



לזכות  
החייל בצבאות ה'  
יהושע בנימן שיחי'  
לרגל הולדתו ביום כ"ד אייר ה'תשע"ו,  
שנת הקהל  
נדפס ע"י הוריו  
הרה"ת ר' נחמן ומרת עלקא שיחיו  
אבענד



# Simcha

## The Bedrock of Yiddishkeit

...בא חסידים האבען די צוויי זאכען קיינמאל ב"ה  
ניט געפֿעלט, שמחת הנפש וידידות. דאס זיינען די  
חסידישע אייגענשאפטען ולעולם ישנם במהותם  
ומציאותם אלא שיש זמנים שהם מתעלמים וצריכים  
לגלותם וההתגלות היא ע"י לימוד חסידות, והתבוננות  
וואס א איד איז, לימוד חסידות מגלה שמחת הנפש...

**These two things were never lacking by  
Chassidim: soulful joy and fellowship. They are  
two characteristics that are always in existence,  
only sometimes they lay hidden and need to be  
brought to the surface through the study of  
Chassidus; by contemplating what a "Yid" is.  
Learning Chassidus brings forth joy of the soul...**

(אנ"ק אדמו"ר מהור"י צ"ח עמ' רמו)

"Our fathers, the holy Rabbeim commanded Chassidim: worry and depression, even if caused by one's deficient spiritual standing, are negative traits. They placed an absolute and total prohibition on these traits, and relegated them to the four deaths of *beis din*. They chased them out of the chassidic bounds, uprooting every last bit without leaving even a the smallest trace, lest they cause serious damage..."<sup>1</sup>

This is how the Frierdiker Rebbe boldly denounces depression and encourages Chassidim to be upbeat and joyful.

One of the bearings of Chassidus introduced by the Baal Shem Tov and implemented by all the Rabbeim is the notion of "*simcha*"—serving Hashem with joy.

Truth be told, the Baal Shem Tov did not create a new idea. Like many other areas in Yiddishkeit that existed for thousands of years before, the Baal Shem Tov with *Toras haChassidus* emphasized, illuminated, and breathed new life on to this concept.<sup>2</sup>

תחת אשר לא עבדת את ה' אלקיך בשמחה, תחת אשר לא עבדת את ה' אלקיך בלב<sup>3</sup>—a person is expected to serve Hashem with joy and gladness of the heart. As the Rebbe points out, serving Hashem is a constant obligation; all day, every day. Hence, a person is required to always be happy.<sup>4</sup>

## The Month of Av

In a vivid account of the atmosphere in the Lubavitch of old throughout the year, the Frierdiker Rebbe describes how each Yom Tov could be felt in the air. “The Three Weeks [between Shiva Asar B’Tammuz and Tisha B’Av] were truly sad days. The *halachos* of Tisha B’Av were observed meticulously, down to the last detail...”<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, Chassidim always found ways to compensate for the sadness by increasing joy (obviously in a manner permitted by *halacha*).

The Mishnah rules משוכנס אב ממעטין בשמחה—when the month of Av arrives we decrease our joy. A famous *chassidishe vort*, quoted numerous times by the Rebbe, maintains that the the Mishnah can be translated to mean that when the month of Av comes around, we decrease [in all undesirable things] through *simcha*.<sup>6</sup>

For this reason, the Rebbe encouraged making *siyumin* during the Nine Days. “Whatever we can do to bring a bit of joy into these days, we must try and do,” the Rebbe explained.<sup>7</sup>

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## THE GREATEST GIFT

Question: How does one reach *simcha*?

The Rebbe: One rejoices when he feels he has received something that he did not have before. The greater the gift, the greater his joy.

Think about the fact that a created being is by definition a finite being. Nevertheless, Hashem gave us the opportunity to fulfill Torah and mitzvos, thereby connecting with the Creator. This is the highest level one can reach. No matter what one can get in life, the greatest of achievements in this world are all limited by definition. They cannot compare with the greatness of connecting with the Infinite Creator.

Being that this is the greatest gift one will ever receive in life, it should bring about the greatest joy ever.

(*Yechidus with the Rebbe, 16 Mar-Cheshvan 5716*)<sup>8</sup>

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LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 229790

THE YEARLY YUD-TES KISLEV COMMUNITY FARBRENGEN IN Kfar Chabad, 5731.

