

The Weekly Farbrenge



MERKAZ
ANASH
מרכז אנאש

למען ישמעו • במדבר תשפ"ו • 879
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

THE BEAUTY OF MODESTY (II)

A LASTING IMPACT

One woman in history had the unique merit of having seven sons become *Kohanim Gedolim*. When the *Chachomim* asked her why she had earned this great *zechus*, she replied, "Because I was careful that even the beams of my home should never see my hair."

The Rebbe highlights how this practice of hers impacted the *avoda* of the *Kohen Gadol* in the *Kodesh HaKadoshim* on Yom Kippur for many further generations, because the position of *Kohen Gadol*, being hereditary, stays within the family.

(יומא מ"ז ע"א. תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"ד ע' 2190)

The *Zohar* uses remarkable terms to describe the importance of *tznius*, and promises generous *brachos* to a woman who does so and to her family as well. Based on this, the Rebbe promised many *brachos* for *tznius* including health, *parnasa*, having children, having *nachas* from children and grandchildren, and finding a *shidduch*. The Rebbe contrasts any temporary discomfort involved to the everlasting *brachos* a woman will receive for generations to come, and question how anyone can act otherwise.

(זהר ח"א קטו, ב. ס' בת מלך פנימה פ"ג ופ"ד)

On his way to *Eretz Yisroel*, the *Baal Shem Tov* passed through Istanbul, Turkey, and saw young men whose *neshamos* were the *neshamos* of the *tanno'im*. The *Baal Shem Tov* explained that their mothers merited having sons with such *neshamos* because of their modesty. He added that in their merit, the *tefilos* that were *davened* in that city are accepted Above.

(שו"ת הגרש"א אלפנדרי, סוף ח"ב)

In the year תרי"ד (1854), a decree in Russia forbade women to wear head coverings. Twenty years later, a draft law required *all* men to join the army, whereas in previous years only a certain quota had to be provided from each city. The Rebbe Maharash recalled that the sons of those women who had staunchly kept their head covering despite the decree were able to evade the draft, and who knows what troubles befell the women who had not withstood the trial...

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 74, וראה סה"ש תר"ש ע' 188)

A PRIME SEGULAH

A young woman requested a *bracha* for a *shidduch*. The Rebbe responded in his handwriting:

"I confirm receipt of your letter of 11/13 concerning a *shidduch* and marriage. The source of *brachos* is *HaShem*, Who gives the Torah and commands us to observe the *mitzvos*. The way to receive His *brachos* is by the daily observance [of the *Shulchan Aruch*]. And concerning a *shidduch*: First and foremost – a life of *tznius*, exactly as described in our Torah, the Torah of Life."

(מצילום המכתב)

CONSIDER

Why is tznius a source for so many brachos?

Why are the benefits of the mitzvah highlighted by tznius more than by other mitzvos?

In a handwritten note, the Rebbe emphasized the effect of *tznius* on the spiritual future of children:

"This reply is based on the words of my father-in-law, the [Friediker] Rebbe, in similar instances – that today's problem with young people, *Rachmana litzlan*, stems from laxities in family purity and *tznius*. From a positive statement about *Kimchis* we can deduce the opposite: Just as her *tznius* blessed her with *seven kohanim gedolim*, we can understand that..."

(מצילום המענה)

To the claim that *tznius* is inconvenient the Rebbe responded:

"How is it possible, after reading the Mishna Berura

about the blessings everyone in the family receives through *tznius*, that the 'inconvenience' still plays a role?!

"By the way, when those who dictate fashion recently decided that wigs were in style, tens of thousands followed suit with *zerizus* and *simcha*..."

(מצילום המענה)

TO DESERVE THE REBBE'S BRACHA

The Rebbe Maharash was not present at the wedding of his son, the Rebbe Rashab, which took place in Ovrutch, the hometown of the *kalla*, *Rebbetzin Shterna Sara*. After the wedding, when the new couple traveled to Lubavitch, the *chossan* suggested to his *kalla* that she ask her father-in-law to give her the *brachos* she deserved, for had he been at the wedding, he would of course have *bentched* them under the *chuppa*. In response to her request, the Rebbe Maharash replied, "Of course – on condition that you cut off that feather."

She was wearing a hat decorated by a prominent feather, as was the style at the time. She cut it off, and the Rebbe *bentched* her.

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 78)

A young girl, who was not *frum* at the time, passed by the Rebbe one Sunday for dollars. She was dressed in her usual style, which was not particularly modest. As she received her dollar, the Rebbe assured her that if she was dressed differently on her next visit, he would give her two dollars. When she asked her parents to buy her new clothing, they brushed her off – until they saw that this was affecting her health, so they agreed.

The following Sunday, she went once again to receive a dollar from the Rebbe, this time dressed in modest fashion. She passed by the Rebbe, but was disappointed to be given only one dollar. She continued walking, when she was suddenly summoned back. The Rebbe said, "I was sure you would remind me about what I had said, but seeing that you didn't, I had to remind you myself. Here's your extra dollar!"

(התן החסידי ע' 129)



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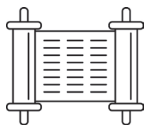
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INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO TORAH

When and how should a child be introduced to Torah study?

From the pasuk *v'limaditem osam es bneichem*, Chazal learn that a father is obligated to teach his child Torah.¹ The Alter Rebbe emphasizes that, unlike most mitzvot, where chinuch is only *miderabanan*, the obligation to teach Torah to one's son is *mide'oraisa*, and rests on the father himself.

