

א חסיד ישער דערהער...

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Parshas Zachor - 5718

On Shabbos Parshas Zachor, 5718, an extraordinary event took place in 770. At exactly 8:00 on Shabbos morning, the Rebbe appeared and invited all the Bochorim and Yungerleit who had come on time to Seder Chassidus into his room to hear a Maamor.

This Maamor focuses very much on what the klipah of Amalek is and on the Avoda of getting rid of him. All Buchrim are encouraged to learn this Maamor.

Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, the Rebbe's Shliach to Milan, Italy, relates:

Before Shabbos, a rumor began to spread that the Rebbe himself was going to the Zal and see what the attendance is like (during this period of time, as it seems, this Seder on Shabbos morning was not attended all that well ...). Naturally, some gave credibility to the rumor, while others chose to ignore it.

When Shabbos morning arrived, I happened to come early to 770, a few minutes before eight. I was strolling around in the hallway outside the Zal, when I suddenly heard what sounded like a large tumult. I heard doors opening and closing rapidly, and before I had a chance to realize what was going on, I noticed another Bochor standing outside the Rebbe's room pressing his ear against the door, as if trying to listen in to something. When I asked what had happened, he explained, "The Rebbe just arrived and called all the Bochorim into his room, closing the door behind them so as not to allow any latecomers in. The Rebbe is about to recite a Maamor for them!"

The time was 8:01. I had missed the golden opportunity by just one minute!

The Rebbe then began with the Maamor "Zachor es asher osa l'cho Amalek..." In it he

explained how there are two Mitzvos related to Amalek: Remembering their wrongdoing and annihilating them from existence. Amalek represents a Klipa that is irreparable. The only way to deal with it is by breaking its very being.

I'm sure there are many others who are not especially impressed by words as these. After all, there are many Maamorim that discuss this subject. There may even be those who are not particularly excited by the fact that the Rebbe recited this special Maamor in his room before Davening. But for me, this unique episode that I experienced continues to live with me all the time, and even more each year when Shabbos Zachor comes around.

The guilty feeling that I was left with on that day is indescribable. I was unable to enter the Rebbe's room and had missed the Maamor, not because I wasn't feeling well or failed to come on time to Seder for whatever reason, but simply because I missed the right moment. It was a matter of utter *Batlonus!* What is more, the Rebbe speaks in the Maamor about "Shvira", breaking the *Yeshus* of the *Kilipah*.

You can be sure that I truly endured a genuine *Shvira* on that Shabbos morning. Imagine; just at the other side of the wall a "Matan Torah" is coming to pass, the Rebbe is reciting a Maamor in his room (how often did we have the chance to enter the "Kodesh Hakodashim" on a regular basis?) and I must remain on the wrong side...

But the Rebbe in his understanding must have thought of our plight. The Maamor was said in an unusually high tone of voice, enabling myself and the rest of us out there to hear every word clearly.



פורים

* [כל הפושט יד נותנים לו..] יד רומז גם שכל אחד פושט ידו לקבל הברכות וההשפעות מנשיא הדור (ועל ידו—מידו של הקב"ה בעצמו כביכול), וכן שנשיא הדור (וכביכול הקב"ה) פושט ידו לכאור"א להשפיע רוב טוב בעל המצטרך לו.
(ספד"ש תשמ"ט ע' 572)

* היינט איז מען קאלט פאפרארען, מען פיהלט גארניט. במוחש זעהען מיר אז איינער געהט אויס רח"ל און קעלט איז ער גארניט מרגיש. מען דארף זיך אָנוואַרעמען און אויך אָנוואַרעמען אנדערע. און די ווארעמקייט האבן חסידים וואס זיינען זיך עוסק אין דרכי החסידים בכלל און אין עבודת התפילה בפרט.
(סה"ש תשי"ג ע' 6)

* בודאי שומר סדרי הישיבה מתאים לתעודתו עתה בהישיבה ומשפיע על התלמידים בכגון דא, וקבלת עול ומשמעת והסדרים יסוד הוא להצלחה בהלימודים...
(ממכתב י"א ניסן תשט"ז)

* "תמחה את זכר עמלק." ויש בזה ב' ענינים: זכר בצירי וזכר בסגול, אבל העיקר הוא — "אבי גוט אויסמעקן"
(משיחת ש"פ נשא תשכ"ג)



Mivtza Purim

The Rebbe's Extraordinary Attention

"*Ah Chossid iz ah Lamternshik!*" was how the Rebbe Rashab articulated the role of a Chossid; a Lamplighter. Throughout the years, the Rebbe never ceased to utilize every opportunity that arose, dispatching his Chassidim with the charge to serve as lamplighters to their fellow Yidden. Naturally, each of the Yomim Tovim became yet another chance for Chassidim to bring the light of Torah to others, assisting them with the Mitzvos of that particular day. "Mivtza Arba Minim" on Sukkos, for instance, was launched by the Rebbe as early as the year 5714!