## Rain of Blessing

Even before the Baal Shem Tov was revealed and spread the teachings of Chassidus to the masses, he already began teaching the Jewish people of the importance of being joyful.

The Frierdiker Rebbe relates:

Before the Baal Shem Tov revealed himself to the world, he went about from town to town in an attempt to awaken the hearts of his brethren and strengthen their *emunah* in Hashem.

Once, he arrived in a village where the local Jews worked the land for their livelihood. It was in the middle of the summer and the area suffered from a terrible drought. Rain hadn’t fallen in a long while and the crop was drying out. The livestock was getting sick with an epidemic and the townsfolk were in great distress.

The locals were pious Jews, and these events aroused them to *teshuvah*. When the tragedy persisted, they decided to bring a *maagid* to preach



words of rebuke and inspire them to do an even greater *teshuvah*.

All the townsfolk gathered in the shul and the *maagid* did not spare any words. He used harsh language to rebuke his listeners ("געשאטן פער און" שוועבל"), while the entire community groaned and cried bitterly.

Hearing the painful cries of the men and women, the Baal Shem Tov, who was in the shul at the time, turned to the *maagid* and called out: "What do you have with the Yidden? Yidden are good!"

Turning to the Yidden, the Baal Shem Tov announced, "Come, Yidden! Dance with me, and after *mincha*, rain will fall!"

The assembled first looked at him suspiciously. They thought perhaps he didn't believe in Hashem or maybe he was out of his mind, *chas v'shalom*. But then, the Baal Shem Tov began strengthening his argument with proofs from Chazal, and the people took heed to his words, believing in the power of Hashem's salvation. They joined him in a dance. As their dance progressed, the gates of heaven opened and a downpour of rain fell upon the ground.<sup>9</sup>

## On Top of the Game

As mentioned, *avodas Hashem* must always be done with joy, as the *possuk* says, עבדו את ה' בשמחה.

Additionally, the Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya that the only way to properly fulfill your job in this world and overcome your *yetzer hara*, is by being upbeat and joyful, ridding yourself of all depression.<sup>10</sup>

"A war cannot be won with tears," a Jewish soldier said to the Tzemach Tzedek. "A war is taken on while singing a march!" The Tzemach Tzedek then exclaimed: "This is a true soldier!"<sup>11</sup>

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## DON'T WASTE TIME

What you write about depression, the answer is already written in Tanya; depression comes from an impure source.

What do you have to do with such things?

I am shocked. Since when do members of *anash* have time for such matters? Do they not see and feel that the present moment is ever so precious? Each and every minute is to be maximized to its fullest potential. Some people are wasting their time over matters that cannot even be referred to as "trivial."

(Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 503)

