

The Weekly Farbrengens

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REFRESHING OURSELVES (II)

A QUALITY VACATION

When the Rebbe Rashab went out to relax, which he often had to do for health purposes, he would take off his *kapota* and, holding onto his *tzitzis*, he would sit down and say, "This is *datche*" (Russian for "vacation").

Explaining the inner meaning of vacation, he pointed out that in *Lashon HaKodesh* a vacation site is called נאות דשא - "a pleasant pasture," a place where one grows just as grass grows. How does grass grow? In its description of the Six Days of Creation, the *Midrash* tells us that each individual blade of grass decided to grow separately, although *HaShem* had not clearly instructed so. Similarly, there are times when every individual *Yid*, though he may be busy with others during the year, should be occupied with his own personal growth in the ways of *HaShem*.

(סה"ש תשי"א ע' 150)

The Frierdiker Rebbe recalled his summertime memories of תרנ"ג to תרנ"א (1891-1893):

In Lubavitch, chassidim follow the local summertime custom of "*datche*" from after Pesach. They would sit in the courtyard, breathe the fresh air, and exchange stories about chassidim of bygone generations. Generally, the Rebbe Rashab would not join them, for he was preoccupied with *avoda*, *davening* every day until five o'clock in the afternoon. Occasionally, though, he would come out and comment on the stories.

(סה"ש תשי"ב ע' 120)

The *Gemara* relates that when Rebbi Zeira felt weak and could not concentrate, he would relax near the entrance of the Yeshiva of Rebbi Nosson bar Tuvia, so that when the *chachomim* passed by, he would be able to rise in their honor.

(ברכות כח ע"א)

The Rebbe taught that the true reason for vacation is so that one should be able to learn the entire day. This is true for children as well as parents. When children see their fathers increasing their learning time during their vacation, they will do the same. And since a *Yid* was created to learn Torah and do *mitzvos*, this is the only way that he truly feels happy and at ease.

(שיח"ק תשל"א ח"ב ע' 367)

YIDDISHKEIT YEAR ROUND

In earlier generations, in Europe, children would be in *cheder* throughout the entire year, learning all through the day and even into the night. Thus, they were constantly in an atmosphere of *kedusha*. Arriving in America, Yidden began following the local custom of taking regular breaks from school. Their children, who already learned very little in the day schools, would have vacation every weekend, as well as a few weeks in the winter and a couple of months in the summer. At that time, a number of camps opened, yet none really focused on raising the standards of these children *beruchniyus*.

CONSIDER

What defines a Yiddishe vacation: that one observes halacha while on vacation or that the relaxing itself is done differently?

How can one continue learning throughout the summer? Won't this ruin the opportunity to relax?

At a *farbrengen* on Shavuos תשנ"ז (1956), the Rebbe addressed this topic:

"Once, children would have days off from *cheder* only twice a year, on Pesach and on Sukkos, and that system produced children who were healthy *beruchniyus* as well as *begashmiyus*.

"Today, especially in America, this has changed. The children, being too 'tired' from the few hours they learn, must regularly travel away for the 'weekends,' while some are even '*mehader*' to leave a day earlier... This happens even more during the summer, when one 'must' relax from the Fourth of July, and then upon returning, relax some more to recover from the trip..."

The Rebbe concluded, "And from such an approach, people expect to raise children properly?!"

The Rebbe therefore suggested that an institution be opened, which on the outside would appear as a camp, but in truth would be exactly like a *cheder*. The Rebbe pointed out that the summertime can have an additional advantage over the rest of the year, for during this time children will have more time for *kedusha*, being free of secular subjects, and in a few weeks they will be able to learn what would usually take them a couple of months. In addition, they will be spared any negative influences from home, as well as the excessive spoiling that their parents may shower upon them.

(בנאות דשא ע' 2, 15)

At the *farbrengen* of י"ב תמוז תשמ"ה (1985), the Rebbe spoke of the lesson we should learn from the *mesirus nefesh* of the Frierdiker Rebbe for the *chinuch* of children. In recent times, the Rebbe said, a strange custom has been introduced - closing the *cheder* during the summer. Such a practice is not only contradictory to *frumkeit*, but is wildly irresponsible (in Yiddish: *a vildkeit*!) The life of a *Yid* is Torah, and one cannot take a break from life. What kind of message does this relay to children?

The Rebbe added that even in those places where they do learn something, this is done in a burdensome way, as if only to fulfill an obligation, and not as *life*. The Rebbe explained that the source of this problem is the adults' misconception that Torah is meant *chas veshalom* to burden a *Yid*, when in truth, it was given in order to better his physical life! It is merely the darkness of *galus* that prevents a *Yid* from accepting this concept. We must do everything possible, the Rebbe concluded, to ensure that children's summertime studies should not be reduced, and indeed should be enriched.

(תו"מ תשמ"ה ח"ד ע' 2450)

On numerous occasions the Rebbe spoke about the need to continue learning as usual throughout the summer, and called the break from learning a "strange" and "distasteful" custom.

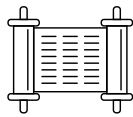
(ראה תו"מ תשמ"ז ח"ד ע' 105, 135)

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DISPLAYING ANGER

When is one allowed to get angry at others?

