



לע"נ  
 ר' יהודה בן ר' משה יעקב ע"ה ביסטאן  
 נלב"ע ר"ח כסלו ה'תשנ"ט  
 תנ"צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו  
 הרה"ת השליח ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו  
 מרת ביילא רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו  
 ביסטאן

# כ"א כסלו Yom Har Gerizim

COMPILED BY: RABBI MENDEL VOGEL

On 21 Kislev of the year 3448 (ג'תתמ"ח), occurred the historic meeting between Shimon HaTzaddik and Alexander ("the Great") of Macedonia: When Alexander the Great conquered Eretz Yisroel, the Kutim (Samaritans), bitter enemies of the Yidden, attempted to gain control of the Beis Hamikdash from Alexander, who initially granted their request to buy the land on which the Beis Hamikdash was built.

When Shimon HaTzaddik, the Kohen Gadol, found out, he dressed in the *bigdei kehuna*, and he and his entourage traveled through the night to meet Alexander (wearing the *bigdei kehuna* outside the Beis Hamikdash was allowed in this instance because of the life-threatening situation).

After sunrise, the two camps met. When Alexander the Great saw Shimon HaTzaddik, he stepped down from his chariot and bowed respectfully.

He was asked, "Why does a king of your stature bow to this Jew?" and he responded, "I see his face before I go to battle and I am victorious."

He asked the Yidden why they came, and they said, "How can you allow these people (the Kutim) to fool you into giving them the place where we pray for you and for your kingdom's stability?"

Alexander granted the Yidden authority to do with the Kutim as they pleased, and they did to the Kutim as the Kutim had planned to do to them—the Yidden plowed and sowed the land on Har Gerizim, the place where the Kutim worshipped. The day on which this occurred—21 Kislev—was declared a Yom Tov.

**F**rom this story, we can learn the following lessons:

1. We should not mistakenly think that as long as we have the true Beis Hamikdash, it doesn't matter if a false one (א"פאלשן בית) "coexists" (המקדש) with it. This is a mistake, since לא נתמלָאָה צור אָלאַ מְחַרְבְּנָה שֶׁל "ירושלים"—Tzor became full [gained power] only from the destruction of Yerushalayim.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, in order for the authentic Beis Hamikdash to truly endure, its counterfeit counterpart must be eliminated.

2. One could ask: If all the military victories of Alexander the Great were credited to Shimon HaTzaddik ("I see his face when I go to battle and I am victorious"), then clearly he had the ability to defeat the Kutim without the help of Alexander. Why, then, did he come to Alexander for assistance?

The answer is that, granted, the integrity of the authentic Beis Hamikdash must be preserved, and anything that threatens it must be destroyed. However, there are different methods, or *avodos*, to accomplish this. The *avoda* of Shimon



HaTzaddik as a Kohen Gadol is to wear the *bigdei kehuna*, and when he fulfills the *avoda* specific to him, then all the other pieces fall into place—the opposition is defeated, and the integrity of the Beis Hamikdash remains fully intact.

In terms of our personal *avodas Hashem*, the “*bigdei kehuna*” refer to the teachings of Chassidus, the inner dimension of Torah (Hashem is referred to as a “*kohen*,”<sup>2</sup> and His “garments” is the Torah in general, and its inner dimension in particular).

Our *avoda* is to “wear” the “*bigdei kehuna*”; to immerse ourselves in the teachings of Chassidus—and not just within the “Beis Hamikdash” or “Yerushalayim.” Also when venturing out into the world, like when Shimon HaTzaddik went to meet Alexander the Great, one does so while wearing the “*bigdei kehuna*.” The wellsprings of Chassidus are not to be reserved or safeguarded for certain individuals, but rather disseminated to all four corners of the world—“פוצו מעינותיך” חוצה.” It is specifically through this *avoda* that we eradicate falsehood and unholiness.



The Gemara<sup>3</sup> asks: How was Shimon HaTzaddik allowed to go to Alexander the Great wearing the *bigdei kehuna*; the *halacha* is that “[with regard to] *bigdei kehuna*, it is prohibited to go out to the country, [i.e., outside the Beis Hamikdash, while] wearing them”?

The Gemara offers two explanations; the second one quotes the *possuk*, “עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך”—It is time to act for Hashem, they have nullified your Torah”; i.e. when the time comes to act for the sake of Hashem (such as preventing the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash), one is allowed to violate the Torah in order to do so (Rashi).

In other words, not only is the violation of *halacha* in this instance not an issue, it is, in fact, *mandated by halacha*.

This attitude applies to *hafatzas hamaayanos* as well: In previous generations, the study of *pnimiyus haTorah* was reserved for an exclusive category of individuals, and it was forbidden to reveal it to the “outside.” However, this system only works as long as the general state of Yiddishkeit is stable. When we are in “crisis mode,” however, and the situation is critical,

then “it is time to act for Hashem”; one must put on the *bigdei kehuna* (i.e. study Chassidus oneself) and go outside the Beis Hamikdash (i.e. bring Chassidus to the masses) in order to eliminate the falsehood that conceals *Elokus*.

There is a well-known *moshol* from the Alter Rebbe about a king whose son fell ill, and the king ordered that the most precious stone in his crown be ground into powder, mixed with water, and poured into the prince’s mouth in the hope that at least one drop would make it in. Now, it is self-understood that under normal circumstances, no one would even dream of crushing this precious stone. But in a situation where the life of the crown prince is on the line, all the rules change and there is no step too drastic.

So it is in the *nimshol*; as the *galus* becomes darker and *Elokus* more concealed, the *avoda* of *hafatzas hamaayanos* must increase. In our generation, we are tasked with bringing the wellsprings of Chassidus to every individual.

### Takeaway:

The *avoda* of *hafatzas hamaayanos*—which is a necessity now more than ever—carries with it both great responsibility and great privilege. For if the *maayanos* are not disseminated after all the work that was done to make them accessible, that means that the “grinding of the crown jewel” was for naught, *chas v’shalom!* At the same time, the *zechus* that comes with spreading Chassidus is tremendous, as evidenced by the fact that the King is even willing to pulverize the crown jewel in the hope that some of it will reach His only son—the Yidden.

(Adapted from *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vaera* 5717)

1. Pesachim 42b.
2. Sanhedrin 39a.
3. Yoma 69a.