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(אור ליום ה' פרשת שופטים תשי"ג)

* כשקוראים המכתבים של הרבנים, הן מכתבים כלליים והן מכתבים פרטיים, רואים את האהבה והחיבה של הרבנים לחסידים. האהבה הגדולה ביותר בלשון בני אדם היא אהבת האדם לבנים, הנה באמת גם אהבה זו היא כלא חשיבא לגבי האהבה שרבי אוהב את החסיד

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 88)



Mivtzoim

Summer - 5734

The summer season of 5734 brought forth an entirely new phase of the Rebbe's Mivtzoim. At the time, the Rebbe had only introduced five of the ten Mivtzoim as we know them today, the most recent being Mivtza Mezuzah. In his words conveyed through the Farbrengen's, Yechidus, and handwritten notes, the Rebbe continuously appealed to the Chassidim to involve themselves in spreading the Mivtzoim where and whenever possible.

It was the Rebbe's fervently spoken call that over that summer that inspired the earliest version of the "Mitzva Tanks". Initiated by the Bochorim, forever faithful to the Rebbe's holy will, and funded by "Tzach" in New York, the Hertz rented trucks were decorated with colorful illustrations of the five Mivtzoim, blaring loud music and attracting fellow Yidden in Manhattan to stop for a moment and do a Mitzvah. Determination proved successful when the Chevreh would return each evening to Crown Heights after laying Tefilin on hundreds of Yidden, literally! The encouragement they received from the Rebbe on a daily basis going far beyond anyone's imagination egged them on to intensify their efforts further.

The following are only snippets of occurrences recorded in a Yoman of a Bochor in 770 that summer, highlighting just some expressions of the Rebbe's interest in the Bochorim's performance of the Mivtzoim during that period. In a later issue, we hope yo be able to bring to you, with Hashem's help, a more detailed account of the "Mitzva Tanks".

Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar, 5 Sivan

At the Farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke of the recent incident in Ma'alit, Eretz Yisroel, where Jewish children were murdered in their school by terrorists YM"SS, and a later finding disclosed that a number of Mezuzos in the building, totaling to the exact amount of victims HY"D, were defected. One may not suggest, Chas V'Sholom, that the reason for people being were killed R"L was because there was a problem with the Mezuzos. But, on the other hand, just as a soldier must wear his helmet for protection and by removing it he places his life in danger; a Mezuzah protects the inhabitants of the home just as well. Let no one mistake the terrible tragedy as a punishment R"L, but rather as a lack of the necessary security provided by the Mitzvah. The most suitable response to the tragedy would be by reaching out to every Jewish home and ensuring that they set in proper, Kosher Mezuzos, as well as Seforim and a Tzedoka box.

Motzoei Shavuot

Tonight we were informed of the catastrophic car-accident in Eretz Yisroel that claimed the lives of four Chassidim, including that of Reb Schneur Zalman

Garelik, the Rav of Kfar Chabad. The saddened Bochorim wandered about throughout the night bewildered and in mourning.

Shabbos Parshas Nasso, 11 Sivan

With tears in his eyes, the Rebbe spoke of the recent tragic occurrence, stating that we can never understand the ways of Hashem. The pain is immeasurable; Hashem has charged us with a harsh judgment that remains completely irrational in our eyes. Our form of counteracting that should be by doing the Mivtzoim in a way that surpasses Sechel altogether!

Monday, 13 Sivan

Mr. Zalman Jaffe, along with some members of his family were received by the Rebbe for Yechidus prior to their trip back to England, and each given twenty pounds; ten for Tzedoka, and an additional ten to be used for Mivtza Mezuzah.

Wednesday, 15 Sivan

After returning from the Ohel late in the evening, the Rebbe notified that he would hold a surprise Farbrengen.

During the second Sicha the Rebbe explained the reason for the unexpected Farbrengen: "In the recent past I have been stirring quite a bit about the Mivtzoim and I have even appointed many others to speak to crowds about it on my behalf, I would like to use this opportunity to speak publicly about it on my own, at a time when my words will be transmitted to long distance locations as well..."

In conclusion, the Rebbe offered all those involved in the Mivtzoim one "Shekel" in the currency of their respective countries.

