

# א חסידישער דערהער

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## Chayei Sara 5745

*Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara, 22 Cheshvan*

### Farbrengen

As the Rebbe explained in the first Sicha, this Farbrengen is a continuation of Chof Cheshvan, and so many of the subjects discussed throughout the Sichos were in this spirit.

### A Tzedoka Reminder

Throughout the years at farbrengens in honor of Chof Cheshvan, the Rebbe often reminded Chassidim that this was an auspicious day to increase in the giving of Tzedoka, as is done on all special days of the year. Whatever the reason, at this year's Chof Cheshvan farbrengen two nights ago, the Rebbe did not specifically state this reminder, assuming that the crowd would pick up on it on their own, but in fact no one did...

So, during the second Sicha this Shabbos the Rebbe reprimanded the Chassidim for their (lack of) behavior.

"What did each one do following the Farbrengen? Some went on to sleep (after all, they were exhausted after the hours-long Farbrengen...), others sat down to eat their evening meal, while some (the ones who are overly "farkoch't") actually stayed to hear the "Chazzora"; but no one actually thought to increase in Tzedoka-giving in commemoration of this special day (aside for a few "Yechidie Segula")..." the Rebbe said sadly.

"When I asked someone for an explanation, he answered me innocently that it was because I neglected to mention it during the Farbrengen... Must I really mention this every single time over again, otherwise it will not cross anyone's mind to do so?!"

The Rebbe continued: "Others may be of the opinion that Chof Cheshvan is only for increasing in the study of Chassidus. That's a wonderful thing; but why must that conflict additional Tzedoka as well..."

### A Lesson from Yonah HaNovi

While the Rebbe explained a section of his father's notes on this week's Zohar, he expounded upon the story of Yonah which is brought down

there, and the lessons we can learn from it. Yonah knew that on the ship with him were many passengers, sailors, and so on; nevertheless, he admitted openly, "B'sheli ha'sa'ar ha'godol ha'zeh..." (It is because of me that this large storm has come about).

A Jew must look at the world around him and see all that is happening as a result of his own actions, and as a lesson for him to learn. When we take a look at what's going on in the world today and see the great empires of the world quarreling with one-another ("Malchiyos misgaros zu be'zu"), he is to take it as an indication that the coming of Moshiach is at hand!

### What a Strange Creature...

Continuing the Sicha from the Chof Cheshvan Farbrengen, the Rebbe discussed the test of the final generation before the *Geula* as articulated by the Rebbe Rashab: A strange phenomenon of Jews who are absolutely *Frum* and Torah-true, yet they lack the belief/interest in the coming of Moshiach...

Who would have been able to dream eighty years ago, that a time would come when a strange creature ("Ber'ya meshuna") as this would actually exist?!

When they are approached and informed that "Hinei zeh oimeid achar kosleinu", Moshiach is going to be here soon, they simply cannot handle such talk; the only thing they can do is scorn and poke fun...

A Yid who follows the Torah must be aware that a Yid and Golus *by nature* cannot coexist! Yidden are the children of Hashem; they belong at the table of their Father, the King... When Yidden are in *Galus* it is said of them "Oi lo'hem la'bonim she'galu mei'al shulchan avihem..."

We can only hope that in the end they will finally be inspired from Above to do complete *Teshuva*, and mend their ways...

Towards the end of the Farbrengen, the Rebbe requested of Chazzan M. Taleshevky to lead with the singing of "Yehi rotzon... Sheyibone".

### די חסידות וואס מען הערט

\*מען דארף טאקע טאן מיט די חסידות וואס מען הערט, מיט דעם דארף מען דאוונען און מען דארף וויסען אז דאס מיינט מען איהם, מען דארף לערנען נאך חסידות אבער בדרך ביאור אויף די וואס מען הערט, איך האלט זייער פון מפה לאוזן, אבער בכלל דארף מען טאן מיט די חסידות וואס מען הערט כו'.  
(ספ"ה"ש תורת שלום ע' 229)

\*אבל גואל ישראל דצלותא היינו ענין גילוי אלוקות ברוחניות תמידית בכל דור ובכל זמן. כי בכל שעה שמתפלל כ"י יש בחי' גאולה ברוחניות כללות נש"י, שהוא ענין הארת משיח ממש, אלא שהיא ברוחניות ולא בגשמיות. ואם היו כל ישראל מתפללין בכוונה, ולא הי' אור האהבה חולפת ועוברת אחר התפלה, היה בא משיח גם בגשמיות.  
(סידור עם ד"א ע' 44)

ההפך בין ישמעאל  
דינו כעכו"ם ובין עשו  
דהוה ישראל  
ראה לקו"ש חלק ט"ו  
תולדות שיחה א



## The Third Imprisonment

In the year 5666, Russia was still ruled by a cruel Czar. Life in general was very hard, and across Europe a spirit of rebellion spread. There were demonstrations against the government in many cities. Workers left their factories to go on strike, students abandoned schools and universities to join them, the demonstrators wanted to bring down the government and make a revolution. Fearing for its existence, and rightly so, the government punished the activists harshly with long jail sentences.

