

a Chassidisher DERHER

א חסידישער דערהער

ערשט פארשט אחו"ק ט' אייר תשע"ג

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Yud Gimmel Iyar

**This week marks the sixty-first
Yohrtzeit of the Rebbe's younger
brother, Reb Yisroel Arye Leib.**

In one rare instance, the Rebbe recorded a story he had heard from the Friediker Rebbe shortly after his wedding in 5689, in which the Friediker Rebbe told of a vision he had seen of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, along with the Reb Yisroel Arye Leib. (The following is an excerpt from the Rebbe's diary, published in Reshimos Choveres 4):

Monday night, 5 Teves, 5689. Upon being summoned, I entered into the [Friediker] Rebbe's room. He said that he wished to convey regards from my brother Leib (who is currently living in Leningrad). When I asked if he had received a letter from him, he replied: "I listened to a Ma'amor along with him from the Rebbe [Rashab]. And here's what happened:

"Tonight, I saw the Rebbe [Rashab]. He held a silk handkerchief in his hand and his face bore an extraordinary expression of joy. The last time his face was as such was in the year 5668. He then said to me 'Mazal Tov for the hat! They may enter now.' I opened the door and a few individuals walked in, among them was your brother. He slowly approached me – or perhaps I approached him, and I embraced him with one hand. My father asked me 'Who is this young man?' but then, after a few seconds he said, 'Ah! I know you'.

"He then recited the Ma'amor Shchora Ani ve'Naava... You must ask your brother about this.

"After the Ma'amor, I approached my father and asked him something, and the entire vision suddenly escaped me.

"I saw him clearly; it was amazing. In which city or place this transpired – I don't know.

"Your brother's face I did not see. His hat was tilted a bit to the side, and he was chewing on something, I don't know if it was a cigarette, his fingernail, or something else. This was the second time I've seen my father since the wedding [i.e. the Rebbe's wedding on 14 Kislev]."

In the following transcript of a conversation with the Rebbe, we read of the Rebbe's effort and insistence that one of his sole surviving works in the field of mathematics be published in a proper manner:

During the Farbrengen of Yud Shevat, 5735, Professor Paul Rosenblum from Toronto approached the Rebbe and, handing the Rebbe an envelope, proceeded to mention another manuscript that Rebbe had sent him some time before. An excerpt of his conversation with the Rebbe:

Rebbe: What is your opinion about it?

Dr. Rosenblum: It has things which are worth publishing, but it needs to be worked over. It needs a forward and references. It seems that the manuscript is incomplete because it quotes other sections which are not there!

Rebbe: But the author is deceased. That means that someone else will have to complete the work. If someone will be willing to complete it, I'll be very happy to compensate him for his work, and you will only supervise. Because I don't know if you'll have enough time, and more so, you're time is valuable. But if someone else will do it and you'll merely supervise his work, I'll be very happy to pay him.

Dr. Rosenblum: is this all you have left from him?

Rebbe: Yes! This is all there is, and he passed away ten years ago.

Dr. Rosenblum: Then I'll do it myself. I figure it would be beneficial to the author.

דער בעש"ט נ"ע האט מגלה געווען, אז יעדער איד האט בכח אויפצוטאן גדולות אין דעם אויספירן די כוונת הבורא ב"ה אין דער בריאה, און דער רבי - רבינו הזקן - און די רביים האבן מגלה געווען מיט וואס יעדער קען ארויסבריינגען דעם כח אויף אויפצוטאן אין דער בריאה די כוונת הבורא ב"ה.

(סח"ש תש"ג עמ' 79)

זע"נ שריח כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
בוונקובר קנדה

הרהר ר' אליעזר ליפמן בן הרב
יהושע דוכראווסקי

נקמף בדמי ימיו כ"ז ניסן
תשע"ג

יהי רצון שבמהרה יקויים היעוד
"ומחה הוי דמועה מעל כל פנים"

The Miraculous Sefer Torah of the Baal Shem Tov

A LETTER BY THE FRIERDIKER REBBE IN CONNECTION WITH THE SEFER TORAH OF MOSHIACH*

On Tuesday, the 21st of Cheshvan 5658, my father, the Rebbe Rashab began a journey to the resting places of the Tzadikim in Mezibuz, Pastov, Anipoli, Bertichev, Haditch, Nezin. During this trip he also had meetings for his communal work in Kiev, Zitomir and Bertichev.