Friday, 24 Sivan


On his way home, the Rebbe stopped to look at a car that has been decorated with a drawing of a Mezuzah.

Tuesday, 28 Sivan

When leaving for home at night, the Rebbe walked slowly past the five decorated trucks that were rented to assist with Mivtzoim and observed the drawings upon them. Even after entering the car, the Rebbe continued to look at them, asking the driver to drive slowly beside them.

Thursday, Rosh Chodesh Tammuz

After finishing with tonight's Yechidus at 3:30am, the Rebbe looked around outside in anticipation to see the trucks again (which had been parked elsewhere for the night). It has been said that the Rebbe referred to the trucks as "Tanks" fighting against assimilation.



Until the last drop of blood...

Much is known of the Frierdiker Rebbe's activities in Russia, how he braved the KGB, and his various arrests, although little has been written about the unsung heroes who worked under the most strenuous circumstances to keep the flame of Yiddishkeit burning.

In a fascinating Reshima¹, the Frierdiker Rebbe depicts one of his journeys by train, and describes how once sitting in his cabin lost in thought, pondering upon the suffering of the Jewish people, and the persecution they were subject to, he was reminded of the words he heard from his saintly father, the Rebbe Rashab, several weeks before his passing in 5680: "Dark clouds are looming over Russia, for sure for the next twenty two years... until our enemies will fall we will suffer at their hand... Yosef Yitzchok, for Harbotzas HaTorah and strengthening Yiddishkeit, you will have to have actual Mesirus Nefesh, not just be prepared for it." Perhaps these very words, were the grounds upon which the Rebbe laid the seeds of Jewish resistance, and yielded the following episode.

Perhaps this is the meaning of "בכל נפשך- אפילו הוא נוטל את נפשך"² In Sefer Hasichos 5680-87 (p. 55), is recorded that by a Yud Tes Kislev Farbrengen in 5684, the Rebbe told the Chassidim that he wants Meshamshim, in the same breath he also explained what he meant: a Meshamesh is a person who will go out through the country, open Chadorim, hire Melamdim, establish Mikvaos and so on. A personal Yoman written by one of the attendees by the Farbrengens relates that immediately, several Bochorim volunteered, the Rebbe gave them L'chaim and wished them success on their mission.

Later on that same year, the Frierdiker Rebbe called for a meeting in Moscow, to which he summoned a handful of Chassidim and informed them that something must be done to continue to strengthen Yiddishkeit, and someone must do it, all of them immediately accepted to do what may, and the Rebbe told them that he hereby makes a treaty, an oath with them that they must fight "Till the last drop of blood", to which they readily agreed. The Frierdiker Rebbe himself writes³ that he picked eight 'healthy' Bochorim, who swore allegiance to him. Elsewhere⁴ however, it is written that the summoned were in fact nine, and the Frierdiker Rebbe himself would close the circle as the tenth. They then split among themselves different regions of the country, and allotted one to each member. He concludes by saying that this effort of theirs, had a strong impact on the entire country, and they were successful in establishing hundreds of Chadorim, and Talmud Torahs.⁵

Little is clear about the identity of these brave Chassidim, although it is speculated that almost all of them lived up to the fullest extent of their promise, and were in fact killed at the hands of the Russians for their 'crimes'. It has been said that nearly all of them were gone by 5710 when the Frierdiker Rebbe, whom they vowed their lives to, passed away.

In the above mentioned Yoman, the author, Reb Michael Yehuda Leib Hacohen writes, that he remembers, albeit not with certainty, that by the Farbrengen, Reb Moshe Charitonow instantly rose to

the call of the hour. Others are said to have been, Reb Chatche Feigin ת"ח the Frierdiker Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Michael Katzenelnbogen, ת"ח Rabbi Yitzchok Yaakov Minkowitz, and yet others who will remain unknown.

The Frierdiker Rebbe, in an incredible letter⁶ to the great Rabbi Menachem Zamba ז"ל⁷, writes about this meeting, and the extent of the Mesirus Nefesh and subsequent success of the Chassidim who took on the oath. Amongst other things, he goes in detail about the readiness Reb Bentzion Shemtov displayed in undertaking this daring mission, and recounts how the Yevsektzia followed him for an extended period of time until they finally arrested him.

