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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Leb'n Mitn Reb'n*
Regards From Beis Chayeinu 1
- Feature: Sefer Torah of the Baal Shem Tov (2)* 2
- A Tziyur fun a Chossid:*
R' Mordechai Dubin 3
- Q A: Sefiras Haomer* 4



Regards From Beis Chayeinu

Lag B'omer - Paris, 5707

In the spring of 5707, the Rebbe traveled to Paris, France, to bring his mother, Rebbetzin Chana to the United States. While there, the Rebbe spent much time with Anash (most of whom had recently emigrated from the former Soviet Union), speaking, guiding, and farbrenging with them.

Interestingly, on Lag B'omer that year, the Rebbe farbrenged twice! The following is the story as it is recounted in Yemei Melech:

During the days of Sfiras Ha'omer, the Rebbe davened Mincha in a local shul in the Jewish quarter of Paris (the "Pletzel") and was asked by the members of the congregation to give a shiur afterwards. Upon hearing the Rebbe's lucid presentation, based on his wide-ranging fluency in all areas of Torah, the congregants begged the Rebbe that he remain with them for longer and farbreng. The Rebbe was reluctant to do so, explaining that the days of Sfirah are not an appropriate time for a Farbrengen, and instead promised to hold one on Lag B'omer.

Indeed, on Lag B'omer, the Rebbe conducted a Farbrengen. Speaking in a low but firm tone, the Rebbe captivated the members of the crowd, all of whom sat spellbound, listening to his every word.

With tears in his eyes, the Rebbe mentioned his father-in-law, the Frierdiker Rebbe, saying:

"All of the preceding Rabbeim lived in cities that were centers of Chassidus; the Alter Rebbe in Lyozhna, the Mittler Rebbe in Lubavitch, and so on. They all had worthy Chassidim who were men of great stature, who had deep comprehension of Chassidus. But the [Frierdiker] Rebbe had to detach himself from what his main occupation should have been, namely – Yichuda Ilo'a and Yichuda Tato'a, and instead is teaching Aleph-Beis in New York, USA!"

[It should be noted that the Rebbe made a similar statement at a Lag B'omer farbrengen three

years later in 5710 – see *Toras Menachem* Vol. 1 p. 61 and further.]

Reb Zalman Sudkavitz relates more details about this Farbrengen and the additional one the Rebbe held later on with Anash:

On the Shabbos before Lag B'omer, there was a Kiddush following davening in our shul, and Anash farbrenged together and decided that RaMash (as the Rebbe was referred to) should farbreng for us on Lag B'omer.

On the morning of Lag B'omer, I went along with Reb Shmuel Betzalel Althois to his hotel room and presented our request. The Rebbe told us that he had already arranged with the members of the shul where he regularly davened that he would join them for a Siyum Mishnayos after Mincha. If we would work out the details with them as how to go about it, he would be happy to join us for a farbrengen as well.

When we reached the shul at Mincha time, three in the afternoon, we attempted to get in (the shul was located on the second floor of the building) but there were crowds of people standing outside and blocking our way. "You haven't heard?" they told us excitedly, "The Ga'on from New York is here and is conducting a Siyum Mishnayos! If you wish to see him, you must also stand in line."

With no other choice, I climbed in through the window on the other side of the building and entered the shul. The crowd was already washing their hands for a festive meal, and the Rebbe was still in middle of Shmoneh Esrei. When I asked one of the members why RaMash was still in middle of davening, he answered, "When RaMash started to join us for davening here (before the war), he did so on condition that we wouldn't wait for him to finish Shmoneh Esrei, because it takes him a long time to daven".

When the Rebbe sat down to speak, he spoke about the conclusion of Mesichta Uktzin, and tied it all in with the daily portion of Chitas. When the Rebbe finished his words and the crowd began saying Le'chaim, I approached the Rebbe and asked him if he would come with us now to farbreng with Anash, and he agreed. We left the shul together, and joined Reb Shmuel Betzalel outside who flagged down a cab to bring us to the Primo Hotel.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe brought us news from Beis Chayeinu and discussed miracle stories that had recently occurred with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

מזל טוב!