With Purim being the most joyous Yom Tov on the Jewish calendar, it is not surprising that the Rebbe displayed so much interest and concern towards his "Mivtza Purim", demanding of Chassidim that it be carried out in the most efficient manner and with the greatest *Shturem!*

The earliest mention of Mivtza Purim in the Rebbe's Sichos, as it seems, was in 5721. At that point the Rebbe requested that effort be invested to ensure that the Jewish youth are educated about the Mitzvos of Mishloach Manos and Matanos La'evyonim. On more than one occasion in the Sichos of the early 5720s, the Rebbe stressed how important these Mitzvos are, and on the other hand, are rather easy to fulfill.

Democracy on Purim?

A very interesting episode in this regard took place in 5724:

In the weeks before Purim of that year, a certain American Rabbi published a newspaper article where he attempted to draw relevant meaning from the story of Purim. In conclusion he gathered that the lesson is: the great importance of democracy and the unjustness of dictatorship.

A few weeks later, at the Purim Farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke with anguish against this Rabbi's words: "Why couldn't he mention anywhere throughout his article that there are Mitzvos to be fulfilled on Purim; Mishloach Manos, Matanos La'evyonim, Krias Ha'Megillah? Democracy may indeed be a very important thing, but what connection does it have with Purim?!"

The Rebbe showed much care for Mivtza Purim and for all those who participate in it. Each year, the Rebbe sent very large sums of money to the administration of *Tza"ch* in Eretz Yisroel (through the *Mazkirus*) to help cover the expenses of Mivtza Purim.

5731 - Israeli Army Bases

In 5731, the Rebbe came out with a special call to reach out to the soldiers of the IDF throughout the day of Purim and assist them with the Mitzvos of the day.

Reb Shloim'ke Maidanchik met with Israeli Air-force officials before Purim and arranged with them that they should supply an airplane to enable the Chassidim to fly to the far-fetched army bases and visit the soldiers there.

One can only imagine how touched the soldiers were to witness the care and concern of the Rebbe on their behalf, resulting in his sending the Chassidim to visit them. Almost every single one would heed the request of the Chassidim and agree to put on Tefillin. Alongside the public readings of the Megillah that were arranged for the soldiers and words of encouragement that were spoken to them, what the Chassidim brought above all, was the joyous Purim spirit.

In the reports that were sent to the Rebbe following Purim, we read of the soldiers' strong emotional impressions that they experienced from these visits. They were all so thankful to the Rebbe for initiating them. One particular soldier, upon seeing the Rebbe's picture that was handed out together with the Mishloach Manos, burst into tears... The *Du"ch* was filled with many more such stories of the heartfelt thanks expressed

by the soldiers to the Rebbe. The new phase of Mivtza Purim to the Israeli army bases indeed proved to be a grand success!

When the Rebbe entered the Farbrengen on Motzoei Purim, he immediately began by saying that *Be'hashgocha Protis*, the Farbrengen began a few minutes late. Meanwhile, word was received from Eretz Yisroel that all the Chassidim who had gone to visit the army bases and bring the joy of Purim to the soldiers returned home safely. Upon mentioning the *Mesiras Nefesh* of the soldiers who protect the Jewish people in the Holy-land with their very lives, the Rebbe began to cry.

Mishloach Manos on the Rebbe's Behalf

Another very special aspect of Mivtza Purim in 5731 was the Rebbe's request to give Mishloach Manos on his behalf to the widows and children of fallen Israeli soldiers, *Hy"d*.

The Rebbe personally covered the expenses for this, and when Purim approached, the Rebbe also added a message to be delivered to each of the recipients:

לכל אחד ואחת מהנ"ל, ולכולן – תחינה: פורים שמח וקיום מש"נ במגילת אסתר ליהודים היתה אורה ושמחה וששון ויקר – כן תהיה לנו!"

