

א חסידישער דערהער...

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My Encounter with the Rebbe –5730

Reb Zalmon Jaffe, the name itself brings a smile to one's face. Reb Zalmon was a Chossid who made for himself a unique mission – to make the Rebbe smile. Shavuot was his, and his wife Roslyn's, special time to visit the Rebbe, flying in from Manchester England. Each year he would write-up his experiences in 770, entitled 'My Encounter with the Rebbe'. The series is being re-printed and the first two volumes can be found in stores. The following is from the original 'My Encounter – 5730'.

It was nearly 11:00p.m when we arrived at '770' on Monday evening. I immediately went to see Rabbi Chodakov to ascertain the earliest possible moment when I could see the Rebbe Shlita.

"Well," he said, "Yechidus is on Thursday, and I will try and fit you in, but if you really wish to see the Rebbe sooner then you can go in straight away." Rabbi Gutnick of Australia was now with the Rebbe and as soon as he leaves the Rebbe's room, I could immediately enter the Rebbe's presence. Of course, if I accepted this offer for tonight, I should not be allowed again on Thursday, so "which day do you prefer?" What a question to ask!!

...I rushed to '770' and took my stand outside the Rebbe's door. It was now midnight, and as Rabbi Gutnick had been with the Rebbe since 11:00p.m, I expected to enter at any moment. Suddenly the door opened - I was nearly caught unawares, and Rabbi Gutnick emerged. I looked at my watch - it was 2:00a.m.. I had been waiting for 2 hours!

[We continue in the middle of his Yechidus...] ... The Rebbe then requested me to provide a Rashi 'Kashi' for the following Shabbos. I then reminded the Rebbe that this year we came especially for Shabbos 'Mevorchim,' as the Rebbe himself had requested last year, and "why should I have to work for an extra Farbrengen?" Well, the Rebbe still persisted that he would like a Rashi question.

It was now 3:05a.m. and I had been with the Rebbe an hour and five minutes. Before leaving I presented the Rebbe with 4 bottles of mashke to give out at a Farbrengen. "Which one," asked the Rebbe. "Anyone" says I. "It is for the Rebbe to give to whomsoever he wishes." ...

...The Rebbe admitted that he had stopped the giving of mashke at the farbrengens because "it got out of hand." I told the Rebbe I did appreciate the cake, but it was not as good as the Mashke because it became hard and stale after a week.

That Shabbos was Shabbos Mevorchim. We commenced Tehillim at 8:30a.m. and finished at 9:55a.m. - 1 hour and 25 minutes - fantastic. Farbrengen started, as usual, at 1:30p.m., prompt on the dot, and went on until 5:30p.m. Main theme - 'Who is a Jew,' conversions must be according to the Halachah ... there will be no peace unless and until we rescind this evil law - then G-d will destroy all Israel's enemies.

After a particularly strong and effective sicha on this subject the Rebbe sat with his head sunk and bowed down, very dejected, and not looking up at anyone at all. Meanwhile Yossi and Mendel were standing up straight and together, each holding a cup of wine and waiting to say le'chaim to the Rebbe, the Rebbe taking no notice. For very many minutes (which seemed like hours) they stood in dead silence whilst everyone waited and wondered when would the Rebbe look up and if he would shake off his despondency. It was already getting most embarrassing, so I stood up and in a very loud and clear voice said le'chaim to the Rebbe. He looked and replied, "Le'chaim Velivrocho." I then pointed to Yossi and Mendel still holding their glasses and standing so straight and upright. The Rebbe's face became transfigured by a lovely smile as he replied to their brochah of Le'chaim.

I was told by a great many people that this was the best part of the farbrengen. It made the Rebbe so happy after his deep depression. Someone told me that the Merkos should pay for my ticket to come once a month to make the Rebbe 'freilech!' You do such a Mitzvah, Mr. Jaffe. You make the Rebbe happy! The Rebbe honored me by giving me a bottle of Mashke to divide amongst those present.

Thursday was Erev Rosh Chodesh. The Rebbe went to the Ohel - the graveside of the previous Rebbe - to pray, say Tehillim and plead for all the Jews. He fasts the whole day. During the three weeks we were in Brooklyn the Rebbe went three times to the Ohel. It was 8:40p.m. when he returned, looking terribly tired, hot and really worn out. What the Rebbe does for us Jews!

