

The Weekly Farbrengens

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

882 • להעלותך תשפ"ו • למען ישמעו
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

THE BEAUTY OF MODESTY (IV)

THE FINAL TEST

The Alter Rebbe once interrupted himself in the middle of a *maamar* (with an unrelated remark) and said with his typical *dveikus* and tune:

“Rivka took Esav’s clothing and dressed Yaakov,” how does it happen that Yaakov wears *goyishe* clothing? The answer is that Yaakov foresaw that a time would come when Yidden would have to wear *goyishe* clothing, and he feared it would affect them (so Yaakov wanted to correct that by wearing that clothing) ... but it didn’t help and it affected them.”

(קוב' מפ"י חסידי'ם אות קעד)

One day the Rebbe Maharash summoned a number of *yungeleit* to his room and delivered a *maamar*. It was not a special date, so no one understood why this had happened.

Some time later it all became clear. The Rebbe had heard that in Paris a new – and very immodest – fashion was about to be launched, and due to his delivery of the *maamar*, that plan had been aborted.

(ליקוטי סיפורי התועודיות ע' 299)

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGE

Reb Mordechai (Mottel) Levin was the educational director of the Beis Rivkah Seminary in Kfar Chabad. Once, at *yechidus*, the Rebbe urged him to impress upon the students the particular importance of modest dress.

The Rebbe explained that since in the world at large this virtue is so widely neglected, when a girl “conquers herself” and dresses in a modest manner, this is evidence of her level of *yiras Shamayim*. The Rebbe directed Reb Mottel to consult with a famous educational authority in Bnei Brak in order to receive advice on how to cope with this educational challenge.

(בת מלך פנימה ע' 19)

Reb Uriel Tzimmer and his wife belonged to a Hungarian Jewish community when he was drawn to the Rebbe. The women in the shul where Mrs. Tzimmer *davened* all wore *sheitlach*, and would

tease her for wearing a *tichel*, as is the Hungarian custom. This was happening to the extent that she felt unpleasant in shul on Yom Kippur, despite the holiness of the day. When Yom Kippur was over she told her husband that she wanted to switch to a *sheitl*, because both Lubavitchers and the members of her *shul* wear it, and she can’t stand their mockery. Reb Uriel couldn’t resist her, and they concluded they’d consult the Rebbe and follow his recommendation.

CONSIDER

Why did the Rebbe encourage Mrs. Tzimmer to keep her tradition of tznius?

Is dressing in modern fashion an inherent problem or is it a sign of something deeper?

They immediately traveled to 770 and submitted their question through the secretariat. They received a call the next day from Rabbi Chadakov and he informed them that the Rebbe wished to respond orally, not in writing. When they entered, the Rebbe explained to them that he was answering directly in order to minimize aggravation, since he intended to recommend that Mrs. Tzimmer keep to her good custom, since they could use more *brachos* of children, health, and livelihood, and the Zohar in Naso teaches us how much *brachos* depend on the care taken with a woman’s hair. It is therefore worth keeping to the *chumra* for the extra *brachos*. Hearing this directly from the Rebbe helped Mrs. Tzimmer deal with the pressure.

(משבחי רבי ע' 61)

THE UNDERLYING MESSAGE

In a letter to a school principal in *Eretz Yisroel*, the Rebbe writes: The manner in which a teacher

dresses is extremely important, even in the lower grades – especially in light of the story that occurred in the times of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, when a *shochet* was removed from his post because he wore galoshes. Surely, there is no prohibition against wearing galoshes; however, since at the time they were worn only by *goyim*, they served as an external manifestation of what was transpiring inside.

(אגרות קודש ח"ט ע' 216)

The Frierdiker Rebbe once related: Frankfurt, although it had previously been inhabited by freethinking *maskilim*, was later populated by *frum* Yidden whose *yiras Shamayim* was legendary throughout Germany. All this came about in the *zechus* of three women who were firm in their resolve to wear a *sheitl*, to observe the *halachos* of the home, and to provide their children with a proper *chinuch*. This had an effect on the menfolk, and on other women as well, that it eventually changed the entire community of Frankfurt for the better.

(תו"מ ח"י"ב ע' 188)

Rabbi Shmuel Chefer, head of the Beis Rivkah Seminary in Kfar Chabad, once shared some sharp words that he had heard at *yechidus*.

“The Rebbe raised the subject of short dresses and skirts that were fashionable at the time and expressed himself in strong terms. He asked me to assemble the students and their mothers and to address this subject, but I was not to tell them that I was speaking on behalf of the Rebbe. The reason: If they knew that, and nevertheless (*chalila!*) disobeyed, I would have to distance them from my presence.’ Those were his words.

“Finally, the Rebbe said that he had been told that ‘the *goy* in Paris’ was about to launch the opposite style – long dresses and skirts – and he added: ‘*Och un vei* (“What a pitiful situation it would be!”) if the girls would now change their style of dress to match the new fashion only because ‘the *goy* in Paris’ so decided, and not because of what is written in the *Shulchan Aruch*...”

(בת מלך פנימה ע' 21)



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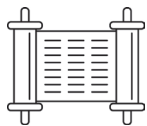


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SHOWERING AFTER MIKVAH

What is the source of the practice not to shower after mikvah?

Among the famous eighteen decrees instituted by Beis Shammai and accepted as halacha is that one who immerses in a kosher mikvah and afterward has three lugin (around 1 liter) or more of drawn water (mayim sheuvin) poured over their head and most of their body becomes tamei once again.

