



A YIDDISHE VACATION (1)

THE WAY TO RELAX

The Rebbe taught: We must conduct our lives contrary to the ways of the rest of the world. During the summer months, people often decrease their learning and focus on strengthening their physical health. We must do the opposite; we must focus on the health of the *neshama*, and then, automatically, our physical lives will be strengthened as well. Moreover, as *Chassidus* teaches, during the summer there is an additional measure of *Elokus* in the world, which also finds expression in the additional sunlight at that time.

(תורת מנחם תכ"ה ע' 268, לקו"ש ח"א ע' 4)

The Friediker Rebbe related: In Lubavitch, during the years תרנ"ג to תרנ"א, the chassidim would follow the local summertime custom of *datshe* 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 would be involved in *avoda* at length, *davening* every day until five o'clock in the afternoon. Occasionally, though, he would come out and comment on the stories.

(סה"ש תש"ב ע' 120)

When the Rebbe Rashab went on vacation, 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 *datshe*" (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 *Medrash* 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 תש"א ע' 150)

The Friediker Rebbe writes to one mother: "Surely children must relax from time to time, from their toiling in learning; however, the

relaxation of a *ben Torah* and *yiras Shamayim* does not mean to do nothing, rather he uses this time to spread *Torah* and *yiras Shamayim*."

(אג"ק ריי"צ ח"ז ע' ש"ט)

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*.

At a *farbrengen* on Shavuos תש"ז, the Rebbe spoke about this: "Once, children would have days off from *cheder* only twice a year: Pesach and 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 this time of year can have an additional advantage over the rest of the year, for at 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 a *farbrengen* (י"ב תמוז תשמ"ה), the Rebbe spoke of the lesson we should learn from the *mesirus nefesh* of the Friediker 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 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 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.

(התועודיות 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 התועודיות תשמ"ז ח"ד ע' 105, 135)

The Rebbe taught that the true reason for vacation time is that a Yid should be able to learn all day. This applies to 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)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is a Yiddishe vacation different because one observes *halacha* while on vacation or is the relaxing itself done differently?
- How can one continue learning throughout the summer? Won't this ruin the opportunity to relax?

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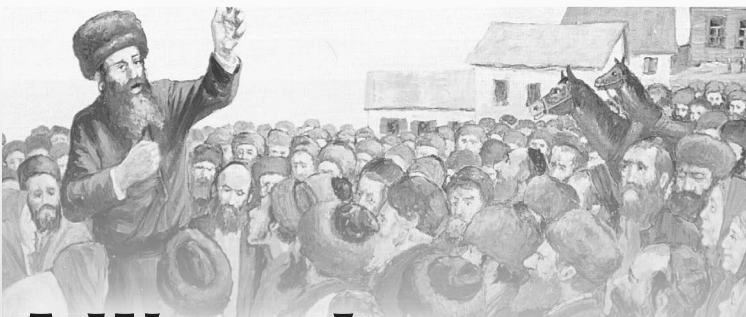
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A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

TOUCHING EXPOSED AREAS OF CHILDREN

Must one wash his hands after touching body parts of a baby or child, which adults usually keep covered but children usually do not?

- The *halacha* is that if one touched a part of one's body that is usually covered ("mekomos hamechusim"), one must wash his hands¹.
- The reason for this is because it is common for there to be dirt as a result of sweat² in those areas. The definition of *mekomos hamechusim* is that which is usually covered and has sweat³. This applies also if one touched a **child** in an area which the child usually has covered⁴.
- It follows from the above that one would not need to wash one's hands after touching the parts of the body of a child that are **not** usually covered, even if an adult usually covers those places, since there is no concern for sweat⁵. Since the parts of the body that are left uncovered vary according to the age of the child, the *halochos* of the requirement to wash one's hands after touching those places will vary as a result⁶.

1. שו"ע"ר מדו"ק סי' ד סעי' יח.
 2. שו"ע"ר סי' צב סעי' ז.
 3. ראה ספר זה השלחן ח"ב סי' ד סעי' כא עיי"ש.
 4. כף החיים סי' קסד או"ק יד.
 5. הליכות שלמה פ"כ אות טז; שו"ת אור לציון ח"ב בהלכות הקצרות פמ"ד אות ו [ומה שציון שם לשו"ע"ר].
 6. הליכות שלמה שם.

צ"ע כוונתו דאייירי התם בנגיעת קטן במאכל ולא במבוגר שנגע בקטן; וכן הובא בשם הגרי"ש אלישיב בספר הקטן והליכותיו ח"א פ"ו הע' יא, וע"ע שו"ת: אז נדברו ח"ה סי' מוה, מנח"י ח"ג סי' כו, ח"ד סי' קי"ד, ויען יוסף ח"א סי' ד.
 6. הליכות שלמה שם.

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CURRENT EVENTS

כ"ב תמוז

REB SHLOMO KARLINER

Reb Shlomo of Karlin was born in the year תצ"ח (1738). He was a *talmid* of the Mezritcher Maggid and the foremost *talmid* of Reb Aharon of Karlin (though only a few years younger than him), and he took over the mantle of leadership after Reb Aharon's passing. Karlin was known for their fervor during *davening*, and for this Reb Shlomo was famous. Many of the *tzadikim* in Lithuania were his students. Tradition has it that *tzadikim* of the generation said he had the *neschama* of Moshiach ben Yosef. He was savagely shot by a Cossack during a pogrom, while he was *davening*, and passed away from his wounds on Chof Beis Tammuz תקנ"ב (1792). His expounding on Torah can be found in the *sefer* "Shaima Shlomo."



Reb Asher of Stolin said: "When the current day *chassidim* come to their Rebbe, they emphasize the good and hide their shortcomings. This is not how it used to be. When I would come to my holy Rebbe Reb Shlomo of Karlin, I would hide the good from him, for was he instead of Hashem Who gives reward and punishment? The negative, however, I would show him, just as a man who had *tzaraas* would need to show his blemishes to the Kohen."

(ילקוט משלים סיפורים ואמרי חכמה ע' 266)



Once when lighting the Chanuka menorah, the flames caught onto the wall of the house and left a large black burn. Upon seeing this Reb Shlomo rejoiced, saying, "Now a mark of this precious *mitzvah* will remain with us all year round!"

(חיים שיש בהם ע' רלא)

Reb Shlomo once said: "In the next world they will put on the 'waging scales,' the fields and forests through which Chasidim have traveled through to reach the Rebbe."

(מפי השמועה)

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

WILL NOT ACCEPT GIFTS

Reb Naftali Roth of Eretz Yisroel relates:

"As my first yechidus came to a close, in Elul 5719, I presented the Rebbe with a silver *esrog* box, with an engraved dedication for the Rebbe, as a gift from my parents. The Rebbe accepted the gift with a smile, and asked me to pass on his thanks to my parents.

"On the morrow, Harav Chodakov approached me with a message from the Rebbe. The Rebbe said he will be happy to accept the *esrog* box. But since as a rule, he does not accept gifts, the Rebbe would like to know what the costs were. All my excuses were futile. I was compelled to telephone my parents, clarify the price, and accept a check for that money from the *mazkirus*.

Even in the later years, when thousands would present the Rebbe with gifts on the line for dollars, the Rebbe would always add an extra dollar, so that the gift was paid for.

