

# A Chassidisher Purim

With the onset of the month of Adar Beis, we present several Purim-related Chassidisher Mayses that took place with our Rebbeim.

## THE MASTER STORYTELLER

ALTER REBBE  
AND MITELER REBBE

The Mitteler Rebbe once traveled on a shlichus of his father - the Alter Rebbe - around Purim time. Unable to return home in time, he had to spend Purim in the town of Orsha.

In the Shul where he went to hear the Megillah - as well as in the rest of that city - there was a custom that followed the reading of the Megillah: They would pass around a plate for people to put in money for the Baal Koreh. When the plate came by the Mitteler Rebbe he put in a handsome amount of 5 rubles, while all of the remaining sum combined didn't even add up to a single ruble!

The Baal Koreh came over and said that he didn't want all that money, "I don't deserve it" he claimed.

However, the Mitteler Rebbe was quite persistent in his donation, and insisted that he accept the money, replying in return: "You read such a beautiful story, the likes of which I've never heard before!"

When the Mashpia Reb Groinem related this story, he explained that the Mit-

teler Rebbe heard the Megillah from the Alter Rebbe every year, who would read it as a lofty spiritual experience. But when he heard it from this Baal Koreh, he heard it as a simple story. To him - that was truly a story he had never heard before...

## A CHILD'S QUESTION

TZEMACH TZEDEK

Ahead of Purim, the Tzemach Tzedek - then a young boy of five or six years old - was eagerly learning the story of the Megillah in Cheder, as most children do.

In the days before Purim, the Alter Rebbe asked him if he had learned the Megillah, to which he excitedly replied that he had indeed done so.

"Did you understand it?" asked his grandfather. "No, I actually didn't," replied the young child, as he continued to ask a question that was then weighing on his mind: "I don't understand why Haman had to build the gallows so tall - fifty *amos*! Mordechai certainly wasn't that tall?!" The Alter Rebbe was silent.

A few days later, on Purim, he delivered a profound and deep Maamor explaining this very concept that had bothered his young grandson, the Tzemach Tzedek.

The concept of the Maamor - in short - is that the fifty *Amos* represent the "Shaar Nun" (a very lofty level in Kedusha) to which Haman raised himself up to, and it was indeed from that very place that he had his downfall.

## MORDECHAI'S EVERLASTING LESSON

REBBE MAHARASH, REBBE RASHAB AND FRIERDIKER REBBE

The Frierdiker Rebbe was once on his way to carry out a mission for his father. Before he left, the Rebbe Rashab asked him to exert himself to do a favor for a certain Chossid. This was a businessman who was in distress and needed assistance.

Upon his return, he reported to his father that he had fulfilled his mission, and that he had indeed helped that Chossid as well.

"You are making a mistake", his father replied. "The favor you did was truly for **yourself**, not for him. Hashem did him a favor by arranging an appropriate Shliach to come to his aide".

He then proceeded to tell him a story:

"In 5648, the local Russian populace was very often incited against their Jewish neighbors. Hateful enemies would



spew poison at these believing and unsuspecting peasants, convincing them that the Jews were the source of all their problems. Sadly, this usually resulted in rampaging mobs and widespread pillaging of businesses and homes.

“The Rebbe Maharash, my saintly father, had many connections in S. Petersburg and he set out to see what he could do to help the situation. After a short few days spent there, he had found ways to put a stop to these pogroms, but it had not yet become official. In order to bring it to that status, he was told to prepare a distinguished delegation which should include prominent Maskilim – members of the ‘Enlightenment Movement’.

“Upon his return, he called together a meeting to prepare the necessary delegation. He explained the situation and finished by suggesting that the Maskilim, too, arrange a group who would partake in this endeavor.

“This came as a great surprise for all those present, for it was common knowledge that the Rebbe Maharash did not care much for the opinion of such individuals, to say the least.

“In fact, one of those people present, incensed by the ‘audacity’ of the Rebbe’s request, jumped up and proclaimed, “We are not blocks of wood to be moved around freely like pawns. If you value our opinion and assistance – do so on a consistent basis; if not – we can be dismissed now as well!”

“Unnerved, my father replied: In the Megillah it says the grim news that Mordechai relayed to Esther: “If you remain silent... help will come from elsewhere... but you and your father’s house will perish”. In other words, the Yidden will be saved in any event. If you choose not to participate – salvation will come from

elsewhere, but then “you and your father’s house will perish”; namely, you will have missed your opportunity.

Upon concluding this anecdote, the Rebbe Rashab turned to his son and said, “One should always keep in mind that when he does a good deed he is in fact doing a favor to himself. One has to firmly believe that help will come; if not through him, it will be from elsewhere, but then he will only stand to lose out”.

The Rebbe Rashab then continued expounding this idea to his son, based on the Kabbalah’s interpretation of the above-quoted words from the Megillah.

## A DARING SHLICHUS THE REBBE

*At the Farbrengen of Purim 5736, the Rebbe related the following story:*

“The Minhag Yisroel is such, that when the chance arises to bring good tidings and encouragement to another Jew who can use it – especially those whose job it is to guard Eretz Yisroel – they immediately seize the opportunity.

Accordingly, there was a request to deliver Mishloach Manos and lift the spirits of Jews who are privileged to guard Eretz Yisroel (being as they’re in places deemed necessary to have a Jew standing armed, so that he can prevent individuals there from doing anything detrimental) – by explaining to the soldiers that “Lo Yanum V’lo Yishan Shomer Yisroel” (“The Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps”), and thus they shouldn’t be afraid, as well as similar messages of Emunah and Bitachon.

I received a message that a group of Shluchim had traveled to the soldiers who are stationed in Shechem. Upon

seeing that it has recently been very hectic in Shechem, the Shluchim were accompanied by a driver along with a soldier or two.

When they were just a short distance away from Shechem, they encountered a roadblock that the Arabs had built, to stop Jewish civilians and soldiers from coming into Shechem and its surroundings. They soon realized that it was not only a blockade comprising stones, sticks and earth, but that many Arabs were standing there as well.

The driver did not want to take the risk and responsibility for the Shluchim who were bringing the Mishloach Manos, especially since their Shlichus could be done another time.

The Shluchim, however, told him in quite certain terms, that since they were given a Shlichus to give encouragement to other Jews and to enliven them with the joy of Purim, they shouldn’t pay attention to the blockade ahead of them, or, for that matter, to the people who are there “awaiting” them. Since they were going to do a good thing, nothing harmful would come out of it.

They convinced the driver and the soldiers to go on further and not to be afraid. The driver went further, breaking through the roadblock. The Arabs tried throwing stones, and one of the accompanying soldiers had to fire a few shots in the air to scare them off.

When they arrived at the army base, they had a very lively Purim gathering. They returned to Yerushalayim unharmed and in good spirits. Indeed, in Yerushalayim the Purim celebration is just starting now, since Purim is celebrated there on the fifteenth of Adar...” ■

1. Sefer Hasichos 5705, pg. 71.