On Sunday, the 26th, at around 12, my father arrived in Mezibuz. Accompanying and assisting him was Reb Binyomin Berlin. Although it was after davening, the first place he visited was the Shul of the Baal Shem Tov. Meanwhile Reb Binyomin went to the bathhouse to see if there was a kosher Mikva because my father was planning on visiting the Tziyon of the Baal Shem Tov that evening and then continuing on his way.

By the time my father, the Rebbe, entered the Shul of the Baal Shem Tov, most of the worshipers had already left. One elderly man, Reb Tuvia Leib the Shamash, sat in Talis and Tefillin at the front of the shul, around him stood a few people and he told them a story of the Baal Shem Tov that he had heard from his father and his grandfather.

This Reb Tuvia Leib, due to his old age, was not able to serve as a Shamash for the shul, even in the smallest way. However, because he sat every day in the shul, davening and learning, and stemmed from the family of those that served the Baal Shem Tov, he was bestowed with the honorary title "Shamash of the Baal Shem Tov's Shul". (Interestingly, his grandfather, Reb Yosef Tzvi, served the Baal Shem Tov in his last ten years and was blessed by the Baal Shem Tov with long life for him, his children and grand-

children. Reb Tuvia was living proof of the power of this bracha.)

At the time the shul was in disrepair and in need of renovation. The people who davened there, mostly poor and elderly people, couldn't afford to fund it, and those of the city with the means for the renovation didn't notice the great need.

The elders of the shul, headed by Reb Tuvia Leib, were greatly pained by the situation for they had a tradition that as long as the shul stood the city would have peace and of the house were to fall, chas veshalom, the city would be destroyed. They deliberated and finally decided that once in a while they would take out the Miraculous Sefer Torah of the Baal Shem Tov and with the donations of those who would receive aliyos they would be able to repair and renovate the shul.

When my father entered the shul, Reb Tuvia Leib was speaking about the great kedusha of the Sefer Torah and how many of the Tzaddikim of the previous generation had made the journey to Mezibuz specifically to get an Aliya on this Sefer Torah and to kiss the cloth of the Baal Shem Tov that lay on the Bima.

Never, cried Reb Tuvia Leib the Shamash, had the zchus been sold for gold and silver. For years the Torah would only be brought out for hoshanos on Hoshana Rabba, and for hakafos on Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah. Other than those times no-one would dare approach this Torah. And now, finished Reb Tuvia Leib, for a little money we will take out the Sefer Torah and honor rich and wealthy people with aliyos! And he wept as he spoke.

In the meantime Reb Binyomin Berlin returned with the news that there was a kosher Mikva and that the wagon-driver was ready to travel to the Beis Hachayim.

My father, the Rebbe, asked Reb Tuvia to tell the story behind the Miraculous Sefer Torah. Here is what he told:

In 5512 there was, lo aleinu, a terrible [heavenly] decree against the town of Mezibuz. Men, women, and children got ill with different sicknesses and many were near death. The town was in an uproar, not one house was spared the epidemic.

They came to the Baal Shem Tov and cried bitterly about the sick and begged him to daven on their behalf. The Baal Shem tov told them that he would not be able to help them, only they could help themselves. [In Sefer HaSichos it adds: the townspeople responded to the Baal Shem Tov's refusal "You help everyone who comes to you, and yet your own townsmen you can't help!" to which he said that only they could help themselves.]

The Baal Shem Tov said: We say every day in Shmone Esre "תמיד עבודת ישראל עמך" (Lit. And may the service of Your people Yisroel, always find favor.) This means: Always the service of Your people Yisroel can change His will to weaken and nullify a decree. And the service that constantly stands before Hashem to make a good will is the Letters of Torah. This can be in two ways: Saying the words of Torah and Tehillim, and through writing a Sefer Torah in which everyone takes part.

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To be continued...

Continued from page 1

Rebbe: But it will be beneficial to me. I didn't want to tell you who the author was before so as not to influence you, but it was written by my brother. I had a brother who was younger than I am, and he passed ten years ago.

