

## AWAITING HIS COMING (II)

### Hearing his Footsteps

The Chozeh of Lublin passed away on Tisha BeAv ה'תקע"ה (1815), and his son, Reb Yosef of Tortchin, inherited the wall clock that had hung in his father's room.

Once, while on his way back to his hometown, a violent storm broke out. Reb Yosef had to stop his journey and find shelter for three days in an inn owned by a simple Yid. When the storm passed and he prepared to leave, he told his host that he had no money with which to pay him, so since he had no alternative, he would give him the precious clock that had belonged to his father.

A few years later, Reb Yissachar Ber of Rodoshitz stopped at this inn, but couldn't sleep through the night. At every chime he woke up and burst into joyous singing and dancing. The next morning he asked the innkeeper from where he had received that clock. The innkeeper related how he had received it as payment, and when he went on to describe the stranger's appearance, Reb Yissachar Ber exclaimed, "I could *feel* that this was the clock of the Chozeh of Lublin! When other clocks chime, they remind a person that he is one hour closer to the end of his life, but when the Chozeh's clock chimes, it tells us that we are one hour closer to *Moshiach*."

(סיפור"ח זוין מוועדי' ע' 366)

### At Any Moment

Soon after the Alter Rebbe had passed away, his grandson the Tzemach Tzedek overheard a few chassidim lamenting the *ruchniyus'dike* state of affairs ever since the passing of their Rebbe and concluded, "Only Hashem knows when *Moshiach* will finally come."

The Tzemach Tzedek entered the room they were in and said, "That is the way Bilaam speaks: 'I see it, but not now; I behold it, but it is not near.' We, Yidden, must hope for *Moshiach's* arrival every single day!"

He continued, "I heard from my grandfather, that his teacher the Mezritcher Maggid was able to cause even a newborn child to experience the loftiest levels of *yiras Hashem*. His Rebbe, the Baal

Shem Tov, could have even enthused an inanimate object. Why did they not do so and then, with the whole world aware of Hashem's presence, *Moshiach* would have come? Because Hashem did not yet want this. And if the arrival of *Moshiach* is dependent on Hashem's will, why would the passing of our Rebbe, my grandfather, change that? When the time comes, and Hashem wills it, *Moshiach* will surely appear."

(סיפור"ח זוין תורה ע' 439)

On the first night of Shavuot תשכ"ז (1967), soon after the Six Day War, a chossid who was present at the Rebbe's table said to the Rebbe, "Since the *Kosel HaMaaravi* is now accessible, if the Rebbe goes there, tens of thousands of Yidden will join him." The Rebbe responded, "Why only tens of thousands? When *Moshiach* comes, many more will travel..."

(המלך במסיבו ח"א ע' קס"ז)

### Expecting his Arrival

A grandchild of Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev was engaged to marry a grandchild of the Alter Rebbe. When Reb Levi Yitzchok was shown a draft of the invitation, indicating that *di groisse chassuna* was due to take place in Zhlobin, he tore it up and instructed that the wording be changed to read, "The *chassuna* will take place *im yirtze HaShem* in Yerusholayim *Ir HaKodesh*, in the *Beis HaMikdash*, may it be speedily rebuilt. However, if (*chas veshalom*) *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* will not yet be here, then the *chassuna* will take place in Zhlobin."

(באר החסידות)

One of the chassidim of the Tzemach Tzedek ran an inn that he rented from the local *poritz*, paying him ten rubles at the beginning of every year. One year the chossid fell ill and sent his son to renew the contract and pay the *poritz* for the coming year. The son decided to ask for a five-year contract at a cheaper rate of thirty rubles, thus saving his father twenty. The *poritz* was so happy to receive the advance payment that he agreed. Full of excitement, the young man returned home and told his father of the great deal he had made.

"Fool!" the father berated him. "You paid the extra

twenty rubles for nothing! *Moshiach* is coming straight away, and we'll all go to *Eretz Yisroel*. So the money you've paid for the next four years was all wasted!"

