ב"ה

The Weekly Farbrengen

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנ"ש

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

IMPACTFUL VISION (II)

VIEWING KEDUSHA

There are certain holy things which *Chazal* say one should look at because of their positive effects. For example, looking at the sky causes a person to think of *HaShem* and arouses *yiras Shamayim*.

When Czar Nicholas decreed that Yidden were only allowed to wear a hat with a large visor, the Alter Rebbe said, *"Kelipa* is disturbing people from gazing at the sky, which is a known *segula* for *yiras Shamayim*; now there will be additional *avoda* – turning around the hat." Indeed, many chassidim turned around their hat, making the visor face the back, so that they would easily be able to gaze above.

(רש"י ברכות ל"ד ע"ב, טעמי המצוות פ' ואתחנן, אג"ק ריי"צ חי"ד ע' תלח)

The Shaloh HaKadosh writes that when studying Torah, one should look at the letters, because "*osiyos machkimos*" – seeing the letters of *lashon hakodesh* makes one wise. This is also a *segula* for remembering what he has learned. Similarly, the Rebbe added, when a person is *davening* he should look inside a *Siddur* – and the letters will enlighten his eyes.

(של"ה שבועות - תורה אור ס, תו"מ תשמ"ד ח"א ע' 485)

One should gaze at *tzitzis*, as the Torah says this will remind him of the *mitzvos*, and consequently, he will keep them. At the beginning of *Kiddush,* one should look at the *Shabbos* candles, for this is a *segula* to heal eyesight. During *hagba,* one should make a point of seeing and actually reading letters of the Torah – and they will be endowed with a great light. For this reason the Alter Rebbe writes that at that time an effort should be made to come close to the *bimah.*

(שו"ע אדה"ז סי' כ"ד ס"ה, סי' רע"א סי"ט, שער הכוונות דף מח, פסקי הסי־ דור בסוף שחרית)

APPORTIONING THE POWER

Chazal say that the heart and eyes can serve as "middlemen" for *aveiros*, for they can lead one to sin. *HaShem* says, "If you give me your eyes, then you are Mine!"

(ירושלמי ברכות פ"א ה"ה)

The *Shaloh HaKadosh* writes: The eye of a Yid in This World below corresponds to the *ruchniyus'dike* "eye" Above *(ayin* ***tachas*** *ayin),* so that when a person guards his eyes and looks at proper things, his eyes will be brightened with *kedusha*. If, instead, a person looks at improper things, he separates his eyes from *kedusha* and causes a *p'gam* (blemish) Above.

(של"ה פרשת משפטים ד')

Once Rebbi Yonasan was being chased by *apikorsim,* heretics. He ran away from them until he entered his home and locked the door behind him. Standing behind the door they called out, "Rebbi Yonasan! Go and tell your mother, and compliment yourself, too - that you did not turn around to look at us, for had you done so, you would have been running after us to join us!"

(קהלת רבה א' כ"ה)

CONSIDER

Of the various types of negative viewings, what is the order of severity?

Why did the Rebbe only mention non-kosher animals and ammunition, and not any of the other negative sights?

Reb Aharon of Karlin, once said: "It's no surprise that the younger chassidim are unable to uplift themselves! It is because they make light of the 'small matters.' We, however, turn away from even a slightly immodest sight, and we thank *HaShem* for his kindness..."

(קדושת עינים ע' שמו)

A scholarly chossid once complained to Reb Menachem Mendel of Kotzk about his weak memory in Torah.

"The Torah itself gives us a *segula* to improve memory," said the *tzaddik.* He then quoted the two adjacent *p'sukim* from *Shema: "V'lo sosuru acharei l'vavchem v'acharei eineichem... l'maan tizkeru!* – You shall not follow your hearts and your eyes... in order that you remember!"

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 419)

The great chossid Reb Avremke Zhebiner would not look out of his window on *Shabbos:* he didn't want to see *chillul Shabbos*. Though all the townspeople kept *Shabbos,* he was concerned that he might see a *goy* traveling through the town. He would say, "If one sees *chillul Shabbos*, even if it is performed by a *goy*, this blemishes the *neshama*."