There were many young Jews among the organizers of the demonstrations, and the government quickly became aware of it. The government decided to turn the anger of the population away from the Czar and redirect it against the Jews. To this end, they spread false rumors that the Jews were responsible for the poverty in Russia and encouraged non-Jews to persecute them. They concentrated on spreading these rumors in small towns and villages where the Jews had little strength themselves.

In those days, the small town of Lubavitch contained about three hundred families and one hundred Russian families. Lubavitch, however, was the center of Chabad (Lubavitcher) Chassidus, and thousands of Chassidim used to journey there to see the Rebbe Rashab. In 5657, Tomchei Temimim yeshiva was opened, which increased the town's small population.

In Lubavitch itself, Yidden and goyim lived peacefully side by side, but in the surrounding area, the towns and villages were anti-Semitic. And it was difficult to know their feelings towards the Yidden and what they were capable of executing. Adding to the worries, there was a new *galach* who preached libels about the Yidden, inciting pogroms, which were unfortunately quite common in those days. The Yidden in Lubavitch were afraid, but did not just sit back and wait for things to happen. They organized a group of young men, to defend them in the event of an attack, armed with sticks, metal bars and the like, so if they would be caught, they would not be accused of harnessing illegal weapons. Gaining a permit for weapons was impossible, for the government would never grant permission.

The effects of the *galach* and his ranting's were B"H ineffective to incite the populace against the Yidden. And quite the opposite, they pledged to stand up and defend the Yidden against any attacks.

For two months this arrangement continued until one Friday, the seventh day of Chanukah, when the peace and quiet was shattered. It was market day in Lubavitch, and farmers came from the surrounding villages to sell their produce. A group of young Jews, took the opportunity to demonstrate, waving red flags (the revolutionary color), which infuriated the police and the older goyim. However most of the young goyim of the town joined them and sang revolutionary songs with them.

When the police arrived at the scene and ordered them to break up the demonstration, they not only refused to listen, but

they shouted and sang louder. Police retaliated by firing their rifles in the air. In the confusion that followed, the Jewish demonstrators, tore the flag from the stick and ran for their lives. The goyim however were not so quick to give in. One of the youths jumped on a wagon, and screamed out to his friends, "[Comrades] come here, whoever does not is a coward". The police officer ordered that another volley should be fired in the air, which incited the youth and made them boil with anger. They jumped on the officers, and beat them until blood flowed, grabbed the commanding officer's revolver, ripped his clothes, smashed his sword, and paraded off, singing victoriously.

That Shabbos, the Yidden of Lubavitch were very frightened. There was a rumor that the Chief of Police was coming with a regiment of Cossacks to punish the demonstrators. On Motzei Shabbos, Lubavitch's Jewish defense brigade, about 100 in number, gathered and armed itself.

The following day, the Chief of Police arrived, with 20 policemen and began an inquiry into the demonstration. Thirty non-Jews were immediately arrested, and tortured to reveal the names of those involved and who had succeeded in escaping. Even under the duress they did not give any names.

The priest used this as an opportunity to vent his hate on the Yidden. He traveled to the big city, and incited the populace to go avenge themselves against the rebellious Jews, a crime punishable by death.

The next day, a warning was sent to the heads of the Jewish community in Lubavitch: they had twenty four hours, to hand in the names of the demonstrators, or they would be held responsible for what had happened. The problem was, even had they wanted to hand the youth in, they had fled town immediately after Shabbos.

The Jews were terrified; many of them sent their wives and children away. Towards evening, rumors spread that the populace of the town which the priest had gone to, would come in the morning and wreak havoc in Lubavitch. Meanwhile, the gentiles from the neighboring towns, promised to protect the Yidden of Lubavitch. They also sent messengers to the villages in the area, to rally support, and aid in the protection of Lubavitch if the need would arise.

After the twenty four hours had passed, the police called in the elders of the city again, and issued them another harsh warning: they had another day, but if the demonstrators were not handed over by then, a heavy tax would be levied on each person, five hundred rubles a head, only to be returned with the arrest of the demonstrators. Now the situation was extremely dangerous. All Jewish shops closed, and their owners locked themselves up in their homes.

Wednesday morning, the Frierdiker Rebbe received an order to go to the police station at ten o'clock in the morning. If he would disobey, he was warned, he would have to pay a



## Niggunim of Reb Shlomo Tchasniker –Part 2

Reb Shlomo Tchasniker composed various niggunim which he would sing on different occasions.

