

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

REVERING THE TORAH (III)

DEFENDING THEIR HONOR

Chazal teach that a *talmid chacham* is called "Shabbos." The Rebbe explains that just as *Shabbos* is removed from the weekday and its worldly activities, so too a *talmid chacham* is a person who is removed from the material activities of this world and is dedicated to *ruchniyus*.

(זהר ח"ג כט,א, לקו"ש ח"א ע' 40)

One day the Baal Shem Tov was shocked that he had seen a Yid being *mechalel Shabbos*, since everything a person sees exists within himself to a degree. He then recalled that once, after having heard someone degrading a *talmid chacham*, he himself had remained silent – and Chazal teach that a *talmid chacham* is called "Shabbos."

Others relate that the Baal Shem Tov was told of a Yid who desecrated *Shabbos*. In response, the Baal Shem Tov said that he himself had a share in the *aveira*, since he had once made use of a *talmid chacham*, and this had led to that Yid's actual *chillul Shabbos*.

(רשימות דברים ח"ג ע' כה, רב יבבי כב,כו, תו"מ חל"ו ע' 7)

It was a tense time: the Russian government was about to decree that all *rabbonim* must learn Russian. A meeting of *rabbonim* and *maskilim* was held in Petersburg, in which the Rebbe Rashab and Reb Chaim Brisker participated. During Reb Chaim's speech, some *maskilim* began to ridicule what he was saying. The Rebbe Rashab wrote something on a note, handed it to his chossid, Reb Mendel Chein, and left.

After the speech they opened the note to find out why the Rebbe had left, and read that he could not take part in a meeting at which the words of *gedolei Yisroel* are ridiculed. Hearing this, all the *rabbonim* stood up and left as well.

(ס' הצאצאים ע' 193, קדושת הדיבור ח"ג ע' 128)

The Rebbe once overheard one of his secretaries calling a certain *rov* by his first name. The Rebbe told him sternly, "He is a *rov*!"

(ניצוצי רבי 693)

SPEAKING UP

It was the custom of Rabbeinu Chaim ben Atar, known as the Or HaChaim HaKadosh, to distribute meat to poor *talmidei chachomim* in honor of *Shabbos*. One week a plague broke out amongst the cattle, and as a result, all the animals in town were found after *shechita* to be *treif*. Only the calf that was *shechted* for the *tzaddik* was *kosher limehadrin*. When one of the wealthy townsmen heard about this, he rushed to Reb Chaim's house, hoping to get some meat in honor of *Shabbos*. He offered an enormous price for a piece, yet was told, "This is not a butcher shop. The meat is reserved for poor *talmidei chachomim*."

CONSIDER

What is the purpose of defending the honor of a *talmid chacham*? Will the other person necessarily change his mind?

While they were speaking, one of Reb Chayim's regular "customers" walked in. Upset, the rich man exclaimed: "Eh... You call this a *talmid chacham*!?"

Reb Chaim ignored his comment and gave the visitor his portion. The rich man realized the futility of his endeavor and left, furious. That night, the Or HaChaim HaKadosh had a dream in which he was told from Heaven that since he had not protested against the embarrassment of a *talmid chacham*, he would have to go into *golus* for a full year. He immediately packed his few belongings and set out on a long and arduous trek, traveling from one place to another, making sure never to sleep two nights in the same place. He often went to sleep hungry, yet he accepted his pain with love and davened to *HaShem* to forgive him for his sin.

On *erev Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai* the *tzaddik* found himself on the outskirts of a city. Sitting down on a stone to rest his weak body, he reflected on the first *posuk* of the *parsha*, which begins with the words, *Im*

bechukosai teileichu. As he then continued walking towards the city, still in *dveikus*, he conceived forty-two original insights on this *posuk*. When he finally reached the *shul*, the *shammes* asked this needy stranger to be his guest for *Shabbos*. At the conclusion of the Friday night *seuda*, the *shammes* told him of the local *minhag* to visit the *rov* at his home, and together they set out, joining the throngs already gathered, all eagerly waiting to hear *divrei Torah* from the *rov*.

At the head of the long table, with eyes closed, sat the *rov*, enraptured in a state of *dveikus*. After a few moments he awoke, quietly shared fourteen insights on the above *posuk*, and concluded, "These *peirushim* I just heard in Heaven, cited in the name of the holy *tzaddik*, Reb Chaim ben Atar."

"Chaim ben Atar!" the unknown guest corrected him loudly.

All eyes turned to see: Who could have the *chutzpa* to dishonor the Or HaChaim? The *shammes*, feeling responsible for his guest, begged them to leave the poor man alone. At the daytime meal, the *rov* expounded a second set of fourteen *peirushim*, explaining again that he had heard these in Heaven in the name of the holy *tzaddik*, Reb Chaim ben Atar. The same scenario repeated itself. Again the guest called out, "Chaim ben Atar!" This irritated the townsmen even more. Before *shaaleshudes*, the *shammes* warned his guest to behave properly. However, the scene repeated itself a third time, and Reb Chaim was locked in a room where he was to stay until fitting measures would be decided upon.

That night, a violent storm swept through the city, and the townspeople frantically rushed to ask the *rov* for its cause. The *rov* was told from Heaven that on *Shabbos, gehinom* closes, and it reopens on *motzai Shabbos* when the Or HaChaim HaKadosh recites *havdala*. And since the *tzaddik* is currently locked in a room and thus cannot recite *havdala*, there is a great uproar Above. That was what was causing such a harrowing storm below. Hearing this, the townsmen immediately released their holy guest from his confinement. Reb Chaim understood that his *teshuva* had been accepted in Heaven, took his knapsack, and made his way back to his hometown.