לזכות ידידינו מראשי המערכת של גיליון זה מיום היווסדו הת' הנעלה יעקב קאפעל שיחי' חייטאן

לרגל בואו בקישרי השידוכין עב"ג תחי' ביום כ"א אייר ה'תשע"ג

לזכות הת' רפאל דובער שי' גורביץ וב"ג תחי' לרגל בואם בקשרי השידוכין

ביום כ' אייר
ע"י חבריו שי'

The Miraculous Sefer Torah of the Baal Shem Tov (2)

A LETTER BY THE FRIERDIKER REBBE IN CONNECTION WITH THE SEFER TORAH OF MOSHIACH*

When the town's people heard what the Baal Shem Tov said, they immediately decided to write a communal Sefer Torah, in which everyone from the community would take part.

The Baal Shem Tov told his own personal sofer, the tzadik Reb Tzvi, to write two of the yerios.

As soon as the Sefer Torah's writing was begun, the many sick people of the town began to get better. And this Sefer Torah was named "The Miraculous Sefer Torah".

My father, the Rebbe, davened mincha, hurried to the mikvah, and from there went to the Tziyon of the Baal Shem Tov, where he stayed until quite late.

When he came back to daven maariv, while still fasting, [it's not clear if this is a horoah lorabim or not, since I once heard from the [Frierdiker] Rebbe that before going to a tziyon one does not eat, but does drink. Perhaps not every time that one goes to a tziyon is it the same – the Rebbe], he told Reb Binyomin Berlin to inquire by Reb Tuvia Leib and the other elders of the shul how much is the cost for the repairs to the shul. When Reb

Binyamin asked them, they told him that there are two options: Either to do a simple, more basic level of repairs, and that would cost about 300 silver rubles. Or to do a much nicer and stronger job, but that would cost about 450 silver rubles.

My father, the Rebbe, instructed Reb Binyomin to tell the elders the following: "This man meaning the Rebbe - is a businessman from the city of Arsha, - my father the Rebbe would pay the business tax, Gilde in Russian, over there. - He would like to donate the entire sum of money needed for the best renovation possible. However, this is on condition that tomorrow, Monday, there will be a minyan over here, in which they'll lein from the Miraculous Sefer Torah, and he - meaning the Rebbe - will get an aliyah, and gelilah.

In addition, there are certain other conditions which would have to be met: 1) the minyan must be early in the morning. 2) Only the elders may take part in the minyan. 3) A kohen and levi must be from those getting an aliyah. 4) For the first three days afterwards no-one else may find out what happened.

Reb Tuvia and the elders happily agreed to the conditions.

My father, the Rebbe, gave them 200 silver rubles as a down payment, and Reb Binyamin wrote a receipt in his own, Reb Binyamin's, name, with an address in Vitebsk, at the home of Reb Meir Mordechai Tzernin.

My father, the Rebbe, then went to his hotel room, where he broke his fast with a cup of hot water and some bread he had brought with. Afterwards he went back to the shul, had mead and parter brought for reb tuviah and the elders, and they sat together till quite late that night.

My father returned to the hotel to rest a bit, and while it was still dark he got up, and went to the mikvah. Over there he met some of the elders, and they went together to the shul, and prepared themselves for davening.

After davening my father went once more to the Baal Shem Tov's Tziyon, and from there went directly to the train station, to continue on his journey.

*Igros Kodesh, Vol. 6 page 280

Niggun Hishtapchus Hanefesh of R' Menachem Mendel of Horodok

R' Menachem Mendel of Horodok, author of "Pri Ha'aretz", was a chossid of the Baal Shem Tov and later was among the first and most devoted Chassidim of the Maggid (The Maggid sent him to Vitebsk for the purpose of spreading chassidus and, while there, he was the one who advised the Alter Rebbe to travel to the Maggid in Mezeritch).

After the histalkus of the Maggid he began travelling to the Alter Rebbe and displayed the true bittul of a chossid to his Rebbe. In turn, the Alter Rebbe, before becoming Rebbe, had many talmidim and would travel together with them to R' Mendele to hear chassidus from him (this was after the Alter Rebbe founded Chassidus Chabad in "תק"ל).

