

# The Weekly Farbrengens

  
**MERKAZ ANASH**  
 מרכז אנאש  
 למען ישמעו • ויקהל תשפ"ב • 659  
 EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## PURE JOY (I)

### DELIGHT IN A MITZVA

The AriZal once told his *talmid*, Reb Chayim Vital, that the reason he merited *Ruach HaKodesh* and the revelation of Eliyahu HaNavi was his great joy in fulfilling *mitzvos*. In this the Rebbe saw a lesson for every individual – that through joy in fulfilling *mitzvos*, one can reach great heights.

(ס' חרדים בהקדמה, שמחה ובטחון בה')

The Torah warns that as a result of not serving *HaShem* with *simcha*, the Yidden will have to serve their enemies. The Alter Rebbe explains that these "enemies" are the *mekatregim*, the accusatory voices in the *Beis-Din shel Maala* that threaten a Yid in the areas of *parnasa*, health and children. Those voices are silenced when he *davens* with the exuberance and *simcha* that come from recognizing *HaShem*.

The Alter Rebbe would instruct people with troubles to *daven* with song and *simcha*, for doing so sweetens the *dinim*, the Heavenly verdicts that hang over a person, and eliminates all the adversaries in the *Beis-Din shel Maala*. The Mitteler Rebbe noted that this approach has been "tried and tested."

The Mitteler Rebbe adds that even those people who are deeply immersed in meditation on *Chassidus* while they *daven* should say the words aloud, together with song, for this brings *simcha*. In addition, one ought to actually experience *simcha shel mitzva*, to the extent that when putting on *tallis* and *tefillin* or giving *tzedaka*, one should feel excitement in his heart that he is able to cause pleasure to his Creator. One should ignore those who mock him in this, and whose only sources of enjoyment are physical pleasures.

(אג"ק אדהאמ"צ ע"ר ס"ה)

A *chossid* once complained to the Alter Rebbe that his mind was being assailed by foreign thoughts. The Alter Rebbe told him, "They gather in empty space!" (This means that such thoughts come when the mind is not filled with thoughts of Torah and *mitzvos*.)

The Rebbe commented that the same is true of *simcha*: if a person does not have joy in fulfilling *mitzvos*, his happiness will be expressed in other things...

(תר"מ חלו"ו ע' 221)

In the days of the Baal Shem Tov there lived a *chossid* in the village of Lubavitch who was nicknamed Reb Yisroel *der Lebediker* ("Yisroel the lively one"). Even at the age of ninety, he would still *daven* and learn *Tanach* and *Mishnayos* with the excitement and energy of a young man. He used to say: "A *mitzva* without *kavana* is like a body without a *neshama*. The *kavana* must be that the *mitzva* comes from the commander, *HaShem*, Who *shleps* us out of all sorts of mud. So if I, Yisrolik, who am nothing, have been given the *zechus* of fulfilling the command of *HaShem*, of course I should jump and dance out of absolute joy!"

(לקוטי דיבורים חלק א' ע' 228)

### CONSIDER

Is the difference between worldly excitement and *simcha shel mitzva* in the object of the joy, or in the joy itself?

Why is *merirus* not a contradiction to joy? Is the *teshuva* of joy less earnest than *teshuva* of *merirus*?

### TRUE SIMCHA

The Rambam writes that when a person eats and drinks and rejoices on *Yom-Tov*, he should not be drawn into drinking and frivolity, and claim that by doing so he is fulfilling the *mitzva* of *simcha* more fully, for this is not *simcha*, just unbridled foolishness. We are commanded to have real *simcha*, which always involves serving *HaShem* – and this cannot be carried out when one is wild or drunk.

(רמב"ם הל' יו"ט פ"ו ה"כ)

When the *chassidim* of Reb Naftali of Ropshitz *davened*, the *tzaddik* would walk up and down the *beis midrash*, scrutinizing each one. One morning, after

*davening*, he commented, "Today, I saw Reb Tzvi the *shammes* dancing with great ecstasy. He can dance! And it is not in vain, for he will grow into a mighty tree under which many great men will find shelter. But quite in contrast to him, I saw another man dancing (and he named him). What a pity to wear out a good pair of shoes on dancing of that sort...!"

