

The Weekly Farbrengens

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 EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

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 11th 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.

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 *mitvzoim*. 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 *mitvzoim*, 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)

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 תשל"ז (1969) the Rebbe wrote about Yiddishe women and their mission and then added in his own handwriting: “With blessings for success in *mitvza tznius* and for good news in this area soon.”

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.

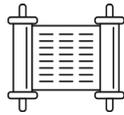
(לקו"ש ח"ז ע' 364)

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FIDGETING ON SHABBOS

May I twiddle a fork by the Shabbos meal to occupy myself?

Interestingly, the rules of muktza evolved over history, with Chazal first making them stricter, and then gradually closer to their original more lenient criteria.

Initially, in the days of Shlomo Hamelech, the prohibition of muktza only applied to things that were not at all fit for Shabbos use. In the days of Nechemia, when Jews became lax about Shabbos laws, Chazal issued decrees to enhance the sanctity of Shabbos. They prohibited moving any utensils — even those with permitted uses — with the sole exceptions being cutlery, which could only be handled for meal use.

When Shabbos observance improved, Chazal lifted parts of their restrictive decree in phases, with the end result that any common utensil may be moved for its space or any permitted use — even if it's not its normal usage (e.g. a hammer to open a coconut) — and utensils designated for permitted use may be moved even for their own protection (e.g. from rain or robbery). Even so, they never lifted the prohibition of moving a permitted utensil — even meal utensils — for no use at all, and this applies until today.¹

Edible food and books that may be read on Shabbos were never included in the restrictive decree and may therefore be moved even with no purpose. Some poskim extend this to clothing and jewelry, which are garments meant for constant wearing and not "tools." Others argue that aside from food and books everything was included in the decree (as seen from the Alter Rebbe's prohibition of cups). The Ketzos Hashulchan records the common practice to be lenient.²

Is fiddling with cutlery to release stress considered a legitimate purpose?

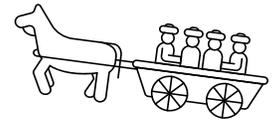
Many contemporary poskim rule that this qualifies as a purpose and therefore is permitted.³ Likewise, poskim permit holding something in one's hand while learning or giving a sermon to help with focus.⁴

It should be noted that the purpose for the item need not be immediate. Thus, one may move an item to a different location if they will need to use it later on Shabbos, even if they currently do not need to use it.⁵

1. שו"ע ר' אור"ח סי' ש"ח סט"ז וסי"ז. 2. ראה שו"ע ר' שם סי' ז', א"א מבוטשאטש. שש"כ פ"כ ספ"ג והערה ד"ש שם. אז נדברו ח"ו סי' מ"ה סק"ב. קצוה"ש סי' ק"ח הע' ז'. 3. פסק"ת סי' ש"ח סקט"ז בשם שו"ת באר משה ח"א סי' כ"ג ועוד. 4. ראה חוט השני ח"ג פמ"ט סק"א, וראה ערוה"ש סי' ש"ח סט"ו. 5. שו"ע ר' סי' ש"ח ס"ח. וראה ט"ז סי' ש"ח סק"ב. וראה שו"ת מגדנות אליהו ח"ד הערות לסי' ש"ח, שסב"ל שגם בספק יהיה מותר דאל"כ מה החידוש כשמל"ה על כשמל"א. וצ"ע.

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

Our Heroes



REB TZADOK OF KOPUST

Reb Tzadok of Kopust was a chossid of the Mitteler Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek who was renowned for his avodas hatefilah.

Too young to have been a member of the Alter Rebbe's chadorim, R. Tzadok still managed to learn what the Alter Rebbe expected of Chabad chassidim. They would call him "Tzadok the davener," due to his davening at great length.

R. Tzadok chose to earn a living through managing a windmill, not a watermill. Since windmills were only active several months a year, he could dedicate the rest of the year to Torah and avoda. His mill was not far from Lubavitch, and whenever his mill was not active, he would spend time in Lubavitch.

As a youngster, the Rebbe Maharash asked R. Tzadok why he davened

so long. R. Tzadok replied, "I am fulfilling the Torah's instruction to 'retell the going out of Mitzrayim,' since during davening one goes out of his limitations (meitzarim)."

The Tzemach Tzedek called him "Tzadok the Baal Tefilah," since he was truly a master of davening, which came from his allowing the davening to become his master.

(ס"ה ש"ת-ש"ת"א ע' 327)

Whenever he traveled through Kopust, R. Hillel Paritcher would stay at R. Tzadok's home. R. Hillel would say that R. Tzadok is a chossid according to the wishes of the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe and the Tzemach Tzedek.

(בית רבי ע' 337)

A Moment with The Rebbe



OVERCOMING INAPPROPRIATE SCENES

"I studied at the Montreal Lubavitch yeshiva for seven years," related Reb Simcha Zirkind.

"During the summer months, we did not go to camp, and every day we would walk from the yeshiva building to the dormitory to eat. However, due to the lack of modesty on the streets, I did not feel comfortable walking outside during the summer months.

"In a yechidus in 5717 (1957), I asked the Rebbe for advice what to do about seeing

inappropriate scenes.

"The Rebbe told me that I should keep a photo of the Frieddiker Rebbe in my pocket, and 'before you go out onto the street you should take a look at the photo.'

"I put a picture of the Rebbe and the Rebbe Rayatz in my pocket and I would look at it before I left the building. It was good advice - it averted my attention. I would concentrate on their holy faces and not on what I saw in the streets."

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