

# The Weekly *Farbrengens*



למען ישמענו • בהר-בחוקותי תשפ"ו • 878  
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## THE BEAUTY OF MODESTY (I)

### HUMILITY AND BASHFULNESS

The *Midrash* teaches that there is nothing *HaShem* loves more dearly than modesty.

(פסיקתא רבתי מו, א)

The Rebbe Rashab explains that pride is referred to as *zeh* ("This!"), because it is revealed prominently, whereas the way of *kedushah* teaches the very opposite – "to walk humbly with *HaShem*." Modesty requires that a person should not be revealed, but should cover himself, out of his humility of spirit.

(ס' המאמרים תרנ"ד ע' קנד)

In a *sicha* to women, the Rebbe once explained that the main component of *tznius* is quiet and modest behavior at home. Appropriate conduct outside the home then flows from this as a matter of course.

(שיח"ק תשכ"ח ח"ב ע' 159)

### UPHOLDING PRIVACY

The Torah praises the trait of modesty in many sources. *Chazal* command that one should be modest in all his ways and not conduct himself in a shameless manner, not only while he is in company but even when alone. Even when he is alone at night, in his private rooms, he should conduct himself modestly and bashfully in the presence of *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*, for "the whole world is filled with His glory," and "in His sight, darkness is as light."

(שולחן ערוך אדה"ז מהדו"ב סי' ב' ס"א)

At one point during his chase to kill Dovid HaMelech, Shaul HaMelech entered a cave to take care of his needs, unaware that this was where Dovid and his men were hiding. To ensure that no one see him, Shaul HaMelech went deep inside the cave, and he concealed himself even more by using his cloak as a covering. Dovid HaMelech, who would have been allowed to kill Shaul to save his own life, was urged by his men to do so, but despite the opportunity, he

felt unable to kill him. Instead, he cut off part of Shaul's cloak. He later told Shaul that his *tznius* had protected him from being killed.

The *Maharal* explains that this was his reward for having concealed himself.

(שמואל א' כד, ד, ברכות ס"ב ע"ב, נתיבות עולם נתיב הצניעות פ"א)

### CONSIDER

*What is the connection between feeling modest and dressing modestly?*

*Why can't a person be public and also beautiful within?*

When the *malochim* asked Avraham, "Where is Sara, your wife?" they were inquiring about what *zechus* she had, as a barren woman of ninety years, to merit having a child. Avraham replied, "She is in the tent," implying that in the merit of her modesty, she was worthy of *HaShem's* promise that 'Kings will proceed from you.'

(כלי יקר בראשית י"ח, ט')

When Bilam wanted to curse the Yidden, he noticed that the entrances of their tents were not facing one another, for reasons of modesty, and therefore *bensched* them instead. The Rebbe notes that we see from here how one should not focus only on the main requirements of *tznius*, disregarding the finer points, for even a minute aspect of *tznius* has the power to transform a curse to a *bracha*.

(במדבר כ"ד, ה', לקו"ש חי"ג ע' 83)

### THE GLORY WITHIN

The Torah tells us that the true beauty of a Yiddishe woman is not expressed in her external appearance; rather, by virtue of her inner

qualities, she is *beautiful within*.

At a *farbrengen* on Simchas Torah תש"ל (1969), the Rebbe said that young girls should be told what a lack of modesty implies. When partially uncovering themselves to impress others, it is as if they are carrying a poster announcing that they have nothing else to show for themselves—neither intelligence nor *middos*, nor even a pleasant face ... Now, why would anyone want to proclaim such a situation publicly?

But in fact that is not the true situation. In fact, every individual girl has her own innate inner qualities, and once she understands this, the test of dressing in a modest manner will become easier.

(תהלים מו, יד; שיח"ק תש"ל ח"א ע' 122)

In Winter 5722, Rabbi Refael Tzvi Hartman, a school principal in Eretz Yisroel presented the Rebbe with a dilemma that he had. Many schools had the practice of appointing older students to serve as cross-guards to make sure that the students only cross at the designated crossing. His school, which included a boys and girls department, also had such a system, and girls were chosen to this position. Rabbi Hartman was uncomfortable with the girls doing this and asked the Rebbe's advice.

To this the Rebbe replied: "Regarding this that you discontinued the girl cross-guards – it is obvious that this is how you should continue for the future."

(אג"ק חכ"ב ע' נה)

When the book on the Alter Rebbe's descendants was being compiled, the editor wished to include a picture of the Rebbetzin. He asked the Rebbe for her picture, and the Rebbe replied that she would need to be contacted directly, and her agreement would need to be procured. They contacted her, and she replied that under no circumstance would she agree for any photo of her to be published.

(מפי השמועה)

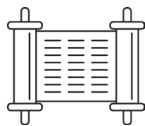
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## GOSSIP

If someone tells me something, may I go repeat it?

The Torah prohibits relating gossip about another Jew: "Do not go gossiping (*rachil*) among your people."<sup>1</sup> Rashi explains the word *rachil*, "gossiper," as sharing roots with words meaning "spy" and "peddler," since, like a peddler, the gossipmonger wanders from person to person, spying out bits of information and trading them.

