



# א חסיד'ישער דערהער...

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## The (Un)timely Maamor

*The Frieddiker Rebbe related, and the Rebbe quoted it numerous times, that on Rosh Hashanah the Tzemach Tzedek performed "Sedorim in Petersburg" (i.e. he used his superhuman powers to arrange that the government positions in Petersburg would be only those best for the welfare of the Jewish people). We do not attempt or claim to have any comprehension of the things that the Rebbe does, but at times it is almost apparent that the Rebbe was indeed orchestrating events here on earth from a higher source, as in the following episode...*

### 29 Nissan - Erev Rosh Chodesh Iyar, 5735

During the afternoon before taking leave for the Ohel, the Rebbe notified the Mazkirim that a Farbrengen was to take place in the evening following Maariv, and that this was to remain a secret exclusively to them. In addition, they were instructed to prepare bread for a meal and some empty bottles. Upon his return from the Ohel, the Rebbe was noticed to have been wearing a silk Kapotte (rarely worn on weekdays in those years).

All the while, an official announcement of the Farbrengen still had not been made until the conclusion of Maariv at 8:35. Only then was the public notified of the surprise Farbrengen to be held fifteen minutes later, at 8:50.

At exactly 8:50 p.m. the Rebbe entered the Shul and washed hands for bread, and began the Farbrengen by instructing the Chassidim to sing "Mimitzrayim" and "Ana Avda". Then the Rebbe prepared himself to recite the Maamor while the Chassidim sang the Niggun Hachona. But then, a most puzzling thing occurred; the Rebbe interrupted in the midst of the song and began with the *Dibur Hamaschil* of the Maamor, "Uveroshei Chodsheichem..." The startled members of the crowd were totally unprepared for the sudden outburst and everyone immediately stood up on their feet, as is customary. (When listening to the recording of the Farbrengen on tape, one can hear the noise of the benches and tables being rapidly moved about...) It seemed that the Rebbe was desperate to begin the

יש מעלה מיוחדת אצל התלמידים - שהם מקבלים את החי' יחידה של הרבי, ולכן, נתחייבו גם לפרוע בהחי' יחידה שלהם. ואף שאי אפשר לדמות הפרעון בהחי' יחידה שלהם לחי' יחידה של כ"ק אדמו"ר, ה"ז ע"ד המבואר בדא"ח בענין "בכל מאדך", שעם היותו "מאד שלך", ממשיכים עי"ז "מאד" האמיתי, בלי גבול בעצם. פרעון החוב בהחי' יחידה מתבטא בתנועה של יציאה מההגבלות - הן ההגבלות שלו ("ארויסגיין פון די אייגענע הגבלות"), והן (ועאכ"כ) ההגבלות דעניני העולם. (משיחת ליל ב' אייר תש"י)

\* "וואס איז די התפעלות אז תפארת שבתפארת מאכט גוט" (היום יום ב' אייר)

Maamor before the clock reached nine in the evening...

The Maamor itself is largely dedicated to expound upon Hashem's choosing the Yidden as His people, and the supernatural methods with which He handles them.

It should be noted that on that same night at 9:00 p.m., the President of the United States, Gerald Ford, was scheduled to address the nation on various issues regarding Foreign Policy. Amongst the many subjects he discussed were the US relationship with the USSR and the peace talks between Egypt and Israel in the Middle-East. Mysteriously, there were many technical failures in the transmitting of his words to viewers on American television.

Who can ever know what it was that the Rebbe accomplished with this surprise Farbrengen and the rush to begin the Maamor ahead of time...

## Emor - 5744

The Rebbe began by explaining the reasons for holding a Farbrengen this week:

a) In honor of the birthday of the Rebbe Maharash, having been on Friday, Beis Iyar. The date bears extra significance this year, with the completion of 150 years since his birth in 5694.

b) This week, thousands of Jews around the world began the newly-initiated study cycle of the Rambam; what justification to hold a Farbrengen is more appropriate than that?

Continuing with the reasons why the Mivtza was launched, the Rebbe asked: These motives have existed all along; why then did we only come upon them now?

The answer: The world seems to be "asleep" and it is therefore necessary to "awaken" everyone by storming them with a new project, loudly and noisily ("mit ah ly'arent") to heighten the excitement about Torah and Mitzvos once again.