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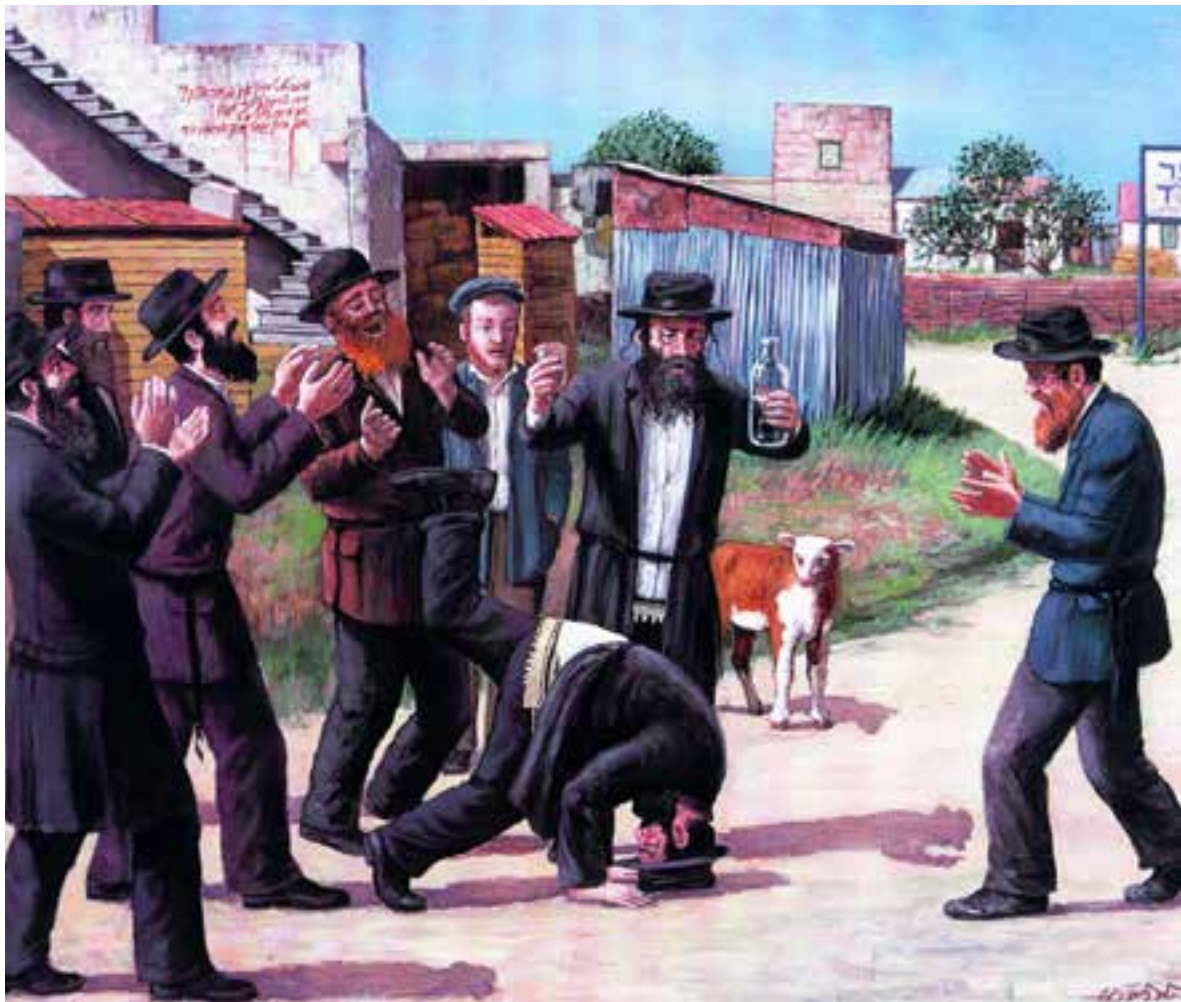
## Think About It

For this reason, the Rabbeim always taught their Chassidim to be joyful, even helping them with advice on how to reach this state of being.



CHASSIDIM BREAK OUT IN SONG AND DANCE ON THE AIRPLANE ENROUTE TO THE REBBE FOR TISHREI.

16 ELUL 5737, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 20486



To a Chossid who asked how to be more joyful, the Tzemach Tzedek responded:

You must ask Hashem to help you be happier, but there is also a role that you can play in achieving this goal.

A person has the ability to be in full control of his thought, speech, and action at all times. Train yourself to think only positive thoughts and remove all bad thoughts from your mind. Simply think about other things; whether worldly or holy. Likewise, don't talk about sad topics. Make as if you are actually happy, even if you don't feel that way in your heart. This way, you will eventually reach true happiness.<sup>12</sup>

The Rebbe once related a story of Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev:

A Yid once entered Reb Levi Yitzchok's room in the morning and he found the rav in the midst

of reciting *birchos hashachar* dancing joyfully. The Yid was puzzled. Before davening or accomplishing anything today, the rav is already so happy?!

The Berditchiver explained: "When I reached the *bracha* of שלא עשוי גוי, I realized how lucky I am. Just the fact that I am required to recite this *bracha* means that things could have been different, and I thank Hashem for creating me this way. When I realized how fortunate I am, I started dancing!"