Dr. Rosenblum: Ten years ago?

Rebbe: Approximately. This is all that's left from him.

Dr. Rosenblum: Apparently he worked in an independently and didn't have access to a library. That's clear.

Rebbe: He was of independent character. He would write on his own and only afterwards would he check in the references to see if anyone else wrote in the same way. He was very zealous about his independence. I'm very eager that it should go to print. If something can be done, I'll be very happy to pay for it.

Dr. Rosenblum: I can do it myself, I'll make the time.

Rebbe (with a big smile): Hashem should bless you! If so, let me thank you again! L'Chaim V'livrocho!



R' Mordechai Dubin

“You do not merely possess goodness and kindness; rather you are the very embodiment of goodness and kindness”. These were the words the Frieddiker Rebbe used to address his faithful chossid, R' Mordechai Dubin, upon thanking him for his efforts in obtaining his release from prison in Russia.

R' Mordechai Dubin was born on chof zayin teves תרמ"ט to his father R' Zalman Ber and his mother Rivka Rochel, in the city of Riga, Latvia. Being a Lubavitcher chossid, his father brought him as a young child to Lubavitch, to receive the Rebbe Rashab's brachah. At a relatively young age, he married the daughter of R' Dov Yacobson from Meitava. His son (and only child), Shneur Zalman, was counted among the talmidim of the Tomchei Tmimim in Otvotzk. (His wife, son, and daughter-in-law were murdered by the Nazis י"ט).

Early on, R' Mordechai immersed himself in public affairs. He joined various committees devoted to assisting his fellow Jews, taking a special interest in harbotzas hatorah. He often frequented the homes and offices of public activists and men of political authority, who in turn held him in high esteem despite his young age.

With the advent of WWI, came a wave of pogroms and expulsions. R' Mordechai stood at the helm of the relief efforts, extending aid to those affected. Thousands of refugee Jews flooded Riga and he was the one who took to all their needs. For many, he procured the funds needed to immigrate to other countries or for their return home - depending on the circumstances.

When Latvia gained its independence, R' Mordechai, only thirty years of age, was chosen to represent 'Agudas Yisrael' in the parliament. In addition to being a public figure, he was also very devoted to helping every individual and anyone who contacted him was immediately helped. His dedicated work for the betterment

of the community as a whole and for each person individually, was simply unparalleled.

His daily schedule

R' Mordechai would daven every morning with the vasikin minyan in the chabad shul known as "Bazerburg". Prior to davening, he would deliver a shiur in mishnayos. His davening, slow and with great concentration, was often accompanied with intense weeping. On a regular weekday day he would daven for no less than an hour-and-a-half.

Upon finishing, a horde of people would already be waiting for him to tend to their many needs. The crowds would even converge upon his home with their various requests. [Once, R' Mordechai jokingly referred to someone as meshugeh. The man answered "Am I any crazier than you? One who stands in his own home, full of people, for thirteen hours straight, and does not throw them out is certainly meshugeh!"]. His secretaries would also come to his house to receive instructions for that day's work. Most of the issues and personal requests would be taken care of either through him by way of telephone or through his secretaries and assistants as per his directives. The more serious matters were attended to solely by him and they usually warranted personal visits to the appropriate offices or personalities. He paid daily visits to various government institutions in order to assist his Jewish brethren. For his personal business dealings, he relied entirely on his business partners for he simply did not have enough time. He gave tzedakah generously and every Jewish institution in the city benefited from his support.

On shabbos R' Mordechai would daven with the first minyan, and served as the baal koreh. He always attended chazoras da"ch which would take place between mincha and maariv. In addition to taking part in chassidische farbrengens, R' Mordechai himself would hold a Farbrengen in his house every year on the night of shemini atzeres which would always continue until the wee hours of the morning. These memorable farbrengens were never forgotten by all who partook in them.