(סיפורי חסידים זיין מועדים ע' 188)

One night on *Chol HaMoed*, the students of the Tomchei Temimim Yeshiva in Dokshytz arrived at the *sukka* of Reb Yehoshua Lein to *farbreng* and rejoice in *Simchas Beis HaShoeiva*. The *chossid* told them, "What kind of *simcha* can one possibly have without studying beforehand the *maamar* that begins *U'She'avtem* (which explains the reason for the joy)?"

The *bochurim* went off to bring a few copies of *Likkutei Torah* from their homes and then studied that *maamar* for over an hour. Only then did they rejoice, dancing till late at night.

(לקוטי סיפורים פערלאוו ע' 178)

### THE JOY OF REUNION

At the beginning of the Alter Rebbe's *nesius*, he discontinued the practice of his *chassidim* to arouse *atzvus* (sadness) within themselves over their wrongdoings. The *chassidim* thought they were also to do away with *merirus* (bitterness over *aveiros*) and were therefore constantly in a state of *simcha*. Later, the Alter Rebbe wrote in *Tanya* that there is a benefit to be gained from feelings of bitterness over *aveiros*, for in fact it serves as a necessary prerequisite for joy. The *chassidim* then understood that it was only melancholy that the Alter Rebbe had negated.

The Rebbe once said that in our times we no longer have the emotional strength to do *teshuva* with bitterness; rather, we must do *teshuva* with *simcha*. The Rebbe went further and explained that in fact, *teshuva* itself is a great reason for *simcha* – for there can be no greater joy than finding oneself and being reunited with our Father, like a wandering prince who finally comes home, after a long separation, to his father, the king.

(סה"ש תש"א ע' מה, תר"מ תשמ"ו ח"א ע' 667, תר"מ תשמ"ג ח"א ע' 90)

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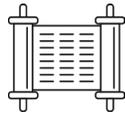
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**KNOTS ON SHABBOS**

**I was making a bow on my shoes and it mistakenly turned into a double knot. Is there any way to get my shoes off?**

Among the thirty-nine *melachos* are *Kosheir* (tying) and *Matir* (untying). Depending on how strong or professional the knot is, and how long it is meant to last, its tying and untying can either be prohibited *min haTorah*, *miderabanan*, or in some cases, permitted.

A single tie — e.g., tying two flaps of a garbage bag with one overhand knot — is permitted regardless of how long he wants it to last, since it doesn't have strength to last and isn't considered a "knot" at all.<sup>1</sup> Making a bow or slipknot on its own is not either considered tying and is completely permitted, even if making a double one.<sup>2</sup>

A double knot — e.g., tying the flaps with two overhand knots — or knotting a string around itself — e.g. to prevent a *tzitzis* string from unraveling — are possibly considered "professional" knots, and are forbidden to make even for a short time.<sup>3</sup>

What about a bow on top of a single overhand knot—e.g., as people tie their shoes?

Some *poskim* hold that since each one on its own isn't a halachic knot, there is no problem to combine them as well, even if they remain tied for a long time (e.g. garbage bag). Others, however, argue that since the combination is stronger, it may not be tied to last more than 24 hours (e.g. shoes or sashes). The Alter Rebbe seemingly rules stringently and only permits if one plans to untie it the same day.<sup>4</sup>

What if one was tying a regular bow and it mistakenly became a double knot?

