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Yud Beis – Yud Gimmel Tammuz 5711 Excerpts of a Letter by Reb Yoel Kahn

לעבן מיטן
רבי'ן

13 TAMMUZ, 5711

Yesterday, we all went along with the Rebbe to the Ohel, and each of us handed him a Pan so he may read it there on our behalf (as we usually do when visiting the Ohel).

In the evening there was a Farbrengen in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment in the room where he normally held Farbrengens (the "Stalova" – dining room). Both the Rebbe and Rashag participated but neither of them spoke at all; we just sang *Niggunim* (including the Alter Rebbe's *Niggun*).

Being that in just a few hours the Rebbe will begin his Farbrengen, I will pause my letter here and complete it tomorrow.

Everyone has gone to rest now hoping to gather enough strength for the Rebbe's Farbrengen, because it has been already two nights that we have not properly slept. Two nights ago, on the night of Yud Beis Tammuz we farbrenged with Reb Shmuel Levitin. He farbrenged very well, only that like all Farbrengens here in America, it had to be "watered down" and lost some of the genuine Chassidishe touch... If only I was able to be in Tel-Aviv for the first two nights of celebration and then to come here for tonight's Farbrengen; now that would be something!

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I began this letter on 13 Tammuz, now I shall continue from where I left off.

At the Farbrengen, the Rebbe said a *Maamor* for about twenty minutes, plus two *Sichos*. Throughout the course of the Farbrengen the Rebbe took a lot of *Mashke* and spoke quite openly. It was amazing to hear how much the Rebbe extolled the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Mesirus Nefesh*, implying that it was even greater than that of Avrohom Avinu!

There is a well-known explanation in *Chassidus* that Avrohom's *Avoda* was greater than Rabbi Akiva's, for Rabbi Akiva wished to have *Mesirus Nefesh*, whereas Avrohom didn't necessarily care for *Mesirus Nefesh*, just that his job should get done. If *Mesirus Nefesh* was needed – then so be it!

But for the Frierdiker Rebbe, things were taken even one step further. He looked at the task of spreading *Yiddishkeit* as if it was his own personal business, and he would not rest until it was properly done! (See story on page 3).

After the Farbrengen, the Rebbe personally distributed *Mashke* to all those present and blessed them each as they passed by. When it came my turn to receive *Mashke*, the Rebbe said to me, "May you grow to be a true *Chosid*, a *Maskil* in *Chassidus*, and an *Oved*."

After a two and a half hour distribution, the Rebbe davened *Maariv* and then before leaving the *Shul*, he said: "Have a healthy summer materially and spiritually; may we hear good news from one-another in regards to strengthening the Rebbe's work. *Farbreng Gezunterheit*; have a *Gut Yom Tov*!"

The Rebbe left past 3:00 in the morning. Being that he had said "*Farbreng Gezunter-*

heit", some *Mashke* was placed on the table but no one was able to say *Le'chayim*. We were all busy reviewing the *Maamor* and a bit of the *Sichos* until six in the morning!

The next day we reviewed the *Sichos* properly. In the evening, I was notified that one of *Anash* had set up a record (a machine that records everything being said; like a phonograph) throughout the entire Farbrengen. (He was sure to keep it a secret, because the Rebbe doesn't appreciate it and there have already been stories with Rabbi Hodakov about this).

So I went with another Bochur and Mordechai Dubinsky to this man's house, a trip of about three hours from New York. We borrowed a car from someone and headed out at five in the afternoon, taking into account the six hours of travel and hoping to spend three hours at his house, returning late in the middle of the night.

But then the troubles started... Firstly, our car broke down and we just barely made it to our destination. (We weren't even thinking about our way back yet!) Then, the man denied ever having done the recording in the first place (because he was afraid of Rabbi Hodakov). We tried to explain to him that it wasn't for our own benefit that we asked him for the recording; just that we should be able to properly transcribe the *Sichos*! We continued arguing for close to an hour until he finally admitted to having the recording and agreed to allow us to hear it.

To make a long story short, we got back home only the next day, at four in the afternoon.