The study of Rambam is also very much in-line with the first stated motive for this Farbrengen; the Rebbe Maharash's birthday. After all, he is responsible for the statement (and notion) of "Lechatchila Aribet". The Rambam compiled his Sefer to include all the Halachos in the Torah, avoiding all the lengthy discussions and contradictions that come along with the reasoning behind them and limited the text to the final Halachic verdict only; "Lechatchila Aribet!".

### Yasher Koach to Tahalucha goes; rain or shine!

Towards the end of the Farbrengen, the Rebbe acknowledged those who participated in the Tahalucha on Acharon Shel Pesach, and joyfully so, thereby bringing the joy of Yom Tov to many others. They're deed is especially commended as it was a courageous one, due to the downpour of rain that fell upon them during their assignment, but did not stop them from carrying it out! The Possuk says, "B'veis Elokim Nehalech B'rogesh"; the word Ragash being the Roshei Teivos of Ruach (wind) Geshem (rain) Sheleg (snow). Meaning: when we must go out for a Mitzvah, we'll do it regardless of the climate in the outdoors..."

# The Picture of the Alter Rebbe

## Part 1

*The picture of the Alter Rebbe adorns the wall of many Lubavitcher homes. Where does this picture come from? In the Russia of those days, before the photograph was invented, pictures were very rare how did this portrait come to be? And the real question is: how can we be sure the picture is authentic? Part 1*

The following excerpts from the diaries of the Frierdiker Rebbe were originally printed in Hatomim Vol. 8. p. 5 [in the complete print Vol. 2 p. 757].

Not long before these diaries were written the picture had been first circulated among the general public. Arguments for and against the authenticity of the picture were printed in the Jewish newspapers of the time. Many Chassidim saw the picture as well and against this backdrop the Frierdiker Rebbe recorded the accounts from the Rabbeim and the Elder Chassidim.

*Monday, 20th of Teves, 5656*

Tonight the Chossid Reb Avraham Dov of Babroisk visited with my teacher, Rashbatz, and I and continued his stories from days of old.

Tonight he repeated what he had heard from the Chossid Reb Ahron Blinitcher about the picture of the Alter Rebbe that he had seen when he was with the Rebbe Maharash in Petersburg on a mission from the Tzemach Tzedek.

This is the story he told:

When the picture of the Alter Rebbe first arrived in the city of Babroisk there were two elderly Chassidim still alive who had known the Alter Rebbe. One of the two had lost his eyesight and he could not see the picture. He asked two questions: 1. Is the forehead of the one pictured high, broad and furrowed? 2. Is there a scratch on the nose?

Both of these identifying features are clearly seen in the picture.

The second elderly Chossid, upon seeing the picture testified that the portrait was an accurate portrayal of the holy countenance of the Alter Rebbe that he remembers so clearly.

When Reb Sholom Dovber came to visit his brother Reb Shamryahu Noach<sup>1</sup>, and the newly circulated picture of the Alter Rebbe came up in the conversation, I<sup>2</sup> repeated to them what Reb Aharon Blinitcher had told me.

*[The story as by Reb Aharon Blinitcher:]*

In the beginning of Kislev, winter of 5615, an edict arrived from the Governor of the Vitebsk region - through the police in Babinovitch<sup>3</sup> - to the Tzemach Tzedek.

The edict announced a meeting of the Executive Committee, headed by the Deputy Minister of Interior, to take place in six weeks. The meeting would discuss printing of Jewish sforim in German for Jewish children. As one of the participants in the past Conference of Rabbonim<sup>4</sup>, the Tzemach Tzedek is being invited to go to Petersburg to take part in this meeting.

The Tzemach Tzedek did not want to travel to Petersburg and furthermore he was weak and not healthy. At the time Doctor Heibenthal, the specialist, was visiting a patient in a nearby village and they called him to visit the Tzemach Tzedek.

When they showed the doctor the invitation to the meeting, he immediately wrote a certificate, that as an expert doctor, he disallowed the Tzemach Tzedek to travel until spring in light of his fragile health.

The invitation, along with a letter in Russian, was sent by special messenger to Petersburg to the chassidim Reb Tzvi Hirsh Rubashov and Reb Yisroel Chaikin. They were to deliver the letter to the Division of Religious Faiths in the Office of the Minister of Interior. The letter stated that due to health concerns the Tzemach Tzedek would not be able to attend the meeting. If they desired his opinion, and with the permission of the Government, he would send representatives in his place.

