”ע או”ח.
2. ס”י רל”ט וס”י רפ”ח.
3. ברכות שם. סנהדרין ל ע”א.
4. ראה ערוך השולחן או”ח ס”י רפ”ח.
5. ראה מה שלוקט בס’ אוצר סגולות הרבי פכ”ח. וראה אג”ק ח”י ד ע’ 326 וחט”ו ע’ 13.
6. ראה אג”ק חט”ו ע’ 191.
7. אג”ק ח”י ע’ 290. וראה אג”ק ח”ג ע’.
8. ראה אג”ק חט”ו ע’ 191.

לע”נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר’ שלום דובער ע”ה

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in honor of a simcha or yahrtzeit

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REB ELIMELECH OF LIZENSK

Reb Elimelech was one of the greatest *talmidim* of the Mezritcher Maggid, and after the Maggid's *histalkus*, he became responsible for the dissemination of Chassidus in Poland. He was a brother of the famous Reb Zusha of Anipoli, and together they were known as “the holy brothers”. He was one of the greatest Rebbe of his time, and many of his disciples became Rebbe in their own right, his primary successor being the Chozeh of Lublin. His teachings were printed in the *sefer Noam Elimelech*. He passed away in Lizhensk on the 21st of Adar תקמ”ז (1787).

The Alter Rebbe once met with a *rov* who was an opponent of Chassidus. The *rov* asked the Alter Rebbe, “I have a *sefer* called *Noam Elimelech* which as I have discovered, has been written by a chossid, a disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch, and I put the *sefer* under the bench. Can you tell me something worthy about its author?”

The Alter Rebbe replied, “Even if you would put the *tzaddik* of Lizhensk himself under your bench, he would remain silent and not say a word. Such was his humility!”

(בית רבי ע’ סג)

The brothers Reb Elimelech and Reb

Zusha took upon themselves to go into *golus* (self-inflicted exile), and so they wandered from village to village, dressed in simple rags, with no one knowing who they were. During the course of their travels, whenever they would come to the town of Ludmir, they would stay by a certain Reb Aharon, who was a great man but lived quite poorly.

Years later, when Reb Elimelech and Reb Zushe had become well known, they once again traveled to Ludmir. This time, however, they did not travel by foot, but with a horse and buggy and an entourage of chassidim.

When they reached a village near Ludmir, one of the wealthy men in town came out to greet them and invite them to stay with him for the course of their visit. The brothers suggested that he return to Ludmir and they would arrive on their own.

When they arrived, they headed to the home of the poor Reb Aharon. When the wealthy man heard about it, he came running and complained, “Why did you not accept my offer?” To which one of the brothers replied, “We are the same people as before, and we don’t want to change our lodgings. The only difference between then and now is the horse and buggy. If that’s what inspired you to invite us, take the horse and buggy and let them stay with you...”

A Moment with The Rebbe



לזכר נשמת מרת חוה לאה בת ר’ שמשון הכהן ע”ה

A CHOSSID’S SIMCHA

“Throw you *mara shechora* into the dead sea!”

Longtime Detroit Shliach Reb Berel Shemtov, was standing in a personal *yechidus*, and with these words, the Rebbe demanded from him to be happy.

Reb Berel, taken by the Rebbe’s direct instruction, stood frozen in his place.

“The Rebbe should give me a *bracha* for *simcha*,” he asked the Rebbe.

“You are a chossid,” the Rebbe responded, “and your father is a chossid...”

“*In di daled amos darf men zain b’simcha* – in this space one needs to be joyous!”

(As heard from Reb Kasriel Shemtov)