



THE AVODAH OF SIMCHAS TORAH

THE KEDUSHA OF THE DAY

The Friediker Rebbe related, in the name of his father, the Rebbe Rashab: "The 48 hours of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah must be held very precious, for at every moment one can draw pailsful and barrelsful of treasures, both *b'gashmius* and *b'ruchnius*. This is accomplished through dancing."

(ספר המאמרים תשי"א ע' 79)

The Baal Shem Tov told his *talmidim*: On Simchas Torah, *Yidden* often *daven Shacharis* a little later than usual, because of the *hakafos* and *seuda* the night before. The *malochim*, who do not have this *avoda*, are preparing as usual to recite songs of praise. However, they must wait for the *Yidden*: they cannot sing praises to *HaShem* until the *Yidden* sing them below. In the meantime they occupy themselves 'cleaning up Gan Eden.' Suddenly, they find *shoes* there. This amazes them; they are used to finding *tzitzis* and *tefillin*, but not shoes. When they ask Malach Michoel what this means, he explains that this is his merchandise: these are the shoes that were worn out during the dancing of the *Yidden* with their *sifrei* Torah. And as he counts the shoes he says, "These are from Kaminka, those are from Mezritch."

With this, Malach Michael glories over Malach Metat, who fashions crowns for his Creator from the *tefillos* of the *Yidden*, claiming that the crowns that he will make from these worn-out shoes are superior.

(הוספות לכתר שם טוב ק"ד)

A certain chossid, distraught, once made a long trek to visit one of our Rebbeim. (When the Friediker Rebbe narrated this incident, he added: "And I'm not going to tell you who was the chossid and who was the Rebbe.") That chossid had come to report that his mentor had come to him in a dream with fearful news: It had been decreed in Heaven that one of his children would pass away. The Rebbe heard his words, sighed, and did not answer.

Since it was before Succos, the chossid remained near his Rebbe until after *Yom-Tov*, and before returning home, he asked him for

a *beracha*. The Rebbe said, "It will be good; the child will live."

The chossid asked the Rebbe for a promise that this would be so. The Rebbe promised, and then asked him, "What did you do on Simchas Torah?"

The chossid replied, "When everyone was dancing at *hakafos* I stood by the oven and cried. But then I reminded myself that it was Simchas Torah, so I washed my face and went to dance with the Torah."

The Rebbe replied, "You should know that by doing so, you reversed your situation."

(ספר המאמרים תרפ"ז ע' 241)

Once, while dancing during *hakafos*, the Friediker Rebbe (before he was Rebbe) told a certain chossid: "Granted that we are not up to the *avoda* of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. But the *avoda* of Simchas Torah – dancing – that we *can* do. So dance! Raise yourself up!"

(מפי השמועה, וכע"ז בסה"ש תש"ג ע' 8)

REJOICING WITH THE TORAH

Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev once observed a simple person dancing with gusto on Simchas Torah. Recognizing that he was utterly unlearned, the *tzaddik* asked him what he was rejoicing about. The *Yid* answered, "When my *brother* marries off his daughter, should I not participate in his rejoicing...?"

The Rebbe explains that in fact Simchas Torah is not "a brother's *chassunah*," the celebration of some other *Yid*, but rather every individual's personal rejoicing. The joy on Simchas Torah is about the essence of the Torah, which is accessible to every *Yid*, for when he studies even the smallest segment of Torah, through it he is connected to the entire Torah.

(תו"מ ח"ב ע' 92, שיח"ק תשל"א ח"א ע' 86)

One year after *davening* on Simchas Torah morning, the *Tzemach Tzedek* sat down to *farbrenge*. During that time he drank a large quantity of *maskhe*, taught a lot of *Chassidus*, and spoke a great deal about his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe. Whenever he mentioned

his *zeide's* holy name his face was aflame, and his eyes filled with tears that streamed down his cheeks like two springs of water. The *farbrenge* extended throughout the day and continued until the early hours of the morning. After everyone left and the *Tzemach Tzedek* returned to his room, some chassidim peeked through the cracks to see what he was doing. They saw him sitting with a *Gemara*, learning with delight and enthusiasm.

(סיפורי חסידים מועדים זוין ע' 239)

Early in the morning, after a night of *hakafos* on Simchas Torah, the Rebbe would return to his study. One year, a young boy was curious to know what the Rebbe was doing at such an hour, so he climbed up, peeked through the window, and saw the Rebbe sitting and learning from a big *Gemara* or *Shulchan Aruch*.

