

The Weekly *Farbrengens*

MERKAZ ANASH
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BEING DIFFERENT (II)

DISTINCT FEATURES

The *Midrash* says that the distinct Yiddishe haircut is one of the signs of a Yid, just like *tzitzis* and *bris milah*. In fact, it is forbidden to grow one's hair like non-Jews, for example by cutting certain parts shorter than others.

(שו"ע יו"ד סי' קעח, שהש"ר פ"א פט"ו)

During the decree against Yiddishe dress, two officers barged into the home of Reb Hillel Paritcher to cut off his long *peyos*, but he held the *peyos* tightly, and did not allow them to do so. Violently, they withdrew their swords and began hitting his hands and head. His neighbor, a tailor who had a good relationship with the officers, heard his screams and came running to help. He promised the officers gifts and convinced them to leave. Very thankful, Reb Hillel promised the tailor that after 120 years, he would be buried near him.

Many years later, when Reb Hillel passed away, he was buried in the distant city of Kherson. The tailor, growing old, decided to move to the home of one of his children. On his journey there, he stopped in Kherson and stayed at the *hekdesch*, the community hostel, where he suddenly fell ill and passed away. The local *chevra kaddisha*, not knowing who he was, prepared his body and took him to be buried in the section for unknown people. It was in middle of the winter, and due to the fierce snow, they unknowingly buried him next to the grave of Reb Hillel.

Spring arrived, and visitors to the *beis hachayim* were surprised to find an unidentified *kever* right next to the *kever* of the distinguished chossid. After some inquiry, they unearthed the promise made to the tailor – and recognized *HaShem's hashgacha* that had brought Reb Hillel's promise to fruition.

(רשימות דברים ח"א ע' רג)

Regarding his *mesirus nefesh*, Reb Hillel explained that it had come from a handwritten note of the *tzaddik*, Reb Pinchas Koritzer, which he had in his possession. In the note it was written:

The 50th gate of *tumah* is the *goyishe* way of dress (מקיי דבינה דקליפה), and had the Yidden in Mitzrayim fallen prey to it, they would have not been able to be redeemed. Similarly, in the times before *Moshiach*,

there will also be an attempt to make Yidden change their way of dress, and unfortunately they will succeed. Only in the *zechus* of individuals who will have *mesirus nefesh* not to change their dress, will all the Yidden be able to proceed to the *Geula*.

Reb Hillel concluded, "Anyone who would have had this note would have had *mesirus nefesh* for Yiddishe dress."

Reb Hillel himself wrote that for the above-mentioned reason, every Yid should dress differently from the nations, so that *kedusha* should rest upon him.

(מגדל עז ע' רל"ו, פלה הרמון שה"ש ע' יז)

CONSIDER

Are *peyos* and *tzitzis* an expression of one's warmth for Torah and *mitzvos* or do they bring that love?

Why does it require a special *kabbalas ol* and *mesirus nefesh* to retain the Yiddishe mode?

OBVIOUSLY DIFFERENT

Chassidim have always been particular that their *peyos* extend beyond the minimum measurement, as an obvious sign of being Yidden. Even when they were ridiculed for this, they remained unfazed.

While living in Russia, the chossid Reb Moshe Vishedsky gave much attention to his children's *chinuch*. When cutting their hair, he would give them a *chassidische* haircut and leave large *peyos*. One of his children once said that he thought that his *peyos* stood out too much when he went outside. His father gently explained that if his *peyos* would not be noticeable, they would no longer be considered *peyos*...

(דברי הימים גורקאוו ע' עה, סיפוח חב"ד ח"ב ע' 154)

PROTECTIVE GEAR

The Frierdiker Rebbe notes that those Yidden who are particular about their *peyos* and *tzitzis* have a warmth and a love for Torah and *mitzvos*, whereas those who are lax in these matters become cold and apathetic to Torah and *mitzvos*.