פתגם | אשרי העם

אשרי העם שככה לו אשרי העם שהיו' אלקיו, דער וואס איז א עובד הוי' און ער האט פועל געווען אין זיך אז דער "ככה" איז זיינער, אז אזוי ווי מ'דארף זיין אזוי איז ער, בא דעם איז הוי' אלקיו.

(אג"ק אדמו"ר מהריי"ץ ח"ה ע' עב)

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YECHIDUS

Part 2

Reb Avraham Ber had just been in Yechidus for the first time. During the customary dancing after Yechidus he asked his father about the significance of his recent experience. His two main questions were, 1) why is going in to the Rebbe called Yechidus? 2) Why do Chassidim begin dancing when they emerge from the Rebbe's chamber? By way of answer his father first began to talk about the Beis Hamikdash and the Aron.

"And now," finished Father, "do we have a Beis HaMikdash and a Kodesh HaKodoshim?"

"No," I replied with a sigh, "Now we have neither a Beis HaMikdash nor a Kodesh HaKodoshim."

I looked up at my father, waiting to hear what he would say next about all of this. But before I could regain my voice, a new group of people entered the shul singing, and another dance broke out. When father realized that most of the men in this group were our townspeople from Homel, he suddenly sprang up from his bench with outspread hands and jumping feet, and joined their dancing.

I was startled by this, and didn't know what to do. My first impulse was to follow my father, but I was afraid I might be trampled under their feet. I retreated, and climbed up to stand on one of the benches. I noticed the wagon driver Reb Avraham Meir among the dancers, but when I called his name he didn't answer.

I stood on the bench and watched, as father danced in the middle of the circle. All around him were several of the Home-ler Chassidim, among them Reb Avraham Meir the wagon driver and Reb Shlomo Peshe's. Each one danced with closed eyes, his right arm on his neighbor's shoulder, his left arm waving to the beat of the sacred melody issuing from his mouth. An indescribable aura of holiness surrounded the dancers' faces. The love and brotherhood, the bliss and the ecstasy, are unimaginable. I nearly burst apart with desire to join the dance.

Reb Avraham Meir passed me by a second time, and then a third. Each time, I called to him, but he didn't respond. But suddenly, someone seized me from behind. I felt myself flying through the air, and there I was riding on the shoulders of one of the dancers. Bending my head forward, I discovered that Reb Shlomo

Peshe's was carrying me on his shoulders. My rapture knew no bounds!

In a thunderous voice, the chassid Reb Zalman Yaakov Esther-Disha's suddenly cried out, "Here ends the first hakkafah! Now it's time to daven Minchah." Within seconds of this announcement the dancing ceased and everyone got ready for Minchah.

Father's words about the Beis HaMikdash, the Most Holy Chamber, the Ark, and especially his last question, "And now, do we have a Beis HaMikdash and a Kodesh HaKodoshim?" had left me somewhat sad and dejected. In my mind, a new question began to take shape: why was everyone so joyful, if the Beis HaMikdash remains destroyed and goats cavort in the place where the Kodesh HaKodoshim once stood? I therefore decided to ask Father to explain it all to me after he finished Minchah.

The men in the shul began davening Minchah in melodious tones; they davened loudly, in the Simchas Torah style.

When the davening ended, Reb Zalman

have neither the Beis HaMikdash nor the Kodesh HaKodoshim. In the meanwhile, Lubavitch is our Yerushalayim, the shul where the Rebbe davens is our Beis HaMikdash, and the room where the Rebbe sits is our Kodesh HaKodoshim. The Rebbe himself is our Holy Ark containing the Luchos of Hashem's Holy Torah."

Father's solemn facial expression as he spoke these words made an awesome impression on me. Then, the realization struck me: Father and I had just been inside the Kodesh HaKodoshim, and we now found ourselves in the Beis HaMikdash. What a wondrous idea! Very awesome indeed!

As these thoughts about the Beis HaMikdash and the Most Holy Chamber went through my mind, I heard Father speaking to me again. "Are you aware, my son, that after Moshe deposited the Aron and the Luchos in the Kodesh HaKodoshim, he was able to hear Hashem's voice speaking to him from between the Keruvim on top of the Ark?"

"Yes," I replied, "I heard Mother reading about this to my aunt."