It is therefore no wonder that chassidei chabad over the generations often sang the hishtapchus hanefesh niggun attributed to R Mendele. The words are:

וואלט איך האבען גילדענע פליגלען וואלט איך צו דיר געפליען -
 וואלט איך האבן גילדענע רעדער וואלט איך צו דיר געפאהרן -
 וואלט איך האבן פערד און זאטעל וואלט איך צו דיר געריטען -
 וואלט איך האבן טינט און פעדער וואלט איך צו דיר געשריבען -
 וואלט איך האבן א גילדענעם פינגערל וואלט איך צו דיר געגעבען -

"If I would possess wings of gold, I would fly to you
 "If I would possess wheels of gold, I would travel to you
 "If I would possess a horse and buggy, I would ride to you





R' Mordechai Dubin (2)

“You do not merely possess goodness and kindness; rather you are the very embodiment of goodness and kindness”. These were the words the Frierdiker Rebbe used to address his faithful chossid, R' Mordechai Dubin, upon thanking him for his efforts in obtaining his release from prison in Russia.

The Release of the Frierdiker Rebbe

R' Mordechai played an important role in obtaining the release of the Frierdiker Rebbe from soviet prison in the summer of 5687. To properly understand the power of his influence we must first explain the political situation at the time: Russia sought commercial relations with other countries and because Latvia was interested, there began discussions between the two countries. When the issue came before the Latvian parliament, forty nine out of a hundred members supported the contract while forty nine opposed the idea. The success of the deal now depended on the support of the two representatives of Agudas Yisrael - R' Mordechai Dubin and Reuven Wittenberg. Ironically, the great and mighty country of Russia now desperately required the support of two Jews.....

At that time the Frierdiker Rebbe's imprisonment became known to R' Mordechai and he realized that because the Russian government relied so heavily on him, he automatically wielded great influential power. He immediately travelled to Russia where he was received by the Latvian ambassador there, who arranged for him a large reception. Present at the recep-

tion, were precisely the people through which it would be possible for R' Mordechai to apply pressure on the GPU (the Russian Police). This was not an easy task at all, for the Yevsektzia (the organization responsible for the Frierdiker Rebbe's imprisonment) in Leningrad were pressuring them not to release the Rebbe. R' Mordechai's tireless efforts, together with additional international pressure, bore fruit and the Frierdiker Rebbe's life was saved.

Interestingly enough, despite R' Mordechai's family being of Chassidic background, his direct ties with the Frierdiker Rebbe began only at this point. He first met the Rebbe in Malachovke, near Moscow.

Immigration to Riga

Immediately following the miraculous liberation, R' Mordechai immediately renewed his efforts on behalf of the Frierdiker Rebbe, this time to procure visas to leave Russia. After his success in obtaining the precious papers, he traveled to meet the Rebbe, who had just arrived in Malachovke after visiting the Ohel of the Rebbe Rasha"b in Rostov. Thinking the Frierdiker Rebbe would leave Russia as soon as possible, he was surprised when the Rebbe

told him "I am not afraid. We will travel after the month of Tishrei". R' Mordechai feared that until then the authorities who issued the visas might regret their decision. When he related his worries to the Rebbe, he responded "everything will be alright; they will not repeal the visas". Time passed and right before the date of departure the Frierdiker announced that he refuses to leave without his library. More delays, more worries.....but the end is known: the day after simchas torah, the Rebbe left Russia with his family and seforim.

Upon leaving Russia, the Frierdiker Rebbe temporarily settled in Riga. R' Mordechai developed a very close relationship with the Rebbe, acting on his behalf in both official and secret matters and in the coming years, travelled to Russia many times in an effort to help the plight of the Russian Jewry. In the summer of 5689, R' Mordechai joined the Frierdiker Rebbe on his journey to America and met with President Hoover and further discussed this matter with him.

to be continued...

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“If I would possess ink and a feather, I would write to you

“If I would possess a golden finger, I would give it to you”

“The words of the niggun are based on a Yiddish poem and the tune expresses an outpouring of the soul which represents the love and yearning yidden feel towards Hashem (Sefer Haniggunim – Niggun 25).” The niggun can be heard on “heichal negginah” tape 4 song 1.

There are two niggunei chabad which are both very similar to the Niggun Hishtapchus Hanefesh: Niggun Kol Dodi attributed to the Alter Rebbe and the niggun “דער אויבעשטער וועט געבן געזונט און לעבן” ... which is attributed to the talmidim of R' Mendele.

The reason for this is as follows:

As it is known, in the year תקל”ל R' Mendele decided to travel to Eretz Yisrael and he was accompanied by three hundred of his talmidim. The Alter Rebbe greatly desired to go with him but halfway into the journey his Chassidim prevailed upon him not to abandon them and he returned to Liozna. Many of R' Mendele's talmidim remained as well and their longing for their Rebbe grew from day to day.