Maariv was at 9:20p.m. I was asked to daven at the Omud. As the Rebbe was still fasting, I davened extremely quickly - no one objected at all - but after Maariv, instead of going straight home for a meal, the Rebbe had Yechidus with Chief Rabbi Dreyfus of Belgium!

הנחות העולם

* דער סדר אין יעדער ענין דארף זיין, אז בשעת מען זעט ווי עס איז דער סדר מצד הנחות העולם, דארף מען טאן פארקערט. (שי"פ קדושים תשי"ט)

* במ"ש אודות מנהגי הגבה וכו' - כנראה ממכתבו כבר הנהיגו זה בביה"כ"נ בו התפלל כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר זצוקלה"ה נב"מ זי"ע, והנה אף שלכתחילה אולי צדקו טעמי כתר- לשלילת שינוי המנהג, ובפרט שכן נהגו זקני אנ"ש בדורות שקדמו בבואם לאה"ק ת"ו. אבל הבע"י עתה - האם יש לנגוע בנקודת ההתקשרות של מי שהוא לרבותינו נשיאנו, אפילו באם מתבטא היא ביותר על המדה. (אג"ק חלק י"ט עמ' רפ"א, עיי"ש)

בר"ח סיון "לא אמור להו [משה] ולא מידי משום חולשא דאורחא" דאה לקוטי שיחות חלק כ"ח שיחת ר"ח סיון

The Moisture in a Chossid's Life

(An excerpt from *Likkutei Dibburim*, Yiddish Vol. 4 p. 1486; English Vol. 5 p.119)

The *temimim* are not familiar with the way things used to be in Lubavitch. True, it may be argued in their favor that they are preoccupied with studying both the revealed and esoteric levels of the Torah, and with meditative *davenen*, so they cannot devote themselves to the way things used to be in Lubavitch. The fact remains, though, that the vital moisture of chassidic life is missing.

A house, by way of analogy, may be built of wood, or of stone (as in the metaphor of *Sefer Yetzirah*, "Two stones build two houses"), or of bricks — but not of bricks alone: they must be held together by mortar, and mortar must be moist.

If someone is rich and owns millions of bricks, then even if he stacks them on top of each other in the shape of a building and adds sand, it's dangerous to walk by: a brick can fall from the sixth floor and the passerby will walk away without a head. If the building is to last, it must be held together by moist mortar. On the other hand the mortar cannot remain moist: only when it dries can the building serve for human habitation.

So, too, if someone studies *Gemara* or the halachic rulings of the *poskim*, then he is immensely wealthy; he owns millions of bricks. Yet if he lacks the moisture that links him, one must watch one's step and keep a safe distance from him, for otherwise one can walk away without a head...

Within the chassidic community we have some immensely wealthy individuals, people who own vast quantities of bricks — that is, letters of the revealed Torah and of the teachings of *Chassidus*. And not only letters, but also closely-argued comprehension, and expertise in a wide range of *maamarim*. But this kind of scholar does not constitute a human habitation: he is only a building of bricks that can strike someone's head. He can belittle his peers; his world has no room for any other individual. His attitude finds expression in many behaviors, whose underlying cause is his lack of the moisture of chassidic life. The moisture of togetherness springs from a comradely chassidic *farbrengen* and from *avodah shebalev*, divine service that takes place in the heart.

In former times, a *farbrengen* provided a young chassid with a foundation for his life. There, as he soaked up the manner in which chassidim of integrity interacted and shared their lives, he saw the meaning of friendship and brotherly love, of truthful speech, of unfeigned humility, and of devotedness to elder chassidim.....

...Participating in a chassidic *farbrengen* provided him with the kind of moisture that gave his endeavors cohesion. Its training in "*Sur Mera*" [turning away from evil] and "*Ase Tov*" [doing good] did not simply deal with doing or not doing a *mitzvah* or its opposite; it sensitized him beyond that. It made him aware that even the subtlest trace of an undesirable character trait is also evil; that even the correct and meticulous observance of a *mitzvah* is not yet necessarily the ultimate in truthful observance. In this way, all his individual bricks — the letters of his study of Torah and *Chassidus* — eventually came to constitute a truly solid edifice.

However, a damp house whose mortar has not dried out is no place to live in. So, too, moisture alone does not constitute *avodah*: one cannot discharge one's obligations through *farbrengens* alone. One must toil in one's studies, one must study *Chassidus*, one must exert oneself in meditative *davenen*. And the resultant sober contriteness is what dries out the moisture.