Purim 5733 – the Rebbe's Farbrengen in the Sinai Desert

During the Farbrengen of Purim 5733 that we all were privileged to watch this year, one can hear of a very interesting episode. In between the Sichos, Rabbi J.J. Hecht spoke to the listeners tuned in to the Farbrengen over the radio. He relates:

"This very Farbrengen is being broadcast live to a group of Chabad Chassidim in the Sinai Desert. They flew there by airplane earlier on to bring the joy of Purim to the Israeli soldiers, but when it came time to leave, a terrible sandstorm broke out and they were unable to liftoff. Realizing that there was no way to be back at Kfar Chabad in time for the hook-up, but determined nevertheless not to miss the Rebbe's Purim Farbrengen, the Chassidim attempted to arrange their own hook-up right then and there. Indeed, the technical details were carried out in no-time, and right now, as we speak, the Chassidim and the soldiers are enjoying the holy Rebbe'dike Purim words in the heart of the Sinai Desert!"

(It should be noted that when the Rebbe heard about their hook-up, he postponed the beginning of the Farbrengen for a short while, entering the Shul only once they were ready. Yet again, we can see the Rebbe's special affection for the participants in Mivtza Purim.)

Mishloach Manos from the Rebbe Himself...

There are many, many more interesting facts about the Rebbe's intimate involvement in all the details of Mivtza Purim throughout the years. To specify just a few: The Rebbe's special request to visit Jewish inmates in prison and the Sichos that were said in that regard, the Rebbe's instruction to *Tza"ch* that they begin with the planning of Mivtza Purim as early as mid-Cheshvan (!), and much more. A really special moment was when the Rebbe recounted at a Purim Farbrengen (5736) of an incident that took place earlier that Purim with Shluchim on their way to an army base in *Shechem*.

We'll finish with one last anecdote that is of great relevance to Bochorim today:

The Rebbe issued an instruction that all Bochorim and Yungerleit participating in Mivtza Purim are to take one of the Mishloach Manos packets for themselves and consider it personal Mishloach Manos from the Rebbe! Imagine, what would a Chossid not do to receive a dollar, a *Kuntres*, or a piece of *Lekach* from the Rebbe? Here we have the chance to receive Mishloach Manos from the Rebbe himself. Who could resist but go out on Mivtzoim this Purim with the greatest *Shturem!*



שערי אגונה Niggun HaHishtachus - 2

The Areinfirmish of the Tzemach Tzedek

The following is a free translation of a sicha of the Friediker Rebbe¹:

Erev Yom Kippur 5553 [תקנ"ג], the Alter Rebbe went to visit the gravesite of his daughter Rebbitzin Devorah Leah. The Alter Rebbe commanded to carry the child, the Tzemach Tzedek, and bring him with to the holy site. The Rebbe said "Just as Tzadikim are greater after their passing than in their lifetime, so too the blessings of Tzaddikim are much greater after their passing than in their lifetime".

All the assembled were shaken as the Alter Rebbe standing by his daughters *kever* and while holding the hand of the small child said with a pleading voice: "Devorah Leah bas Shterna today is Erev Yom Kippur bless your child Menachem Mendel ben Devorah Leah that *'zeh hakoton gadol yihiyeh'* in Torah, the revealed aspects as well as the hidden aspects of Torah with much success in good deeds, and that he should do so with good health and many long years. And plead for me, for Adas HaChassidim and for Toras HaBaal Shem-Tov."

That Yom Kippur, the Tzemach Tzedek fasted like all adults... On the following day after davening, the Alter Rebbe commanded that they should wrap up the child so he shouldn't see anything and carry him to his mothers resting place. The Alter Rebbe with all his family who were then in Liozna as well as a large group of Chassidim went to the holy site. There the Alter Rebbe together with the child and his father R' Sholom Shachna² went over to the grave. The Alter Rebbe called out in a cheerful voice: "Devorah Leah bas Shternah today I am bringing in your son to Torah (to *cheder*) bless him that *'kishem shenichmas l'Torah...'*" and all the assembled called out amen.

Every year on Tzom Gedalyah, the Yartzeit of his mother, the Tzemach Tzedek would say a Maamar Chassidus; the subject would be about Sefiras HaMalchus³.

