

אָפּערעס'זע פּער

לעבן מיטן רבי'ן
MID-NIGHT SURPRISE

CHOF DALIT TEVES, 5723

This week we will commemorate the 200th Yortzeit of the Alter Rebbe on Sunday, Chof Dalit Teves.

In this spirit, we bring the following story from fifty years ago, when the Rebbe commemorated the 150th Yortzeit in the most unique way.

Beginning with the preparations already in the preceding months, the Rebbe created a major tumult amongst the Chassidim, calling upon them to get ready to observe the upcoming Yortzeit by increasing in Torah learning and extra Tzedoka (see Derher #60 – Tavo, 5772).

The Yortzeit itself fell out to be on a Sunday (just as it was in the original year of the Alter Rebbe's Histalkus). The Rebbe held no less than three Farbrengens in honor of the auspicious day, including a totally unexpected one on Motzoei Shabbos, at the precise time when the Histalkus took place!

At 10:25 p.m. on Motzoei Shabbos, the Rebbe entered the Shul downstairs.

As soon as the Rebbe entered the Farbrengen, he began by quoting a letter of the Frierdiker Rebbe regarding a Yortzeit: when Chassidim learn Torah of the one who's Yortzeit they are commemorating and old a Farbrengen on that day, this is considered to be like a "Pan" to the Rebbe, drawing down immense blessings for all the participants.

After the singing of Avinu Malkeinu, the Rebbe recited a very brief Ma'amor by the Alter Rebbe entitled "*Ain Mosrin Rozei Torah*". At its conclusion, the Rebbe pointed at a bottle of Mashke situated on his table and instructed that it be distributed amongst all the participants, specifying especially the winner of the raffle from Israel who had come in for Chof Dalit Teves on behalf of his fellow Chassidim there.

While turning to many individual Chassidim and responding "*Le'chaim V'livrocha*" to each of them, the Rebbe said, "Give some *Le'chaim* to Berel Baumgarten; let him enjoy a bit from the bottle as well!"

Interestingly, in one of the Sichos the Rebbe expounded upon the letter from the Tzmach Tzedek in which he describes the scene at the Alter Rebbe's Histalkus, specifying the exact moment when it occurred, "At around half of the 11th hour before midnight" (i.e. 10:30 in the evening). The Rebbe then went on explaining the significance of marking the exact time of the occurrence and the deeper meaning behind it, and so on.

The Chassidim could not help but take note of the fact that the Rebbe had entered the Farbrengen that evening at a most unusual time, much later than the fixed time for the start of most Farbrengens. It seems as though the Rebbe wished to recite the Alter Rebbe's Ma'amor at the exact moment of the Histalkus!

Later, the Rebbe conducted a Siyum on the Tanya. As he had instructed Chassidim at the Farbrengen on Chai Elul, the entire Tanya was divided for communal study and completed in time for Chof Dalit Teves. Now, the Rebbe gave a lengthy explanation on the beginning and end of Tanya, connecting it with the last letter written by the Alter Rebbe before his Histalkus.

Afterwards, the Rebbe instructed all those involved in Jewish education of children ("Chinuch al taharas hakodesh") to say a special Le'chaim, making special mention of the Bochorim who go out on "Released Time" ("Mitvoch Sho'a").

Throughout the night, the Rebbe requested that many Niggunim be sung (Ki onu amecha, Shamil, Ani Maamin, and others). Quite a memorable Farbrengen indeed.

א' כתב לכ"ק אדמו"ר על רצונו לנסוע לרוסי' להשתטח
על ציוני רבותינו נשיאנו
וענה לו הרבי בכתי"ק:
"כמה פעמים היית על ציון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר?"
(מפי השמועה)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Leben Miten Rebben **1**
- The Power of
Imagination **2**
- Biography: **3**
- Reb Asher Nikolayiver
Part - 1
- Study for Everyone **3**
- Q & A: **4**
- Learning with a
Chayrusa

ענין השמש

מען האט אמאל גערעדט וועגן דעם ענין פון א שמש. די עובדא פון א שמש איז צו וועקן. ער וועקט אלעמען, צי יענער וויל אדער ניט, איז דער שמש טוט זיינס, ער קלאפט אים לאדן און וועקט. ווייל באמת וויל יענער נאר ער שלאפט, דארף מען אים אויפוועקן.