Logic would demand that after arrest, one would relax his efforts, or stop altogether from 'counter-revolutionary' activities, however under the power of oath, especially to the Rebbe, a Chossid knows not to stop until he either succeeds or his life is taken from him. Who more than the Frierdiker Rebbe himself can express this? In fact, in the newly released volume of Igros Kodesh, in a letter to Reb Bentzion Shemtov's father⁸, the Frierdiker Rebbe hallows Reb Bentzion's efforts, and blesses his father that soon his son will be released, and be able to.... rest? Quite the contrary, resume in an ever stronger effort in his activities!

It is related, that immediately after the meeting in Moscow, one of the Bochorim who submitted to the oath, ran back into the Frierdiker Rebbe's room and exclaimed: "Rebbe, I'm scared!", to which the Rebbe promptly reassured him by saying: "If the heart (=the Rebbe) isn't scared, why should the rest of the body (=the Chassidim)?"

As it was, the Frierdiker Rebbe was deeply connected to these courageous Bochorim, and was profoundly disturbed when he learned that some trouble had befallen them; In a Reshima⁹, the Frierdiker Rebbe relates how after Reb Chonie Morozov ת"ח was arrested, Chassidim gathered to raise their morale, but a noticeable gloom reigned among the assembled. The Frierdiker Rebbe, who more than anybody felt the pain as his own, was to encourage the Chassidim and speak to their hearts. He indeed expounded upon the greatness of Reb Chonie's Mesirus Nefesh, and how they mustn't be deterred, rather renew their commitment to the cause. He records that his words fell on open ears, and had an effect on all the assembled, all apart for one: a Rebbe after all, had lost a Chossid.

As we look retroactively, today we reap the dividends of the Frierdiker Rebbe's successful efforts, and those of his Chassidim. The very country which once outlawed Judaism and murdered its adherents, today defends and stands guard to us in our activities, the very square in Moscow where Jews were forbidden to walk, now hosts parades underlying Jewish pride and identity.

While the Communists have succumbed, and joined the ranks of their predecessors in history books, Yiddishkeit is now more alive than ever.



שערי נגינה

The Alter Rebbe's Niggunim—3

Daled Bavos

This Niggun is commonly known as “The Alter Rebbe’s Niggun”. It is the foremost fundamental Niggun among Chossidim and considered very holy, sung only on special occasions, such as Yud Tes Kislev, Purim, and so on. In Lubavitch it was also sung during the month of Elul, when Chassidim would daven at length. It is also customary to sing it at Simchas: bris, bar mitzva, or chasuna. When sung during these times it causes a simcha. Above, however if sung at a regular occasion it can cause *kitrugim*. It is also minhag Chabad to sing the Niggun under the chupah, as was done by the Rebbe's wedding.

The niggun is most profound and contains many deep *kavanos*. There is a lengthy letter of the Friediker Rebbe in which he repeats a farbrengen of the Rebbe Rashab from on Yud Tes Kislev 5663. Towards the end of the farbrengen at 4:30 in the morning, the Rebbe Rashab turned towards Reb Nosson Notah Paharer and requested that he should lead his group of singers (see *derher* issues 1-2, 17.) in singing Daled Bavos, and before they began he said:

“The niggun corresponds to the four worlds, the four worlds correspond to the four letters in Hashem’s name and they illuminate the four levels of the nefesh (excluding yechida). Since it represents these levels, one must sing this niggun precisely for it has effect on his nefesh, when one sings it with a his’orrius pnimis, it is a fit time for teshuva and hiskashrus, and one can even ask - after davening with this niggun- for a bracha in *bonei chayai umzoini*...

The Rebbe Rashab continued to explain each of the four stanzas and their spiritual significance, and when he concluded, he asked that they sing the first three parts, and then the fourth one 10 times!

It is customary to sing a special niggun hachana before daled bavos which was sung in front of the Rebbe Rashab.

The Friediker Rebbe once said: since we don’t know all the *kavonos* to the niggun we must sing it bi’pshitus and Hashem will help...

Until the last drop of blood (cont.)