"In the meanwhile, Lubavitch is our Yerushalayim, the shul where the Rebbe davens is our Beis Hamikdash, and the room where the Rebbe sits is the Kodesh HaKodoshim."

Yaakov Esther-Disha's announced that liquor and cake were being served. I then turned to Father and said, "You asked me whether we still have a Beis HaMikdash and a Most Holy Chamber. Well, nowadays we have neither, so why is everyone dancing so joyfully? After all, the Beis HaMikdash is destroyed, and goats caper in the Kodesh HaKodoshim!"

When Father heard this question he replied, "You are right, my son, you are very right. The Beis HaMikdash that stood in the Holy City of Yerushalayim is now destroyed. When the Yidden do teshuvah, then the Holy One (blessed be He), will send us Mashiach, our righteous redeemer, who will gather us from the four corners of the earth and take us - together with our houses and our furniture - to the Land of Israel, where he will rebuild Jerusalem and the Beis HaMikdash. Until that time, we

"The words that the Rebbe speaks to each chassid entering his chamber for yechidus, are the word of G-d," father continued. "Just as the Kohen Gadol used to enter the Most Holy Chamber all alone, so too, whoever enters the Rebbe's room (which is now our Kodesh HaKodoshim) does so all alone. That's why the audience is called yechidus. And just as the Kohen Gadol and all of Israel rejoiced when he emerged from the Kodesh HaKodoshim, so too, we chassidim all rejoice and celebrate the great kindness that G-d has shown us by giving us the privilege of entering our Kodesh HaKodoshim and receiving our Rebbe's holy blessing. Remember well the words of the blessing the Rebbe gave you," Father cautioned me. "G-d willing, when we get home, you can tell Mother all the details."

Reb Yikusiel Liepler was a chossid of the Alter Rebbe who merited to be a Chassid of four Rabbeim, living to see the Rebbe Maharash. Although a big *baal avoda*, he was not blessed with a good head and struggled to understand Chassidus. After sweating for four months, training himself to think in depth and to review the maamrim many times, he became like a new man. His mental faculties expanded, he was able to understand the deepest concepts of Chassidus.

How much had he changed? It is known that the Mittler Rebbe wrote different sforim for different groups of Chassidim. Aside for the general categories of Ovdim and Maskilim, there were many sub-groups in each category.

Imrei Bina – the most advanced of his sforim – he wrote for Reb Yikusiel Liepler.

The depth of Reb Yikusiel's understanding can be seen in this interesting story:

Once, the Rebbe Rashab asked the Rebbe Maharash, his father, a question in Imrei Bina on the subject of bread, wine and oil, and their correspondents in Torah. The Rebbe Maharash explained the subject and then said:

The Mittler Rebbe wrote the sefer Imrei Bina for his chassid Reb Yikusiel Liepler. Even though he had been by the Alter Rebbe in Yechidus, and it was a 'rich' Yechidus, he was a block of wood, you can't give someone a head [א קאפ קען מען נישט ארויף שטעלן]. His heart on the other hand was full of emotion and he would daven with great inspiration.

"When the Mittler Rebbe returned from

the heart of Russia, and settled in Lubavitch, he began to work with yungerleit, teaching them the depths of Toras HaChassidus. Reb Yikusiel was jealous of these young chassidim and deeply desired to understand the new maamorim. He toiled relentlessly and in time his efforts were rewarded, he was able to grasp the most delicate concepts of Chassidus.

"Once (the Rebbe Maharash continues), I had a question in Imrei Bina in Shaar Tefilin, Perek 32 on the topics of *Or Yashar* and *Or Chazer*, and about the formation of *Chochma* from its source in Perek 37. I worked hard to understand to concepts but to no avail. I entered yechidus by my father and laid my question before him. He answered: Right now the chassid Reb Yikusiel is here [in town]. And he began to tell me about him. Among the things he mentioned that the Mittler Rebbe had written Imrei Bina specifically for Reb Yikusiel and suggested that I ask him my question, finishing, 'Tell me what he says and I will then explain your question.'

"Reb Yikusiel would daven for many hours, so I ordered Reb Yosef Mordechai, the servant, to tell me when Reb Yikusiel would finish davening. When he finished, I approached him in shul and presented the question that was bothering me for so long. He thought for a short while and said, 'I am a simple storekeeper. When a storekeeper is asked for goods, and he has them, he always asks for the price before he sells. I have the goods, what's your price?'

