



Like an only Child

As we approach Gimmel Tammuz we bring the following words spoken by the Rebbe's Choizer, Reb Yoel Kahn, at the Kinnus Hatmimim Ha'olami, 5771, with which he reminds today's Bochorim of the privilege of being the Rebbe's Chassidim, and encourages them to live up to the faith he has in us, especially in our present trying times.

"I HAVE ALREADY SIGNED IT..."

I would like to begin with a story. I have told this story many times before and I'm certain that many of the Bochorim remember hearing it in the past, but I'll repeat it nonetheless.

In the later years, when the Rebbe no longer held *Yechidus* with individual people (rather only dollars), a group of *Chassanim* once passed by the Rebbe to receive his *Brocha* before their respective weddings. To each of them, the Rebbe handed a dollar and offered the usual

"Brocha V'hatzlocha," but then suddenly, the Rebbe singled out one particular *Chosson* and asked him, "Did you receive my letter in honor of your wedding? I have already signed it."

One of the bystanders observing the scene took note of this strange incident and, unable to contain his curiosity, was determined to reach the bottom of the story. Why did the Rebbe single out that *Chosson* specifically, more so than the others in the group?

Approaching the *Chosson*, he asked if he knew the reason behind the Rebbe's

behavior, to which the *Chosson* replied with a story.

A few weeks earlier, a number of *Bochorim* had sat together in conversation, discussing the letters the Rebbe would send to each of *Anash* in honor of their *Simchos*. Generally speaking, each of the letters bore the same content – a few sentences of blessings for the occasion – and only the name of the person to whom the letter was addressed and the date varied between letters. Finally, at the end of each letter, the Rebbe would personally place his holy signature.

Consequently, there were different opinions among the *Bochorim* as to what extent the Rebbe actually involved himself in each particular letter.

Some *Bochorim* expressed the opinion that by placing his holy signature on the paper, the Rebbe undoubtedly involved himself personally in each letter.

[Just think for a moment about any decent and honest person who gives his word to someone else (albeit by way of writing and signing a letter); if he is a sincere person, he obviously means the words he is saying, and the more sincere the person is, the more meaningful and genuine his words will be. Thus, when we are talking about the Rebbe, we can say



with certainty that he genuinely bestows his blessing with each and every letter he sends out.]

However, since the same *Brocha* is needed for each *Chosson*, he therefore sends a near identical letter, which in no way diminishes the Rebbe's personalized attention within the letter.

Other *Bochurim* suggested that since each letter's content was near identical, it was a stretch to believe that the Rebbe actually conveyed a *Brocha* from the depth of his *Neshoma* with each letter. Nevertheless, they believed that at least some thought and a personal *Brocha* was put into each letter.

One *Bochur* was skeptical and argued with both opinions. He believed that the Rebbe merely signed the pile of letters on his desk without giving them much

thought at all, after which the *Mazkirim* would mail them out. "Who says that the Rebbe even sees which name is written at the top of the letter?" he had contended.

"I was the one who foolishly suggested the third view," the *Chosson* said, concluded his tale. "It seems that the Rebbe went out of his way to single me out and reassure me that he had personally signed the letter."

I personally heard this account from that curious bystander who took the initiative in finding out the details of the story.

Years later, after Gimmel Tammuz, I repeated this story at a *Farbrengen*, adding that I had heard it from someone with a trustworthy reputation, and I could therefore be certain of the story's authenticity.

After the *Farbrengen*, a *Yungerman* approached me.

"You say that you know the story is accurate because you heard it from a trustworthy individual? Let me tell you, that foolish *Chosson* was me! Needless to say, today I regret ever having entertained such foolishness in the first place."

There are a number of interesting points to discuss from this story.

Firstly, we can be certain the first group of *Bochurim* had the right idea; the Rebbe obviously invests his entire being into each *Brocha* he conveys.