As mentioned earlier, the Alter Rebbe considered himself as being a chossid of R' Mendele and he greatly desired to be with him. For two weeks the Alter Rebbe closed himself in his room caught up in deep meditation and tremendous yearning for his Rebbe.

R' Zalman Leib Estulin once recounted a certain farbrengen in Moscow that took place during the period subsequent to the Frierdiker Rebbe leaving Russia, R' Yeshaya Zusya Shubov, the chassidische rav of Moscow, stood up and spoke about how following R' Mendele's departure to Eretz Yisrael, the Alter Rebbe would often sing R' Mendele's Niggun Hishtapchus and then would continue the niggun with the words “Kol Dodi”. Over the years the Alter Rebbe continued to sing the niggun Kol Dodi and apparently new pieces were added on by him.

The second niggun mentioned earlier was sung by R' Mendele's talmidim who stayed behind in Russia, amidst a deep longing to their Rebbe. It seems that both the Alter Rebbe and R' Mendele's talmidim based these niggunim on R' Mendele's Niggun Hishtapchus.

One hundred and fifty years later, after the Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia, this was often sung by the Russian Chassidim, expressing their desire and hope to once again see their Rebbe.



What lessons can we learn from the days of Sefirah?

In the following letter, the Rebbe discusses some ideas that one can learn from days between Pesach and Shavuos – Sefirah. The Rebbe also writes about the unique Lubavitch approach on the importance of quality over quantity.

By the Grace of G d
Rosh Chodesh Iyar, 5731 [April 26, 1971]
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To All Participants in the "Evening with Lubavitch" in Philadelphia, Pa.

G d bless you —

Greeting and Blessing:

I am pleased to extend greetings and prayerful wishes to all participants in the Evening with Lubavitch, and particularly to the honored guests.

Inasmuch as the event is taking place in the days of Sefira ("Counting of the Omer") it is well to reflect on the significance of this Mitzvo.

At first glance, the counting of days seems to be of no consequence, since the flow of time is beyond man's control. Yet, it is obviously very significant in that it lends emphasis to the period connecting the two most important events in Jewish history: Pesach — the liberation from Egyptian bondage, marking the birth of the Jewish people; and Shevuos — the Receiving of the Torah at Sinai, where the Jewish people became a truly free and mature nation.

Like all things with Torah, the Counting of the Omer has many aspects. To one them I will address myself here.

Generally, the counting of things by the unit, rather than by approximation of the total, indicates the importance of the thing. The fact that each day, day after day for forty-nine days, a Brocho is said before the counting further emphasizes the importance of this thing — in this case the value of time. The Brocho we make expresses not only our gratitude to G d forgiving us the Mitzvo of Sefira, but also our gratitude for each day which He gives us. We must learn to appreciate the precious gift of each day by making the proper use of it. The tasks we have to accomplish today cannot be postponed for tomorrow, since a day gone by is irretrievable.

Secondly, while it is true that the flow of time is beyond our control, since we can neither slow it or quicken it, expand it nor shrink it; yet, in a way we can directly affect time by the content with which we fill each day of our life. When a person makes a far-reaching discovery, or reaches an important resolution, he can in effect put "ages" into minutes. On the other hand, time allowed to go by without proper content, has no reality at all, however long it may last.

Correspondingly, the Torah tells us that man has been given unlimited powers not only in regard to shaping his own destiny, but also the destiny of the world in which he lives. Just as in the case of time, the real length of it is not measured in terms of quan-

tity but in terms of quality, so also in regard to a man's efforts. Every good effort can further be expanded by the vitality and enthusiasm which he puts into it. Indeed, the period of seven weeks connecting the above mentioned two greatest historic events in Jewish life, illustrates the Torah concept of time and effort as indicated above. In the course of only seven weeks, a people which has been enslaved for 210 years to most depraved taskmasters, were transformed into a "Kingdom of Priests and Holy Nation," who witnessed the Divine Revelation at Sinai and received the Torah and Mitzvoth from G d Himself.

"Lubavitch" teaches and exemplifies the principle of the predominance of form over matter, of the soul over the body. It is not the quantity — in terms of physical capacity and length of time — that is the essential factor, but it is the quality of the effort and the infinite capacity of the soul that determine the results.

I trust that the spirit of Lubavitch will stimulate each and all of the participants to ever greater accomplishments in all areas of Jewish life, both personal and communal.

With blessing for Hatzlocho,

a Chassidisher
DERHER

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