(רשימות דברים ח"א ע' רסג)

Chazal list certain things at which one should not gaze, for they bring about negative results:

It is forbidden to gaze at the face of a *rasha*, for this brings a spirit of *tuma* upon the observer and weakens his eyesight. Indeed, *Chazal* teach that part of the cause for Yitzchak Avinu's loss of eyesight was his looking at Eisav. The *tanna* Rebbi Yehoshua ben Karcha said that he was blessed with long life because he never looked at a *rasha*.

Similarly, one should not look at a person who is angry, for this causes forgetfulness. One should not look at the moon, except for a moment before *Kiddush Levana*, nor at a rainbow, except when reciting the *bracha,* for this harms the eyes. Some sources hold that these restrictions apply only to concentrated staring.

(מגילה כח ע"א, מגן אברהם רכ"ה סק"כ, שו"ע או"ח רכ"ט ס"א)

At a *farbrengen* (י"א ניסן תשל"ח), the Rebbe mentioned the practice of many Yiddishe women to surround a child with images of *kedusha* and *Yiddishkeit* and not *r"l* with non-*kosher* animals or ammunition. Although adults, too, should not be exposed to such things, he said, this is especially important for children, who are so impressionable.

When the Rebbe spoke of this again (כ' מרחשון תשד"מ), he encouraged everyone to adopt this practice, and added that even pictures drawn for illustration purposes should be completely holy. The Rebbe connected this heightened level of *kedusha* to the imminent *Geula,* when all impurity will be removed from the world.

(שיחו"ק תשל"ח ח"ב ע' 140, לקו"ש חכ"ה ע' 311)

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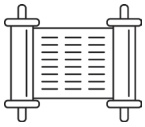

RABBI CHAIM HILLEL RASKIN

CHALLAH FOR SHABBOS

Is it an obligation to bake challah at home?

The poskim record a custom to knead and bake challah at home each erev Shabbos rather than buy bread from the market as on other days, and the Rama writes not to deviate from this minhag.[1] Several reasons are given for this custom:

(1) Kneading the dough lets one be *mafrish* challah, helping to atone for *chet etz hadaas*, which ruined the "challah" of the world (Adam who was kneaded and taken from the earth);[2] (2) the very act of baking at home, rather than buying from the market, is in itself an honor for Shabbos;[3] (3) it ensures one has *pas Yisroel* for Shabbos rather than *pas palter* (which was often relied upon in various situations).[4]

From the Alter Rebbe's wording, it appears that all three reasons are important. One should therefore bake challah at home even when *pas Yisroel* is available, and separate the *shiur* challah when finished. He notes that this be done specifically on erev Shabbos, much as one prepares for Shabbos by bathing and cutting nails, so it's noticeably *l'kavod Shabbos*.[5]

Contemporary *poskim* debate whether it is better to bake a smaller batch fresh every week or to knead one full *shiur* challah, take challah with a bracha, and freeze the rest to reheat as needed. A middle path is to freeze the larger batch of dough and bake it fresh each erev Shabbos, achieving the fresh taste and the erev Shabbos baking. But if the taste of frozen challah is comparable to freshly baked ones, one may bake once every several weeks and just reheat weekly.[6]

Today, when bakeries produce tasty challos made especially for Shabbos, some poskim say that they satisfy *kavod Shabbos*, especially given current-day pressures and responsibilities. Still, baking challa at home is definitely praiseworthy.[7]

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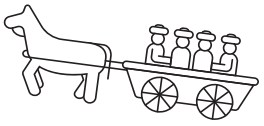
1. שוע"ר סי' רמ"ב סי"ב. רמ"א או"ח סוס"י רמ"ב. וראה ביה"ל שם ד"ה והוא, שמתרעם על שהשביתו המנהג.
2. ראה מג"א סי' רמ"ב סוסק"ד, ומחצית השקל שם.
3. אליה רבה סי' רמ"ב סק"י.
4. ראה מג"א שם. ושוע"ר שם סי"ג.
5. שוע"ר שם סי"ב ובסי' תקכ"ט ס"ב. והדיוק ביום ששי נזכר גם בסדר היום, הכנת היום השישי. סידור יעב"ץ. מחצית השקל בסוהס"י. ליקוטי מהרי"ח.
6. ראה שו"ת שרגא המאיר ח"ח סי' ט"ז. שו"ת שבט הקהתי ח"ד סי' פ"א.
7. ראה הנסמן בפסקי תשובות סי' רמ"ב סק"א.

