

# The Weekly Farbrenge

  
**MERKAZ ANASH**  
 מרכז אנאש  
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## A DISTINCT NATION

### LIVING DISTINCT

The Torah instructs us to be holy nation, living distinct from the nations that surround us. We must not mingle with them or mimic their ways for we may become influenced by their lifestyles. Instead we should focus on our unique mission of Torah and *mitzvos*.

(ס' החינוך מצוה רסב)

At the age of fourteen, Reb Boruch, the Alter Rebbe's father, lost his parents. He traveled from town to town for three years until he arrived in Liozna, where he was employed to guard an orchard that two Yidden held on lease from the local *poritz*. Young Boruch enjoyed the peace and quiet and would spend his time *davening* and *learning*, without anyone detecting his greatness in Torah and *avoda*. At harvest time he would help his employers, Reb Avraham and Reb Ezriel, and their families and other workers who would gather and pack the fruits. The workers, including the *goyim*, were impressed by him, for he was well-built, handsome, had a sweet voice and spoke a fluent Polish.

One day, the *poritz* visited the orchard with his family and, noticing Baruch's capabilities, engaged him in a discussion. They were amazed to hear his rich language. Baruch felt very uncomfortable with all the attention he was receiving. The next day, the *poritz* and his family returned specifically to speak with him, and after their discussion, invited him to visit their estate. However, Boruch declined their invitation.

One evening, while alone in the orchard, Boruch was unexpectedly visited by the son of the *poritz*. "Good evening," said the young visitor. "My father would like to invite you to spend the night with us, for we know how lonely it is out here."

Boruch knew that this visit would not bring good results, so he told him that he could not leave the orchard unattended. The visitor left but returned shortly with two men accompanied by huge watch dogs, saying, "Here, they'll take care of the job while you're gone."

Boruch was stuck. Personally, he had no qualms refusing the offer of the *poritz*, but he knew that a refusal could cause the *poritz* to pour out his wrath on the Yidden of Liozna. He therefore decided to accept the invitation, but resolved not display any fear and to present himself with Yiddish pride, in the spirit of the Torah.

He was welcomed at the castle with great friendship,

which greatly displeased him, and he took the first opportunity to show his confidence by refusing to remove his hat. He explained in fluent Polish that a Yid is required to constantly feel *HaShem's* presence and hence cannot go bareheaded. The *poritz* and his family were deeply impressed by the self-assurance and boldness of a simple Yiddish watchman, especially since they were used to seeing Yidden trembling and behaving subserviently. In fact, the *poritz* showed such respect for his young guest that he covered his own head with his hat. Boruch entered into a deep discussion about the value of Yiddish *minhagim*, and emphasized the unfairness of using one's supremacy to interfere with another's beliefs and way of life. He displayed his wisdom and knowledge and explained many *psukim* and *maamarei Chazal*, all in fluent Polish, meanwhile contrasting the two worlds - the *goyishe* world of materialism and the Yiddish world of *ruchniyus*.

did not need to excuse himself, for at that moment the youngest child of the *poritz* burnt himself with hot water, and the whole family ran to help with the emergency. Baruch took the opportunity to slip away and return to the orchard. That night he could not sleep. What would he do if the children of the *poritz* came the next day to speak with him?

All through the night he said *Tehillim* with tears. The next day he heard that the child had died, but he still felt restless, knowing that the other children of the *poritz* were likely to come despite the tragedy. He decided to unburden himself to Reb Avraham and tell him of his decision to leave the job. Reb Avraham accepted his request and that night he and Reb Ezriel took over the task of guarding the orchard. It transpired that Baruch's suspicions were justified, for later that evening the son and daughter of the *poritz* came to the orchard, and when they heard that he was no longer there, they went home disappointed. As for Baruch, he received his wages from the partners and was now able to return to the *beis midrash* to immerse himself in *davening* and learning.

(ספר הזכרונות מוהרי"צ ח"א פ' א-יג)

### CONSIDER

Why was Reb Boruch concerned about interacting with the *poritz* and his family? Did he really think that he would be influenced?