(ומביא גואל ע' 124)

Before Reb Simcha Bunim of Pshis'cha went to sleep, he would always place his *tallis* and *tefillin* next to his bed. One of his close *talmidim* asked about this practice and he explained, "Since we await the coming of *Moshiach* at any moment, it's possible that while I'm resting, the good news of his arrival will suddenly be heard. I want to be ready to go immediately with him to *Eretz HaKodesh* and not have to remain in this bitter *golus* for one extra moment. I don't mind disowning all my assets, but my *tallis* and *tefillin* I must take. So I make sure to keep them close by."

(שיח שרפי קודש)

Reb Mordechai Yafeh, author of the *Levush*, writes that he had always wondered: Why don't we read *Eicha* on Tisha BeAv from a *megilla* of parchment, like *Megillas Ester*? He answered his own question: Since we are constantly waiting for these days of mourning to be transformed into days of joy and *Yomim-Tovim*, writing a parchment *megilla* would give the impression that we are *chas veshalom* giving up hope.

(לבוש סימן תקנ"ט ע"א)

## CONSIDER THIS!

- Why did the *chassidim* feel that *Moshiach* was further away after the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus*? How did the Tzemach Tzedek answer their question?
- What does it mean to "expect" *Moshiach*? Should everyone write Yerushalayim in their *chassunah* invitations, avoid making advance business deals and keep their *tallis* and *tefillin* near their bed?

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# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin  
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

## Faux Leather Shoes

Am I allowed to wear artificial leather shoes on Tisha B'Av?

- On Tisha B'Av we are required to restrict ourselves from certain pleasures, one of which being not to wear "shoes."<sup>1</sup> Children must be trained not to wear leather on Tisha B'Av and Yom Kippur, since unlike food, this is something that they can manage without.<sup>2</sup>
- Some *Rishonim* understand this prohibition to include any added foot protection.<sup>3</sup> Others limit it to solid shoes which entirely shield the foot from stones, such as leather or wood (clogs).<sup>4</sup> However, many *Rishonim* understand from other contexts that only leather shoes are considered "shoes" according to *halacha*, and therefore only shoes of leather or covered in leather are prohibited on Tisha B'Av and Yom Kippur.<sup>5</sup> Shulchan Aruch rules that only shoes which have leather are prohibited<sup>6</sup> (though many *poskim* advise to be stringent).<sup>7</sup>
- What about crocks or sneakers? In explaining why non-leather shoes are permissible, the *poskim* offer two reasons: (1) Since they are still uncomfortable, (2) since only leather is considered a shoe.<sup>8</sup> The reason behind the *halacha* is important when determining the permissibility of a shoe of synthetic material which is as comfortable as leather.<sup>9</sup> *Minhag* Chabad is to be lenient.<sup>10</sup>
- What about shoes that look just like leather? While some *poskim* have expressed concern for *maris ayin* (mistaken appearance),<sup>11</sup> more recent *poskim* write that today when such shoes are commonplace, people will assume that they are not real leather.<sup>12</sup>

1. ראה שו"ע או"ח סי' תקנ"ד ס"א.  
 2. ראה חכ"א אבילות סי' קנ"ב סעי' י"ז, חינוך הבנים כהלכתם פרק פ"ד הע' ה'. וראה שם ובפסק"ת סי' תרט"ז סק"א בנוגע לקטנים ביותר עד גיל שלוש יש מקום להקל בשעת הצורך, שאין בעצם דין חינוך רק יל"ע מצד דין ספייה, אלא ש"ל שזהו האיסור הקשור בזמן ואינו מאכל – וראה שו"ע ר סי' שמ"ג.  
 3. בעל המאור, וכ"פ הב"ח בהל' יוהכ"פ סי' תרי"ד.  
 4. רש"י ע"פ הר"ן יומא ב' ע"א.  
 5. רי"ף יומא ב' ע"א, רא"ש יומא פ"ח סי' ז'.  
 6. או"ח סי' תקנ"ד ס"ז.  
 7. ראה שו"ע ר' הל' יוהכ"פ סי' תרי"ד ס"ב (טוב להחמיר בעצ'').  
 8. ראה פ"ח ה' הל' יוהכ"פ שהאריז"ל אמר שביוהכ"פ אסור דווקא עור.  
 9. ראה שו"ת פמ"א ח"ב סי' כ"ח שהחמיר, קובץ מנחת לוי פצ"א סי' י.  
 10. ספר המנהגים ע' 46, ע"פ שו"ת ואחרונים סי' תרי"ד, דרכי חו"ש ס"ק תרע"ג.  
 11. ראה שו"ת מהרש"א אלפנדרוי ח"א סי' י"א, שו"ת מנחת שלמה ח"ב סי' נ"ח תשו' כ"ח.  
 12. ק"י הל' מועדים עמ' קי"א, חזון עובדי' הל' ימים נוראים עמ' שי"ז. וראה ערוה"ש סי' תקנ"ד ס"ט.

