



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 Michael 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 חל"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 *mashke*, 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 המעשה)

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 תשי"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...

(התועודיות 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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GROWING FURTHER

The Rebbe Rashab said: "When a poor storekeeper accepts merchandise on credit, he is glad to be trusted, but his main concern is to profit. On Simchas Torah it is the same: true, we rejoice about the credit – that is, the *kochos* we are given on trust – but the real rejoicing comes when we succeed in paying back the debt for the 'merchandise,' when we utilize what we have received for Torah and *mitzvos*."

(אג"ק אדמו"ר הרי"צ ח"ט ע' 370)

The Frieddiker Rebbe once said: After the *seuda* on Simchas Torah, it was the *minhag* of my father, the Rebbe Rashab, to announce: "Now is the time for *veYaakov halach ledarko* ('and Yaakov took to the road'). After the *avoda* of Tishrei, *Yidden* hit the road and take the path of Torah and *mitzvos* throughout the entire year.

The Frieddiker Rebbe explained that at the annual fair we acquire merchandise, and when we go home we unpack it and use it throughout the whole year as needed. Similarly, during the month of Tishrei, every *Yid* is given *ruchniusdikke* merchandise to provide for his needs during the whole year. However, one must open the packages, and do with the merchandise whatever is needed. It must be unpacked immediately, for otherwise it may fall apart or dry out, and sometimes the mice will be impatient (*veln arein-chapn*) and nibble it...

(אג"ק מוהרי"צ ח"א ע' קצ"ד, לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 556, סה"ש תש"ז ע' 74, אג"ק ח"ד ע' י"ח)

The Rebbe explained: After the month of Tishrei, the *avoda* required is to draw *Yiddishkeit* and *kedusha* into the mundane activities of the year. All our activities, even eating, drinking and business, should be done in a *Yiddische* way – eating with a *beracha*, thanking *HaShem* for the food, and doing business honestly, without intruding on another's livelihood.

(לקו"ש ח"ט ע' VII)

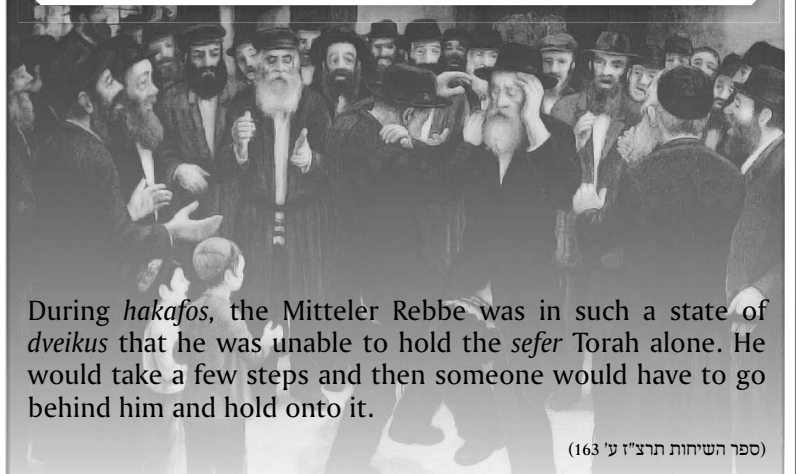
The Frieddiker Rebbe once said: The intense rejoicing of Simchas Torah is a *keili* for the provision of one's material needs for the whole year.

(סה"ש תרפ"ז ע' 236)

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות התמים שמעון בן-ציון סימפסאן
וחי' מושקא בעגון שיחיו
לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשטומ'צ
נדבת הורי החתן י"י ויפה שיחיו סימפסאן

DANCING WITH SIMCHA



During *hakafos*, the Mittlerer Rebbe was in such a state of *dveikus* that he was unable to hold the *sefer* Torah alone. He would take a few steps and then someone would have to go behind him and hold onto it.

(ספר השיחות תרצ"ז ע' 163)

One Simchas Torah, the *Tzemach Tzedek* danced energetically at *hakafos* without tiring. Robust young men could not keep up with him. A few even collapsed from exhaustion. While dancing, he encouraged them, "Dance, *Yidden!* Dance! Rejoice on Simchas Torah and be blessed with children, life, and an abundant livelihood!"

The wife of the *Tzemach Tzedek* complained to her father, the Mittlerer Rebbe, that her husband was wearing out the chassidim with his dancing. The Rebbe replied, "A revelation of the light of Simchas Torah is now shining for him as it shone in the *Beis HaMikdosh*. Through his rejoicing he is meriting a revelation of the essence of the *neshamas*, as it is in the world of *Atzilus*, and even higher."

(ספר השיחות תש"ג ע' 11)

On Simchas Torah in the year תרמ"ח (1887), when the Rebbe Rashab was honored with the first *hakafa*, he said that he was not yet ready. He called over a certain wholesaler and asked him to explain the nature of his business. The chossid explained that he brought merchandise from the big city and distributed it to the small retailers, and those who paid for the goods they had been given the previous time received a new batch on credit.

Hearing this, the Rebbe said, "After we have paid up our bill with the *avoda* of *chodesh* Elul, Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkos, *Simchas Beis HaShoeiva* and Shemini Atzeres, we can now go to *hakafos* and get new merchandise on *credit*." (The word *hakafa* also means credit.)

(ספר השיחות תש"ה ע' 57)

The Frieddiker Rebbe related: "One Shemini Atzeres a few chassidim danced with lively fervor and *chayus*. The Rebbe Rashab later commented, 'Though they danced with feeling and *hislahavus*, it was not wild, for the Alter Rebbe drew down the light of intellect even into dancing.' "

The Frieddiker Rebbe concluded that this was possible only because those chassidim had teachers and mentors who guided them in their *avoda*: only then were they sure to follow the right path.

(ספר השיחות תרצ"ו ע' 263)

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