But there is a deeper idea that we discern from the story – just how precious every *Bochur* is to the Rebbe. That foolish *Chosson* must have been



האהבה התקועה ומסותרת בלבם... למסור נפשו לה'... והוא כאשר ישים אל לבו מ"ש הכתו' כמים הפנים לפנים..."

After presenting various methods in the preceding Perokim of how one can arouse a true *ahava* to the *Aibershter*, the Alter Rebbe begins this *Perek* with what he refers to as the "simple and straightforward path" to arousing an *ahava* that will invigorate one's *Neshoma*, to the extent that one will be prepared to even give his life away for Hashem. This is achieved through contemplating the meaning of "כמים הפנים לפנים" - the love that Hashem has for us, which will influence a similar feeling from the *Yid* in return.

We must think about the care and concern that the Rebbe has for us, even today. When one goes to the Ohel (or faxes a letter to the Rebbe), it should not be perceived merely as a 'ceremonial performance', doing something just because this is what Chassidim do.

Rather, pause for a moment and give it some thought; you are now going in to the Rebbe, to the one about whom we are told "אנכי עומד בין ה' ובניכם", the one who connects us with the *Aibershter*. And as we pointed out earlier, not only is he there for *Klal Yisroel* as a whole, but he also stands there for each and every one of us individually.

The Rebbe personally takes interest in the wellbeing of all his Chassidim. When someone comes to the Ohel and requests the Rebbe's *brocha* for something that is troubling him, the Rebbe is concerned about it, and he does all that is in his ability to help and bring about salvation. And on the other hand, when one returns to the Ohel later to notify that all is well, the Rebbe is very pleased.

A CHILD'S CRY

The Frieddiker Rebbe writes in a letter: "א יתום קלאגט, א קינד וויינט" (roughly translated: an orphan grieves; a child cries).

An orphan unfortunately has no one to turn to; hence, left with no other alternative, he grieves about his situation.

such a *Shoite* to actually believe that the Rebbe doesn't even read the letters he is signing. Nevertheless, the Rebbe went out of his way to clearly demonstrate to him that even *he* deserves and receives the Rebbe's individual attention, giving him the "ladder" to climb up and out of his foolishness.

LIKE AN ONLY-CHILD

This idea is rooted in the Baal Shem Tov's famous saying that every *Yid* is as dear to the *Aibershter* like an only child born to parents in old age.

We may wonder how this is actually possible. After all, you can't call every *Yid* an only child when there are millions of *Yidden*. How can you consider each one to be an only child, when in reality they are not the only one?

The point is (and without delving too deeply into it): since Hashem is unlimited, He is of infinite capacity to love each and every *Yid* boundlessly, as if each individual were indeed an only child.

We, as mere mortals, cannot negotiate such a concept: when we are entirely invested in one thing, we are incapable of

involving ourselves (to the same extent) in another thing. Hashem on the other hand, is obviously not limited by any restrictions, and is able to love every single *Yid* as though he were an only child.

In a similar vein, the *Tzaddik* about which we are told "אנכי עומד בין ה' ובניכם", the one who serves us as a *רועה נאמן*, has the ability to devote himself entirely to every *Yid*, and especially to those who consider themselves his Chassidim.

THE REBBE'S CARE CONTINUES

In light of this story it is important for us to realize, understand and appreciate that, in this regard, nothing has changed since Gimmel Tammuz. Every one of us must know that there is someone who thinks about us, cares for us, and is concerned for our wellbeing.

We are always talking about strengthening our *Hiskashrus* to the Rebbe; one way to do so is to contemplate the Rebbe's deep connection to each of us.

In Tanya (*Perek Mem-Vov*) the Alter Rebbe writes:

"יש דרך ישר לפני איש... לעורר ולהאיר אור



But a child who has a father doesn't grieve hopelessly – he cries to his father for help.