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# OUR HEROES

## Reb Binyomin Kletzker



Reb Binyomin Kletzker was one of the greatest chassidim of the Alter Rebbe. Originally from a family of big *misnadgim* in the city of Shklov, Reb Binyomin eventually became a chossid. He was a profound *maskil* in *Chassidus* and a great *ba'al madrega*. He was a businessman and gave a lot of *tzedaka*. He was brothers-in-law with the chossid Reb Pinchas Reizes.



Reb Binyomin had the ability to be so deeply engrossed in *Chassidus* that he would be oblivious of what was happening around him. Once, while walking home from *shul* holding his *tallis* and *tefillin*, he became lost in thought. It was a market day and he put down his *tallis* bag on one of the wagons of the merchants. He leaned against something and rested his foot on the axle of the wagon while he carried on thinking. In the meantime, the merchant finished his business, loaded his wagon and drove away. So engrossed in thought, Reb Binyomin held his foot in the air for a short while before lowering his foot, still lost in thought. Only the need to *daven mincha* in time awoke Reb Binyomin from his thoughts.

As the non-Jewish wagon driver was leaving town, he offered some of the produce that he was selling to a passing-by Jew. The man noticed the *tallis* and *tefillin* and managed to retrieve them and return them to Reb Binyomin.

The Friediker Rebbe emphasized the strength of *yiras Shamayim* in this story. Although Reb Binyomin was so engrossed in thought, he nevertheless sensed that the time for *davening mincha* had come!



One of Reb Binyomin's business enterprises was lumber. Once he was standing in a forest surrounded by workmen who were waiting for instructions, but Reb Binyamin was engrossed in thought. The workmen gently nudged him and asked for the next instructions. Reb Binyamin said, "Wait a moment", and carried on thinking. After quite a while they nudged him again saying, "Reb Binyamin! Everything has its time! The time to think *Chassidus* is during *davening*, not now!" Reb Binyamin responded, "Is that so? When thoughts about lumber come in middle of *davening*, that's not so terrible, but when thoughts of *davening* come in middle of the lumber it causes such a commotion!"

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### The Walls

During the early years, the larger *farbrengens* of the Rebbe (including Yud-Tes Kislev, Yud Shevat and Purim) were held in a rented hall. The smaller events took place in the *shul* at 770.

In a letter from Cheshvan 5712, Reb Avrohom Shemtov writes: "The Rebbe *shlita* was asked before the *yomim tovim* whether or not to rent a more spacious place for the *davening* and *farbrengens* of the *Yomim Noraim*:

"The Rebbe answered, 'The [Friediker] Rebbe soaked himself in these walls over the last ten years, with tears and with his last strength – and I should go elsewhere?!'"

As a *bochur*, Harav Yitzchok Hendel, Av Beis Din of Montreal, arrived at 770 to see the Friediker Rebbe. However, since there were no *farbrengens* or public *tefilos* due to the Friediker Rebbe's health condition, he planned on returning home.

The Rebbe's son-in-law, our Rebbe, told him not to go and added, "The time has come for us to take from the walls of 770..."



347.471.1770



info@LmaanYishmeu.com



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