

many thanks for the *אגרות קודש*.

## GOOD NEWS

*Time and again the Rebbe implored of Chassidim to write about their besuros tovot, enumerating the many benefits of this practice*

### IT LESSENS THE LONELINESS

In response to your letter of Wednesday, *parshas Va'eschanan*: your apology for writing to me is unnecessary, since it does not bother me. In fact, it is always a pleasure to hear what is happening with *anash*. For if it is good news, it gives me satisfaction and joy, and even if it's not, the mere fact that you write to me strengthens the spirit and lessens the feelings of loneliness and dejection. It is explained in many *seforim* that even if a person cannot help out in a tangible way, his positive thoughts and wishes are helpful. It is also well known that verbally mentioning a fellow person's virtues, or the things he needs, bears significance [in and of itself] as this causes his situation to become easier, whether immediately or eventually. (This matter is explained with a *moshol* by Reb Hillel Paritcher, printed in *Hatomim* vol. 2 and in *Kovetz Michtavim* 1 p. 20.)

### REASON TO WRITE

A *bochur* once asked the Rebbe about the necessity of writing a *duch* to the Rebbe, saying, "Why must we inform you if the Rabbeim know everything regardless?" The Rebbe answered him that this is similar to what Rashi writes on the *possuk* "And Moshe repeated the words of the nation to Hashem" (Yisro 19:8). [Rashi writes:] "Did Moshe really have to repeat [their words]? Rather, this teaches us proper conduct. Moshe didn't say "Since the One who sent me knows everything I don't need to repeat [their words]." The same applies in our case.

It is well known that the Ba'al Shem Tov tried to encourage simple people to speak positively about one another, and through this they were able to transform [lit. sweeten] harsh judgments.

I will read your *pan* in the room of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, where we go to deliver *panim* and for *yechidus*, as well as at the Ohel of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, at an opportune time.

When a tzaddik blesses, Hashem fulfills—to its fullest extent—the blessing of the tzaddik, who is in this world [now] more so than during his lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

### "TZAROS CHASSIDIM"

...It is surprising that you have still not answered me as to whether you have set aside fixed times to learn Torah in general, and particularly the Torah of the Rebbe, my father-in-law. The Rebbe, my father-in-law, would say that there are "*tzaros Chassidim*"—who only remember about the Rebbe and Chassidus when something negative happens to them, and then they write a *pan*. When there is abundance, and "each man is under his grapevine and his fig tree" [they do not write to the Rebbe].

I do not understand why you, who has merited through supernatural means to see the holy face of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, need to be reminded about the necessity of learning his Torah; and even after you are reminded, you are still undecided about whether to accept the suggestion or perhaps you have more important things to do instead.

Obviously, it is not my intention to bring up something that is the opposite of compassionate. But I am surprised at those who

have the choice of whether to be “*Polishe Chassidim*,” “*tzaros Chassidim*,” “*veibershe Chassidim*,” or to be at least some of what was demanded of us by all the Rebbeim, something whose taste is that of the sweet, good, and light. Yet nonetheless these people choose to become *ba’alei battim*; they become occupied [with other things], say that learning one line of Chassidus is enough, and that they shouldn’t be asked to do more.<sup>2</sup>

## GOOD NEWS AVOIDS THE OPPOSITE

I received your letter of 9 Cheshvan in which you apologize for writing news that is not positive.

Generally, when someone ought to write and delays it, another reason will come up which forces him to write. On the other hand, when someone writes in a timely manner, informing [the Rebbe] when there is good news, instead of only about the opposite, Heaven does not need to find other means to compel him to write, connecting [the two parties] with one another.

I hope that by the time you receive this letter, the matter about which you wrote will already be resolved in a good way, and hopefully also the other matters [will be resolved] as they should be, slowly but surely. I also wait to hear good news; that everything is well with you, both physically and spiritually.

P.S. When I will visit the Ohel of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, I will mention all of the people whom you wrote about, [and ask a *bracha*] for good health and livelihood for them.<sup>3</sup>

## THE RABBEIM PROTESTED

...As I recall, I have already told or written this to you: I wish *anash* would make it a habit of notifying me when they have good news, as this will cause Heaven to decrease the amount of negative notices needing to be sent. Even though already in the Alter Rebbe’s times, withholding good news was bemoaned, it should not serve as an indication that this behavior is tolerated; not even for the later generations, as even then the Rabbeim protested strongly against this behavior.

In keeping with the theme of your letter, you haven’t mentioned anything about utilizing the month of Tishrei to strengthen and spread Yiddishkeit. I would hope that you actually did so even though you aren’t telling me about it.

With blessings for good news.<sup>4</sup>

## MISSING THE POINT

In response to your notification that you turned 16; you have certainly learned in Chassidus the meaning of “Avraham was

## שמחה ותענוג נפשי ופנימי

May Hashem help that when you will next come into *yechidus* you will be able to write about the good things that you are doing, not only about negative things [happening in your life]. When I hear about a *bochur* in Tomchei Tmimim who is learning, davening, and behaving properly, this gives me joy and a true and intrinsic delight (“שמחה ותענוג נפשי ופנימי”). It is obvious [what happens] when the situation is the opposite.

Certainly, you and your acquaintances in Tomchei Tmimim will try to improve in this regard, if for no reason other than *ahavas Yisroel*.

(From a *yechidus* in Kislev 5732)

old, advanced in days,” that one’s time should be filled with Torah and mitzvos. But when you write that you turned 16 and you request a *bracha*, without mentioning anything about your studies and your current status of *yiras shomayim*, the main point is missing. The fact that you have completed 16 years of life—may you live long—is not in your hands. You neglect to mention entirely about the purpose for which you were created, which is, as *Chazal* say (towards the end of *Masechte Kiddushin*), “I was not created for any purpose other than to serve my Creator.”<sup>5</sup>

## WRITE GOOD NEWS YOURSELF

Thank you for the good news regarding the improvement in the health of Harav [...]. I am surprised that he didn’t inform me about this on his own. In fact, this is one of the ways of fulfilling the mitzvah of loving your fellow as yourself—through gladdening the heart of a Jew with good news. [What I said applies] particularly to this individual, who obviously informed me earlier what the situation was before he received treatment. Apparently, the saying of the Alter Rebbe that [the mitzvah of] ‘love your fellow as yourself’ creates a receptacle for—and is also included in—[the mitzvah of] ‘love Hashem your G-d’ has not reached everywhere yet.<sup>6</sup> **D**

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 402

2. Ibid. p. 416

3. Ibid. vol. 21 p. 233

4. Ibid. vol. 14 p. 52.

5. Ibid. vol. 5 p. 203

6. Ibid. vol. 14 p. 358