A Special Connection

Reb Yisroel— Third Installment

The special care and attention that the Rebbe reserved for the bochurim is well-known. Considering the significance of the subject, we turned to Horav Yisroel Friedman, Rosh Yeshivah of Oholei Torah in Crown Heights, and asked him to share with us some of the many incidents that he personally experienced in this regard.

During the days of Sefiras Ha'Omer in the year 5719, us as Yeshivah students were privileged to be shown extraordinary attention from the Rebbe. It was on one of those Shabbosim that the Rebbe conducted a *farbrengen*, specifying that it was geared especially for the bochurim. He added that 'in his mind', "since we have spoken so much lately about "Uforatzta" – performing Torah study and Mitzvos in a boundless manner, surely the Mashpi'im would *farbreng* in order to bring about tangible results in this regard, as the custom of Chassidim and their Rabbeim had always been – to accomplish things through a *farbrengen*. But as it seems, the Mashpi'im aren't doing it, so I resolved to do it on my own..."

On the following Shabbosim until Shavuos, the Rebbe *farbrenged* each week speaking directly to the bochurim, expounding upon the great privilege that they carry, to learn in the Rebbe's Yeshivah, and about the importance that they fervently involve themselves in Torah study, in a way of "Ufaratzta".

One special anecdote that sticks out in my mind that the Rebbe said during one of those *farbrengens*: True, it is demanded of a bochur that he be punctual about coming to Seder on time, but not necessarily does that mean that he comes to be in Seder only. On the contrary, a bochur must be studying Torah so diligently throughout the entire day, and with such fervor, that when it comes time for Seder he'll automatically be already involved in learning!

There were many, many more very special expressions that the Rebbe said then that are of great significance to bochurim, but we shall not repeat them all here and now. One can read these *farbrengens* in their entirety as they were published in *Toras Menachem* Vol. 25.

1. Towards the conclusion of the year 5718 (beginning with the *farbrengen* of Yud Beis Tamuz), the Rebbe began to speak about the concept of "Uforatzta". The literal translation as it appears in the *posuk* (*Vayeitze* 28:14) is "and you shall spread forth", but there is a deeper meaning as well – to break through. From that point and on, the Rebbe constantly demanded that Torah and Mitzvos, and especially the dissemination of *Chassidus*, be done in a manner that exceeds and breaks through all boundaries. As for the Yeshivah bochurim, the Rebbe demanded that their study of Torah should be increased, in the spirit of "Uforatzta".



שערי צנינה

Ech Ti Dudah

“עך טי דודא טי מא-יא, וויסאלו-כא טי מא-יא, וויסאלי-קא טי-מין יא,
נאטשו זשאיו סאראנא”

A loose translation: “You, my *dudale* (beautiful tune) you’re mine, happiness you are mine, happy you shall make me, although we find ourselves across the barrier”.

This niggun was sung by the Chossid Reb Yonah Kahan or Yonah Poltaver as he was better known, he was a great *baal menagen* and composed various niggunim one of them being the famous niggun “Sheha’shalom Sheloi..”

Originally from Poltava, he later moved to Nevel. The city of Nevel was a Chassidic town well known for its lively niggunim, but this specific niggun sticks out from the rest, as it would later take on special meaning and acted as a source of encouragement for Chassidim.

The niggun with words in Ukrainian is a metaphor describing the Neshomah’s descent into this physical world, where the Shechina is not revealed, and the Neshomah is deeply saddened. Before her arrival here she was a “*Chelek Eloka Mimaal...*” and merited to see revealed G-dliness. While here, she yearns for her previous heights and desires to rise and cling to Hashem. Looking at her surroundings, she feels lonely and searches for a source of comfort, and so she turns to the niggun - the “Dudale”. It is through this that the Neshomah finds solace for herself, with the knowledge that although it is on the other side of the “barrier” the niggun will help overcome her loneliness and she will be able to serve Hashem with joy.

The niggun begins slowly, on a sadder note, and then gradually quickens its beat ending as a lively dance.

After the Friediker Rebbe was released from prison the communists didn’t allow him to remain in Russia. Immediately after Succos 5688, the Rebbe departed for Poland leaving his beloved Chassidim behind. The situation then was very bad, religious observances were banned and many Chassidim were arrested and sent to unknown destinations. Contact with the Rebbe was almost impossible.