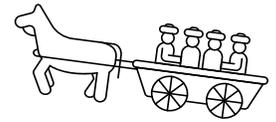
While some argue that it may be untied unconditionally since there was no intention to make a professional knot,<sup>5</sup> the Ketzos Hashulchan considered it a regular short term knot which may be only untied if it causes major discomfort (i.e. not being able to remove one's shoes).<sup>6</sup> This is because (a) there is doubt whether a double knot is truly considered a "professional" knot, and (b) some hold that any knot that isn't meant to last more than 24 hours may be untied, and Chazal were thus lenient in cases of major discomfort.<sup>7</sup>

If a knot was made but it wasn't yet pulled tight, it may be undone.<sup>8</sup>

1. ראה קצוה"ש סי' קכ"ג סק"ד.
2. שו"ע או"ח סי' שי"ז ס"ה ומשנ"ב שם.
3. סקכ"ט. והטעם - ראה ארוחות שבת פ"י ס"ב.
4. שו"ע או"ח סי' ס"ב-ג.
5. המתירים - ראה ב"י סי' שי"ז בשם המרדכי.
6. ראה ט"ז סק"ז ומג"א סקט"ו. המחמירים -
7. ראה אגור המובא ברמ"א ס"ה. וראה שו"ע שם ס"ג.
8. ראה משנ"ב סקכ"ג. שש"כ פט"ו ס"ט.
9. קצוה"ש סי' קכ"ג בדה"ש סק"א.
10. שו"ע"ר שם סוס"ב.
11. קצוה"ש שם.

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

לע"נ מרת חנה בת ר' ישע"י ע"ה  
יאהרצייט כ"ד אדר  
נדבת משפחת בערקאוויטש שי'



**R. NECHEMYA OF DUBROVNA**

The *gaon* R. Nechemya Birech Halevi of Dubrovna was the son-in-law of R. Chaim Avraham, the Alter Rebbe's son, and was one of the Alter Rebbe's outstanding *chassidim*. He earned his livelihood from a factory of *taleisim* that he owned. He authored *Sheilos Uteshuvos Divrei Nechemya*, as well as glosses on Gemara (printed in the back of the Vilna shas) and on the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*. He passed away on his birthday, Tu Bishvat 2165 (1852).

exclaimed in amazement, "Wow! Is this what the *chassidische* businessmen are like?!"

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 123)

R. Nechemia once met up with a *rov* of a town, and they started entered into a Torah discussion. The *rov* was very impressed with R. Nechemia's *geonus* and asked why he wasn't renowned among the *geonim* of his time.

R. Nechemia replied with a story:

There was once a *seforim* salesman who traveled throughout the cities and towns selling *seforim*, and he was known for his wide selection. He once chanced upon the home of a town *rov* and saw his vast library, which included many rare and costly *seforim*.

The seller asked the *rov*, "Why is it that I have a tenth of the *seforim* that you have, yet everyone knows about my *seforim*, while you have so many more *seforim*, but no one knows of them?"

To which the *rov* replied, "Your *seforim* are for the world and therefore they are famous, but my *seforim* are for myself."

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 233)

*A Moment with The Rebbe*



**A NIGHTLY BAKERY VISIT**

Although *pas palter*, kosher bread baked by a non-Jewish bakery, can be permitted halachically, in accordance with the Arizal one should be stringent. In a *yechidus* with *HaRav* Yeruslavski of Nachlas Har Chabad, the Rebbe said, "Chassidim are very particular with *pas Yisroel* and *chalav Yisroel!*"

was a time when there was no *pas Yisroel* bread available for the local *Yidden*.

Once the Rebbe heard this, the Rebbe immediately took action. Since there was no public transportation at night, despite the distance, the Rebbe made his way to a bakery by foot. At the bakery, the Rebbe lit the fire and threw in a piece of wood.

On another occasion, the Rebbe explained at a *farbrengen* that gentile bread represents worldly pleasures, and one seeking to rise above materialism should start with being particular about *pas Yisroel*.

This then became a nightly 2:00am bakery visit, thus providing Parisian Jewry with *pas Yisroel* bread.

(Compass Magazine, Shevat 5777, p. 39; Heichal Menachem, Vol. 1, p. 224; Toras Menachem, Vol. 12, p. 105; Yemei Melech, Vol. 1, p. 390)

During the Rebbe's years in Paris, there