### ניגון היחידות

The most famous of his niggunim is the niggun *Ha'yechidus*.

Before a Chossid enters the Rebbe's chamber for Yechidus, where he will reveal to him what bothers his Neshomah and request advice in his Avodas Hashem, he must prepare himself. This is done by purifying oneself and making a thorough '*Chesbbon Ha'nefes*' through which he arouses his deepest feelings for Teshuvah and seeks to ascend to a higher, more spiritual life. It is during this lengthy contemplation that a melody escapes his lips, a song full of feeling which express the present situation of his Neshomah.

It is with this idea that Reb Shmuel Zalmanov, in his introduction to this niggun in Sefer Haniggunim, describes the feelings expressed in this song. Indeed, if you pays close attention then you will be able to hear how the notes climb higher and higher and then descend, up and down, up and down, accompanying the pre-Yechidus meditation, preparing to stand in front of the Rebbe's holy presence.

### A Personal Composition

It seems that there are many "niggunei Yechidus", for every Chossid would have "his" niggun that he would sing, expressing his own private feelings as he prepared himself to enter the Rebbe's room for Yechidus.<sup>1</sup> The one in Sefer Haniggunim is from Reb Shlomo Tchasniker and to date is the only one which is known as "Niggun Ha'yechidus".

In a letter it states that the Maskil Shimon Ha'kofer wrote to his superiors, the heads of the Haskalah movement, about the different niggunim that Chassidim would sing, one of them being niggun Ha'yechidus.<sup>3</sup>

1. Reb Shmerel Feldman from Kfar Chabad in his introduction to the niggun on his tape says that R' Shlomo Tchasniker would sing this niggun till the Alter Rebbe would open the door for him.

2. This niggun can be heard on Heichal Ha'Hegina Tape 3, Song 7.

right not to sign, but you should know that what you have done is very unusual. Anyway, you are free to go." I stood up, wished them good night, and left."

When the Frierdiker Rebbe returned home, he discovered the reason for his quick release. After his arrest, the leaders of the Jewish community had asked the local Poritz Izmidov, for his help. Although Izmidov owned the town of Lubavitch, he lived very far away. An intelligent and educated man, he had valuable connections in the Russian government, and he had helped the Jews of Lubavitch many times. The Poritz immediately told the local chief of police that the arrest of an innocent man was a major crime, and, were the Frierdiker Rebbe not released immediately, he would complain to the commander-in-chief of the Russian police, the highest police authority in the land. When he heard this, the local police chief was so afraid, and he released the Frierdiker Rebbe immediately.

(Continued from page 2)

fine of one thousand rubles – an enormously large sum. At the police station, he was met by a group of high ranking officials. They told him that it was obvious that the Yeshiva students had not participated in the riot and that he was not responsible, but he would be arrested. He would be held as a "guarantor" until the community hands over the Jewish demonstrators to the police.

The Frierdiker Rebbe could have spent a long time in jail; even if the community leaders wanted to hand over the demonstrators, it would have been impossible. They had all run away and were in hiding.

The Frierdiker Rebbe boldly responded to them: "Thank you for the "great honor" that you have given me, but I am very worried about my parents and family. After all, they know what you are like. It's possible that you may make false accusations against me while I am under arrest. Who knows what the result will be."

The chief of police went red with anger and said: "We will take responsibility for whatever happens. We know the law." Then he turned to one of the policemen and told him to put him in a cell.

The Frierdiker Rebbe describes his time under arrest:

"Time passed, and I had not eaten lunch, but I did not feel hungry because I was so worried about what my family must be going through. I knew the demonstrators had all run away, and had no idea how long I would be here for. I stood up and davened Mincha. With the pen and paper I had been provided with, I sat down and wrote for a while. In the evening, a kerosene heater was placed in my cell. At five pm that evening, I was called before a committee. The chief of police and the investigators looked pale and angry. They told me to sit down and listen to their verdict. The committee which was charged with inquiring into the events of the riot had decided to pressure the heads of the community into handing over the young rebels. They read the following conditions from their report: 1.the community had to pay a fine of 500 rubles for every Jewish demonstrator. 2. Mr. Shneersohn would be held as a guarantor. 3. We have told Mr. Shneersohn our intentions, and he has agreed with us. We thank him for his help, and he is free to go home.

When they were finished reading, they passed me a copy of the document to sign. I turned to them and said: "I have not taken part in this inquiry, and I cannot sign that I agree to my arrest, as this is false."