(ספר המאמרים תש"ד ע' 122)

In Minsk there once lived two wealthy families which both supported Torah learning by maintaining a *beis Midrash* near their homes. One family stemmed from *chassidische yichus*, whereas the other was from a *veltishe* background. When the time came to marry off their daughters, they both chose fine sons-in-law from respectable families. The *chassidische* son-in-law had an untrimmed beard and dressed in the traditional way, while the *veltishe* son-in-law cut his beard and dressed in a modern fashion.

Time went on and both sons-in-law went into business, traveling to Petersburg to strike big deals. The *veltishe* young man was attracted to the malls of Petersburg and the fancy clothing. Looking to make successful deals, he 'needed' to spend time in the restaurants, play cards and befriend the entrepreneurs. The *chassidische* one, however, found his way to the local *chassidische beis midrash*, where they learned *Chassidus* every night and *farbrenge*d, and he returned home with the report that Petersburg is a true *chassidische* town...

(הקריאה והקדושה ניסן תש"א ע' טו)

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes: "In Mitzrayim, the Yidden had *kabbalas ol*, and did not change their names, their way of dress, or their language – the three indicators that distinguish one type of people from another. Using a Yiddishe name, speaking the Yiddishe vernacular, and wearing a beard and *peyos* – these differentiate Yidden as "a nation that dwells apart." This prevents people from socializing with freethinking *porkei ol*, and prevents a Yid from visiting certain places. During the harsh times of *golus* Mitzrayim, the Yidden did this without asking 'Why', and by crying out to *HaShem* with *emuna* and with firm *kabbalas ol* in these matters, they merited their *geula*."

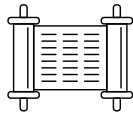
(לקוטי דיבורים ח"ג ע' ת"ו)

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HIRING A CHAZZAN

How should we choose a *chazzan* to lead the *tefilos* on Rosh Hashana?

There is a preference to hire a dedicated *chazzan* over relying on volunteers, as it offers community leaders better management of who will be the *chazzan* and can ensure it is an appropriate candidate. As well, a *chazzan* who is paid will make sure to *daven* better and more precisely.¹ It is disputed whether a paid *chazzan* can establish a *chazaka*.²

Payment for the *chazzanus* on Shabbos or *yom tov* can run into the rabbinic prohibition against *sechar Shabbos* – receiving payment for work on Shabbos, and any work done for pay is prohibited.³ Some *poskim* permit payment for *mitzva*-related services, in addition to the fact that “davening” isn’t considered work. The custom is to allow it.⁴

Yet even those who allow it caution that one won’t see *bracha* with money paid for Shabbos alone. This issue can be avoided by receiving the payment for Shabbos and *yom tov* “absorbed” into a larger pay period (see issue 260).⁵ Some hold that the payment to the *chazzan* or *baal korei* also covers the time they prepared during the weekdays, while others argue this is merely a *limud zechus*, justification, and should not be relied upon.⁶

If the *chazzan* will also lead the *selichos* or other special weekday davening, the lump payment can “absorb” also the Shabbos and *yom tov davening*.⁷ However, some *acharonim* write it should be the kind of *tefila* for which payment would make sense, and not a regular *tefila*.⁸

What are the qualifications for a *chazzan*?

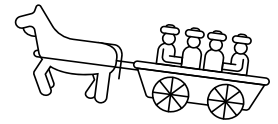
He should be upstanding, free of sin, with a good history. (Once appointed, we do not remove him due to a past misconduct for which he did *teshuva*, but a current issue is sufficient to demote him).⁹ He should be fluent in *lashon Hakodesh*,¹⁰ and be admired by the entire congregation.¹¹

Year long, a *bochur* may serve as *chazzan*, especially if already has a fully grown beard, or it began growing and he is over eighteen. But for the *yomim noraim*, it is ideal for the *chazzan* to be married, with children, and be over thirty – the age the *leviyim* began serving in the *Beis HaMikdash* (which our *tefila* corresponds to), and life experiences will cause him to be more serious and brokenhearted.¹² Nevertheless, if the *bochur* is a *talmid chacham* and the other is not, the *bochur* should be preferred.¹³

Many have the custom to elect the more prestigious *chazzan* for *musaf*, which corresponds to the *korbanos* of the day.¹⁴

