

The Weekly Farbrengens



לחמן ישמעו • בא תשפ"ו • 863
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

BEING DIFFERENT (I)

STANDING APART

Moshe Rabbeinu *davened* to HaShem that the Yidden should be distinguished from all the other nations, even during the time of *golus*. This is expressed even in mundane activities, as a Yid stands apart from the nations around him.

(תשא לג, טז, ת"מ ח"ט ע' 337)

The *Midrash* writes that the Yidden were redeemed from Mitzrayim in the merit of keeping themselves separate. They did this by holding onto their Yiddishe names, speaking a Yiddishe language and wearing Yiddishe clothing.

(מדרש לקח טוב פ' כי תבא)

The Torah states clearly, "In the way of their statutes you should not walk." The *Rambam* explains that just as a Yid is different in his *emuna* and observance of Torah and *mitzvos*, so too, HaShem wants us to remain distinct in our dress and hair styles, and in the architecture of the *shuls* we build.

Sefer HaChinuch explains that the purpose of this *mitzva* is to ensure that we distance ourselves and despise the behavior of the *goyim*, even their clothing. The *Shulchan Aruch paskens* that one is not allowed to dress like the other nations or imitate their actions in other areas.

(רמב"ם הל' עבודה זרה פ"א ה"א, ס' החינוך מצוה רס"ב, שו"ע יו"ד סי' קע"ח ס"א)

The *Midrash* writes that HaShem tells the Yidden, "If you are separate from the nations, then you are mine (and can live a life of *geula* in Eretz Yisroel), but if not, you will be delivered into the hands of Nevuchadnetzar, or others like him, and you will go into *golus*."

(ספרא, רש"י סוף פ' קדושים)

A certain *maskil*, seeking to ridicule the *tzaddik* Reb Simcha Bunim of P'shisha, asked, "Did Avraham Avinu also wear a *shtreimel* and silk *kapota*?" Reb Simcha Bunim answered, "Exactly what kind of garments he wore – I do not know, but I do know that he looked to see how the *goyim* were dressed,

and made sure that he dressed differently."

(שיח שרפי קודש)

DIFFERENT IN SPEECH

Throughout all generations, Yidden have had a language of their own and spoke differently from the nations around them. Generally, this was done by intentionally jumbling the local language, and adding many words from *lashon hakodesh*. (In fact some speakers of Yiddish call it not "Yiddish," but "zhargon.")

Some opinions consider speaking like the nations to be part of the Torah's explicit prohibition against following *chukos hagoyim*, the ways of the non-Jews, while the *Talmud Yerushalmi* includes this practice among the decrees that Chazal instituted during the days of Hillel and Shammai, to keep Yidden separate..

Some *tzaddikim* have explained that the language of a nation expresses its nature, and speaking that language influences the speaker.

(ירושלמי שבת פ"א ה"ד, סמ"ג ל"ת נ', שם משמואל פ' דברים)

CONSIDER

*Is goyishe dress forbidden
because it is inappropriate
or because of the identity it
gives us?*

*What constitutes goyishe
language?*

The Rebbe spoke about the importance of speaking Yiddish several times. Once at *yechidus* the Rebbe expressed surprise at the fact that in Russia no Yid would think of speaking in Russian among themselves, while in America it has been considered acceptable even among fluent Yiddish speakers to converse in the *goyishe* language...

(ת"ו תשמ"ח ח"ב ע' 73, יחידות תשכ"ח - מפ"י השמועה)

Once, during the time of the czarist decree against distinctively Yiddishe dress, the son of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, the Maharil, was walking in Lubavitch dressed in full chassidishe *levush*, when he was stopped by a police officer. Attempting to tell him that he had paid the tax, the Maharil, who could not speak Russian, said, "I am one of the rebels." (The Russian words for 'tax' and 'rebels' are somewhat similar.)

The officer laughed and let him go.

(לקו"ס פרלוב ע' קל"ג)

A HOLY CALENDAR

The *mashpia* Reb Volf Greenglass related:

When the Rebbe went to the Frierdiker Rebbe's Ohel for the first time, he looked around at the *matzeivos* of *anash* that surrounded the Ohel. Upon seeing that some of them listed *goyishe* dates, he was very disturbed and expressed his displeasure.

(מהרמ"ז גרינגלס ע"ה)

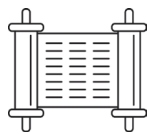
The wealthy baron Reb Shimon Rothschild wished to fulfill the *mitzva* of writing a *sefer* Torah, and wanted it to be written by a *talmid chacham* and *yerei Shamayim*. He heard of a *sofer* from Russia who met his criteria and had him brought over to Germany, where he lived. Under Reb Shimon's careful watch, the *sofer* began writing, and received payment in increments, enabling him to send funds home for his family's support.

Finally, as the *sefer* Torah neared completion, Reb Shimon asked the *sofer* how much he still owed him. The *sofer* took out his notebook, where he had listed the payments according to the secular months. Seeing this, Reb Shimon was filled with anger: "You calculate according to the secular months?! Someone like you should follow either the Yiddishe months, or the *parshiyos*!"

He gave him the rest of the payment and sent him home... together with the *sefer* Torah.

(סיפורים למעשה ח"א ע' קלח)





NECK HAIR AND MUSTACHE

Is it permissible to trim the mustache or the hair of the neck?