(ספר השיחות תש"ה ע' 62)

לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' אברהם ב"ר מאניס
צבי ע"ה
נפטר י"א מר-חשוון ה'תש"ס
♦
ומרת **דייכא** בת החבר
ר' ברוך ע"ה
נפטרה כ' תמוז ה'תשע"א
♦
נד' ע"י
משפחת וויינגארטען
שיחיו

THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

OR THE IMPORTANCE OF THINKING POSITIVELY



(From *Likutei Diburim* Vol. 1 page 316)

Chasidim and Temimim that merited to be in Lubavitch by a Farbrengen and by Yechidus, have unlimited riches.

Every Farbrengen and

every Yechidus is a wealth of all types of physical and spiritual good.

He who has a *chush*¹ and a feeling, and can picture in his mind how he entered into Yechidus, reflects on what he spoke and what he asked, remembers what he was answered with the exact wording that was used in the bracha and what he was asked, is fortified against the slumber of Shtus [from the *Nefesh Habahamis*]. It is as if he was newly resurrected.

There are no words to describe the hope and comfort provided by such a memory. Such recollections make the physical life easier, it carries light into one's mundane existence and it creates a life-force in the continued *avoda*.

In Lubavitch, in the Yeshiva Tomchei Temimim, there was a mashpia by the name of Reb Michoel. (The older Temimim here remember who Reb Michoel is.²)

Once, when he was a young man, his child got very sick – *lo aleinu*. The doctors gave up on him saying that there was no cure, nothing to do. Reb Michoel went to the gathering of Chassidim [in his town] and informed them of the bitter situation. The Chassidim encouraged him, that he should not be disheartened, Hashem will surely be merciful. Rather he should immediately travel to Lubavitch [to the Tzemach Tzedek].

Reb Michoel wept passionately, for he wished to go to the Rebbe, but the doctors say that only a few hours are left – *rachmaan litzlan*. What use is there in going?

One of the elder Chassidim rebuked him strongly: Does the Gemara³ not clearly say “One should not hold back from begging mercy” Surely those who plead for mercy (מליצי יושר) effect by Hashem to with the decision until he would make it to the Rebbe.

One of the Chassidim there, a working man, a tailor by trade, and a good friend of Reb Michoel traveled with him to Lubavitch. On the way he took him through a few shortcuts available to speed their journey.

Arriving in Lubavitch, Reb Michoel was informed that he would be able to enter into Yechidus shortly.

“When I entered Yechidus”, recounts Reb Michoel, “and handed my *Pan* on behalf of my child, at that time the thought passed through my mind ‘Who knows what is happening with my son, the doctors only gave him a few hours....’ And I began to sob.

“The Rebbe read the note and told me, ‘Don’t cry, think good and it will be good. Don’t worry, you will be by your grandchild’s Bar Mitzvah.”

[*Igros of the Frierdiker Rebbe*⁴ adds:

The Chossid told the Rebbe: of what use is it for me to think good? You, Rebbe, should think - your thinking helps.

The Tzemach Tzedek replied: Yes, but one must inform how things are going, for there is thinking and there is thinking, and a good thought helps.⁵]

“In every hard time,” continued Reb Michoel “when I had trouble with the upbringing of my children (צער גידול בנים) I would picture the Rebbe’s holy face, and the Yechidus words and it would be good.”

This is in physical life, especially in *ruchniyus* all good memories are a pillar of light and a pillar of fire, they light up the mind and warm the heart.

In every generation the Chassidisher Farbrengen was one of the central pillars in the edifice of the education and guidance of Chassidim.

The *chush hatziyur* (portrayal, of picturing in the mind’s eye) is one of the most important skills and power of the soul. It brings to great things, both in *Haskala* and also in *Avoda*. My forefathers, the Rabbeim, would value those who possessed a *chush hatziyur*.

My great-grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek recounted a long story of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Barditchev. From this story one can see the great value attached to a *chush hatziyur* and to one who possessed it.

(*The Frierdiker Rebbe then continues with the famous story of the Black Dog and how the imagination, the chush hatziyur, of a Poretz brought him back to Yiddishket. See there page קס*)



And what if one has no memories? Read the stories and diaries, or watch videos, and picture those episodes in the mind’s eye, for imagination in almost as good as a true memory.⁶

1. Skill, sense

2. The Frierdiker Rebbe is speaking to those present at the meal that this sicha was said by.

3. ברכות דף י ע"א

4. ח"ב ע' תקלו

5. אמר החסיד וואס העלפט טראכטן מיין, איהר רבי זאלט טראכטן, אייער טראכטן קאן העלפן. אמר כ"ק אאמ"ר (הצ"צ) יע, אבער מי דאך מודיע זיין ווי עס גייט, יש מח' ויש מח', ומח' טובה מועלת כו'.