1. סה"ש תר"פ-תרפ"ז ע' 132-133.
2. דברים ו, ה. פרש"י.
3. שיחת י"ג תמוז תרצ"ב.
4. סה"ש תש"ב ע' 154.
5. See *Derher* Issue N. 20.
6. אג"ק אדמו"ר מוהרי"צ נ"ע ח"ב ע' קמ"ט.
7. (1883-1943). One of Poland’s leading Rabbis, and member of Agudas Harabonim. He was killed by the Nazis ימ"ש.
8. אג"ק אדמו"ר מוהרי"צ נ"ע חט"ז ע' קע"א.
9. סה"ש תר"פ-תרפ"ז ס"ע 157 ואילך.
10. It should be noted, that Reb Chonie was eventually released from that imprisonment, but subsequently rearrested and killed in 5698.

א ציור פון א חסיד

Reb Avrohom Pariz Part 2

About his years in Lubavitch, R’ Avrohom would later relate, “After the Rebbe said a maamar, ‘*Hob ich zich gevalgert tzvishen di tmimim heren a derher*’ (I wandered among the tmimim to hear some deep understanding). I wanted to hear what each one ‘took’ from the maamar. I took something from each one, but I heard what they wanted to hear from the maamar. From those who didn’t speak, from those who kept quiet, I got the most.” His hiskashrus to the Rebbe Rashab knew no compromise. He was tied to him with ropes of love. This is illustrated in the following story:

In the year that the communists completed the revolution, Russia was a battlefield. The civilian battle between the “Reds” and the “Whites” were at their peak, and pogroms were routine. The German army was still present in Russia and it captured parts of the country and won in other areas. Many Jews lost their lives in these battles and pogroms. The Angel of Death was ever-present and a Jewish face was reason enough for abuse.

The Rebbe Rashab minimized his trips at this time. He wrote to his son (later to be the Friediker Rebbe): “... my dear son I gave you ... that you shouldn’t think at all about coming here to visit me because the trip is frightful ... and so don’t think of coming here at all. We are thinking about how our return trip will be IYH because the way we traveled here is nearly impossible ...”

But for R’ Avrohom, any danger, as serious as it might be, was insignificant when it came to visiting the Rebbe. R’ Avrohom’s daughters relate that during those dangerous days of pogroms, their father went to Rostov to be with the Rebbe for Tishrei. After yomtov, when he wanted to return to Vitebsk, the fighting was so severe that it was life-threatening to travel. He decided that he would remain with the Rebbe until things quieted down. In those days there were no phones and the mail coaches had stopped traveling, and so his family didn’t know what had become of him. They feared the worst.

Thus, R’ Avrohom remained with the Rebbe for a year and a half while his family had no idea whether he was alive or not. After things quieted down and the danger had passed, R’ Avrohom returned home. He feared entering his house suddenly lest it harm his family and so he went to a neighbor and asked him to prepare his family to meet him.

To be continued...



Q & A:

What is the Chiddush of Chassidus on Ahavas Yisroel?

The Baal Shem Tov, was orphaned from his father, R' Eliezer, at the tender age of five. The last words spoken to him by his father before his passing were: "Yisrolik, fear nothing but Hashem alone. Love every single Yid, without exception, with the full depth of your heart and with the fire of your Neshomah, no matter who he is or how he behaves."

His father's final words not only shaped the Baal Shem Tov's personal life, as is evident from the countless stories of the extents he went to help and uplift others, but indeed, served as the cornerstone of Chassidus.

In fact, not only is the Mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel explained many times over throughout Toras Hachassidus, but it is the underlying trait in the behavior of every single Chossid. How many times have we heard people saying, "You know what I admire about Chabad? It's their undivided love for every Jew from any walk of life..." or, "Everyone feels so welcomed by Chabad..."

What is the big Chiddush of Chassidus?

To "love your fellow as yourself" was not a new idea discovered three-hundred years ago. It's a Possuk in the Torah, part of our heritage for the past 3,300 years. And 1,600 years before the Baal Shem Tov was born, Rabbi Akiva stressed that this mitzvah is "A Klal Godol Batorah."

The Baal Shem Tov's revolution was not in the discovery of this universal truth, but in the depth and understanding that he revealed within this profound mitzvah. Which changed the face of Yiddishkeit for all time to come.

