



# JOY TO THE CORE

## *Celebrating Simchas Beis Hashoevah*

In one of his *maamarim*, the Alter Rebbe explains the concept of *levushim*, the garments of the *neshamah*. Thought, speech, and action are the external garments of the *neshamah*, and they can conceal the person's true personality, his intellect and emotions.

The Alter Rebbe brings two examples to illustrate this:

1) A person who is not very smart can quote the words of a wise person though he doesn't even understand the words he is saying. Someone observing might think that this person is very smart, but in truth it is the garment of speech that is concealing his actual intellectual capabilities, which are lacking.

2) A mean and spiteful person, may perform an act of kindness from time to time. Here too, although he doesn't feel the *middah* of *chesed*, his garment of action conceals his true emotions.

How do the *levushim* manage to conceal the intellect and emotions? It is explained in Kabbalah that the *levushim* have a very deep and powerful *ko'ach* that allows them to conceal one's personality, his *pnimiyus*, just as physical clothing can make an ugly person look good.

The Alter Rebbe is teaching us a very powerful lesson:

Nowadays, the *avodah* of refining our intellect and emotions is very difficult; it says in Tanya refining the *middos* is an *avodah* reserved for

*tzadikim*, and elsewhere it is explained that the refinement of our intellect will only happen once Moshiach comes. Nevertheless, we still need to do our *avodah* with our garments of thought, speech, and action. If we make sure that our *levushim* are beautiful, they will cause us to appear beautiful though we may be lacking in our *pnimiyus*.

Simply speaking, it seems that the spiritual beauty that comes from the *levushim* extends outwards only, to the eyes of an outside observer. However from the words of the Alter Rebbe it is clear that the *levushim* have such a strong *ko'ach* that they can actually change our *pnimiyus*! As we can see in the two above-mentioned examples; although the simple person is not so



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לזכות  
 גאלדא שתחי'  
 לרגל הגיעה לגיל שנים עשרה שנה,  
 היא עונת בת מצוה  
 ביום כ"ח מנחם אב ה'תשע"ו  
 שנת הקהל  
 נדפס ע"י הוריה  
 הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק  
 וזוגתו מרת ח' שצערא ומשפחתם  
 שיחיו  
 שפאלטער



smart now, through speaking words of *chochmah*, he will eventually become smarter. Likewise, through performing kind actions, the mean person will slowly become nicer. So too in our lives; if we think, act, and speak in the right way, the *ko'ach* of these *levushim* will cause a change in our *pnimiyus*.

We see this idea in the following story:

Once, people complained to the Alter Rebbe about the behavior of certain Chassidim, who would spend a long time davening despite the fact that they were not on a level to do so adequately; they were doing it only *be'chitzoniyus*. The Alter Rebbe answered them by quoting the Mishnah<sup>1</sup> that “if a person pretends that he is lame, blind, etc. he will not die from old age until he

actually becomes like that.” So too these “pretenders” will not die before they actually reach the level they are pretending to be on.

From all of this we can learn a special lesson regarding Simchas Beis Hashoevah:

Simchas Beis Hashoevah comes after the *avodah* of Chodesh Elul, the twelve days from Chai Elul until Rosh Hashanah, the days of *selichos*, Rosh Hashanah, Aseres Yemei Teshuvah, Yom Kippur, the days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos, and the first days of Sukkos.

After an honest spiritual accounting, there will be some who will realize that they have remained unaffected by these special days, and have yet to begin their *avodah*. This may cause them to be downhearted

and depressed, and ask themselves “What do I have to celebrate at Simchas Beis Hashoevah? How am I to dance with joy?!”

The answer to this is, *hamaaseh hu ha'ikar*—action is the main thing. As we explained earlier, *levushim* have a special *ko'ach*, our actions have the ability to change reality. The Alter Rebbe (a *posek* in *nigleh* and Chassidus) *paskened* like the Mishnah that “if one pretends....he will not die from old age until he becomes!”

We must do our part and dance, and this will bring about true change within us—a justified *simcha*.<sup>2</sup> **T**

1. Pe'ah 8:9  
 2. Based on the maamar of Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos 5721