

The Weekly Farbrengens



A UNIQUE IMAGE (I)

THE IMPORTANCE OF DRESS

Some years before the Rebbe Rashab passed away, his brother, the Raza, moved from Lubavitch to Vitebsk, where he dealt in logs. Vitebsk was a big, modern city, and his daughter began to dress in a more modern fashion. Word of this reached her grandmother, *Rebbetzin* Rivkah, and it brought her to tears. When the Rebbe Rashab asked her what had happened, and she told him, he was surprised: "Even when Father (the Rebbe Maharash) passed away you did not cry like this!"

To which she replied, "That was *HaShem's* will, but this is against His will!"

(בת מלך פנימה ע' 22)

The *Zohar* warns that the *Yetzer HaRa* begins its influence on a person by targeting his clothing, as with Yosef HaTzaddik, who was grabbed by his garment. One must strengthen himself to escape, exactly as Yosef did.

(זהר ח"א ע' ק"צ ע"ב)

The chossid Reb Peretz Chein once traveled to the *Tzemach Tzedek* together with another chossid, who had the *zechus* of having seen the Alter Rebbe, yet was now dressed in a more modern fashion. The *Tzemach Tzedek* did not recognize that chossid and asked Reb Peretz who he was.

After being told, the *Tzemach Tzedek* said in wonder, "Is that so? Had I known that clothing could have such an effect on a person, I would have had *mesirus nefesh* for it!"

(למען ידעו ע' 273)

Once, when questioned about the importance of distinctive Yiddish clothing, the Rebbe expressed surprise that there could be any doubt in this matter, for it can clearly be understood from many of the teachings of *Chazal* and from *halacha*. The Rebbe mentioned the *possuk* in *Navi* which says that *HaShem* will judge those who

wear *goyishe* clothing, and also noted the writings of the *Tzemach Tzedek* against such dress.

(אג"ק ח"כ ע' שיב, צפני' א,ח)

Once, one of the children waiting to receive a coin from the Rebbe was wearing a *Tzivos HaShem* cap and was dressed in a shirt that had a childish, secular character on it. The Rebbe asked him if he was in *Tzivos HaShem*, and when the boy nodded, the Rebbe inquired why he was wearing such a shirt...

On another occasion, in תשמ"ג (1983), when the Rebbe was shown pictures of a winter camp in Morocco, he noted that in one photo a child was dressed as an Arab and said, "It is not appropriate to dress like this."

(קובץ פניני העשור ע' 42, תשורה ראסקין טבת תשנ"ט)

CONSIDER

Why is it so important to dress distinctively if it is only an externality?

What is defined as goyishe dress?

Yidden have always been particular that the right side of their garments go over the left. The Rebbe mentioned this a number of times, and explained that this is done so that *kedusha* and *chessed*, which are associated with the right side, should be the prevailing influences in one's life.

(י"ב תמוז תשכ"ג, ש"פ אמור תשד"מ ועוד)

DISTINCTIVE DRESS

During the time of the Alter Rebbe, a new fashion in Russia dictated that jackets should henceforth have collars. When his grandson Reb Nochum, son of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was preparing for his *chassuna*, the Alter Rebbe called for him and asked him about his silk *kapota*: would it be made in the traditional way, or would it conform to the new fashion?

"It'll have a collar, of course," Reb Nochum replied.

The Alter Rebbe requested that he have it made without one, but Reb Nochum, then still a young *bochur*, argued, "Everyone else will have one, and I'll be embarrassed."

The Alter Rebbe then promised him that if he would wear a *kapota* without a collar, he would be together with his grandfather in Gan Eden. He then asked Reb Nochum that when his *kapota* was ready, he should come to him dressed in it.

Before the *chassuna*, the young man entered the Alter Rebbe's room, dressed in his new *kapota*... which had a collar. The Alter Rebbe then tore off a small piece of fur from the inside of the coat. Years later Reb Nochum commented, "I was young and did not appreciate the greatness of the promise I had been given."

The Rebbe explained that at that time and place, the challenge of clothing was extremely difficult. Had the Alter Rebbe been successful, that challenge would have been removed for generations to come. And that explains why he offered his grandson such a rich reward.

(רשימ"ד החדש ע' 97, ת"מ חל"ה ע' 278 ועיי"ש)

Reb Hillel Paritcher wore a winter hat all year round, because during his time it was decreed that all summer hats must have a visor. Reb Hillel, not wanting to follow the gentile style of dress, wore his winter hat, which had no visor, throughout the summer months.

(רשימת דברים ח"א ע' רנא)



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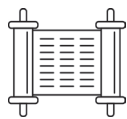


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RABBEINU TAM TEFILLIN

Why do we wear Rabbeinu Tam Tefillin if the halacha follows Rashi?

Tefillin contain four *parshiyos*, and the Gemara's description of their required order is open to various interpretations. Rashi explains they must be written according to their order in the Torah, while Rabbeinu Tam holds that the two '*vehaya*'s are in the middle.¹

Although the views are known as those of Rashi and his grandson, Rabbeinu Tam, the disagreement dates back much earlier. In most areas of halacha, one view is followed exclusively, but the order of the tefillin *parshiyos* remained an ongoing debate. The Shaalos Uteshuvos Min Hashamayim writes that both are "divrei Elokim Chayim," and it is disagreed upon above — between Hashem and the Beis Din shel Maalah — just as it is below.²

The Arizal revealed that from the days of Moshe Rabbeinu through the period of the geonim, people would wear both types, even simultaneously. Each pair draws down a different spiritual light, and one should therefore wear both.³