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

Our Heroes



R. DOVID SHIFRIN

R. Dovid Shifrin (d. 5703) was born in Zhebin and lived in Pleshnitz after his marriage until he moved to the U.S. in approximately 5660. An early chossid of the Rebbe Rashab, and later of the Frierdiker Rebbe, R. Dovid Shifrin was one of the first active Chabad Chassidim in the U.S. and served as the secretary of Agudas Chasidei Chabad in America. He devoted himself to fundraising on behalf of Chabad *mosdos* and assisting fellow Chassidim in need.

Arriving in Lubavitch by foot with just two kopecks, R. Dovid went to rest in the inn of Shmuel Ber "the Kohen Gadol." In walked the two Dokshitzer chassidim, R. Yekusiel and R. Aharon, to collect funds for poor *orchim*. R. Dovid walked right over to them and said, "I have just two kopecks. Should I give them to you or keep them?"

"You have two kopecks?" the chassidim said. " Give them to us and we will then provide for you..."

(קובץ ליובאוויטש ע' 585)

This is how R. Yisroel Jacobson described him:

Our dear friend R. Dovid Shifrin was the focal point of Anash in America. He was a heartfelt, *pnimiyusdiker*, clever, *chassidisher* Yid. He kept contact with Anash across America without publicity, an office, an assistant or even an official title; simply heartfelt, genuine, chassidishe Ahavas Yisroel.

Before leaving to America where his sons lived, R. Dovid came to the Rebbe Rashab and said, "Rebbe! I'm going to America. I didn't come to ask whether to travel or not; I have a ticket already. But I don't want to be like a child who runs away from cheder and doesn't tell his teacher where he went. I therefore came to tell the Rebbe where I'm going."

(זכרון לבני ישראל ע' 141)

When our Rebbe, then the Frierdiker Rebbe's son-in-law, arrived in America, R. Dovid watched him in davening and other activities. Though not easily impressed, R. Dovid remarked, "This seems to be something good..."

(ימי מלך ח"ב ע' 10)

A Moment with The Rebbe

PRONUNCIATIONS AND THE BIGGER PICTURE

While Lubavitch has its own traditional pronunciation of davening, the Rebbe often emphasized the need to focus on what matters most.

In a *yechidus* with R' Mulik Gurevitch of Melbourne, Australia, the Rebbe discussed the pronunciation for use at his school:

"There's no reason to wage a holy war against teaching with a Sephardic pronunciation, since in Eretz Yisroel there are Chabad institutions that use it.

"Obviously," the Rebbe added, "if all factors are equal, it is certainly preferable that they teach with the Ashkenazic pronunciation. Nevertheless, if it will lead to machlokes or some will pull out their daughters as a result, it's not worth it."

In a similar vein, when R' Chaim Noach Maatuf noted that a certain Chabad shul davened with the Yemenite accent, the Rebbe said:

"Every pronunciation has a lofty source Above, and it's not important which one is used for davening. The main thing is to use a uniform pronunciation and not change."

The Rebbe explained that sticking to a pronunciation with which one is comfortable allows one to focus on the davening, whereas altering the pronunciation can cause confusion

Yet, when there was reason to change, the Rebbe encouraged that.

As a chosson, R' Chaim Melul of France asked the Rebbe about changing since his kallah was from an Ashkenazi background. The Rebbe encouraged him:

"Since Chassidus, Shulchan Aruch, and Torah say that there is no problem with changing one's pronunciation, [you should do so -] so that it won't create confusion for the children."