"I answered that I would *chazzer* the

maamar from Shabbos for him, explain him the topics discussed there and whatever I wouldn't know I would ask by my father, the Rebbe. He was happy with my response and the deal we struck, and answered my question with a clear, orderly, explanation. In my greatest expectations I never dreamed to hear these pearls coming from such an average man, even considered simple in knowledge of Nigla. In the most complex parts of Kabbala and Chassidus he was completely at home, speaking with clear breadth and in deep profundity.

"When I retold the explanation of Reb Yikusiel to my father he said, 'Reb Yikusiel is a living example of the words of Gemara, "יגעת ומצאת", he worked hard but found more.'

"That evening Reb Yikusiel came to me for payment. I *chazzered* the *maamar* for him as he listened very intently. It's a sight to see, how an elderly chassid listens to *chazzara* of a *maamar* – all his limbs pay attention. He begged me to have compassion on him and *chazzer* again early the next morning and I agreed. The next morning after I finished the second *chazzara*, he began to ask his questions, most of which I had to ask my father. A week of pleasure it was, to convey these questions and answers back and forth.

"From then on whenever Reb Yikusiel would come to Lubavitch I would spend time with him. He remembered everything he had seen from the first time he came to Liozna in 5556."

(To be continued)

PERSONAL BUSINESS

The (Frierdiker) Rebbe related a story that took place during a conference of *Rabbonim* in Petersburg in which his father, the Rebbe Rashab and Reb Chaim Brisker participated. The subject of discussion was about a law that the government wished to enforce compelling *Rabbonim* to acquire secular knowledge; something that all religious leaders vehemently opposed.

The government still stood strong in their conviction to pass the law, to the extent that they sent a message to the *Rabbonim* gathered at the conference that if they will not release their demand to stop the law from being passed, a terrible wave of pogroms would sweep across Russian Jewry.

After many of the *Rabbonim* spoke (including Reb Chaim Brisker), the Rebbe Rashab requested to say a few words. Undeterred, he spoke very sternly and with great emotion saying determinately that only our bodies are subject to the rule of *Galus*, but not our *Neshomos*. There is no way that we will allow this terrible decree to pull through. Upon concluding his speech, the Rebbe Rashab fell into a faint.

After receiving a report of what went on by the conference, the

government sent out an order that the Rebbe Rashab be placed under house-arrest.

When Reb Chaim Brisker came to visit the Rebbe Rashab, he found him sitting in his room, crying. Seeing this, he commented, "Lubavitcher Rebbe; we have done all we can. From now on, we must rely only on Hashem!"

The Rebbe Rashab answered him with a *Moshal*:

There are two types of workers involved in a business; one is a paid worker and the other is the owner of the business.

The difference between the two is: at a time when the business is put into financial difficulty, the paid worker (even one who is genuinely devoted to his job) will at best add extra effort at work, but after that, he goes home and is able to sleep peacefully. Whereas the owner, even after doing all he can and working extra hard to keep his business going, nevertheless, if the business is not doing well he cannot sleep at night! It makes no difference to him whether he has or has not done all he can to help the situation; it's *his* business and he simply cannot help but worry about it!

(Sichas Yud Beis Tammuz 5711 – Toras Menachem vol. 3 pg. 211)

What is the difference between a Maskil and an Oved? Part 1 | Q & A

[Maskil lit. "a thinker", oved lit. "a servant", are two types of chassidim. The Maskil, as his name supposes, is an intellectual thinker; the Oved, focuses on the humble service of the refined heart termed *avodah*.]

Chanukah 5604, the famous Chassidim Reb Aiyzik Homiler and Reb Hillel Paritcher stayed in Lubavitch for a few weeks. My great grandfather, the Tzemach Tedeck, said numerous ma'amorei Chassidus which were then chazzered by and his sons and the chassidim, Reb Aiyzik and Reb Hillel.

It is known that on every maamor that he said in public, my great grandfather would privately say a *biur* to my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash.

At the behest of my great-grandfather [the Tzemach Tzedek], my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash would go to the aforementioned Chassidim to hear them chazzer the maamorim the Tzemach Tzedek had previously said.

