

# The Weekly *Farbrengens*



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מרכז אנאש

884 • קרח תשפ"ו • לחמן ישמעו  
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## THE BEAUTY OF MODESTY (V)

### ENCOURAGING MODESTY

Reb Chaim Meir Friedland related:

“On *Shabbos Parshas Chukas* תש”ז (1947) my *ufruf* took place in 770. At the *Kiddush* that was held after *davening*, the Rebbe, then the son-in-law of the Friediker Rebbe, spoke about the education of girls, and emphasized the need to raise each of them to be an *eishes chayil*, instead of trying to imitate the secular world. He also noted that girls do not have to conduct themselves like other girls in America who are taught “to curtsy before the queen,” and they don’t have to know how to dance. They must only know Torah and how to conduct themselves in a manner of *tznius*.”

(אלבום מוקדש ישראל ע' 35)

Rabbi Mordechai Shmuel Ashkenazi, the Rov of Kfar Chabad, and his wife had *yechidus* in Tishrei תשכ”ט (1968). The Rebbe asked Mrs. Ashkenazi: “What about the *yiras shamayim* of the girls and women in Kfar Chabad?” And without waiting for a response, he said: “The true test of *yiras Shamayim* is *tznius* and *tahara*.”

The Rebbe continued: “When you return to *Eretz Yisroel*, divide Kfar Chabad into districts, and arrange a *tznius* club in each area where they’ll study the appropriate *halachos*.”

(בת מלך פנימה ע' 108)

One summer evening in תשכ”ט (1969), Reb Alexander Bin-Nun entered the Rebbe’s study for *yechidus*. He later related that the Rebbe had instructed him to speak about *tznius* during his forthcoming visit to Camp Emunah. The Rebbe emphasized that it would not suffice to speak about the concept of modesty in general, nor to speak of lofty *tznius* ideals. Rather, he should speak about plain and simple *tznius*: that the skirt should be the proper length, and so on.

(יומן תשכ”ט, תשורה בלינוב תמוז תשנ”ח ע' 75)

After a nuclear reactor exploded in Chernobyl, causing radioactive fallout to spread throughout the entire region and placing the whole population in danger, Chassidim decided to

transport local children to *Eretz Yisroel* and to settle them in Kfar Chabad.

The first group arrived on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Av תש”נ (1990). They included 96 girls, the youngest five-and-a-half, and the eldest, eighteen. The girls of course brought their clothing with them, and the organizers faced the challenge of introducing them to modest clothing.

**CONSIDER**

*Why did the Rebbe have to clarify that tznius must be spoken about in “plain and simple terms”?*

*What does it mean practically that the modesty of the Old Country applies in America as well?*

They wrote about their difficulties to the Rebbe, who responded immediately. Amongst other directives the Rebbe wrote that it must be stated that the long-held community standards could not be changed and that only a firm stance would prevent friction and set the standard. The Rebbe advised that nice modest clothing be bought for the immigrant girls, thus making modesty attractive.

(צדיק למלך ח”ז ע' 237. החן החסידי ע' 160)

### “MIVTZA TZNIUS”

Two girls wrote to the Rebbe about *tznius* problems in their school. In a letter dated Chanukah תש”ל (1969) the Rebbe wrote about Yiddishe women and their mission and then added in his own handwriting: “With blessings for success in *mivtza tznius* and for good news in this area soon.”

Two months later, the girls received another letter in the Rebbe’s name, signed by the secretary: “In connection with your letter from *motza’ei Shabbos* 12 Kislev about dressing modestly, please provide updates.”

(בת מלך פנימה ע' 106)

In an interesting exchange between the Rebbe and a *tznius* committee in Yerushalayim, the Rebbe addresses their suggestion to add *tznius* to the ten *mivtzoim*. In the letter, dated 17 Shvat תשל”ח (1978), after encouraging the work of the committee and even sending a contribution towards their future activities, the Rebbe adds the following:

“P.S. As to announcing a special campaign for fixing *tznius* within the framework of Chabad’s *mivtzoim*, it is dubious for a number of reasons as to whether we can task the young men and women who are the bulk of Chabad’s activists with this type of campaign. It seems more appropriate for a Rabbinical organization which you’re in contact with, and this will be the most effective and successful route.”