Yiras Shomayim

R' Mordechai's yiras shomayim and hiddur beitzvos was exceptional. Various stories are told illustrating this. Once, as a young bochur, he arrived home very late at night. Not hearing any noise coming from within the house, he figured his parents were asleep. He stood outside the entire night until the morning so as not to awaken them. On another occasion, in shul, he noticed his coat was missing. Apparently someone had made off with it. He immediately concluded that the person that took it obviously did not own a coat of his own and didn't have the means to buy one himself. "He should wear it in good health; I will buy myself another one...." he said, smiling. That evening he went home without a coat. On the following day the tailor arrived at his home with a brand new coat but R' Mordechai refused to try it on until the tailor had removed all the stitching that consisted of shatnez and only then did he allow him to make the proper measurements.

to be continued...

Hidden Talents

The Chossid Reb Yehuda Eber (5661-5702) learned in Lubavitch during his youth and later on became the Rosh Yeshiva in Otvotzk, and in Warsaw. His Chiddushei Torah, which were published by his students after world war two, are known throughout the Torah world by the title it was given - Sharrei Yehuda.

Aside from being a great Gaon, he was also greatly talented in other areas. Yet his talent in song was unbeknown to his students until the Frieddiker Rebbe himself told them of it, as told over by Reb Moshe Rubin:

During the farbrengen of Shavuos 5698 in Otvotzk, there were many bochurim who were standing near the Frieddiker Rebbe. As usual we sang niggunim between the sichos, though this time the Rebbe showed dissatisfaction from the way we sang, as we were not well versed in them and were not singing them with precision. When we finished singing, the Rebbe commented, "Generally the shamash in shul sees to it that all property of the shul is in its correct place, if the shamash is unable to do it, the responsibility falls on the gabbai, and if the gabbai fails to organize the shul then its his responsibility. That's all a parable. The lesson to be learned from this is: if the Bochurim don't know the niggunim, it's the Hanhala's job to teach it to them, but if they

fail to do so, it's the Bochurim's responsibility to learn them properly!"

When he finished talking, he immediately turned to Reb Yehuda Eber, indicating it was him who he meant. At that point we realized that in addition to being very well versed in all of Shas and Poskim, he was also a Baal Menagen; something which he concealed from us until then.

In accordance with this directive, Reb Yehuda arranged that during the time for Seuda Shlishis, a group of Bochurim who had a natural talent with neginah would come to his house to learn niggunim. It did not take them long to realize how knowledgeable he actually was in this field as well. He taught them niggunim from many different chassidim, as well as from different Chassidische cities, such as Nevel (where he taught before fleeing to Poland in 5690).

Aside for the niggunim which had names, (meaning those to whom or where they are attributed) he also taught them 'nameless niggunim' which he would call 'niggun stam one', 'niggun stam two' etc. He also composed his own niggunim which he taught them as well.

On his recording of niggunim, Reb Moshe Rubin (who was among those who went to Reb Yehuda's home each Shabbos), sings several of the niggunim he was taught then, as well as one niggun which Reb Yehuda composed.

Regarding the niggun known as "Reb Yehuda Eber's niggun hisva'adus", the author of Sefer Hanigunim writes: "In this niggun it is strongly expressed the seriousness of deep thought, and the inner feelings of the heart."



Q & A

Whats the connection between "Kol Yisroel" and the Minhag to learn Pirkei Avos?

QUESTION:

At the beginning of Pirkei Avos, the Alter Rebbe writes in the siddur: "It is a Minhag to say Pirkei Avos... and to precede it with the Mishna of Kol Yisroel."

The Mishna of Kol Yisroel is familiar to us Chassidim as the Rebbe included it in the 'Twelve Pessukim', and most children can recite it by heart already from a young age. However, this Mishna is not from Pirkei Avos (rather from Maseches Sanhedrin), so why was it established as an introduction to our recital of Pirkei Avos every week?

ANSWER:

Learning through Pirkei Avos, we come to answer this question. Although replete with emphasis on the greatness and necessity of learning Torah, the Pirkei Avos determines that the "essential thing is not the study, but rather the deed." In this sense, we say the Mishna of Kol Yisroel before Pirkei Avos, reasserting that the doing of the Mitzva is most important. [When the Mishna mentions that each Yid merits Olam Habo, it refers to the era of Tchiyas Hamesim, which is a reward for the physical actions in fulfilling the Mitzvos.]