Love Another as Yourself?!

To actually love someone else as you love yourself is a direct contradiction of human nature. In the words of the Ramban, "The human heart cannot take upon itself to love another with the same love as one has for oneself." This led many Meforshim to explain the possuk not in the literal sense, but rather, that the mitzvah relates to practice more than emotion; instructing us to treat others favorably and seek the best for them in every way—as you would for yourself.

The above is true, Chassidus explains, only if one views another Yid as "someone else." But, in truth, "...they all have one father. It is on account of this common root in Hashem Echod that all of Klal Yisrael are called 'brothers'—in the full sense of the word; only the bodies are distinct from each other." (Tanya Perek Lamed-Beis)

The above quote points to the fact that the Torah states regarding the Yidden: "You are children of Hashem." Like children of one father, so does every Yiddishe Neshomah come from one common source, Hashem Himself, and within their Source they constitute a *singular* entity. It is on account of this common root that all Yidden are called "brothers—in the full sense of the word," literally, not figuratively.

Whom to Love

This approach changes not only the depth of the love we are capable of cultivating, but also the parameters of whom we can come to love as well.

In the Baal Shem Tov's words: "One must have total Messirus Nefesh and dedication for love of one's fellow, even towards a Yid whom one has never seen."

If the basis of love is the common source that all Neshomos share, and not the attraction to the unique qualities that we see in another, it follows then that this love can and must be applied to any person in possession of a Neshomah. For if we are looking at someone based on his achievements and level that he has worked himself up to, then yes, only a well educated, Torah observant Yid deserves your love, however, that is only looking at the body- the actual doing- but if you look at the Neshomah; which is the driving force for a person's Ahavas Hashem and he is involved in developing these feelings then for sure he deserves your love because you see the Elokus in him, the way he is one with Hashem.

The period in history into which the Baal Shem Tov was born was very bleak for the Jews of Eastern Europe.

For the simple and unlearned Yidden the situation was particularly difficult. Within Jewish communities, the Talmidei Chachamim distanced themselves from the ignorant and illiterate, in some Shuls even segregating them to an adjacent room outside of the main room.

Recognizing their despair and broken spirits, the Baal Shem Tov made it his mission to revive these precious Jews. He would travel from village to village, gather the Yidden in the markets and anywhere he could find them, and tell stories to inspire and uplift them. Although the Baal Shem Tov himself was a monumental Talmid Chacham and Mekubal, he sought to engage the simplest of people, and convey to them the message that their simple service of Hashem was as precious to Hashem as the Torah study of the scholarly and learned and perhaps even more.

The Baal Shem Tov's approach was reaching out to the simple Yidden, the Maggid came and added another aspect. Based on the fact that the love is coming because of his Neshomah, therefore, we must love even a Rosha, because the Aveiroh is only an external thing, not his real self. Nothing in the world can affect the innermost core of his Neshomah.

The Alter Rebbe went on to explain how one can be expected to love another as oneself, as explained above.

To add just one more point:

The Baal Shem Tov taught, just as Hashem's love is not reserved for a Yid's Neshomah and spiritual concerns, but also extends to his body and material needs, so too our love towards "those who are loved by our Beloved" ought to be more than a spiritual exercise. The love must express itself in genuine concern for the material needs of another. In the famous words of the Baal Shem Tov, quoted in Hayom Yom (Hei Iyar): "עס קומט אראפ א נשמה אויף דער וועלט און לעבט אפ זיבעציג אכציג יאהר, צוליב טאן א אידען א טובה בגשמיות ובפרט אין רוחניות."

פרק א' ליום	ג' פרקים ליום	מורה שיעור ללימוד הרמב"ם
הל' מכירה פ"ז	הל' נזירות פ' ו-ח	ב תמוז
פרק ח'	פ' טי-הל' ערכין וחרמין פ"א	בא תמוז
פרק ט'	פ' ב-ד	בב תמוז
פרק י'	פ' ה-ז	בג תמוז
פרק יא	פ' ח'; ספר זרעים הל' כלאים פ' א-ב	כד תמוז
פרק יב	פ' ג-ה	כה תמוז
פרק יג	פ' ו-ח	כו תמוז