Mikvaos in those times were often murky, so it was natural for people to rinse themselves off after immersion. Some began to mistakenly think it was the clean, drawn water that accomplished their tahara, and Chazal were concerned that the actual mikvah immersion would be abandoned altogether. To prevent this error, Chazal decreed that non-mikvah water poured on a person after immersion would itself bring back tumah, discouraging people from doing it.

Rishonim disagree on the effect of this decree. Some understand that the rinsing completely undoes the original tevilah, and the person must immerse again; others hold that only a weaker form of tumah returns; and some limit the entire decree to the era when people ate terumah, and not to tevilah in our time. While the Mechaber doesn't mention it, the Rama rules to be machmir with tevilah de'oraisa.

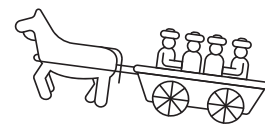
For tevilah before davening, or in honor of Shabbos and Yom Tov, some contemporary poskim hold that there is no halachic concern with showering afterwards (in fact, tevilas Ezra is itself valid even when done in mayim sheuvin). Others nevertheless conclude that it is preferable not to shower after mikvah, especially when immersing for tosefes tahara.

Chassidim were particular not to wash off the waters of the mikvah even when those waters were very dirty, and even on a regular weekday, due to the holiness of the mikvah waters.

The Arizal teaches that the erev Shabbos mikvah waters should not be dried from the body at all, so the body can soak in kedusha. In practice, the Rebbe said that one can fulfill this by not drying one part of the body.

- 1. שבת י"ד ע"א. וראה שו"ע י"ד ס"י ר"א.
2. ראה שו"ך י"ד ס"י ר"א ס"ק קנ"א.
3. מרדכי ריש ס"י תש"ן בשם הרשב"ם.
4. ראה ב"י י"ד סו"י ר"א. הגר"א שם ס"ק קכ"ז. דרכי תשובה שם ס"ק של"ב.
5. ראה שו"ת רב פעלים י"ד ח"ו ס"י ט"ו. ברכי יוסף י"ד ס"י ר"א סע"ה.
6. מ"א שם סע"ה. וראה ערוך השולחן שם. הגר"א שם מיקל. וראה עוד פרטים בטהרה כהלכה ח"ב ע"ת תקסה ואילך.
7. ראה שו"ת ציץ אליעזר ח"א ס"י ס"ד אות ט"ו. שבט הלוי ח"ז ס"י ל"ג אות ב. הליכות שלמה חודש אב פ"ד ע"ת תכ"ד. וברמב"ם הל' תפלה פ"ד ה"ד שטבילת

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



R. ASHER NIKOLAYEVER

In the year 5660 (1900) R. Asher was chosen by the Rebbe Rashab to reprint the Tanya in a clear typeset, known to us as "The Vilna Edition", which is still in use today. The Rebbe Rashab asked R. Asher to verify and compare the text of the Tanya with many kisvei yad (handwritten copies of the Tanya), a work that the Rebbe Rashab recounts and praises in the introduction to the new edition.

The Rebbe related that the Frierdiker Rebbe told him that R. Asher's work is trustworthy.

(מודעה רבה בתחילת התניא, פתח דבר לכ"ק אדמו"ר התניא)

R. Asher was once sitting and learning the Hemshech Samech Vov with great enthusiasm when in came two distinguished Chassidim and began excitedly telling him a miracle story of the Rebbe Rashab. R. Asher responded to the disturbance with saying: "Go away with your miracles! You make it seem that without the Rebbe performing miracles,

he wouldn't be a Rebbe..."

(R. Asher was trying to express his feeling that a Rebbe is primarily here to help us with serving Hashem; help that we can tap into by learning the Rebbe's Torah, which is what he was busy with when they interrupted with a miracle story).

(ר' מענדל עמ' 104)

At a chassidische chassuna, R. Asher once heard a special niggun, and being musically gifted he remembered the niggun to the note.

The next time R. Asher came to Lubavitch he sang it for the Rebbe Rashab who much appreciated the niggun. The Rebbe Rashab said: "This is a niggun with which one can daven well; it can clean out the 'vessel' wonderfully and open the heart".

This niggun became known as "R. Asher Nikolayever's Niggun."

(ספה"ש ה'תש"א עמ' ט"ל, ספר הניגונים ח"א עמ' נ"ג)

A Moment with The Rebbe



WHO CAN PERFORM MIRACLES?

Active in promoting Yiddishkeit on college campuses, Dr. Rivkah Blau, the daughter of Rabbi Pinchas Teitz, entered yechidus with a fellow activist in 1961. When, at the end of the yechidus, the Rebbe asked if they had any questions, the young man spoke up: How it was that the Rebbe, who was neither a doctor nor a lawyer, could advise people about surgeries and legal cases?

The Rebbe smiled and gave the example of a contractor: If he knows how to read the blueprint for a house, he can instruct the plumber and electrician on what to do. Similarly, the Rebbe explained, the Torah is the blueprint for the world.

"I don't know law better than the lawyers or medicine better than the doctors," the Rebbe said, "but based on what I

have learned in Torah, I can give people advice."

"Why then can only chassidische rebbes perform mofsim and misnagdishe gedolim cannot?" the young man asked. The Rebbe affirmed that they can, and mentioned names of gedolim who did wondrous things.

The Rebbe then explained that chassidische rebbes perform miracles because, for them, the world is of no significance; all that exists is Hashem and His Torah.

"Such a person among the misnagdim," the Rebbe concluded, "can perform miracles as well."

(Here's My Story, Issue 538; Newman Teshura, 25 Sivan 5784, p. 24)