1. שוע"ר אור"ח סי' נ"ג כ"ח.
2. ראה נט"ג ר"ה פט"ו סי' ובהמצויין שם, ובפרט ראה קונט"א לקצה המטה סי' תקפ"א סקס"ד והלף למטה סקס"א.
3. ראה בארוכה ש"כ פכ"ח הע' ק"י.
4. ראה שוע"ר אור"ח סי' ש"ו סי"א.
5. ראה ארחות שבת פכ"ב סק"ה והע' קס"ו.
6. ראה ערוה"ש אור"ח סי' ש"ו סי"ב, וראה ארחות שבת שם הע' קמ"ט.
7. ראה שוע"ר שם.
8. ש"ש פכ"ח ע' קמ"ה, הליכות שלמה תפילה פי"ז סי' ה.
9. ראה משנ"ב אור"ח סי' נ"ג סקט"ו.
10. משנ"ב שם ס"ק ל"ז.
11. שוע"ר סי' נ"ג כ"ד.
12. רמ"א אור"ח סי' תקפ"א סי' א, משנ"ב שם סק"ב, מט"א סכ"ד.
13. משנ"ב אור"ח סי' תקפ"א סק"ג.
14. ילקוט אברהם אור"ח סי' תקפ"א.

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



REB BORUCH SHOLOM KAHN

Reb Boruch Sholom was born around the year 5630 (1870). His parents were both from Chabad families, and he visited the Rebbe Rashab quite often. He married in 5656 (1896) and later settled in Warsaw where he did business. During World War I he moved to Moscow, and he would host the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe when they visited the city. He regularly assisted in fundraising for Tomchei Temimim, and gave a lot of *tzedaka* himself. He passed away on 13 Shvat 5693 (1933).

Whenever the Frierdiker Rebbe would ask him for something, Reb Boruch Sholom would do it in the best possible manner. Once, the Frierdiker Rebbe asked him to purchase a set of mattresses for his parents (the Rebbe Rashab and Rebbetzin Shterna Sara). Reb Boruch Sholom went to the biggest store he knew and requested the best mattresses. Whatever they showed him, he asked for better ones until they said that they had prepared two mattresses for Czar Nikolai, and if he wished they could give those to him and prepare other ones for

the czar. Only then did he ascertain that he had obtained the best. He purchased the mattresses and sent them to the Rebbe.

(לב הארי ע' 24)

At a *farbrengen* in Rostov, the Rebbe Rashab announced that he needed funds for his holy activities. He took a sum of money, placed it in an envelope and proclaimed, "Whoever will give a sum like the amount in the envelope, will receive this money." The *chassidim* present began to offer different amounts until Reb Boruch Sholom said, "I will give ten times the amount in the envelope!" The Rebbe Rashab gave him the envelope with the money saying, "This is for you." When he opened it he found two hundred ruble. He excused himself to the Rebbe and confessed that he didn't have all the money he promised with him at that time. The Rebbe calmed him and said, "I trust you. You will send the money soon." And so it was.

(לב הארי ע' 28)

A Moment with The Rebbe



YIRAS SHAMAYIM MUST BE TAUGHT

A principal of a Lubavitch school was once asked to speak at the annual convention of Torah Umesorah. When he asked the Rebbe what to address in his talk, the Rebbe responded in a note:

"It is imperative that you say – in my name or not, as you see fit – that it is absolutely necessary to teach the children *yiras Shamayim*.

"All agree that one cannot be a doctor without studying medicine, so how could they expect the children to be *yerei Shamayim* without teaching it?

"In days bygone, this was absorbed at home, and the children saw it on the street. But times have changed. The

only source for *yiras Shamayim* is the school, therefore it must be taught.

"And giving the children 15 minutes a day to learn a *mussar sefer* of their choice cannot suffice at all. In fact, it sends a negative message, because the child says to himself that every other subject has a mandatory timeframe, from a specific book, and a special teacher is hired – so this topic must be inferior!"

The Rebbe concluded the note, "Say this with a full *breitkait* (confidence), without fear, with a great *tumult*, with force. And Hashem will grant you success."

(Simpson Teshurah, Cheshvan 5771)