\*

*[Reb Aharon Blinitcher continues:]*

The Rebbe Maharash [then assisting his father in his work on behalf of Russian Jewry] wrote to me about the whole story and in the name of his father he requested that in the event the Government would accept the proposal to send representatives, if I would agree to be one of the two who would travel to Petersburg.

About a month later a special messenger came from Lubavitch with a short letter from the Rebbe Maharash in the name of his father [the Tzemach Tzedek] informing me that an order had been received from the Government to send representatives to the central meeting. Therefore I was to travel to Lubavitch immediately, no later than the end of the week.

When I arrived in Lubavitch I was notified that the Rebbe [the Tzemach Tzedek] would be sending his son the Maharash and myself as his representatives and he instructed us on every aspect of our mission.

\*

One of the Committee members, the assistant to the Deputy Minister of Interior, was a man, roughly thirty years old. He gave much respect to the Rebbe Maharash and one could see that the Maharash interested him greatly.

Between the fourth and fifth meetings there was a five-day break. When the fourth meeting finished, the assistant approached the Maharash and asked to make an appointment to meet him in his hotel.

The assistant came to the meeting and sat with the Rebbe Maharash for about two hours, without my knowing the topic of discussion.

On the second day, the Rebbe Maharash told me that the assistant had requested to draw a portrait of him. The assistant was a talented artist, a talent that came from his grandfather who had been a collector of portraits and had left a large collection of portraits behind after his death.

Among the portraits there is a portrait of a Jew, one of the great Rabbanim who had been accused of rebellion. This grandfather had been the head investigator of the Gendarmes and had ordered a portrait made of the accused and, at the close of the case, had taken the picture for his collection. This picture was now in the assistant's family reserves.

The Rebbe Maharash had asked for permission to visit the safe-boxes to see the portrait and the assistant had said he would meet them on Wednesday for that was his day off from work.

On Wednesday, the Rebbe Maharash and I traveled to the collection to see the picture of the Rav. How surprised we were to see the countenance of an Ish Elokim (a G-dly man), underneath which states clearly the name of the Alter Rebbe and his father's name from the city of Liozna!

The date of the painting was 1798 in their dates which corresponds to 5659 in our calendar, the time when the Alter Rebbe sat in jail in Petropavilski.

\*

When I retold this story, finished Reb Avraham Dov, to Reb Sholom Dovber and his brother Reb Shamryahu Noach, Reb Shalom Ber said that he too had heard this story from Reb Aharon Blinitcher.

1. Sons of the Maharil of Kopust, Reb S.D. lived in Retzitza and Reb S.N. lived in Babroisk.

2. Reb Avraham Dov

3. Lubavitch did not have a police station of its own.

4. See The Tzemach Tzedek and T'nuas Hahaskala, Kehot



## שערי ציון

Yifrach B'Yomov

Of all the many Niggunim composed yearly in honor of Yud Aleph Nissan, some linger in the hearts and minds of Chassidim until today, having left an impression as "out of the ordinary". Among them we may count the Niggun of "Shuvah", composed in honor of Yud Aleph Nissan 5751, constantly sung in the Rebbe's presence until Chof Zayin Adar, 5752. Any Chossid from that period will confirm how this Niggun was uniquely cherished by the Rebbe (and consequently, by the Bochorim and Anash), something displayed quite evidently in the way he encouraged the singing of it.

Another very treasured Niggun dear to all Chassidim is "Yifrach B'Yomov Tzaddik" from the year 5733. Originally an old Vizhenitzer tune, the words from Tehillim, Kapitel Ayin Beis, were fit to it by Rabbi S. Cunin of California in honor of the Rebbe's seventy-first birthday. The Pesukim talk of the Tzaddik sprouting out and gaining rule over the world and crushing his enemies, and as the commentators explain, they speak of Moshiach himself.

With the appropriate words and a beautiful lively tune, the new Niggun instantly captured the souls of the Chassidim. But it would take time until the Niggun would be officially approved by the Rebbe.

At the Farbrengen on Yud Aleph Nissan the Niggun was presented, but the Rebbe made no remark at all. As the custom was in those years, Reb Yoel Kahan began this Niggun each week at the Rebbe's Shabbos Farbrengens after the Rebbe made Kiddush, but still the Rebbe seemed to ignore the new Niggun. At last, one week, Reb Yoel assumed that the Rebbe does not appreciate the singing of the new Niggun and resolved that he would discontinue doing so, replacing it with a different Niggun. Surprisingly, in the middle of the Farbrengen the Rebbe asked, "Why has the usual Niggun been omitted? Let it be sung now..." and from that point onward, the Rebbe encouraged the singing of "Yifrach" immensely.