(מפי בעל המועשה)

The Friediker Rebbe once expressed himself: "It is not enough that on Simchas Torah we rejoice with the Torah; the Torah must also be happy *with us*."

(ספר השיחות תש"ב ע' 3)

Originally the *minhag* had been that in the daily study cycle of *Chitas*, the beginning of *Parshas Bereishis* would be learned on *Isru Chag*. However, the Rebbe suggested that it be learned on Simchas Torah itself, since we begin *leining* the Book of *Bereishis* on that day. The Rebbe explained that in earlier years, every moment of Simchas Torah had been utilized for rejoicing, so the learning had been deferred to the following day. However, one who takes time off for other things, should better use that time to learn...

(התוועדות תשמ"ו ח"א ע' 452 ואילך)

CONSIDER THIS!

- With what should one occupy his time on Simchas Torah?
- What is the joy of Simchas Torah about? How does it apply to everyone?

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WHEN ONE THINKS OF THE NEFOSHOS

Reb Berel Baumgarten, the first *Shliach* to Argentina, was always very open with the Rebbe, in his simple, direct, *chassidische* style.

During one of his travels across Europe, in the early 5730's, Reb Berel was very moved to see the new, state-of-art building of Lubavitch, of one European city. While rejoicing at the success of *hafotzas hayahadus* in another country, Reb Berel could not help himself from feeling down, for this luminous structure made his modest Chabad center in Buenos Aires, look like a little shack.

The next time Reb Berel was in *yechidus*, he poured out his feelings to the Rebbe. The answer was not long in coming, "Who needs great buildings of brick and glass, when one thinks of the *nefoshos*, the four bochurim you sent here to learn in the *yeshivah!*"

The Rebbe then took out of his drawer a recent report from the *hanhala*, and showed Reb Berel that his *baalei teshuva* are from the most outstanding.

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ל' תשרי

REB YAAKOV MORDECHAI BEZPALOV

Reb Yaakov Mordechai Bezpalo was one of the great *chassidim* of the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab, and was one of the three people who received *semicha* from the Rebbe Maharash. For over 35 years, he served as the Rov of Poltava in Russia. Before the Rebbe Rashab accepted the *nesius*, he was his *chavrusa* and very close friend. He was known to serve Hashem in the way of "merirus" (remorse). He passed away on the 30th of Tishrei, תרע"ו (1915).



The Frieddiker Rebbe records, what he heard from his father, about the comfort Reb Yaakov Mordechai gave him after the passing of the Rebbe Maharash:

"It is only a good friend who is capable of putting a person on his feet, saving him from going down into the pit of sorrow and anguish, and raising him to broad light that would not have been fathomable in the beginning. [My father] spoke about his friends and beloved ones and counted them out one by one, speaking of their greatness.

"He said that the one person with whom he found comfort after the passing of his father, with whatever is possible to be comforted after such a terrible and shocking calamity, was only his friend from his youth, his beloved friend Reb Yaakov Mordechai. He was the first one who sent fourth a comforting hand, a helping hand, the hand of a true and beloved friend. His words were loyal, his speech was pure, and they were not wrapped in the mist of honor and praise, which is the custom in such cases. He spoke of everything with open eyes and pure faith. He did not 'climb valleys or ascend mountains,' rather he went round the point of truth again and again, and with this, he found calmness and comfort to his soul."



The Frieddiker Rebbe describes a *farbrengen* at the *sheva brachos* of Reb Yaakov Mordechai:

"... In middle of it all, [Reb Yaakov Mordechai] began to cry bitterly, to the degree that all those present were astounded. They asked him to stop crying, but to no avail... Everyone began dancing, all besides Reb Yaakov Mordechai, who leaned his head on his hands and cried. When they poured cups to say *l'chaim*, he stopped crying and began to say in a tearful voice, "The Rebbe [Maharash] told me, 'When there is a Rebbe, there are *chassidim*, but *chassidim* who do and work.' When a *chossid* is not a *chossid*, he makes his Rebbe no more a Rebbe. The Alter Rebbe was a Rebbe, and he made *chassidim*, and the *chassidim*, being that they were *chassidim* and "people of deed" with *avoda sheb'leiv*, they strengthened their Rebbe..."



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