Chinuch begins the moment a child can speak. The father begins by teaching him two pesukim: *Torah tziva lanu Moshe*, planting in his heart that the Torah was given *min hashamayim* and is eternal; and the first pasuk of *Shema Yisroel*, instilling the *emunah* that Hashem is One. After this, they gradually continue learning additional pesukim by heart.²

When the child turns three, the father teaches him the *alef beis*. That year, he teaches him to read, so that by age four, he can begin reading *pesukim* in the Chumash. Poskim debate whether *ben chamesh shanim l'mikra* means when the child turns five or at the start of his fifth year, i.e., at age four. The Alter Rebbe takes the second approach.³

The child's reading is very precious to Hashem, as Dovid Hamelech said, *mipi olelim v'yonkim yisadta oz*, from the mouths of young Hashem established strength. Even when the child stumbles and skips letters or words, Hashem sees them as an expression of love.⁴

The father should teach pesukim slowly but steadily, learning also at night to fulfill the pasuk *v'hagisa bo yomam valailah*.⁵ The minhag is to begin Chumash with Sefer Vayikra, as Chazal say, "let the pure ones come and engage with the laws of purity."⁶

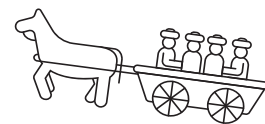
The Rebbe highlights how even once the child begins cheder, the chinuch at home remains important. When the child comes home, he should only see things that reinforce what he is taught at cheder. *V'dibarta bam b'shivtecha b'veisecha* means the child should be able to come to his father and mother and talk Torah with them.⁷

Moreover, the Rebbe points out, the strongest tool in this is the father's own example. When the child sees his father setting aside business, foregoing a few more dollars he could earn, to sit and learn Torah, this example is engraved in the child for life. The aim is for the child to feel the value and importance of Torah, with real *geshmak* in learning, so he's excited to learn another pasuk of Torah.⁸

1. קידושין כ"ט ע"א.
2. הל' ת"ת לאדה"ז פ"א ה"א.
3. שו"ע יו"ד סי' רמ"ה ס"ז-ת. הל' ת"ת.
4. תו"מ חנ"ג ע' 396.
5. תו"מ חמ"ה ע' 145. תו"מ תשמ"ד ח"ג ע' 1533.
6. לחם משנה הל' ת"ת פ"ב ה"ב. יהושע א.ת.
7. ראשית חכמה, שער הקדושה, פרק גידול בנים אות. 1.
8. תו"מ חמ"ה ע' 145. תו"מ תשמ"ד ח"ג ע' 1533.

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

Our Heroes



REB CHAIM DOVID LEIN

Reb Chaim Dovid was the middle son of Reb Moshe Leib Lein, and a grandson of the famous chossid of the Alter Rebbe, Reb Peretz Chein. He was born around the year 5610 (1850). After his *chasuna* he was a *yoshev* by the Rebbe Maharash in Lubavitch, as was the custom was in those days. Eventually he took on the job of *shochet* and *bodek* in the city of Nevel, a task he continued to hold even in his old age, as he had very steady hands. As can be seen in the letters written to him, the Frierdiker Rebbe held him in very high esteem. He passed away in Nevel in the year 5699 (1939).

Reb Chaim Dovid once related two instructions he had personally received from the Rebbe Maharash:

- (1) To understand a *maamar Chassidus* one needs to learn it at least three times. To apply it in *avoda*, one needs to learn the *maamar* at least thirty times.
- (2) A *shochet's* mind has to be utterly clear

and focused. Therefore, since he *shechted* on Fridays, he was to forgo the custom of chassidim to remain awake on Thursday night, making it up on *motzai Shabbos*. To strengthen his mind's clarity further he should add three hours of sleep on Friday and Sunday nights.

(אוצר החסידים אה"ק ע' 310)

Late one winter Friday night amidst a snowstorm, knocking was heard on the door of a chossid's home in Nevel. This was during the time when the NKVD would often make searches or arrests during the night, so the chossid opened the door with a pounding heart. He relaxed when he saw Reb Chaim Dovid standing in front of him in the cold, begging to come in. Reb Chaim Dovid explained, "I was in middle of learning a *maamar* of the Rebbe Maharash when the candle went out and I could not continue. I walked outside and saw the light was still burning in your home, so please let me finish the *maamar* here."

(תשורה אבני חן ע' 43)

A Moment with The Rebbe



AVODA IN BERLIN

R' Ezriel Zelig Slonim of Yerushalayim related:

In 1929, after hearing that the Frierdiker Rebbe had left Soviet Russia, I resolved to spend Shavuos with him. Since Latvia required an official invitation from a local resident in order to obtain a visa, I traveled to Berlin to arrange the necessary documents.

Upon arriving in Berlin, I made my way to the home where the Rebbe, then the future son-in-law of the Frierdiker Rebbe, was staying. The family hosting the Rebbe informed me that he was fasting that day, something they said he did often.

When I knocked on the door to his room,

I found the Rebbe wearing Rabbeinu Tam tefillin and learning Talmud Yerushalmi. He motioned for me to sit down and wait until he finished learning. After removing the tefillin, he rose from his place and warmly extended his hand to greet me.

When I explained the reason for my visit, the Rebbe immediately accompanied me to the post office, where we sent a telegram to the Frierdiker Rebbe in Riga requesting that an official invitation be issued in my name.

When we went out to the street, I noticed that the Rebbe was wearing gloves on his hands, protecting his hands from anything impure.

(Eved Melech, pp. 123-124)

IN HONOR OF

Sima Chana Miriam bas Chaya Bunia - Birthday 28 Iyar
Leah Frieda bas Chaim Volf - 3rd Yohrtzeit 2 Sivan