The paradox

The Mishna of Kol Yisroel further shapes as the perfect introduction because it clarifies the dichotomy that is Pirkei Avos. Throughout its chapters, Avos teaches ethics rather than Mitzvos, as is typical of all other Masechtos. However, such teachings are only relevant for people who need to refine their conduct, and yet, Avos is called "Mili D'chasedusa" - things that a Chossid does. And as we find throughout Shas, the title "Chossid" is conferred upon those whose observance extends beyond the letter of the law. So how is it that Pirkei Avos addresses both these two contrasting themes and audiences?

A similar question can be asked regarding the Minhag to recite it in the summer months. The reasoning behind the Minhag is that as the weather becomes more pleasurable, people naturally seek "pleasures", and thus we recite Pirkei Avos each week to encourage people to conduct themselves in a positive manner. However this Minhag applies to all Yidden, regardless of whether the "pleasurable climate" influences them. So once again, how does this Minhag of learning Pirkei Avos remain relevant to every Jew?

Equal reward

The answer to both questions lies in the Mishna of Kol Yisroel.

"Kol Yisroel Yesh Lohem Chelek Le'olom Haboh": The Tanna proclaims that every Yid, irrespective of his religious standing, has a share in Olom Haboh - the era of Tchiyas Hamesim, in which the body, as a reward for its performance of the Mitzvos, will exist within the reality of the soul. And in this regard, every Yid is the same, as the Tanna quotes from the Possuk that this merit is an "inheritance" - every Yid merits this reward simply because he is Jewish.

However, the same Possuk concludes, "They are the branch of My planting, the work of My hands in which I take pride." This teaches us, that despite the inherent merit of every Yid, one must nevertheless invest his own effort in fulfilling his potential, just as a sapling needs to be cared for to ensure its proper growth.

And furthermore, while Olom Haboh is the birthright of every Jew, Gan Eden, however, is merited by one's Torah study, in which all men are not equal; some people have greater intellectual abilities than others. [Whereas by physical deed, we are told "Even the sinners of Israel are filled with Mitzvos like (the seeds in) a pomegranate."]

Thus, on the surface, it seems that the equality of Yidden with regard to Mitzvos demonstrates its low spiritual worth in comparison with learning Torah, where there is space for rank and stature. However, in essence, it is really because the physical deed is so lofty. Indeed, it is the physical performance the Mitzvos that accomplish the purpose of creation - to build a dwelling place down here for Hashem. And being that every Yid is "the branch of My planting, and the work of My hands," each individual feels how he can fulfill his part. [And it is specifically about the body of a

Yid (Masei Yodei) that the Possuk concludes, "I take pride." This is also the reason that the reward will specifically be the coexistence of body and soul, as it is a reward for refining the body, teaching us that Hashem not only chose the Neshoma of the Yidden but also their bodies.]

The mission of each individual

With this in mind we can now understand why Avos is applicable to everyone. On the one hand, there is no one who cannot be refined, and moreover, being that it is "The work of My hands," he or she will certainly become more refined. And on the other hand, no one can say this 'service' is below his dignity, because in fact, the ultimate idea of 'Mili D'chasedusa' is working with the body - because Hashem specifically takes pride through 'Maasei Yodei'.

Is this really for me?

The Rebbe brings a few more reasons:

One might think that Avos, which demands that one go beyond the letter of the law, is not applicable and relevant to every person. We therefore begin with a Mishna that proclaims and praises every Yid as a Tzaddik, insinuating that every Yid can and must fulfill the words of Avos. And even more so, because of his loftiness, every Yid is capable of achieving these seemingly difficult teachings.

Preparing properly

Avos is learned in preparation to receiving the Torah on Shavuot. The first step must therefore be to engage in acts of Ahavas Yisroel towards every Jew, and so we read the Mishna of Kol Yisroel which helps us appreciate the value and greatness of our fellow Yidden.

One might argue, "Why should I give up some of my time for another person who is on a lower level than me, with this time there is so much I can accomplish for myself!"

We answer this by reaffirming that every Yid has a portion in Olam Habo, and only in this physical world do you see others as being higher or lower than you, but in truth (in Olom Haboh - the world of Truth), you are really quite the same.

However, even when we are involved in helping another, we need to keep in mind that it is not our own strengths and qualities, but rather it was handed down from Moshe to Yehoshua etc. and from the Moshe in each generation to us

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