1. Sefer HaSichos Kayitz 5700 p. 65

2. R' Sholom Shachna later remarried and had more children from his second wife, one whom he named Devorah.

3. Sefer HaSichos 5704 p.63

א ציור פון א חסיד

Reb Shilem Kuryatin part 2

A Home for Body and Soul

Unfortunately, as mentioned above, Reb Shmuel Gronem was not interested in having a Gymnasium student at his yeshivah because he felt that he might badly influence his peers. Now, while Shilem sat crying outside the mashpia's office, someone felt sorry for him and told the Rebbe Rashab what had happened. When the Rebbe Rashab heard the full story, he decided to allow Shilem to enroll at the Yeshivah. Suitable clothing was provided for him, as well as somewhere to stay.

The young orphan had finally found a home, in more senses than one. Until this point, he had not realized how much his soul had thirsted for the study of Chassidus. He dedicated himself entirely to his studies, integrating everything he learned into his daily conduct. At first he found Chassidus hard to grasp, but he persevered until he eventually overcame his difficulties. Before long, he became known as one of the most diligent student in the Yeshiva.

His rare capacity for concentration became legendary. When he became engrossed in learning or prayer, nothing in the world could distract him. The late Reb Yisrael Leibov once provided an interesting illustration of just how deep his levels of concentration must have been: "One cold winter night, the stove in the center of the study-hall at the Lubavitch yeshivah was kindled as usual. It let off a shower of sparks which set the wooden walls on fire. The horrified students immediately grabbed buckets of water and tried to put out the blaze. The resulting tumult and noise was heard by the Rebbe Rashab, who was then at home. He immediately rushed to the scene with his son, the Friediker Rebbe, to find out what was happening. When they arrived, they supervised the efforts of the students until the fire was successfully extinguished.

"In the middle of all the hubbub the Rebbe Rashab suddenly noticed a young man sitting in one corner of the Zal reciting Shema. This was Shilem, who had just begun to daven Maariv when the fire broke out. He was so engrossed in his prayers that he did not notice the fire or even hear the noise and activity going on around him. The Rebbe Rashab remarked to the Friediker Rebbe, "For this kind of student Tomchei T'mimim was founded!"

Lubavitch Listens to a New Maamar

Eventually Shilem used his unusual powers of concentration and memory for a very important function. He became one of the

students who transcribed the maamarim and sichos of the Rebbe Rashab, which was a great privilege in Lubavitch. So well did he perform his task as chozer that in time he became the leading transcriber in the yeshivah.

Rabbi Shemaryahu Sosonkin has left us a detailed description of exactly how the Rebbe Rashab's discourses were delivered and then recorded:

"Every Friday night the Rebbe [Rashab] would deliver a maamar to a crowd of students and visitors... The Rebbe walked from his home in the courtyard to the study hall wearing a silk *kapote* and a pure white silk scarf. When everyone heard the Rebbe approach, a sudden hush would descend. The singing would stop as everyone looked in his direction. When he appeared, it was as if an angel had arrived. As he walked slowly into the hall he radiated pure warmth. He would sit down opposite his son (the Friediker Rebbe) and as was his custom, he would bind a red scarf around his right hand. For a while the Rebbe would sit quietly, looking at his son. Then he would begin reciting the maamar in a soft tone. As he spoke, he would gradually raise his voice until he sounded quite loud. During the delivery of the maamar, his face would be illuminated with a fiery intensity. All the while, everyone would remain silent as they listened to his holy words.

"Normally, the discourse would last about an hour-and-a-half, though sometimes it went on for as long as two hours. During that time everyone remained standing huddled close together. Only [Shilem] stood a slight distance apart from the crowd because he was anxious that he might become distracted by them. With one hand on his forehead, he would listen intently to every single one of the Rebbe's words...



Q&A

What is a Chassidische Farbrengen? Part 2

Types of Farbrengens

In general there are two types of Farbrengens, that of the Rebbe with the Chassidim, and that of Chassidim amongst themselves.

The Farbrengen is an opportunity for the Rebbe to communicate with the Chassidim, teaching them Torah and giving them direction with the mandate of the day or days ahead. In earlier generations Chassidim would also speak by these Farbrengens. We find in Sefer HaSichos of the Friediker Rebbe many times where a chassid would ask a question, tell a story or two chassidim would talk between each other. However by the Rebbe, aside for special occasions (such as Yud Shvat 5736), only the Rebbe would speak.

The second type of Farbrengen is of Chassidim together, each lifting the other to greater heights in his service of Hashem.