Why will living distinctly create a *kidush HaShem* and not the opposite?

The *poritz* thirstily drank all that Baruch said, but his children were unhappy with the direction the conversation had taken; they preferred lighter talk, so they decided to visit the orchard themselves the following day, just to schmooze. Foreseeing the possible danger in this friendship, Baruch was vexed, and tried to think of a solution to get out of it. Meanwhile, he was invited to the dining-room that had been set up with dozens of delicacies, and although the food was kosher, he decided to eat nothing in order not to strengthen their relationship. Fortunately, he

### A NATION APART

The Baal Shem Tov once went to the *mikveh* in a place that was populated by *goyim*. On his way back, after *toiveling*, he was afraid that a *goy* might touch him, *chas veshalom*. While he was walking, he overheard one *goy* tell another, "Be careful not to touch this contaminated Yid."

His grandson, the author of *Degel Machaneh Ephraim* explained that this is the meaning of the *possuk*, "*Hein am l'vadad yishkon*" - "They are a nation that dwells apart." The Yidden do not mingle with the *goyim* because (as that *possuk* continues), "*uvagoyim lo yischashov*" - "they are not counted among the nations," that is to say, the Yidden are not esteemed in the eyes of the *goyim*. And paradoxically, this is for the Yid's benefit!

(על התורה ועל העבודה)

On numerous occasions the Rebbe emphasized that standing apart from the *goyim* in all areas of conduct will not cause the *goyim* to dislike the Yidden (as some Yidden over history had believed); on the contrary, it will elicit their respect and admiration, seeing how the Yidden live distinct and true to their tradition.

(לדוגמא: ת"מ י' תשמ"ח ח"ה ע' 2994)

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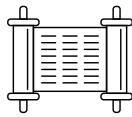
  
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**GOOD NEWS.**



## BACKYARD PICNIC

**When eating outside, can I pour liquids on the patio floor if they will flow onto the grass?**

Pouring or spilling water on grass, plants or trees – even if the water doesn't end up reaching the earth underneath – is prohibited under the *melachos* of plowing and sowing, as the water softens the earth (plowing) and causes the grass to grow (sowing). Even if one does not intend to benefit the grass (e.g. washing hand), is still an inevitable outcome (*psik reishai*), and one assumedly is happy that his grass will grow better. If he doesn't care about the grass at all (e.g. in a woody area), *poskim* debate the issue, and the Alter Rebbe holds it is nonetheless prohibited *midrabanan*.<sup>1</sup>

Only water causes vegetation to grow; other liquids like wine, juice or urine actually ruin it. It is therefore permitted to pour them on grass, provided that they don't contain a significant amount of water. Still, the Alter Rebbe says that it is fitting to be careful even with such liquids.

For the above reason, it is preferable not to eat over grass at all if one will be using water, since it is difficult to be careful that even a small drop of water won't fall on the grass.<sup>2</sup>

If the water falls on the floor and from there flows to the grass, some *poskim* permit since it is indirect (*grama / koach sheni*) as long as one doesn't intend to water the grass.<sup>3</sup> If the water travels to the grass through a pipe (e.g. draining from a sink), some argue that this is considered direct watering and not *grama*, since *grama* implies an indirect process, and not when the result is just an extension of one's actions (pouring it into the beginning of the pipe).<sup>4</sup>

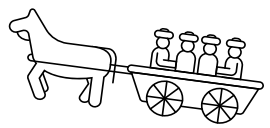
However, if the water enters a basin and spills **over** onto the grass, that is indeed *koach sheini*, and many *poskim* allow it if one doesn't care about the grass being watered and doesn't intend for that to happen.<sup>5</sup> Yet, some *poskim* are still stringent.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the Alter Rebbe only allows *grama* in a situation of loss or great need.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, before pouring water, one should consult with a *rov* to ascertain the exact circumstances, including how much the need is, how indirect it is, and to what extent does he not care about the grass being watered.<sup>8</sup>

1. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' של"ו ס"ט, וראה שם הלשון והוא שמתכוין ובקצוה"ש בדה"ש סי' קמ"ב סק"ז גורם מועיל. וראה פסק"ת סי' שלו סק"ט.  
 2. שו"ע"ר שם ע"פ תוס' שבת.  
 3. שו"ע"ר סי' פ"ב ס"ט.  
 4. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' של"ד סכ"ג שהסיבה שמתיר בטלית דווקא שהאש מגיע למים ולא הפוך. וכן ראה בסכ"ב בהיתר של גרמא.  
 5. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' פ"ב ס"ט, וראה שם הלשון והוא שמתכוין ובקצוה"ש בדה"ש סי' קמ"ב סק"ז גורם מועיל. וראה פסק"ת סי' שלו סק"ט.  
 6. שו"ת אז נדברו ח"ד סי' ל"ז, וראה פסק"ת שם, וראה שו"ת ישועת משה ח"ג סי' ל"ד שדן בזה.  
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## R. ZALMAN ZLATAPOLSKY

R. Shlomo Schneur Zalman Zlatapolsky lived in Kremenchug, and was a *chosid* of the Rebbe Maharash. The Rebbe Maharash held him in high esteem and would occasionally say *maamorim* especially for him upon his visits to Lubavitch. R. Zalman was very thorough in everything he did. He had a special *seder* when coming to Lubavitch, how long to stay and when to leave. His trips to Lubavitch, hearing *Chassidus* and going into *yechidus* were particularly meaningful to him.

beautiful trees, my father pointed out a bench and said to me:

"In the year 5645 (1885), three years after the passing of my father [the Rebbe Maharash], R. Zalman sat on this bench, and while deep in thought, sang a *nigun* with great *dveikus* for many hours straight. I did not want to disturb him from his *dveikus*, I just looked at his face and saw R. Zalman's eyes were shut and tears were flowing on his cheeks. He was totally immersed in the *niggun*.

"At a later opportunity I asked R. Zalman which *maamar* he was contemplating at the time. R. Zalman was not soft hearted (he was from Kremenchug – known for their intellectual nature), yet when I asked him that, he burst out crying and could not neither speak or catch his breath. When he calmed down he said, 'It was a *maamar* [he mentioned the opening of the *maamar*] that the Rebbe [Maharash] said on *Shabbos* [he recalled on which *Shabbos* it was said].'"

(ת"ר מ"ח"ג ע' 67)

The Rebbe once related: After the Rebbe Maharash passed away, R. Zalman longed greatly to see him. He discussed his feelings with the Rebbe Rashab. After doing many preparations that the Rebbe Rashab had instructed him (including wearing a *gartel* while sleeping), the Rebbe Maharash appeared to him in a dream.

The Friediker Rebbe related: In the year 5671 (1911) when we were in Menton, I once went with my father, the Rebbe Rashab, on a stroll along the shore. In a corner amongst

My father concluded, "Looking at R. Zalman, was a mirror of the yearning life of a *chosid* who has physically lost his Rebbe some years earlier, but *b'ruchniyus* it was as if he was still standing before him."

(משיחת י"ג תמוז תרצ"ב, סה"ש תש"ז ע' 70)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



### THE PROBLEM

A *chosson* and *kalla*, who had been engaged for a while, suddenly faced difficulties. The *chosson* wrote to the Rebbe that he has many problems with the *kalla*, and is considering breaking off the *shidduch*.

that is the number of times that you have met with the *kalla* during the engagement period, etc., in a manner that is not compatible with the *Shulchan Aruch* at all.

As a response, the Rebbe took the original letter of the *chosson*, and drew an arrow from the word "problems" to the margin of the page. There the Rebbe wrote:

"And this is actually the source of all your problems."

The Rebbe concluded with a promise: "When you will cease to follow orders from your *yetzer hara*, all the other problems will cease."

"There is only one problem. And (Simpson Teshurah, Elul 5771)