Shulchan Aruch rules that the general practice follows Rashi, yet a *yerei shamayim* should put on both, either simultaneously or one after the other. Yet only an especially pious person may do so in public, as for others, it is perceived as arrogance.⁴ The Alter Rebbe writes in his Siddur that whoever feels any Yiras Shamayim in his heart should put on Rabbeinu Tam tefillin after davening, and if he is concerned about haughtiness, he could don them privately at home.⁵

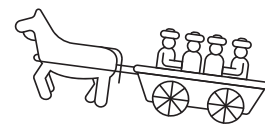
Considering the extra purity required for putting on an additional pair of tefillin, the accepted practice in Chabad was to wait at least until age 18, or marriage, and only begin with the Rebbe's approval, often with certain stipulations (e.g., mikveh, chassidus).⁶

However, on Purim 5736, the Rebbe announced that the time had come for everyone to start putting on Rabbeinu Tam at *bar mitzva*,⁷ and in 5749, the Rebbe extended the directive to begin already from *hanachas tefillin*.⁸ The Rebbe explained that this is necessary as we come closer to Moshiach, and to combat the ever-increasing darkness of *golus*.⁹

1. גמ' מנחות לד ע"ב. וראה רש"י ותוס' ד"ה והקורא.
2. שו"ת מן השמים סימן ג'. וראה תו"מ תשד"מ ח"ד ע' 1929-1931. וראה יב"א ח"א סי' ב' שיש משמעות לשני השיטות בדברי חז"ל.
3. בא"ח שנה א' פ' יורא ה"א. וראה שער הכולל פ"א סקל"ט. ובפנ"ח שער התפילין פ"ט שדר"ת מוחין דאבא ושדרש"י מוחין דאימא. וראה תו"מ חט"ז ע' 19.
4. שו"ע או"ח סי' ל"ד ס"א-ג. שו"ע"ר שם.
5. פסקי הסיידור הל' תפילין ד"ה כל אשר. וראה גם בסוף הל' ק"ש ותפילה ד"ה מנהג להניח.
6. ראה לדוגמא אג"ח ח"ז ע' 310 וח"ח ע' 36.
7. שיחות קודש תשל"ו ע' 629.
8. ספר השיחות תשמ"ט ח"ב ע' 632 הע' 114.
9. ראה שיחות הג"ל וגם בשיחות קודש תשל"ט ח"א ע' 710.

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

Our Heroes



REB NOACH ALTSHULER

Reb Noach Altshuler was a famous *talmid* and *mekushar* of Reb Mendel Horodoker. He was a decendent of Reb Yechiel Hilel Altshuler, the compiler of the *pirushim Metzudas Dovid* and *Metzudas Tziyon* on Nach. Some say he was married to the sister of the Mezritcher Magid. His son Reb Sholom Shachna married Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, daughter of the Alter Rebbe, and he was thus the Tzemach Tzedek's grandfather.

A few years after Reb Mendel Horodoker moved to Eretz Yisroel, Reb Noach boarded a ship en-route there. On the boat he fell gravely ill. Knowing the law to throw any deceased passengers overboard, Reb Noach requested from the captain that after he passes away, but before throwing him into the sea, he should be tied to a board while wearing his *talis* and *tefilin* with a note in his hand stating his name.

On one *motzaei Shabbos* Reb Mendel sent his *talmidim* to the shore commanding them to wait there and greet an esteemed guest — one of their colleagues who would arrive from abroad. After a

few days of waiting they heard a great commotion that a man wearing a *talis* and *tefilin* could be seen floating on a board near the shore. The chassidim recognized Reb Noach and brought him for burial in the nearby city of Chaifa.

(עדן ציון ע' קסא)

When Reb Noach came to *Beis Din Shel Maalah*, they found one thing that he didn't fix during his lifetime. He was given two choices: half an hour in *Gehinom* or to return to this world. Reb Noach said, "My entire life I never did anything without asking my Rebbe. Now too, I want to ask my Rebbe." The *Beis Din Shel Maalah* found his words to be true and gave him permission. Reb Mendel Horodoker was sitting with his chassidim and said, "Reb Noach is here now and asked me what to choose. I say better half an hour in *Gehinom*. What do you say, chassidim?" All the chassidim of course repeated their Rebbe's choice, "*Gehinom*." At that moment they heard a cry, "Oy Rebbe!" and a mark of a burnt hand was seen on the window frame.

(אוצר סיפורי חב"ד ח"ז ע' 294. רשימות דבריו ע' 207)

A Moment with The Rebbe

לזכר נשמת מרת חוה לאה בת ר' שמשון הכהן ע"ה



THE BIG CAUSE

In a personal meeting, at a Machne Yisroel Development Fund event, a donor approached the Rebbe with a proposal. He told the Rebbe that he has a large sum of money that he would like to give to *tzedaka*, but he wants to give it to a "big cause."

"You should give it to the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel," the Rebbe responded, "who are giving out *shemura matza* to fellow Yidden there.

"I am pleased with the Rebbe's suggestion," the donor politely replied, "but as I mentioned, I would like to give

it to a 'big cause.'"

When the Rebbe repeated the idea of giving the money for *matza*, the donor explained himself. "My intention to make 'something big' means a big building. Something that will last."

If you would like to build big buildings, the Rebbe said, there are organizations that build buildings. "But if you ask me what is a big thing? The answer is: When you give a yid *shemura matza*, the bread of *emuna* and the bread of healing."

(Shlichus K'hilchasa Miluim p. 59)

לזכות רבקה דינה בת ח'ה בוניא יום הולדתה לאורך ימים ושנים טובות