6. See also *Toras Menachem* Vol. 1 page 51.

Reb Asher Grossman, known as Reb Asher Nikolayiver, was a Chossid first of the Rebbe Maharash and later of the Rebbe Rashab. Educated by Reb Hillel Paritcher, he served as Shochet and Bodek for his home city Nikolayev. He passed away on 15 Cheshvan 5680 a few months before the Histalkus of the Rebbe Rashab.

[One of his son-in-laws was Reb Shlomo Aron Kazarnovsky featured in Derher Issue 62, Expanded of this past Tishrei.]

Devotion

In the early years of the Rebbe Rashab's nisius there was a discussion between the chassidim (many of which were the Rebbe Maharash's Chassidim) over which Rebbe's Chassidus a Chossid should learn. One suggested to learn *Imrei Bina* from the Mittlerer Rebbe, another suggested the Tzemach's Tzedek's maamorim, while a third said the Rebbe Maharash's. Reb Asher who was also there said he doesn't understand the question for a Chossid needs to 'koch' (be involved) in what the Rebbe is involved, the Rebbe (Rashab) says a maamer every Shabbos, and this is his 'koch', so obviously this is what a Chossid should be learning. This was Reb Asher, totally devoted to the Rebbe Rashab.

Baal Menagen

Reb Asher had a real talent in music; he had composed several niggunim, as well as brought to Lubavitch niggunim which he had heard. At the wedding of the Horenshtein family in 5661 he heard a very *geshmake* niggun from the band. On his next visit to Lubavitch he sang it before the Rebbe Rashab, who being very pleased by this niggun (specifically with the *ga'aguim*[longing] expressed in this niggun), commented: With this niggun one can daven well, and the *kli* can be washed out with its warm tears, and it helps for opening the heart. "עם הניגון הזה אפשר להתפלל טוב, והדבר מועיל לפתיחת הלב, אפשר לרחוץ היטב את הכלי בדמעות חמות".

Of this talent of his Reb Yoel Kahn relates: During one of his visits to Lubavitch Reb Asher heard that the famous chosid Reb Berel Moshe's from Kremenchug (who was one of the 'Kremenchuker Berelach') was in town. Reb Berel Moshe's was older than him and he was well known for his ability to explain chassidus. Reb Asher knew much about him although he never had the chance to meet him in person. One day Reb Asher walks into the small beis medrash and saw a Chossid with his tallis over his shoulder deep in thought, one foot on the ground one on the bench, singing a niggun. Seeing him singing Reb Asher commented "This must be Reb Berel Moshe's". So much was his talent, he was able to sense the essence a person based on their singing.



Preparing the Tanya for print

When the Rebbe Rashab wanted to print a definitive version of Tanya, with all the many typos corrected, he chose Reb Asher for the task, which was completed, and printed in Vilna in 5660. About this work Reb Asher wrote in the 'printers introduction', 'ממורה רבה', how he gathered many different manuscripts and versions of Tanya and the painstaking work of comparing them to try and figure out the correct one, which would express what the Alter Rebbe was trying to convey. About this Tanya the Rebbe wrote in the introduction to the Tanya printed in 5714: included are the corrections of Reb Asher Grossman...and my father in law, the [Friediker] Rebbe told me that in general his work is something which can be relied upon.

A Cycle Everyone can Join

As far back as the times of the Alter Rebbe Chassidim were given, as a gift, certain study cycles to be learnt each day.

The Alter Rebbe said "One must live with the times" and the Maharil explained that this means to learn Chumash on each day of the week not only on Shabbos, each *aliya* corresponding to one day. (See Hayom Yom, 19 Teves; 3 Cheshvan)

The daily Tehillim and Tanya were established and introduced by the Friediker Rebbe (see collection of letters in the back of Tehillim.)

The Rebbe established the daily study of Rambam, with three separate cycles in order for everyone to take part: three chapters per day, one chapter, and the Sefer Hamitzvos. (Sichos in 5744 and on.)

Time and again the Rebbe would emphasize how these four study programs are unique in their ability to reach each and every Yid and to available and possible to each person in their personal situation. No matter who they are, or what level of learning they might be holding at, each person has the ability to join in these study cycles.

Chumash - even without understanding one fulfills the mitzvah of learning Torah, for just reading Torah Sh'bechsav is already Talmud Torah.

Tehillim - everyone can read the words which are considered davening even without understanding.

Tanya - is the Torah Sh'bechsav of Chassidus, and the words of Tanya alone have an amazing power.

Rambam - This is the reason there are three separate ways of learning Rambam, to make it possible for all people, of all levels of understanding, to partake in the learning.

