

# The Weekly Farbrengens



502 • לחמן ישמעו • כי תשא תשע"ט  
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## DYNAMIC DEVOTION (III)

### UNCONTAINED ENTHUSIASM

The Baal Shem Tov once asked one of his *talmidim* if he listened to how the *melamedim* in his town taught the children. The *talmid* replied that the *melamedim* in his town were *chassidim* and *yerei Shomayim* and so he had no reason to check up on them. The Baal Shem Tov nevertheless instructed him that he should go on Rosh Chodesh and listen.

When the *talmid* listened in on the following Rosh Chodesh, he heard the *melamed* teaching '*borchi nafshi*,' the supplementary *kapitl* of *Tehillim* recited during the *davening* of Rosh Chodesh, which describes the greatness of *HaShem's* creations. A child then asked, "Why does Dovid HaMelech interject *Ma rabu maasecha HaShem*, ("How manifold are your works, *HaShem!*"), right in the middle of the *kapitl*? Why didn't he say it at the end of the *kapitl*, after describing all of *HaShem's* great works?"

To which the *melamed* replied, "Dovid HaMelech was so excited by *HaShem's* doings that he couldn't contain himself until the end, and he immediately shouted his praise for *HaShem!*"

Sated and elevated, the *talmid* set out for home.

(תשורה רבינוביץ י"ג סיון תשס"ד)

The Alter Rebbe did his *avoda* with great fervor, exhilaration and excitement. While *davening*, he would sometimes unwittingly bang his hands on the wall until they bled (cushions were later affixed on the walls around his *davening* spot). When delivering a *maamar* of *Chassidus*, he would sometimes fall to the floor.

Reb Moshe Vilenker related:

"Once, I couldn't find a place to stand near the Alter Rebbe's table, so I sat under it, and I was passed food and drink there. When the Alter Rebbe began to say *Chassidus*, I neared his feet and heard him quite well. In the middle of the *maamar*, however, he slipped under the table and I heard him murmur, "I want the simple unity. I don't desire your *Gan Eden HaElyon*, nor your *Gan Eden HaTachton*, just You Yourself! I would have passed on long ago; only your Torah and *mitzvos* kept me here".

(היכל הבעש"ט טז ע' קנז)

While reciting the *Haggada*, the *tzaddik* Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev was fired by tremendous *hislahavus*. When he reached the words *Matzah zu* he would become so carried away in *dveikus* that he would fall from his chair to the floor, overturning the *kaara*, the *matzos* and the wine. By the time he came to, the table would be set afresh, and another long white *kittel* was handed to him to replace the one stained with wine. Putting it on, he would say with visible delight, "Ah! *Matzah zu...*"

(סיפור"ח זוין מועדים ע' 367)

### CONSIDER

What lesson did the student of the Baal Shem Tov learn about excitement?

Is Chassidus Chabad fond of emotion in *avodas HaShem* or not?

### GENUINE EXCITEMENT

When the Mittlerer Rebbe succeeded his father, the Alter Rebbe, he discouraged the *chassidim* from expressing emotion during *davening*. Some of the Alter Rebbe's *chassidim* considered this inconsistent with the manner of the Alter Rebbe who *davened* and taught *Chassidus* with obvious enthusiasm, and they left the Mittlerer Rebbe. Likewise, some of the Mittlerer Rebbe's *chassidim* thought that any form of emotion in the service of *HaShem* was undesirable, and even made efforts not to become excited.

Addressing this confusion, the Mittlerer Rebbe wrote an essay entitled *Kuntres HaHispailus*, in which he distinguishes between the natural joy of the *neschama* in connecting to *HaShem* and the simulated excitement which arises from personal satisfaction and pride of one's *avoda*. He enumerates a range of levels in true inner *hispailus*, and demands of his *chassidim* not to strive towards great heights but to serve *HaShem*

with sincerity each according to his level.

(סר"ה"ז מ' קונטרסים ע' לט-קפה)

### ALIVE WITH CHASSIDUS

In a letter, Reb Aizil Homiler recounts his journey to satisfy his yearning to recognize the oneness of *HaShem* and his incredible excitement at attaining that recognition:

"I exerted myself tremendously to comprehend this *emuna*, until finally, with the help of the [Alter] Rebbe's son [the Mittlerer Rebbe], my understanding began to increase. However, I was unable to maintain this perception, and I would write many *tzetzlach* to the Rebbe begging him to explain the matter to me in a clear and lucid manner. The Rebbe, however, kept on pushing me off, and this caused me tremendous pain.

"Finally on one occasion, the Rebbe acquiesced and said he would deliver a *maamar* of *Chassidus* especially for me. About ten people gathered in the room. Hearing the words of the Rebbe, I stood trembling, oblivious of whether it was night or day. As soon as the Rebbe finished speaking, a bright shining powerful *emuna* shot into my heart like an arrow, and I had a strong desire to run in the streets and shout out this great revelation. For whatever reason, I decided against it.

"By the Name of *HaShem* I tell you that I am not exaggerating even one bit..."

(תולדות יצחק אייזיק ע' 176)

Having spent a few days by the Alter Rebbe, the group of *Chassidim* was ready to return to their hometown, but their *baal agala* was nowhere to be found. Worse yet, the horse that had brought them to Liozna was in its stall, not having been fed for several days. They set out to search for the wagon driver in the forests outside of Liozna, and found him walking about and shouting in Russian, "If you were to ask a *goy* 'Do you love G-d?' he too would say 'I love Him!'"