Chassidus is not a subject to be learnt, a theory of how to view the world, rather, it is a way of life. The approach to every aspect of one's life is dramatically changed when veiwed through the lenses of Chassidus. And how can a *vort* that is written in a maamar be incorporated into real practice? Through *hisbonenus*, davening and farbrenging.

It says "עשה לך רב וקנה לך חבר" the Chaver mentioned is the friend sitting on the other side of the table prepared to listen without judging, commiserate and empathize, willing to extend himself for his friend helping him overcome the challenges that arise in his service of Hashem. The Chassid confides in his friend and tells him the inner workings of his heart, and together they strengthen each other. The Rebbe Maharash said "When two Chassidim farbreng it is two *Nefesh HaElokis* against one *Nefesh HaBahamis*" because the *Nefesh HaBahamis* will not help each other, on the other hand the *Nefesh HaElokis* work together to combat the Yetzer Hara.

This is why true Ahavas Yisrael is the foundation of the Farbrengen (as brought from Hayom Yom last week). For words that come from the heart enter the heart.

Hayom Yom¹ mentions a prerequisite for a Farbrengen "cutting of the nails", when giving your friend a hand, make sure your nails are short enough not to scratch him. In other words, when reprimanding a fellow Chassid be sure the rebuke comes from a pure heart with *his* good in mind, and not merely a way to bash him and inflate the one delivering the rebuke. Every *shtech* is sourced in *klipa*.

Living Memories

The Friediker Rebbe describes what form a Farbrengen should take²:

"...the Farbrengen of Anash should be arranged as it used to be in the past, full of an inner *toichen* with no room for expression of [foreign] passions.

An atmosphere of true seriousness would rest within the participants of the Farbrengen.

One was retelling a *hanhaga* he saw by his Rebbe and another describing the davening of his Rebbe that he merited to hear

during one of periods he had spent time there. Another divulges the happenings of his *yechidus* that are not personal and yet another brings to mind the events of his *yechidus* that are private and therefore could not be disclosed.

During these moments each of those present at the Farbrengen is absorbed in his memories, lost in the past. He sees himself standing many years ago in the court of his Rebbe, beholding in awe his holy and luminous countenance, and with holy dread mingled with a great inner bliss, he listens to each word of the *yechidus*. These memories are not only memories that arouse him now; he is living with them, more precisely, reliving them.

These feelings are expressed in a melody full of emotion that bursts forth from those sitting around the table, as one.

How sweet it was to hear the stories retold by Farbrengens, stories of the lives of chassidim, describing their ways. Like song and like dance, through which the great distance in time is swallowed up and each chassid feels as if he is now standing in front of his Rebbe in his holy chamber, this was the form of the chassidische Farbrengen of old. It was this Farbrengen I had in mind when I established the *seder* of making *Kiddush* and Farbrenging in public on *Shabbos Mivorchim*.³

A Farbrengen Always Has Affect

In answer to his letter describing their situation, that thank Hashem they are unified in love and affection for one another, yet when they speak during the Farbrengen concerning learning, davening and fixing their *midos* there is not much of an effect for they are all married *jungerleit*. What he says is true, yet nevertheless they must increase the Farbrengens as often as possible [for] the *Nefesh HaBahamis* in general, and the Yetzer Hara in particular, feel the depth from which the directives come and they have an effect.³

... A farbrengen is likened to plowing, and to the maximum, sowing. Many other efforts, important efforts, must follow in order for there to be the growth of fruits as desired...⁴

1. היום יום כ"ב אלול
2. אגרות קודש מוהרי"ץ חלק ט ע' רמז
3. אגרות קודש מוהרי"ץ חלק ט ע' ר
4. אגרות קודש חלק ט"ו ע' שה

פרק א' ליום	ג' פרקים ליום	מורה שיעור ללימוד הרמב"ם
הל' שאר אבות הטמאות פ' י"ח	הל' עדות פ' כ-כב	י"ב אדר ב'
פרק י"ט	הל' ממרים פ' א-ג	י"ג אדר ב'
פרק כ'	פ' ד-ו	י"ד אדר ב'
פרק כ"א	פ' ז הל' ממרים א-ב	ט"ו אדר ב'
פרק כ"ב	פ' ג-ה	ט"ז אדר ב'
פרק כ"ג	פ' ו-ח	י"ח אדר ב'
פרק כ"ד	פ' ט-יא	י"ח אדר ב'