(כפר חב”ד גיליון 991 עמ' 178)

### THE TRADITIONAL WAY

The Rebbe once wrote in a letter: Soon after my father-in-law, the Friediker Rebbe, arrived in America in the year ת”ש (1940), he announced that his *shlichus* in this land was to transform it into a place of Torah and *yiras Shamayim*. There were those who asked him, “But isn’t this, after all, America, not like The Old Country, *der alter heim*?”

The Friediker Rebbe replied, “*America is no different!* With regard to Torah and *mitzvos*, America is no exception!”

The Rebbe added: Yiddishe women must know that the very same Torah and *mitzvos*, and the very same principle—that “the entire nobility of a princess is within”—which applied in the Old Country apply in America as well.

(לקו”ש ח”ו ע' 364)



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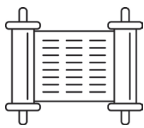
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## ISRAELI SHIPS ON SHABBOS

**What was the Rebbe's halachic objection to Israeli ships traveling on Shabbos?**

In the 1950s, ocean liners were the main link between Eretz Yisroel and America. The trip took over ten days, so every voyage met Shabbos at sea. The ships belonged to ZIM, the state-owned Israeli line, and its subsidiary Shoham. Their kitchens were kosher, yet they sailed on through Shabbos amid countless *melachos*. For close to a decade, the Rebbe campaigned against this public blatant chillul Shabbos by the newly formed "Jewish State."<sup>1</sup>

To those who brought in the *heterim* for passengers traveling on Shabbos (see previous issue), the Rebbe pointed out that the discussion there was whether an individual may board a ship already sailing. But with a Jewish-run ship, the real question comes earlier and is far more serious.<sup>2</sup>

At the time, the company claimed the ships ran automatically over Shabbos. The Rebbe countered that this was false, as no vessel was able to cross a full day without constant human work. The Rebbe listed about ten *melachos* that would be necessary even if the ship traveled on automation, and international law required constant logging. Anyone who denied this either didn't understand how ships operate or meant to mislead the public.<sup>3</sup>

Others argued *pikuach nefesh*: the fleet was vital to security, could not safely stop at sea, and halting it would cost money needed to defend Jewish lives. The Rebbe replied that the ships could safely stop at a port en route. Besides, other travel existed: non-Jewish liners or Israeli planes on weekdays. The argument that the funds were needed could be applied to permit working Eretz Yisroel's fields and factories on Shabbos, a far greater loss. To the *parnasa* argument, he gave the Frierdiker Rebbe's *mashal*: helping a Jew through an *aveirah* is like dousing a fire with gasoline.<sup>4</sup>

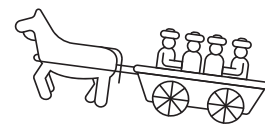
When it came to the individual passenger, some rabbonim ruled that one who does no *melacha* himself may board, and that boarding more than three days before Shabbos would be permitted. The Rebbe countered that it was prohibited according to halacha. Since one can readily travel otherwise, the three-day allowance falls away. Moreover, the passenger benefits from *melacha* done *b'issur*, resulting in the *issurim* of *lifnei iver* and *mesayea yedei ovrei aveira*.<sup>5</sup>

Some proposed running the ships by a "Shabbos Goy," or "selling the ships" for Shabbos to a non-Jew. However, the Rebbe explained the fallacy of the arguments: a handful of men could never operate a liner carrying hundreds; owners and nearly all passengers are Jews, for whom the *melacha* is done; and the sale is mere *ha'aramah*, with the work still done by the crew's own hands.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, these ships were identifiably Jewish, and in the Ramban's view, such an open lack of *shevita* is itself chillul Shabbos *b'farhesya*.<sup>7</sup>