As it turned out, the simple wagon driver listened to the *maamar*, and caught only these words of the Alter Rebbe. This inspired him so, that he completely forgot about everything, and immersed himself in those words.

(לשמע איון ע' 26)

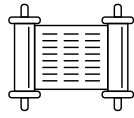


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## PLAYGROUP IN AN APARTMENT

**Can I open a playgroup in my apartment if a neighbor objects?**

Halacha states that one may not open a new store or business in a house that opens to a shared courtyard (*chatzer*), since it will cause more people to enter the area and encroach on the neighbors' privacy in their courtyard. However, if it increases traffic only in a shared alleyway (*mavo*) and not a shared courtyard, the *mechaber* prohibits it while the *rema* allows it.<sup>1</sup>

Even if the neighbors didn't protest immediately, they are still entitled to be protest later on. Though usually the failure to protest is interpreted as agreement, in this case it isn't, since the harm that is generated is so major.<sup>2</sup>

What is the status of today's apartment buildings? On one hand, it is a closed area comparable to the courtyards discussed in the Gemara. On the other hand, the old-age courtyard was used for private work like washing clothing, unlike the hallways of apartment buildings which are only meant for people to walk in, making it more like an alleyway.<sup>3</sup>

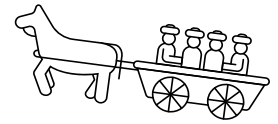
In the days of the Mishna, R. Yehoshua ben Gamla made an enactment that a teacher may teach Torah to boys even in a home that opens to a shared courtyard, so that there is no shortage of Torah education. Poskim extend this allowance to all mitzvah-related activities, such as a *minyan*.<sup>4</sup> However, some qualify that this doesn't apply to late night teaching or studying which can be particularly bothersome.<sup>5</sup>

A playgroup, though important, is not included in the mitzvah allowance and therefore neighbors in a shared courtyard can protest if it disturbs them. If we view an apartment building like an alleyway, *sefardim* will have to be stringent as per the ruling of the *mechaber* while it would be permissible for *ashkenazim*.

1. שו"ע חו"מ סי' קנ"ו ס"א. התשב"ץ ח"ד סי' נ"ז מעיר שאם יש רעש גדול שנכנס לתוך בתי השכנים יכולים לעכב, אבל אחרים לא העירו, ובמילא צ"ע למעשה בהז. 2. שו"ע שם ס"ד. 3. ראה ס' משפטי חושן סי' קנ"ו הערות ס"ב. 4. ולהעיר מדברי החת"ס שאם המצווה לא יתבטל ממילא אין לו להפריע לשכינו. 5. שו"ת שבת"ל ח"ז סי' רכ"ד.

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

# Our Heroes



## REB BARUCH FRIEDMAN

Reb Baruch Friedman was born in Poland and came to learn in Tomchei Tmimim in Lubavitch. There he was known as "Baruch Polisher." As an older *bochur* he served as *mashpia* of *Chassidus* in Charkov. In 5681 (1921), after World War I, he returned to Poland and was appointed as *mashpia* in Warsaw, then in Lodz, and eventually in Otvotzk. During the first two years of World War II he was in the Ghetto of Radom where he continued to serve as *mashpia*. From there he was taken to Treblinka and was killed *al kidush Hashem* during the month of Elul 5702 (1942).

Reb Baruch was a great *maskil* in *Chassidus*. The Rebbe Rashab said about him, "Baruch Polisher understands a *vort Chassidus*." When he would sit and learn, nothing was able to divert his attention. Even when three of his children were sitting on him—one pulling his beard,

another pulling his hair and the third sitting on his shoulders—he wouldn't get distracted. He demanded the same level of concentration from the *bochurim*, and would often say during *farbrengens*, "You should bury yourself in *Chassidus*."

(לקוטי סיפורי התועדויות - רמ"ז גרינגלאס עמוד 35)

Reb Baruch once said, "It is known the importance of saying words of Torah when walking in the street. However, this is only for someone who is not able to think deeply. Someone who is capable should *think deeply* while walking in the street, the reason being that one merely saying words of Torah can be simultaneously thinking of other things, possibly worldly. Not the case when one is thinking deeply into Torah, for then one's mind is fully occupied and there is no room for other thoughts."

(לקוטי סיפורי התועדויות - רמ"ז גרינגלאס עמוד 35)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



## LEIL SHISHI WITH THE REBBE

Reb Nachman Sudak A"H related:

To us *bochurim* of the 5710's (1950's), the Rebbe was like a caring father. We would often *farbreng* amongst ourselves at our dormitory on Eastern Parkway, and there were times when the Rebbe, walking home from *yechidus*, would stop outside and listen in. There was a feeling of closeness.

It happened one Thursday night at 3 am that I was sitting in the *zal* of 770, typing the Rebbe's *sichos* for publication. I was the only one in the *beis midrash*, besides for one other *bochur*, who had fallen

asleep on a bench with an open *Likkutei Dibburim*.

I had a strange feeling that someone was watching me. I looked up, and behold the Rebbe was there, looking at me and inspecting my work.

The Rebbe didn't say anything to me. He gently approached the sleeping *bochur*, bent over on his side, and peered into the *Likkutei Dibburim* to see which *sicha* he was reading. The Rebbe smiled, turned and left the room.

(Main Nachman, page 7)

