

The Weekly Farbrengens



865 • יתרו תשפ"ו • לחמן ישמעו
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A DELIGHTFUL SHABBOS (I)

A MITZVA TO ENJOY

The Baal Shem Tov explained the *mitzva* of *oneg Shabbos* with the following *mashal*:

A prince who was in captivity amongst coarse people received a letter one day from his father, the king. The prince was delighted and wanted to celebrate, yet he knew that his neighbors could not appreciate the greatness of the king. He therefore distributed liquor and they celebrated, so that he too could celebrate his happy occasion.

Similarly, in order for the *neshama* to rejoice in the spiritual revelations of *Shabbos*, the body must rejoice with some physical delight.

(כתר שם טוב אות קז, תוי"י שלח קלז, א)

The Alter Rebbe explains it as follows:

On *Shabbos*, Divine pleasure is revealed, similar to the revelation of Gan Eden. However, since we are physical beings, we cannot experience this spiritual pleasure in its pure form, so it is vested in the pleasure of eating physical food. And in that form we can experience it.

(מאמרי אדה"ז הקצרים ע' נט)

The Rebbe explains that the *mitzva* of *oneg Shabbos* is fulfilled in its ideal form when the *neshama* feels a spiritual delight from carrying out *HaShem's* will that we should eat *Shabbos* foods. However, even those who are attracted to the physical pleasure of eating are required to fulfill the *mitzva* of *oneg Shabbos* by eating good meat and aged wine.

(לקו"ש חל"ג ע' 161)

RESPECTABLE MEALS

Rebbi Chiya bar Abba related:

I was once a guest of a man in Ludkiya, and a golden table was brought before him, which had to be carried by sixteen men; sixteen silver

chains were fixed in it, and plates, goblets and pitchers were set upon it, with all kinds of food, delicacies and spices.

I said to him, "My son! How have you merited this?"

He replied, "I was a butcher, and I used to say about every fine animal, 'This will be for *Shabbos*.'"

I said to him, "Fortunate are you that you have merited this, and praised be *HaShem* who has permitted you to enjoy all this."

(שבת קיט ע"א)

CONSIDER

Is the purpose of physical enjoyment on Shabbos to distract the body, or to access spiritual delight? What does it depend on?

Yosef Mokir *Shabbos* ("Yosef who honors *Shabbos*") had in his vicinity a wealthy *goy* who owned much property. Stargazers told him that Yosef Mokir *Shabbos* would take over all of it, so he sold it all, and with the proceeds he bought one precious stone, which he set in his turban for safekeeping. As he was crossing a bridge a sudden wind blew it off and cast it into the water, and a huge fish swallowed it. The fish was later caught and brought to the market on *erev Shabbos*, as the sun was already preparing to set.

"Who will buy it now?" they wondered. But someone advised: "Take it to Yosef Mokir *Shabbos*. He always makes a point of honoring *Shabbos* by buying fish."

They took it to him and he bought it and when

he opened it he discovered the precious jewel inside, and sold it for thirteen chambers filled with gold *dinarim*!

A wise old man met him and commented, "He who lends to *Shabbos*, *Shabbos* repays him."

(שבת קיט ע"א)

SPECIAL FOODS

According to *Kabbala*, one should make a point of eating fish at each of the *seudos* of *Shabbos*.

(שו"ע"ר סי' רמב"ז, לקו"ש חל"ג ע' 192 הע' 15)

The Alter Rebbe once made a lighthearted remark, that what *tekias shofar* accomplishes on Rosh HaShana, we accomplish on *Shabbos* by eating *kugel*. One of the *chassidim* asked, "If so, why do we need to blow *shofar* on Rosh HaShana? We can accomplish just as much by eating *kugel*!"

The Alter Rebbe explained, "That is exactly what we do. When Rosh HaShana falls on *Shabbos*, we eat *kugel* and don't blow *shofar*..."

(שמו"ס ח"ב ע' 156)

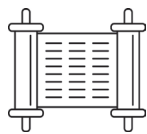
During the *seuda* of the *chassuna* of the Frierdiker Rebbe's daughter Sheindel הי"ד, which took place on *Shabbos* afternoon, the person serving forgot to bring out the *kugel*. Those partaking in the *seuda bentsched Birkas HaMazon*, assuming that no *kugel* had been prepared.

After *bentsching*, the Rebbe asked his *Rebbetzin*, "Where is the *kugel*? Was no *kugel* prepared for *Shabbos Kodesh*?"

She assured him that indeed she had prepared a *kugel* and then asked the person serving to bring it to the table. The Frierdiker Rebbe then washed his hands again, told all those participating to do the same, and they returned to the table to eat the *kugel*.

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 193)





BRUSHING THE BEARD

May a man brush his beard if he may pluck out some hairs?

The Torah warns against “destroying” (*hashchasa*) and “shaving” (*giluach*) a man’s beard, which refers to removing the beard with a razor, or with scissors, according to some. According to various poskim, including the Tzemach Tzedek, even trimming the beard with a cutting device is a transgression of *giluach* (*mide’oraisa* or *miderabanan*), as well as a prohibition of *lo yilbash* (self-beautification for men). (See issue 862 for the full discussion.)

What about plucking out hairs?

