



Daas Torah

of the **Chazon Ish** zt'l

regarding

Shaving the Beard

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It is well known that the *Chazon Ish* zt'l ruled that the use of shaving machines of all kinds is **forbidden¹ just like a razor²** and did not permit selling a shaving machine even to a Jew who shaves with a razor in order to save him from the prohibition of using a razor³

In addition, the Chazon Ish was opposed to the use of a depilatory cream — called in Hebrew “sam” (chemical)⁴. He wrote:⁵

“Regarding (removal of the beard with) depilatory cream... I find this matter very painful...I am accustomed to this being prohibited since the earlier generations, and (the prohibition) was very severe...(Jews) have learned it from the non-Jews during their exile...Although this sickness has spread even among the ***bnei Torah***, the issue has not changed as a result of this, and therefore **my soul boils (with rage) at this practice.**”

“שמעתי מכבוד מורי החזון איש זצ”ל דכשבא

לפניו יהודי בלי זקן - כמעט שמקיא”⁶

“The *Chazon Ish* zt'l said that when a Jew without a beard comes in to see him, (he feels so sick that) he almost vomits⁶.”

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For a comprehensive treatment of this subject, see:

Sefer Hadrass Ponim Zokon / by Rabbi Moshe Wiener / The Cutting and Growth of the Beard in Halachic Perspective / Published with the Endorsements of the Leading Halachic Authorities of our Times / 1000 pages (in expanded third edition)

1 Rav Elozor Menachem M. Shach zt'l, in his letter printed in *Hadrass Ponim Zokon* p. 16; sources cited below in the following footnotes (2-3).

2 The Chazon Ish zt'l quoted in Teshuvos *Minchas Yitzchok* (IV:113) and by his colleague/disciple, Rav Shmuel HaLevi Vosner shlita, in his Teshuvos *Shevet HaLevi* (Y.D.:105) and also Rav Vosner's letters published in *Hadrass Ponim Zokon* (p. 19 and p. 56) and numerous other sources cited in *Hadrass Ponim Zokon* (pp. 349-350).

3 Rav Chayim Kanievsky shlita, quoting the Chazon Ish zt'l at the behest of his father, the Steipler Gaon zt'l, in a letter published in *Hadrass Ponim Zokon* (p. 17); see also Rav Chayim Kanievsky shlita in his sefer *Orchos Yosher* (p. 20), where he wrote: “The Chazon Ish was very strict about shaving machines of all kinds, and did not permit selling one even to a Jew who shaves with a razor in order to save him from the prohibition of using a razor, but instructed (the inquirer) to sell it to a non-Jew.”

4 Rav Chayim Kanievsky shlita in his sefer *Orchos Yosher* (ibid.).

5 Letters of the Chazon Ish zt'l (*Kovetz Igros* I:197-198).

6 Rav Moshe Sternbuch shlita (disciple of the Chazon Ish zt'l and author of *Moadim U'Zemanim*, *Teshuvos v'Hanhagos* and other seforim), in his letter printed in sefer *Hadrass Ponim Zokon*, p. 304.

The same quote is attributed to the Chazon Ish zt'l by his nephew, Rav Chayim Kanievsky shlita (son of the Steipler Gaon zt'l) in his sefer *Orchos Yosher* (ibid.).