At this difficult time Chassidim Farbrenge often, encouraging one another to remain strong even in the face of hardships. It was this niggun that enabled them to express their feelings; they too were lonely, physically far from the Rebbe, yearning to be reunited with him. This niggun comforted them, allowing them to cope with those most trying times.

Reb Zalman Levin, a native Neveler, whose family included many *baalei menagnim*, describes: “I remember as a child attending these Farbrenge. After the assembled had their share of *L’chaim*, Reb Yonah would begin his niggun slowly amidst tears. As the niggun picked up its momentum, the Chassidim stood up vigorously danced on the table with tears still on their cheeks, but hope in their hearts; it was truly a beautiful sight to behold.”

1. After the Friediker Rebbe left Russia, Reb Yonah was put in charge of running the underground Chadorim and Yeshivos which he kept going with much Mesirus Nefesh. He was known under the false name of Shilem Kagan. In 5709 the KGB caught up with him and he was sent to Siberia where he passed away shortly after his arrival. ה"ד.

2. Reb Zalman produced a tape called “Kol Atzmosai” containing niggunim which originate from Nevel.

This niggun can be heard on Heichal Neggina Tape 49; Nichoach Vol. 10

א ציור פון א חסיד

Reb Berke Chein Part 2

Sometime later when he personally heard in Yechidus that “one should not take davening with a minyan lightly,” he made every effort to daven with a minyan. For a long time he would daven with the bochorim in the Yeshivah. But later, when walking became hard for him, he had to daven in the Shul. But even here he urged the minyan to slow down and not to hurry.

Speaking about davening: The Rebbe related on Shvat 14, 1950 that “in order to put on the four pairs of Tefillin, one must be exceptionally pure. The Rebbe then said about himself that he was afraid to wear four pairs of Tefillin until the Friediker Rebbe specifically instructed him to do so. It is known that the Rebbe instructed Reb Berke to put on the four pairs of Tefillin every day.

But it wasn’t only four pairs of Tefillin that he put on daily. He also had several different kinds of Rashi Tefillin: *gasos* and *dakos*, in the styles of the Arizal, the Alter Rebbe from this sofer and that sofer. He put them all on every day saying Shma with every pair. His Shacharis lasted until late in the afternoon or until evening.

Many still remember when they used to return with Reb Berke to Eretz Yisroel from visiting the Rebbe. At the crack of dawn he began putting on his Tefillin and davening, and finished by the time the plane landed in Lod at sundown.

During World War II, he fled to Siberia to escape the Nazis. Only a person who worked could receive a portion of food. But they did not pay in cash, but in calories. At the end of the month the workers received wheat, flour, potatoes, etc, according to the days worked. Anyone who could find work was lucky, because not everyone could.

One morning his employer came to the house where Reb Berke lived with several other Jews. He wanted to give Reb Berke a particular job which didn’t require hard physical labour. Just then, Reb Berke was wearing his Tallis and Tefillin and in the middle of saying Boruch Sheomar. They tried to tell him that the director himself had come to offer him an easy, well paying job. But he just continued davening without interruption.

When he finished Oleinu, he asked why they tried to interrupt him earlier. The employer sat patiently, listened to his Davening, and then offered the job and left. All the residents of the house were standing on edge, the tension was palpable. Who knows what could happen now? But Berke couldn’t understand the problem. After all, he wasn’t playing around until then, he was only davening...

He davened almost until the evening, often sitting all day in Tallis and Tefillin. If he would have to refresh himself with some food, he would remove his Tefillin, lay them down on the table, cover them with his Tallis, wash his hands and eat some dry bread and water. At Birchas Hamazon he would again put on his Tallis and Tefillin.

On a hot Tisha B’Av afternoon, while everyone was resting in the shade, Reb Berke was busy: he put on one pair of Tefillin, recited the Shema, removed them, put on another pair, and so on, while in the process he would learn the shiurim. People would ask: “Reb Ber, there’s still plenty of time until Mincha, you just finished Kinos, take a liitle rest.” He would smile and say, “Rest? Rest?! Oy, will we have plenty of time of uninterrupted rest after 120 years! We can’t rest. A person was born to toil.”

To be continued...



Q & A: What is the difference between Chassidus and Chakira?

We find ourselves between Lag B'Omer, the revelation of Primiyyus HaTorah, and Shavous the day on the Giving of the whole Torah, so we will focus on the differences between different approaches of Yiddishkeit.