30) Once, my greatgrandfather wished to hear in what way the Chassidim, Reb Aiyzik and Reb Hillel, had chazzered the maamorim. He asked his son, my grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash, to repeat the maamorim as he heard them chazzered by the two hoary chassidim. When my grandfather finished, the Tzemach Tzedek said: Reb Aiyzik is a *maskil* and Reb Hillel is an *oved*.

A few days later, my grandfather asked his father as to the difference between a *maskil* and an *oved*. After all a *maskil* is also an *oved*, and the *oved* is also a *maskil*.

My great grandfather answered him nothing.

31) A week passed, it was a Monday night, and the Tzemach Tzedek said a special maamar chassidus for his children and the chassidim, Reb Aiyzik and Reb Hillel. In the middle of the night, around 2 or 3 o'clock, he called my grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash, and sent him to see what Reb Aiyzik and Reb Hillel were doing at the moment.

At first my grandfather thought he was supposed to enter their quarters, but the Tzemach Tzedek instructed him to merely look through the window and observe what they were doing. The two chassidim stayed at different lodgings, Reb Aiyzik in the home of Beshe Bere Boruch's the Chozer and Reb Hillel in the home of Raizel, the widow of Reb Yossel the Maggid.

The Maharash took his steward Reb Yosef Mordechai and went to Reb Aiyzik's lodging. Through the window he saw how Reb Aiyzik was sitting deep in thought, his head thrown back, eyes closed, face aflame, his burnt-out pipe in hand.

Coming to Reb Hillel's dwelling he saw Reb Hillel sitting bent over, he was a small, hunched, man in any circumstance - bent over he looked even smaller and more compact. He sat with a finger in his mouth, a sign of profound contemplation, his face white like a perturbed man.

My grandfather returned to his father, the Tzemach Tzedek, and related what he had seen.

The Tzemach Tzedek said: Both are thinking about the maamar that was said yesterday. Reb Aiyzik contemplates the concept of

"Three Beginnings that are in *Kisra Illad*" and Reb Hillel meditates on the unique power of *Kabolas Ol* through which *Malchus* will be elevated, and is thinking about himself.

When my father [the Rebbe Rashab] related this story to me he expounded:

The difference between a *maskil* and an *oved* is in the approach. The *maskil* starts from the *haskala* [the intellectual idea] and struggles to find an applicable *avoda*, corresponding to it. The *oved* starts with the *avoda* and searches for the *haskala* found therein.

The *maskil*, who begins with the *haskala* and struggles to find the applicable *avoda*, will sometimes find the *avoda*, and at times not. The *oved*, starting with the *avoda* and then searching for the *haskala* is usually successful. If at times he does not reach the *haskala*, at least he has accomplished the main thing, the *avoda*. The *maskil*, if he is unsuccessful, is missing the principle.

In early summer of 5760, my father retold this story and added:

When a Chassid thinks about himself, he is actually thinking about Chassidim in general and Chassidus. Chassidim and Chassidus are the Tree of Life. A tree draws life from the ground through its roots, brings this life up through the trunks and into the branches which can then bear fruit.

In the Chassidic Tree of Life the Rabbeim are the roots, the source of life. The trunk is Chassidus and Chassidim are the branches.

Every Chassid is a branch of the Tree. Through the roots and the trunk of the tree the Chassid receives his *chayus* to be able to bear fruit, i.e. the mitzvot, to fulfill a mitzvah with an inner vitality.

(To be Continued)

(Sichas Yud Beis Tammuz 5708, printed in Sefer HaMaamorim 5708 p. 260)

רמב"ם | מורה שיעור

יום	שלושה פרקים	פרק אחד
ו'	פרק ח תהי ידך וגו'.	הל' שבת פרק יא.
ז'	ספר הל' כלאים פרק א-ב	פרק יב
א'	פרק ג-ה	פרק יג
ב'	פרק ו-ח	פרק יד
ג'	פרק ט-י הל' מתנות עניים פרק א	פרק טו
ד'	פרק ב-ד	פרק טז
ה'	פרק ה-ז	פרק יז
ו'	פרק ח-י	פרק יז

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