The Arizal cautions strongly against plucking even a single hair of the beard and recommends not touching the beard at all.¹ Some *acharonim* suggest that plucking out hairs may be considered razor-like “destroying” the beard (removing it from the root),² while others understand this to be based on Kabbalah, as it severs the Thirteen Channels of Divine Mercy.³

Gently brushing the beard to separate it from tangling is permissible (though some allow only the fingers and not a comb).⁴ To people concerned about the beard’s appearance, the Rebbe wrote that while some exceptional people (*yechidei segula*) avoided combing or brushing their beard, doing so in a manner that won’t definitely pull out hair (*pesik reishei*) is allowed.⁵

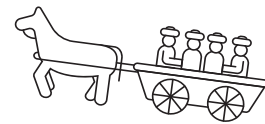
A widespread minhag Yisroel is to stroke one’s beard when deeply engrossed in Torah. In fact, stroking the 13 Midos Harachamim of the beard, which correspond to the 13 principles of Torah exposition, is said to help one understand the learning.⁶

To someone who asked how to break their habit of picking their beard, the Rebbe suggested wearing gloves.⁷ The habit can also run into the prohibition of *gozez* if done on Shabbos.⁸

While the Torah frowns upon men grooming and styling their hair (*mesalsel b’saaro*),⁹ and the Rebbe disparaged combing the beard stylishly,¹⁰ basic hygiene and presentability is allowed and encouraged.

זקנו לפחות עד חתונתה) וח"כ ע' קפב (לבחור שהציעו לו ליישר זקנו לצורך שידוכים). ולהעיר משה"ש תרצ"א ע' 243 (שאד"נ"ע לא סרק זקנו כ"א שורהו במים). ולהעיר מרשימות דברים (מהד"ח) ע' 446 לגבי הנהגת ר' יצחק מתמיד ע"פ הוראות הרופאים למנוע השערות שלא יפלו.
6. ראה אגרא דפרקא אות שלו.
7. ע"פ מראות קודש מחלוקת דולרים כ"א אייר תשנ"א.
8. ראה שו"ע ד' סי' ש"מ ס"א (ושם גם נזכר אפשרות של לא ילבש).
9. ראה רש"י בראשית ל"ט ו'. וראה תניא, קו"א סי' ה. סה"מ תרמ"ג ע' מג-מד.
10. ראה לדוגמא תו"מ ח"ט ע' 364 וחמ"ב ע' 289. ולהעיר גם מתו"מ ח"ה ע' 325 ושיחות קודש תשי"ח ע' רו לגבי קיפול הזקן.

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



REB TZVI BEN HABAAL SHEM TOV

Reb Tzvi, the son of the Baal Shem Tov, was a very holy but quiet and modest individual, and throughout his life, he lived in poverty. He was taught by his father and by Reb Gershon Kitover. After the passing of the Baal Shem Tov, Reb Tzvi took over the mantle of leadership, but on the first *yahrtzeit* of his father, he said that the Baal Shem Tov had revealed himself to him and said that the entire “*pamalya shel maalah*” (heavenly court) had accepted the Mezritcher Maggid. He then took off his *shtraimel* and special white garment and put it on the Maggid. He passed away in Pinsk on the 7th of Teves, תק"מ (1780).

Once, a young man came to Reb Tzvi and asked him how to attain the level of *avodas Hashem* that he, Reb Tzvi, has reached. Reb Tzvi answered him with a *marshal*:

"There was a man who owned

fifty gold pieces, and he asked the wealthiest man of his town how he can prosper from this money. The rich man answered that he cannot advise him since his wealth he received as an inheritance from his father. He recommended that he ask another wealthy man who had worked hard to earn his money."

"So too with me," concluded Reb Tzvi. "I have inherited much from my father. Better go to Reb Aharon of Karlin who has attained his levels with his own effort..."

As mentioned, after one year of leadership Reb Tzvi gave over the mantle to the Mezritcher Maggid. The Rebbe Rashab commented on this, "One needs to have a lot of strength to do this. We find that many *Tanaaim* and *Amoraim* had no desire to accept leadership, but once they took on this position ..."

(תורת שלום ע' 84)

A Moment with The Rebbe



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

SINCE YOU BOTH SPEAK YIDDISH...

Longtime Montreal shliach, Reb Moishe New, relates:

Before my *chassuna*, I merited a *yechidus* together with my kallah, and we received a bracha to build a home that radiates with the light of Torah.

But the beginning of the *yechidus* was interesting. The Rebbe began by telling us, "Since you both speak Yiddish, I will talk to you in Yiddish."

A while after the *yechidus*, I wondered why the Rebbe had said that. Yiddish was my first language, and the school my wife had attended in Montreal taught in Yiddish. I compared notes with some friends, and the Rebbe

hadn't opened with this introduction for them.

But then my wife revealed something to me.

"Before our *yechidus*," she said, "I was afraid the Rebbe would ask me a question." Her Yiddish wasn't as good as her English, and she was worried that she wouldn't answer perfectly. She became preoccupied with this fear.

But then, she said, we came in and the Rebbe said those words: Since you both speak Yiddish, I'll speak in Yiddish. All of a sudden, the fear drained away from her, and she was able to melt into the moment.