The Rebbe's solution was straightforward: dock for Shabbos at a port along the way. Other *poskim* joined the Rebbe as well, agreeing to the prohibition.<sup>8</sup>

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

## Our Heroes



### R. KOPPEL ZELIGSON

R. Yaakov Koppel Zeligson was the son of R. Avraham, the Rov of Lubavitch during the *nesius* of the Rebbe Maharash. R. Koppel was a *chossid* of the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab, and he served as a *choizer* for the Rebbe Rashab during 5652-53. He worked in Tomchei Temimim for some time as a *mashgiach* for Chassidus, and then as a secretary and bookkeeper in the Yeshiva's administrative office. As a resident of Lubavitch, R. Koppel had a close relationship with the Rebbeim, and he is one of the witnesses signed on the Frierdiker Rebbe's *tenaim*.

On a visit to Italy, the Rebbe Rashab was accompanied by R. Koppel and R. Avrohom Babroisker. Their host served them a new and unknown fruit,

and they all recited a *Shehecheyanu* and ate from it. The taste was so repulsive that R. Koppel and R. Avrohom barely swallowed the first bite, but the Rebbe Rashab continued to eat from it, while deep in thought.

Suddenly, the Rebbe noticed that they weren't eating and asked if there was some halachic *shaila* with it. R. Avrohom, who was by nature a *bittuldike* person, did not have the courage to respond. But R. Koppel, who was quite comfortable, told the Rebbe that it was halachically okay, but "we simply can't put it in our mouths!"

The Rebbe then tasted some more, and concurred with them, and stopped eating.

(תשורה ויילשאנסקי תש"ע ע' 63)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



### SIMCHA IS SIMPLE

As the Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan 5713 *farbrengen* was drawing to a close, the assembled sang a *niggun*. Suddenly, the Rebbe interrupted the singing and said:

"My father-in-law would wish *kabbolas hatorah besimcho ubipnimitiyus*," the Rebbe said, and began to explain the difference between *pnimitiyus* and *simcha*.

"*Pnimitiyus* necessitates work. And even after laboring, one cannot be sure to reach it, or that one is not fooling oneself. Moreover, changes may occur as time elapses.

"But *simcha*, everyone can have. It is so simple. There is so much to be happy

with! Like the Berditchever who danced in the morning with the *bracha* 'shelo osani goy.'

"It doesn't take too much contemplation, it can be done before davening," the Rebbe urged the gathered chassidim. "Just listen to the simple translation of the words: Imagine what could have been, and how fortunate we are with what actually happened - we were born as a Yid! We received the greatest gift without any effort!"

And the Rebbe jumped up from his place and danced vigorously with a *niggun simcha*.

(Toras Menachem, vol. 8, p. 171)

1. ראה הנלקט בשלחן מנחם ח"ב סי' קמט.  
2. אג"ק ח"ג ע' רפה.  
3. אג"ק שם ע' שכא ואילך (אגרות ד'תקפ"ו-ד'תקפ"ג).  
4. וראה סיכום רשימות הפעולות בשלחן מנחם שם אות ט.  
5. אג"ק ח"ז ע' שכג (גם בספינות החדשות) חמש שנים לאח"ז.  
6. אג"ק ח"ג ע' רפה. ראה גם מנחת יצחק ח"ג סי' לט.  
7. וראה מכתבי כ"ק אדמו"ר לד"ר הרבני, הובאו בהתקשרות גל רנד.  
8. ראה שו"ת אגרות משה או"ח ח"א סי' צב. אג"ק שם ע' רפה ואילך, ובמ"ש להרב ש"י זיין ש"היתר לנוסעים בנידוננו היפר הדין.  
9. אג"ק שם ע' שכא-שכב.  
10. רמב"ן עה"ת, הובא בשו"ת חתם סופר ח"ו סי' צז. וראה רמב"ם הל' שבת רפכ"א וספכ"ד. אג"ק שם ע' רפט.  
11. אג"ק שם ע' שטו. מנחת יצחק ח"ג סי' לט.