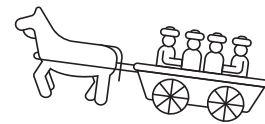
The Mishna teaches that there are five *peios* (“edges”) of the beard — “two from here, two from here, and one from below” — and the destruction of each one incurs a separate set of *malkus*.¹ The *rishonim* debate the exact boundaries of these “edges,”² and Shulchan Aruch therefore rules that a *yerei shamayim* should not use a razor anywhere on the beard.³

Most *rishonim* hold that all the “edges” are located on the face and not on the neck or throat, though the Bach understands that the fifth “edge” is in the area of the Adam’s apple.⁴ The Rama rules that one may not use a razor on the neck area, but one may be lenient to give a razor-like shave with scissors in this area since it isn’t the primary location of the “edges.” The implication of the Rama’s more lenient approach for this area is that this isn’t due to destroying the beard but the separate *issur* of *lo yilbash* (beautifying oneself like a woman).⁵

In his *chidushim* on *Shas*, the Tzemach Tzedek discusses the Bach’s prohibition of shaving the throat area, and seems to accept it as binding.⁶ Moreover, the Tzemach Tzedek prohibits trimming any part of the beard due to *lo yilbash*.⁷ The Arizal was likewise careful not to trim any hair on the throat area.⁸

What about the mustache? Some *rishonim* identify the sides of the mustache as “edges” of the beard, but the main portion of the mustache above the mouth is definitely not part of the beard. Some even encourage trimming mustache hairs that interfere with the food one eats. Yet, others still avoid it.⁹ In response to a questioner, the Rebbe refers him to Rabbanei Anash to verify the custom of elder chassidim.¹⁰

1. משנה מכות כ ע"א. רמב"ם ע"ז פ"ב ה"ז.
2. ראה ח"י הצ"צ למכות פ"ג.
3. שו"ת צ"צ יו"ד סי' צג.
4. ראה שער המצוות פ' קדושים.
5. באר היטב שם ס"ק ה.
6. ראה הנסמן בס' הדרת פנים זקן פ"א.
7. 10 אג"ק ח"ט ע' תכב.



R. YUZIK GUREVITCH

R. Yuzik Gurevitch (d. 5675) was a chossid of the Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab. Originally from Dokshitz, he became a very wealthy businessman through the Rebbe Maharash's *bracha*, and lived in Moscow and Warsaw. He was a major financial supporter of the Rebbe Rashab and merited a close relationship with him. R. Yuzik raised a large Chassidishe family, and his sons and sons in law were also prominent Chassidim and supporters of the Rebbeim.

After the Rebbe Maharash's *histalkus*, the Rebbe Rashab initially refused to formally accept the *nesius*. Meeting his friend R. Groinem, R. Yuzik bemoaned the bleak future of chassidim, but R. Groinem assured him that Lubavitch will rise again.

Thirty years later, in 5673, R. Yuzik visited the town of Lubavitch and was astounded by the sight of the booming Tomchei Temimim *yeshiva* filled with hundreds of devoted *talmidim*. Approaching R. Groinem, now the leading *mashpia*, R. Yuzik couldn't contain his amazement, "Do you recall our discussion of what will be? Did you imagine that this would happen? The Rebbe made a revolution in Lubavitch!"

(אלה תולדות פרץ ע' 687)

R. Zalman Duchman related:

In the winter of 5671, the Rebbe Rashab attended a meeting with leading Rebbees of Poland regarding communal issues. R. Yuzik wanted to the honor of hosting the Rebbe in his house, but R. Shmuel Michel Treinin from Petersburg countered that when the Rebbe visited his city he had stayed in a hotel, not in his home, and he had made hotel reservations in Warsaw. In the meanwhile, R. Yuzik prepared for the Rebbe five rooms in his home.

Everyone came to the train station to meet the Rebbe. Around the Rebbe stood R. Shmuel Michel and two prominent Warsaw Yidden. R. Shmuel Michel said that he had arranged a certain hotel; while R. Yuzik — the wealthy magnate and a quite outspoken fellow — opened his mouth apprehensively saying, "And I arranged the entire house."

One of those present, a wealthy Gerer chossid, spoke up, "Here in Warsaw, everyone stays in private homes (and not in hotels)."

The Rebbe announced, "We're going to Nalevka [St., where R. Yuzik's house was located]." R. Yuzik's joy was beyond measure.

(לשמע און ע' קטז)

A Moment with The Rebbe

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



THE REASON TO CRY

Reb Chaim Gutnik, a respected chossid from Melbourne Australia, merited a deeply personal relationship with the Rebbe, and would spend many hours in *yechidus*.

At one such *yechidus*, Reb Chaim reported to the Rebbe about a certain fellow chossid, who was very connected to the Friediker Rebbe, and despite the years that had passed since the *histalkus*, his connection had not waned.

"Every day," Reb Chaim described to the Rebbe, "he cries for the fact that the [Friediker] Rebbe is not here..."

The Rebbe was not happy with the report.

"I too cry every day," replied the Rebbe, "but I cry with the knowledge that the Rebbe is indeed here..."

(As heard by Reb Osher Farkash)

לעילוי נשמת
מרת מוסיא בת ר' אברהם ישעי' ע"ה שטראקס
נפטרה כ"ה אדר תשפ"ד

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