It cannot be emphasized enough; each of us must understand that we have a father. The Rebbe is our father and is concerned about each of us personally. True, the Rebbe is involved with and helps everyone in the world, and works towards bringing Moshiach, ensuring a *Dira B'tachtonim*, and so on and so forth, but at the same time, he is concerned about each of us individually and attends to us as a father would to his child, and he believes in our capabilities that we will not let him down.

At the same time, this obligates us to constantly stay true to our mission. We are not free to roam around as we see fit; we have a job to fulfill and we are trusted to carry it through.

PRECIOUS TREASURES AT OUR DISPOSAL

One more point:

In the famous “*Hemshech Bosi L'gani*” from the Frierdiker Rebbe, a *moshul* is brought of a king who possesses treasures full of diamonds and precious stones. Some of these stones will never be touched, even in the direst of circumstances. Yet all of them, in one way or another, serve a purpose of some sort. For example, the pearls and diamonds placed in the king's crown, although they would never be removed and used for any other purpose, nevertheless, they enhance the crown's beauty and symbolize the majesty of his kingdom.

But then there is that special treasure that is kept in hiding. Not only is it not used to serve any specific purpose, it is never even seen by anyone. Yet, at a time of war, when the king is in need to be victorious, he will freely expend even these most precious treasures (“*bizbuz ha'otzros*”) in order to win the war.

The war in our instance is “מלחמת בית”

“דוד” - the struggle to bring the *Geulah*. And for us to win the war, the deepest and loftiest parts of Torah have been given so freely to us.

None of our preceding Rabbeim printed so much Chassidus as our Rebbe did, availing it to the world at large. The Rebbe himself, in his own *Ma'amorim* and *Sichos*, brought the deepest concepts in Chassidus to unprecedented levels of clarity and accessibility. And all of this was given to us so that we will be capable of keeping up the fight on *Galus* and finishing off these last moments.

It is in our hands. We know that the final Didan Notzach is about to happen, it's up to us to make it happen even quicker. By doing our part, by delving into the words of Chassidus the Rebbe gave us, and of course, by spreading them out to the “*chutzah*”, we will hasten the *Geulah* and the Rebbe will take us out of *Galus*, *Teikef Umiyad Mammosh!* ■

As mentioned, the Rebbe's care and concern for each and every Chossid was apparent throughout the years.

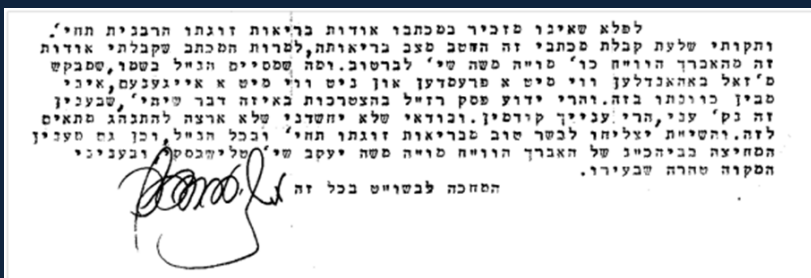
In the following letter, the Rebbe debunks an ill-advised theory maintained by some Chassidim that the Rebbe (or the Rabbeim in general) would faster give a Brocha and perform a miraculous salvation for an “outsider” (i.e. not a Lubavitcher Chossid), than with a Chossid:

I was surprised that you don't mention anything in your letter about the health of your wife שתי. I hope that by the time you receive this letter, her situation will have already improved, despite the letter I received from Rav Moshe Levertov in this regard.

Regarding that which he writes in your name, that “This case should be handled as we would with an ‘outsider’ as opposed to the way we would deal with ‘one of our own’; I fail to understand the meaning of this.

There is a well-known ruling by *Chazal* with regard to [the way we treat] the needs of another individual: “עניי” “עירך קודמין”—the poor (i.e. needy) of your own city take precedence [to receive your assistance]. You certainly would not suspect me of being unwilling to act in accordance with this...

ענייך קודמין



(From a letter to Reb Sholom Posner, 5714)