And from the emphasis the Rebbe placed on these daily study programs we see the importance in fulfilling them. Additionally, from the long explanations in the Sichos clarifying each program of study and why it specifically is *שוה לכל נפש*, we understand that there are no other study cycles that apply to all of Yidden equally.

To be continued

Why learn with a Chavrusa ?

Q&A

The majority of learning that a bochur does is with a chavrusa. Learning together with someone else is a basic foundation upon which Tomchei Tmimim was built. The Rebbe Rashab explained that through learning with a chavrusa one can reach the truth of Torah. This is because no one can say that their way of understanding is the truth, only through discussing it with someone else can you reach the 'real' truth.

In the sixth Perek of Pirkei Avos it speaks about the different ways through which Torah is acquired. One of the methods brought there, amongst the many others, is "Dibbuk Chaveirim". This can be explained very generally as learning B'chavrusa.

What are the benefits and gains of learning together with someone else?

When two people learn something together it automatically generates deeper and more intellectual thinking. Firstly there is the need to explain to someone else, which forces you to have a better understanding, and secondly there is the idea of "Kinas Sofrim Tarbeh Chochmo", (the enviousness of the wise brings to knowledge). Being that this jealousy stems from holiness, it is positive and encouraged. Each person will want to make sure he understands it better than the other, creating a situation where both students know the material well and in depth.

In fact, learning with a chavrusa does more than just add to one's learning, it is imperative, for without it one's learning is incomplete and shallow.

In one of the Sichos at the Purim Farbrengen in 5732, the Rebbe explained this. The Rebbe began with a question on one of the Halochos of Megilla. The Gemora says, "We are stop the learning of Torah to hear the Megilla being read". Seemingly reading the Megillah is also learning Torah, so why is it considered the stopping of learning?

The Rebbe explained how there is a great difference between the learning of an individual person on his own level and the learning of a community. True, reading the Megillah is considered learning but in the face of one's personal in-depth learning it is measured as Bittul Torah.

From here we can see a major difference between an in-depth type of learning and a shallow one, so much so that it is counted as Bittul Torah.

The Rebbe then continued: (*Not a word for word translation*)

"From here we can learn, that one who is able to learn in depth, with a broad understanding, can't suffice and is not fulfilling his obligation with a shallow understanding. (Shallow on his level, for he is capable of much more.)

One of the ways to accomplish this in-depth learning is through learning b'chavrusa, for this arouses "the jealousy of the wise" which brings to knowledge...

The Rebbe then explained why this is not the case with one who learns alone, and the problems that could arise when doing so. [The continuation of the Sichah deals with the correct way in setting up classes, that each class will want to show how they are greater than the other one.]

The Right One

Based on all the above it is imperative for every Bochur to find himself a chavrusa, one who is similar in character in addition to being on a similar level of learning. While it is true that at times one can sit and think by himself, this should not be a continuous habit.

Although sometimes one does not see the importance of it and may not understand it, this should not get in the way of learning with a chavrusa. As the Rebbe wrote to someone, "You should discuss your reasons with your Rav and Mashpia, but afterwards there needs to be *Kabbolas Ol* in doing what they say and this will lead to Hatzlocha..."

No Need for Change

In response to a Bochur who wrote to the Rebbe that he wanted to change his chavrusa even though he had seen Hatzlocha, the Rebbe suggested that he should not change, for how can one be assured that he will have the same success with the new chavrusa.

Staying Focused

In response to someone who wrote to the Rebbe that he has an inner desire to learn Torah but for the time being has not been able to accomplish this, the Rebbe replied:

...2) To try, as much as possible, to make sure you learn with someone else, for in addition to this being one of the ways with which Torah is acquired, one can see clearly that through making this *Kvius* [with someone else] it will last. [The reason for this is] because one is embarrassed in front of others [and therefore will not cancel], and there is also no place for excuses...

מורה ש"ס ללימוד הרמב"ם			
ו'	כ"ב בטבת	הל' טוען ונטען פרק יג-טו	הל' שחיטה פרק י
ש"ק	כ"ג בטבת	פרק טז הל' נחלות פרק א-ב	פרק יא
א'	כ"ד בטבת	פרק ג-ה	פרק יב
ב'	כ"ה בטבת	פרק ו-ח	פרק יג
ג'	כ"ו בטבת	פרק ט-יא	פרק יד
ד'	כ"ז בטבת	פתח פ"ק ו'ג' ספר שופטים הל' סנהדרין פרק א-ג.	נדבות פי' ו'ג' ספר הפלאה הל' שבועות פ"א
ה'	כ"ח בטבת	פרק ד-ו	פרק ב