The following year, the Chassidim found it difficult to part with this precious Niggun, so instead of composing a new one, the words from the Possuk "Koloh She'eiri" were added to the wordless stanza in honor of Yud Aleph Nissan, 5734.

### Reb Bentzion Shenker's Niggun

Another interesting episode regarding Yud Aleph Nissan, 5734:

In those there lived in Crown Heights the famous Modzhitzer Chossid, Reb Bentzion Shenker, who is widely acclaimed for his strong musical inclination. Reb Bentzion utilized his musical talent to compose a Niggun for the Rebbe, citing the words of the Possuk "Va'ani Kirvas Elokim". He discussed the matter with his acquaintance, Reb Yossel Weinberg, who in turn asked the Rebbe for permission to teach the Niggun to the crowd at a Farbrengen.

Indeed, during the Farbrengen on Shavuos, 5734, Reb Bentzion stood up and taught the Niggun to the Chassidim.

[To hear a recording of this Niggun, listen as it was sung at the Rebbe's Farbrengen of 15 Sivan, 5734, following the first Sicha.]

זעם רבנים א איז

Abe Saks part 1

Those of us who watched the Farbrengen of Yud Aleph Nissan 5742 may have noticed in between the sichos a rather interesting individual. He would have been standing on a bench and swinging his fists and his arms to the tempo of the niggun encouraging, as it were, the singers. This man is Abe Saks and I would like you to meet him:

Abe Saks, a coach on the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team, was glued to his television screen. It was 5733 and running on television there was a series called "Religious America," which focused on the spiritual lives of different Americans. That week the television displayed scenes of Lubavitch life in Crown Heights, Brooklyn: prayers with the Lubavitcher Rebbe... a Chassidic wedding... the circumcision of an eight-day-old boy. Abe was transfixed. Most of all he was captivated by the images of the Rebbe himself.

On an impulse, as soon as the show was over Abe caught a train and headed to the address he'd seen on the screen, "770 Eastern Parkway," the central shul of Lubavitch.

He was immediately greeted by Chassidim on the street with the now-familiar question: "Would you like to put on *tefillin*?" Already inspired, on a high, he agreed to put on *tefillin*, something he had not done for over thirty years. In response to his question when and where he could meet the Rebbe face to face, he was told the date of the next *farbrengen*.

From that day on, Abe made sure to put on *tefillin* daily.

The day of the *farbrengen* arrived, and Abe made sure to arrive a few hours early to secure a good seat. He found the singing and clapping absorbing, but once again the most precious part of the experience was simply the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe's face. The sight gave Abe an indescribable, jubilant feeling.

Abe became a frequent visitor to the center of Lubavitch on Eastern Parkway. Whenever he felt down he would travel to 770. He didn't mind the long trip; seeing that smile and those eyes made it all worth it. And of course, at every *farbrengen* with the Rebbe, Abe was there, clapping and singing along with the crowd.

One day, the Rebbe informed the Mazkirus of his intention to conduct a sudden surprise *farbrengen*. Word spread quickly amongst the Chassidim who quickly ran to 770.

Abe arrived at 770 next morning, found out about the *farbrengen* the night beforehand, and was deeply disappointed to have missed it. He consoled himself with the thought that he would soon see the Rebbe as he entered the prayer hall for morning prayers.

When the Rebbe entered the room, instead of heading directly to his place, he stopped and spoke to Abe, "I did not see you yesterday, where were you?" Abe replied that he had not been told about the surprise *farbrengen*.

"Nobody informed you?!" the Rebbe asked.

From then on, somebody made sure to inform Abe every time a *farbrengen* was to take place.

Abe slowly learned and acquired knowledge about his Jewish heritage. Various individuals "coached" him, and he constantly received encouragement from the Rebbe.

To be continued...



# Q & A:

## What's Chodosh and can we eat it?

### Part 1

#### New what?

Before we get technical let's just go over the basic concept of Chodosh. Chodosh means "New". New what?

On the second night of Pesach they would cut an Omer (it's a measurement) from the new crop of barley, which would be waved the next morning in the Beis Hamikdash and accompanied by an animal korban, this is called "Korban HaOmer".