The chief of police glared at me angrily and said: "It is your



# Reb Zalman of Dubrovna

# א ציור פון א חסיד



One of the lesser documented Chassidim is Reb Zalman Velkes, known as Reb Zalman of Dubrovna after his city. He was the father-in-law of the famed Chassid Reb Nechemia of Dubrovna. Not much is written about him, yet the little we know is a fascinating story of young man that changed completely from one extreme to the other.

Reb Zalman was born in the city of Vilna to a devout chossid of the Alter Rebbe. Although born into a chassidische family, the young Zalman got involved in with friends in the Haskala Movement and soon went off the true path, not following Torah and Mitzvos.

This caused his father great pain and he tried to persuade his son to join him on a trip to the Alter Rebbe, hoping the Rebbe would be able to talk sense into his wayward son. However, Zalman never agreed to go to the Rebbe. No matter how much his father pressured and begged him, he refused to join his father on a trip to the Rebbe.

His father did not want to cause the Alter Rebbe pain, so he did not discuss his son's situation with the Rebbe. However after the Alter Rebbe inquired about his son, he was forced to reveal that his son was no longer *frum* and refused to come to the Rebbe.

The family later moved from Vilna to Dubrovna. Evidently the change of location was good for Zalman, specifically his social circle, for the Haskala did not have as strong a presence in Dubrovna as in Vilna, for he soon agreed to travel to the Alter Rebbe.

Seizing the opportunity, his father immediately traveled with him to the Alter Rebbe and not long after Zalman entered into Yechidus.

In yechidus the Alter Rebbe spoke with Zalman words of reproach, rebuking him for his errant ways which were leading him to the very gates of Gehinnom. The words of the Rebbe, spoken from the depths of his heart, pierced Zalman's heart and affected him deeply.

He emerged from Yechidus a changed man, making a complete turn-around and becoming an ardent Chossid of the Alter Rebbe.

The young Zalman, now Reb Zalman, threw himself into the study of Chassidus. He toiled away until he was able to understand profound *sugyos* in Chassidus, soon acquiring a deep understanding in the length and breadth of Chassidus.

With time Reb Zalman became renowned as one of the esteemed chassidim of the Alter Rebbe. Aside for his service of Hashem, davening *ba'Avoda* in the way of the elder Chassidim, he was famed for his in-depth study of Chassidus. He could learn for many hours at a time without being aware of his surroundings. During the long winter nights he could be found standing in one place and meditating on a Chassidic concept an entire night. Once

he learned Chassidus for 15 hours straight, so involved he did not hear or see any of his surroundings.

## A Tzedaka Teacher

Reb Zalman was a very influential and rich man and he gave tzedaka accordingly.

On his table in his house were three strongboxes filled with coins, the first with gold coins, the second with silver coins and the third with copper coins. When a pauper would enter and ask for tzedaka, Reb Zalman look him over, hear him out, and estimate which box this man needed to be helped from, the copper, the silver, or the gold. He would then reach in that box, remove a full handful of coins and give them all to the poor man.

So well-known was he, that Reb Pinchas Reizes himself a rich man and a prolific *ba'al tzedaka*, came to Reb Zalman to "learn" how to give tzedaka. When Reb Pinchas saw how Reb Zalman gives a full handful of coins to each poor man that comes to his door, he resolved to do the same. However, as he later admitted to the Alter Rebbe, he still did not reach the level of Reb Zalman. "When he gives tzedaka" said Reb Pinchas, "he would not even look to see how many coins were in the handful, while I, even though I also give the full handful to the poor man, I open my hand to see how much I am giving."

After the histalkus of the Alter Rebbe, Reb Zalman became a devoted chossid of the Mittlerer Rebbe, even staying in the Rebbe's court a few times.

Not long before his passing, Reb Zalman wrote a Pa'n to the Mittlerer Rebbe asking the Rebbe to arouse Hashem's mercy for his neshama, that he be allowed in to Gehinnom immediately after he dies [so the cleaning will commence, some nashmos must wait some time until they are even allowed into Gehinnom].

In his will they found that he wrote: "My only support for when I will be judged is the *koach* of the Rebbe and the merit of my tzedaka."

This is the life of the hoary Chassid Reb Zalman of Dubrovna, a journey from a young freethinker to the great maskil, oved and *ba'al tzedaka*.

For questions and/or comments please call: (347) 541-4770.  
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מורה שיעור ללימוד הרמב"ם	ג' פרקים ליום	פרק א' ליום
בא חשון	הל' כלים פ' טו-יז	הל' טוען ונטען פרק ג
בב חשון	פ' יח-כ	פרק ד
בג חשון	פ' כא-כג	פרק ה
בד חשון	פ' כד-כו	פרק ו
כה חשון	פ' כז-כח הל' מקואות פ' א	פרק ז
כו חשון	פ' כ"ב-ד	פרק ח
כז חשון	פ' ה-ז	פרק ט