Chakira literally means to investigate. Generally, this includes all sformim of Yiddishe Philosophy that explore the logic that can bring to Emuna, logic explaining how we know that Hashem created the world and so on. For example from the intricate and complex world, we can see that it must have been created by a great Creator.

Many Chakira Sformim will discuss the reasons behind many of the Mitzvos, for example it explains why specifically those ten mitzvos were included in the Aseres Hadibros.

(From Hatomim Issue 5 pp.65; Vol. 2. pp.490 in the bound version.)

One of the differences between the G-dly *sechel* [intellect, logic] that is Chassidus, and the books of Chakira, even those composed by the greatest of our people, is the foundation. The Chokrim built their logical structure on *sechel enushi*, human reason, and after a long and deep discussion containing many questions and answers they arrived at the principals of our beliefs.

Therefore even after the student arrives at the conclusion and the foundation of Emuna, his belief is already *megusham* (made coarse) by the human *sechel* that it had to pass through. (In other words, when we come to the realization of the existence of Hashem, and recognize Elokus, through the created world, we will still perceive a slight comparison between the Creator and the created, [the Bore to the *nivra*]. This is entirely incorrect; Hashem is incomparably greater and higher than anything we can imagine.)

Moreover, until he derives and comprehends the truth and reaches his Emuna, he will be in doubt, and when it comes to Emuna, every doubt, even the smallest of the small, damages the *nefesh*. (As Chassidus explains the meaning of Chometz on Pesach in *avoda*, even the smallest amount is *assur*, "*chametz b'Pesach assur b'mashehu*". Matza is *michla d'mehimmusa*, the bread of Emuna, and in Emuna [on Pesach] even a *mashehu* is damaging.)

Chassidus is not like this. Chassidus is essentially built to arouse the *nekuda* of Emuna that naturally resides within every single Yid's Nefesh HaEloki. It works to awaken this

nekuda, to reveal it and to expand it. The *sechel* involved is only a *kli*, a vessel through which this Emuna can shine. However, because the goal of *avoda* is to effect and change the natural *middos*, Chassidus clothes the Torah in garments of human logic, proofs and the like.

This is reflected in the organization of many *maamorim*. First the *maamor* will bring the ideas and concepts that arouse the inner, natural Emuna and only then will it bring the reasons and the proofs to these concepts.

It is clear that the organization the Rabbeim made in the *maamorim* is an order of *Elokus* and not only an intellectual order. Therefore we find many *maamorim* that on the surface the organization of the topics could have been in a different and clearer order. The truth is however, as stated above, that the *seder* is, first the *Elokus* that arouses the Emuna and make the *Nefesh Eloki* understand, and then the *sechel enushi*.

This is also the reason why *chassidim* would refrain from learning *maamorim* of Chassidus of even the greatest *Chassidim*, unless it was coming to explain a *maamor* of one of the Rabbeim or after they had spent a considerable amount of time learning the *maamorim* of the Rabbeim.

What emerges from the above:

The difference between Chassidus and Chakira is their starting points. Chassidus starts from the *nekuda* of Emuna and expands it until it reaches (also) human reason and logic. And therefore it will not stray from the truth, because the *nekuda* guards the expansion. Chakira is mainly based on *sechel enushi* and works its way to the *nekuda*. With such an order, the student might stray in the wrong direction.

An example of this principal is a circle. Were one to draw a circle and then search for its center, it would be difficult to find it easily. Draw a dot, on the other hand, and the circle will effortlessly be drawn around it. Even if the circle will not come out exact, at least you have the center. The same applies with the *nekuda* (the center dot) and the *sechel* (the surrounding circle).

ל"ע
שיינדל בת ר' שבתי לייב ע"ה
יום ה'אראצי'ט כ"ה אייר

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הל' נזקי ממון פ' י"ג	הל' שקלים פ' א-ג	כ"ג אייר
פרק י"ד	פ' ד הל' קידוש החודש פ' א-ב	כ"ד אייר
הל' גניבה פ' א'	פ' ג-ה	כ"ה אייר
פרק ב'	פ' ו-ח	כ"ו אייר
פרק ג'	פ' ט-יא	כ"ז אייר
פרק ד'	פ' יב-יד	כ"ח אייר
פרק ה'	פ' טו-יז	כ"ט אייר