(תולדות אור החיים הקדוש)



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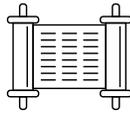
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GOOD NEWS.



FAKE PEPPERONI

May I eat pizza with an imitation meat topping?

Chazal decreed that certain activities which appear similar to prohibitions must be avoided so onlookers won't come to permit the actual prohibition. For example, fish blood is permitted, but one may not drink it on its own unless fish scales are noticeable with it (*heker*).¹ Likewise, Shulchan Aruch rules that one may not cook meat in human milk.²

Thus, Rema writes that when cooking animal meat with almond milk, one should make a *heker* by placing almonds nearby. Some *poskim*, however, disagree with this application. Fish blood is in fact 'blood' and human milk is 'milk' – albeit a permissible kind – and is therefore subject to *maris ayin*. Almond milk, however, just appears similar – as red wine can look like blood – and this halacha isn't concerned about mere appearances.³ Others add further that people are accustomed to almond milk and they won't think it's milk, unlike the problematic foods which are uncommon.⁴

Even according to Rema, the concern applies only when the activity could be mistaken for a *issur d'oraisa*, and since chicken with milk is *midrabanan*, one may cook chicken in almond milk without a *heker*.⁵ Yet, some *achronim* hold the concern for *maris ayis* exists by rabbinic prohibitions as well.⁶ The Taz rules that the halacha follows the Rema, though one should be stringent when possible.⁷

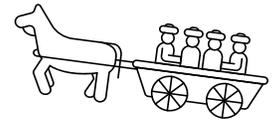
When imitation *pareve* items are very widespread, such as coffee whitener or *pareve* ice cream, all agree that there is no concern.⁸ This classification adjusts over time, as we find in halacha that silk with wool was originally prohibited as appearing to be *shaatnez*, but later became permitted once silk became more common.⁹ Still, some suggest leaving the container on the table as an extra precaution. Practically, one should be extra careful in front of people who don't know and may come to err, or when eating in a public place.

In conclusion, when using a relatively new type of food, one should ideally see if people know about it being *pareve* and otherwise place a *heker*.¹⁰

1. ראה גמ' כריתות דף כ"א ע"ב, שו"ע יו"ד סי' פ"ז סק"ח, וראה ערוה"ש סי' ס"ו ס"ט.
2. שו"ת הרשב"א ח"ג סי' רנ"ז, שו"ע יו"ד סי' פ"ז ס"ד. לאידך הפרי חדש יו"ד סי' פ"ז סק"ז ס"ל שאין לנו לחדש דיני מראית עין שלא הוזכרו בש"ס.
3. כו"פ יו"ד סי' פ"ז סק"ז.
4. שם סק"ח.
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6. ראה ס' הכשרות פ"י סמ"ב.
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R. KUSHE DOKSHITZER

R. Yekusiel Dietsch of Dokshitz, affectionately known amongst *chassidim* as Kushe Dokshitzer, was a *chossid* of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash, and in his old age, the Rebbe Rashab. He was a *melamed* and merited teaching the Frierdiker Rebbe *Aleph Beis*. For more than fifty year, he literally walked to Lubavitch each *Tishrei*. He passed away in the year תרס"ח (1908).

(לקוטי סיפורים עמ' רכ"א, רשימת נכדו ר' מ"מ דייטש ז"ל, רשימת ר' יוחנן גארדאן ע"ה)

R. Kushe became engaged to the daughter of a wealthy *chossid*. At the *yechidus* before his *chassuna*, R. Kushe understood from the Tzemach Tzedek that his life's mission was to be a *melamed*, and infuse his pupils with *yiras shomayim* and *chassdishe* warmth.

His wealthy future father-in-law though, thought otherwise. He wasn't comfortable with the prospect of his esteemed son in law being a "plain *melamed*," and he resolved to "sort it out" with the Tzemach Tzedek. In response, the Tzemach Tzedek gave permission for R. Kushe to go into business, and it would not constitute a

noncompliance of the Rebbe's orders.

Shortly after the *chassuna*, R. Kushe was sent off by his father-in-law to the fair in Leipzig to amass merchandise to sell in his hometown. But as R. Kushe got into the wagon loaded with the goods he had bought at the fair, the horses suddenly took off wildly and started galloping at high speed down the mountain slope. The wagon overturned and the sacks of merchandise landed on R. Kushe, pinning him down to the ground.

It dawned upon R. Kushe that although the Rebbe had said that going into business would not constitute disobedience, it still was not what the Rebbe wanted him to do. With his last strength, he called out: "Rebbe! I will listen. Rebbe, save me!"

He managed to free himself from the wagonload on top of him, and find his way home.

He proceeded immediately to carry out the Rebbe's instructions, and became a *melamed* bent on educating the next generation in the *chassidische* way.

(ר' מענדל עמ' 100)

A Moment with The Rebbe



A WELCOMING SHUL

Despite being preoccupied with the loftiest of worlds, the Rebbe's care for the *shul* at 770 brought him to deal with the most mundane of matters.

"It is important that there be clean towels available, for people to wash their hands before *davening*!" the Rebbe stated at the 28 Elul *farbrengen*, 5728 (1968).

Another such occasion was the *farbrengen* of Shushan Purim 5741 (1981), when the Rebbe made the following suggestion:

"This *shul* has been operative for

many years. Various people step in to learn and to *daven*; they come in tired and sweaty – why shouldn't they find a glass of water, or a hot tea?"

The Rebbe then made note of the fact that there weren't even cups available, or a designated place in the *shul* to have a drink. "The Rebbeim taught that it is important to be well mannered."

Following that *farbrengen*, an urn was purchased, soon to be replaced by a larger one, eventually evolving into a full-scale kitchen at 770.