Gossip refers to repeating to your friend something that someone else said about your friend or did to your friend. Even if the subject contains no shame and the person would not object to it being said, it is nevertheless forbidden, as it can be destructive. This is illustrated in the tragic story of Doeg and Achimelech, where careless reporting led to bloodshed. When Dovid fled from Shaul, he sought food and refuge from the oblivious Kohanim of Nov. Shaul's advisor, Doeg, saw this and reported what they did to the king. Suspecting that the Kohanim intended to help a rebellion, Shaul ordered them killed.<sup>2</sup>

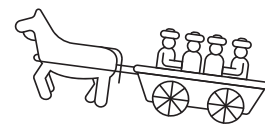
One who hears *rechilus* must likewise be careful not to believe it, and one who does is punished more severely than the one who relates it. In his Shulchan Aruch, the Alter Rebbe allows believing it when there is an indication that the story is true. However, the Alter Rebbe's brother Maharil quotes the Alter Rebbe as saying that only Dovid Hamelech, a king, could judge based on his own assessment.<sup>3</sup>

There is a related *issur* to repeat private or personal information that was shared without explicit permission to repeat it (*bal tomar*). This applies even if the other person did not explicitly say to keep the conversation secret.<sup>4</sup> *Poskim* clarify that this prohibition applies only when it is apparent that the conversation was intended to remain private — for example, if it occurred in a secluded setting or the subject matter itself is clearly of a confidential nature.<sup>5</sup>

When something is shared with three people, it is assumed that the matter will go public, unless the speaker specifically instructs them not to share it. Therefore, there is no prohibition for one of the listeners to repeat it — as long as his intention is not to spread or publicize it further, and the subject matter doesn't involve *lashon hara* or *rechilus*.<sup>6</sup> If the speaker knows that a listener will share it and he shares it nevertheless, it's as if he permitted to repeat it.<sup>7</sup>

1. ויקרא יט טז. רמב"ם הל' דעות פ"ז ה"א.  
2. חינוך רל"ו, סמ"ג לאוין ט', כס"מ על הרמב"ם שם, שו"ע"ר סי' קנ"ו ס"י ובהגהה שם.  
3. שו"ת אדה"ז שער השמועה סי' ו.  
4. יומא ד,א, סמ"ג לאוין ט', שו"ע"ר שם סי' ד.  
5. ראה ח"ח הל' לה"ר כלל ב במ"ח סקכ"ז.  
6. ערכין טז ע"א. רמב"ם שם ה"ה. שו"ע"ר שם סי"א.  
7. מרגלא בפומי' דרבינו אודות דברים שאמר לו אדה"י"י"צ. אמנם בד"ת יש גם משום לא יבזו לגנב וכו'.

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



## REB YEHOSHUA LEIN

Reb Yehoshua Lein was born in Nevel around the year 5641 (1881). At *bar mitzvah* age he was sent by his father Reb Chaim Dovid to learn under his great-uncle, the Radatz, in Tchernigov. After some years he continued his learning in Lubavitch and was among the *yoshvim* (full-time learners in Lubavitch before the opening of Tomchei Temimim). He received guidance from the elder chassidim there — Reb Yerachmiel Binyominson, Reb Shlomo Zalman Havlin, and also from the Rebbe Rashab himself. In 5666 (1906), he headed the *yeshiva* in Dokshitz. After a few years, as per the Rebbe Rashab's directive, he accepted the position of *rov* first in Ovstravna, near Vitebsk, and later in Beshenkovich. After the revolution he was forced to flee and settled in Rudnia near Lubavitch, where he served as a *shochet*. On Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan 5702 (1941) he was killed by the Nazis *al kiddush Hashem*.

After his marriage, Reb Yehoshua came to Lubavitch and requested a

daily *seider* from the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe Rashab instructed him to get up in the morning no later than seven o'clock and to begin *davening* around nine-ten o'clock. He also gave him specific *shiurim* to learn every day. Reb Yehoshua asked if he must finish all the *shiurim* immediately after *davening*. The Rebbe Rashab explained that quite the contrary is more desirable, since then the whole day he would carry in his mind the "ol" (burden) of finishing the *shiurim*.

(תשורה אבני חן ע' 27)

Reb Yochanan Gordon related:

When I came to Lubavitch for Rosh Hashana 5669 (1909), Reb Yehousha was also there, and during *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* he *farbrenge*d. I remember that he was saying that it's a *chutzpah* for one to prepare himself and go lie down in bed deliberately, saying "Now I can relax." To fall asleep is one thing, but to prepare oneself is a *chutzpah*.

(תשורה גאלדמאן י' אלול תשנ"ח ע' 47)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



## PING PONG ON SHABBOS KODESH

When the Rebbe called for the establishment of the Reshet school network in Eretz Yisroel, Rabbi Aharon Mordechai Zilberstrom dropped a respected profession and comfortable income and, together with several other chassidim, opened dozens of schools across the country — finding teachers, organizing training days and seminars, and building communities around those schools that rescued tens of thousands of Jewish children from spiritual destruction.

Beyond the standard school day, they constantly sought new ways to reach boys who had fallen through the cracks.

He relates:

One year we opened a special Shabbos program in the city of Ganim, after it became known that boys were spending Shabbos at venues involving *chilul Shabbos*. To draw them in, we incorporated ping pong and other games into the program.

When we reported this to the Rebbe, the response soon arrived in his holy handwriting: "Ping pong on Shabbos Kodesh - it is self-understood that this has no place whatsoever."

(Letter from 11 Nissan, 5720)