The Torah frowns upon anger as a very negative attribute, which has damaging and destructive results. Chazal say that one who gets angry is prone to lose his wisdom, causes foolishness, and moreover, it displays disregard for the Shechina and is like idolatry.¹ The Alter Rebbe explains that if the person were to believe that what happened to him is of Hashem's doing, he would not become angry.²

When a person gets angry, he loses control. He often doesn't think rationally and does things that he will later regret. Anger can likely lead a person to make improper decisions and sin.³

The Rebbe advised people not to speak and verbalize their emotions when they feel angry. This can help the anger lose momentum and dissipate. It is also important to remember how Hashem is watching us.⁴

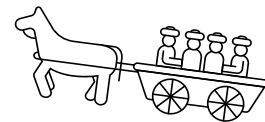
There are times, however, when anger can serve a constructive purpose.

If a father wishes to educate his children and teach them wrong from right, he may display outward anger—while remaining settled inside—to impress upon them the severity of acting improperly. Some *poskim* limit this allowance to education on serious matters.⁵ In certain instances, particularly when there is no other way to impress upon them the seriousness of the matter, one is even allowed to break something and it isn't *bal tashchis* since it serves a constructive purpose.⁶

It is prohibited to wish bad upon a Jew (whether or not one uses Hashem's name),⁷ besides for a wicked person who does evil and doesn't do *teshuva*. Still, Chazal teach that it is preferable not to wish bad upon them, but rather to *daven* that they should achieve clarity between right and wrong so that they may do *teshuva* without hindrances.⁸

1. ראה ספ"ק דקידושין, פסחים ס"ו ע"ב, ומנגד הגהות מילי הל' מלכים פ"ו ה"י. וראה אורח מישרים כעס הע"ו.
2. תניא אגרת הקדש סי' כ"ה.
3. ראה ברכות כ"ט ע"ב.
4. ראה אג"ק ח"ד ע' תנ"ד, ח"ח ע' ל"ה, וחכ"ב ל"ק.
5. ראה רמב"ם פ"ב הל' דעות, וראה לח"מ שם.
6. ראה שבת ק"ה ע"ב, וראה מהרש"א שם.
7. ראה שבועות ל"ה ע"א, רמב"ם סנהדרין פכ"ו.
8. ראה סנהדרין ל"ז ע"ב. אבל ראה ברכות י' ע"א, תענית כ"ג ע"ב. וראה מהרש"א ח"א ברכות שם.
9. סנהדרין מ"ח ע"ב.
10. תענית כ ע"א.

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



REB AHRON OF KREMENTCHUG

Reb Ahron was the son of Rebbetzin Freida, daughter of the Alter Rebbe. He married Rebbetzin Sarah, the youngest daughter of the Mittlerer Rebbe, in her second marriage (after her previous husband Reb Ahron ben Reb Moshe of Shklov passed away); therefore he was the step-father of Rebbetzin Rivka, wife of the Rebbe Maharash. He lived in Kremenchug and was an immense *lamdan* and *davened* at great length. He was extremely adored by all and he greeted everyone with a smile. After a few years of marriage, Rebbetzin Sarah passed away.

begging, he told them that the Alter Rebbe appeared to him in a dream and instructed him to be *mekarev* the chassidim Reb Shmuel and Reb Boruch. Reb Ahron continued, "I told the Alter Rebbe, 'I should be *mekarev* them? I would be happy if they would be *mekarev* me!'" Reb Shmuel and Reb Boruch then understood what the Mittlerer Rebbe meant in their dreams.

(ספר השיחות תש"א ע' 42)

Reb Ahron used to *daven* privately at home. Sometimes he would *daven* in an unusually pleasant, melodious voice, at other times he would *daven* silently. One thing was certain: while he *davened* he was oblivious to everything happening around him. Once a fire broke out in the house and everyone began to scream. Reb Ahron remained locked in his room and heard nothing. In the end, the rescuers had to break down the door, and upon entering, they discovered that he was still *davening*! They carried him out through the window but he still remained completely unaware of the situation. When he finally finished *davening*, he asked in surprise, "Where am I? What happened?"

(דברי ימי הרבנית רבקה ע' כח)

Reb Boruch and Reb Shmuel Tamares, chassidim in Kremenchug, did not treat Reb Ahron with proper respect. Once while learning *Chassidus* in depth Reb Shmuel fell asleep and saw the Mittlerer Rebbe who ordered him, "Go out of my *daled amos*." The next day Reb Shmuel asked Reb Boruch if he also saw something, but Reb Boruch answered that he had not. Later however, Reb Boruch dreamt the same thing, and they concluded that the reason behind it was their lack of respect to Reb Ahron. They decided to go and appease him. At first out of his profound humility Reb Ahron wondered what they wanted from him. When they began

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE REBBE'S HEALTH

Reb Sholom Deitsch was a warm Russian chossid, a *balabos* in Crown Heights, who was deeply connected to the Rebbe.

Reb Sholom suffered from a severe heart condition. In his dire state, he sought the Rebbe's *bracha* and set up a time for a private *yechidus*.

However, as he entered the Rebbe's room, an awkwardness overcame him. He was embarrassed to stand in

front of the Rebbe and ask on his own behalf. And so, almost unwittingly, he said, "Rebbe, I have come to ask for a *bracha* that the Rebbe should be healthy!"

The Rebbe immediately seized hold of the situation, and responded, "*Ven ich vell heren besuros tovos, vell ich zain gezunt - When I hear good tidings from you, I will be in good health!*"

(*Vayehi Ish Matzliach*, page 95)