As soon as they did the cutting for the Omer it became permissible for everyone to cut their own crops, and as soon as they did the waving it became permissible to eat from the new grain. This only served as a permit for grain that was one-third rooted in the ground before the first day of Pesach, anything else would have to wait for the following year. For example if you planted on Vov Nissan you would have to wait until the next year Pesach to use the crops. Needless to say, anything planted after Pesach must wait for the next year. The produce in those two examples is called Chodosh, or - "New since Pesach".

#### With that in mind:

After learning the Pesukim in Parshas Emor<sup>1</sup> you will see that are two parts to this issur (as mentioned above):

One is not allowed to eat new produce (any of the five types of grain) until after the Omer was waved and the korban brought.

Secondly: One can't bring a korban from the new grain until after the korban of "Shte Halechem" on Shavuot.

We will be focusing on the "no eating" part.

There are now two questions that arise both very applicable to us.

#### Where does Chodosh apply?

More simply put; in Eretz Yisroel as well as Chutz L'oretz or just in Eretz Yisroel?

Do we compare it to all other Mitzvos "HaTluvos B'Aretz" (agricultural Mitzvos) like Terumah and Ma'aser etc. As the Possuk says "B'artzechem" ["in your land"]. (Orlah and Kilayim are exceptions to this rule and do apply - to some extent - in Chutz L'Aretz).

Or we can say Chodosh is an exception because the Possuk "Moishvoseichem", which implies wherever you live, even outside of Eretz Yisroel. (The way we would explain the word "Moishvoseichem" if we were to follow through with the first explanation is that the words "B'chol Moshvoseichem" imply all over the land but the Mitzva only starts once the Yidden are settled)<sup>2</sup>.

#### When does it apply?

Meaning is it only *bizman haBayis* or does it apply now *bizman hazeh* as well?

After looking into the Mishnah and Gemorah<sup>3</sup>, you will seemingly come to the conclusion that Chodosh is ossur even in

*chutz l'oretz*.

In regards to the second question, it comes out that it is ossur nowadays as well.

Let us now move ahead to the Rishonim. The Rif<sup>4</sup>, Rosh, and Rambam all seem to say the same thing: Chodosh is prohibited in *chutz l'oretz* and *bizman hazeh*. To quote just one of the sources, the Ramabam, who spells it out very clearly:

"One who eats a kzayis of Chodosh before the Korban Omer gets *malkus* Min Hatorah. This applies in all times and all places...."

In actual fact the issur is stricter nowadays, because now Chodosh is forbidden the whole second day of Yom Tov as opposed to zman Habayis when it was only forbidden until they brought the korban. Not only that, but now the whole third day is also ossur because of "Yom Tov Sheini shel Goluyois". (There is a machlokes as to whether this added issur is from the Chachomim or Min Hatorah. But they all agree its ossur. The Ramabam, who is the strictest, holds it's from the Torah.)

#### So by now you are probably wondering, if so, why haven't I really heard about it?

The first hint of heter is from the Mordechai<sup>5</sup>. He says in regards to beer from barley, that if you don't know if it's Chodosh, you can drink it. The reason he allows this beer is because we rely on a "*ruva d'ruva*" - an extreme majority, that most beer is made from 'old' barley. Therefore, he continues its only a *sfek sfeika* so its allowed. Firstly, maybe its not from this year and, even if it is from this year, maybe it took root before the second day of Pesach.

In short the *heter* he gives is that you don't have to find out the status of the grain. This applies to buying from a Goy as well as to a Yid. (Chances are, when buying from a Yid you would know if its Chodosh).

This is very interesting because we are dealing with an Issur Min Hatorah, and yet he says no need to check!

1. Parshas Emor Perek 23 from Possuk 9.
2. See Rashi, on the above who brings both ways of explaining it.
3. Mishnayos Orlah Perek 3, Kiddushin 36b, Rosh Hashonah 30a.
4. Rif in Kiddushin, Rosh in Kiddushin Siman 62, Rambam Hilchos Maacholos Asuros Perek 10, Halacha 2
5. Mordechai in Kiddushin 501 in the middle

פרק א' ליום	ג' פרקים ליום	מורה שיעור ללימוד הרמב"ם
הל' מקואות פרק ג'	הל' שבת פ' ג-ה	ב' אייר
פרק ד'	פ' ו-ח	ג' אייר
פרק ה'	פ' ט-יא	ד' אייר
פרק ו'	פ' יב-יד	ה' אייר
פרק ז'	פ' טו-יז	ו' אייר
פרק ח'	פ' יח-כ	ז' אייר
פרק ט'	פ' כא-כג	ח' אייר