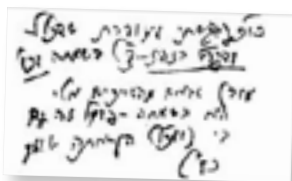
The Rebbe concluded:

One need not contemplate for too long about this. Just listen to the *bracha*, think about how things could have been, and how they actually turned out. Think about the great gift you've been given without working for it at all. You will surely have reason to be happy.<sup>13</sup>



## IT AFFECTS ME

Part of a written response to Rabbi Moshe Yitzchok Hecht of New Haven, CT, explaining the importance that a Chossid always be joyful:



כוכ"פ [= כמה וכמה פעמים] בקשתי ועוררתי שבכלל -  
ובפרט בזמנה"ז [= בזמן הזה] צ"ל [= צריך להיות] בשמחה וכו'  
מובן שבאם מהשייכים אלי הוא בשמחה - פועל זה גם בי (ומכלל  
הן - אתה שומע כו') וכל השייך יותר ובפרט ע"י מעשה בפועל,  
יום יומית הרי - הנ"ל הוא ביתר שאת כו'

I have asked and encouraged many, many times that in general, and especially in the present time, one must be joyful, etc.

Obviously, if those who are connected to me are joyful, this affects me as well. (From the positive side, the opposite is understood [i.e. the negative—if they are not joyful it affects me].)

Whoever is more connected [with me], especially if [the connection is] by means of action, on a daily basis, the abovementioned [effect on me] is even greater.

## Positive Energy

Another reason to be happy, the Rebbe explains, is because happiness brings positive energy to the person and helps bring about blessings in his life.

The Zohar says, everything happening in this world has effect in the higher worlds. If one is happy down here, he can draw light and joy upon himself from above. For this reason, it is so important to be happy and avoid even thinking negative thoughts. Hence the Rabbeim instructed us: "*Tracht gut vet zein gut*."<sup>14</sup>

## Pave the Way for Moshiach

In recent years, the Rebbe encouraged an outburst of uncontrolled joy as means to fight off the last moments of *galus* and usher in the *geulah*:

"In recent times, we have seen an increase in the intensity of the darkness of *galus*. Even in a physical sense, we see so much negativity, sicknesses and undesirable things that have never been seen before.



"Nowadays, we are unable to fight off these things by fasting, for our generations are not physically strong enough. And so, we need to find another alternative to fight the darkness of *galus*. The best way to do so is by increasing in all matters good and holy, especially increasing *simcha*.

"Chassidus explains the great power of *simcha*, and that it can break through all boundaries, bringing down an abundance of blessings from above in all that we need."<sup>15</sup>

In 5748, the Rebbe clearly singled out pure *simcha* as the last thing needed to finally bring Moshiach

On Shabbos parshas Ki Seitzei, the Rebbe came out with a הצעה ובקשה מיוחדת, a special suggestion



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 129845

THE REBBE ENCOURAGES THE JOYOUS SINGING AS HE LEAVES 770 FOLLOWING THE FARBRENGEN CHOF AV 5736.

and request, to increase in *simcha* in order to bring Moshiach speedily.

The Rebbe explained that after all of our work in *galus*, fulfilling Torah and mitzvos and even spreading Chassidus throughout the generations, it simply does not make sense that Moshiach has not yet arrived.

The only thing that was not yet tried was to increase in pure joy—שמחה בטהרה. Not just a joy in fulfilling the mitzvos, or a joy in serving Hashem in general, but rather focusing on the *simcha* as an *avodah in and of itself*.

Try it and you will see, it will work!<sup>16</sup> **T**

1. Igros Kodesh Admur RaYYaTZ vol. 4 p. 356

2. See Reb Shmuel Zalmanov's introduction to Sefer Haniggunim, p. ה'

3. Devarim 28:47

4. Lekuttei Sichos vol. 1 p. 194

5. Lekuttei Dibburim vol. 1 p. 231

6. See Toras Menachem vol. 26 p. 154

7. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 3 p. 787

8. Toras Menachem vol. 15 p. 203. See also Maamar Vayihyu Chayei Sara 5712.

9. Sefer Hasichos 5701 p. 132

10. Tanya beginning of perek 26

11. Sefer Hasichos 5705 p. 59

12. Igros Kodesh Admur Hazaken, Admur HoEmtzo, Admur HaTzemach Tzedek vol. 1 p. 322

13. Toras Menachem vol. 8 p. 172

14. Igros Kodesh vol. 6 p. 286; vol. 4 p. 119

15. Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 2 p. 187

16. Sefer Hasichos 5748 vol. 2 p. 628