

The Weekly Farbrengens

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

למען ישמעו • כי תשא תשפ"ג • 713
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 *melamdim* in his town taught the children. The *talmid* replied that the *melamdim* 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...*"

(סיפ'ו"ח זיון 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 Mitteler 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 Mitteler Rebbe. Likewise, some of the Mitteler 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 Mitteler Rebbe wrote an essay entitled *Kuntres HaHispailus*, in which he distinguishes between the natural joy of the *neshama* 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.

(סו"ה'נו 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 Mitteler 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)

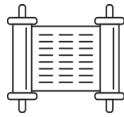
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TOIVELING A COFFEE GRINDER

Does a coffee grinder require *tevila*?

Utensils made from metal or glass that touch the food and are used for preparing, serving, or eating the food require *tevila*.

The Mechaber writes that a knife used for *shechita* or to skin an animal does not require *tevila*, because at that point the animal is not yet ready to be eaten; it still needs to be cooked.¹ According to this, any utensils used with not-ready-to-eat food — e.g. coffee grinder, cookie cutter, kneading bowl, fish scale remover — would be exempt.

However, the Rama quotes a dissenting opinion and rules that it is preferable to *toivel* such utensils without a *bracha*.² But then he adds that the instrument used to perforate holes in the matzah dough before baking does not require *tevila*.

Acharonim debate how to reconcile these two rulings. Some explain that if the utensil can be used for other things as well — such as a *shechita* knife, which can also be used to cut ready food — it is preferable to *toivel* it. The perforating instrument, on the other hand, isn't used for other food purposes. The same would be the case for needles used to sew raw chicken with stuffing.³

Others hold that these are two different views quoted by the Rama, and his personal ruling is that all these utensils should be *toiveled*, including the perforating instrument.⁴ A third interpretation is that if the utensil serves a prominent purpose in food preparation, albeit a preliminary one, it should be *toiveled*.⁵

Contemporary *poskim* write that there is no decisive ruling in this regard. *L'chatchila* one should *toivel* all of them, yet in tricky situations, especially ones of need, one can rely on the lenient views.

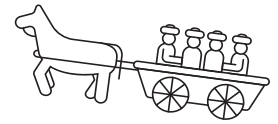
Peelers used for vegetables that are eaten raw — e.g. cucumbers, tomatoes — require *tevila* with a *bracha*, yet those used for vegetables that need cooking — e.g. potatoes, sweet potatoes, zucchini — fall under the above debates and should be *toiveled* without a *bracha*. If a utensil is used for both purposes, we follow the majority of its usage.⁶

Utensils like meat thermometers come in contact with the food but don't change the food in any way and aren't directly involved in its preparation, thus some exempt them from *tevila*.⁷ Others hold they should be *toiveled* without a *bracha*.⁸

1. מרדכי חולין רמז תקע"ז, שו"ע י"ד.
 2. ערוה"ש סי' ק"כ סקל"ה.
 3. סי' ק"כ ס"ה.
 4. תשב"ץ סי' שכ"ו, רמ"א שם.
 5. שו"ך סי' ק"כ סקל"א.
 6. ראה ט"ז סק"ז.
 7. ראה שו"ת אבני ישפה ח"א סי' קמ"ו.
 8. ראה שו"ת תורה מציון סי' שס"ז הע"ר.
 9. ראה שו"ת אבני ישפה ח"א סי' קמ"ו.
 10. חוט שני טבילת כלים כב.
 11. ראה שו"ת תורה מציון סי' שס"ז הע"ר.

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

Our Heroes



R. SHAMAI VIGAN

R. Shamai Vigan was a chossid of the Rebbe Rashab and Friediker Rebbe. A grandson of the chossid R. Zalman Scherbiner, he was born in the small village of Scherbin, near Lubavitch. R. Shamai learned in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch and was known for his sincere *avodas Hashem*. He served as a shochet in Rostov and was *moser nefesh* to teach bochurim until he was arrested in 5696 and exiled to Siberia for three years. After his release he served as a shochet in Novozybkov, Russia, where he was killed *al kidush Hashem* by the Nazis in 5702.

R. Yudel Chitrik recorded:

From my days in Schedrin, I became friends with "Shamai Scherbiner" as he was called. Shamai was a *yirei Shomayim* and a *primi*, and he shared his inner feelings and experiences with me. He told me that he thought through the *maamar* "Tanu Rabanan" 5643 before davening over 100 times.

Before Pesach, bochurim wished to adopt all the Rebbe Rashab's *hidurim* in making *matza*. But Shamai questioned us, "Are we on the level of such *hidurim*?" Yet, we concluded that in order to be receptive to Chassidus, we ought to be *mehader* as much as we can.

When he reached the age of *shidduchim*, he was matched with the daughter of R. Avrohom Fradkin. He met with her and the *shidduch* was almost finalized, but then Rebbetzin Shterna Sara suggested for him a girl from Gzatzk. He was uncertain of what to do. In

the end, both fell through, and he married the daughter of the shochet from Zhebin.

(רשימות דברים חדש ע' 303)

Even many years later in New York, whenever R. Zev Kazinitz would hear the *niggun* that R. Shamai would sing, he would break down crying. Having learned *shechita* from R. Shamai, he recalled his heartfelt *krias shema she'al hamita* which lasted until dawn and broke the hearts of whoever heard it.

Once, while someone was chazering a *maamar*, R. Shamai was standing and crying. When asked why he was so upset, the great *oved* said that he is crying because he isn't engaged at all in *avoda*...

(רשימות וויניגארטען, זכרון לבני" ע' 87)

When his sister developed a growth on her tongue, the doctors said it was dangerous and must be operated on immediately. Shamai ran in anguish to the Rebbe Rashab, who assured him that it was nothing more than a rotting tooth that must be pulled out. Indeed, they found the tooth and removed it, and the growth disappeared.

When someone noted to the Rebbe Rashab that he is publicly displaying *mofsim*, the Rebbe replied, "Shamai came in crying that his sister must be saved. Nu, what was I to do?!"

(שמעון וסיפורים ח"ג ע' 218)

A Moment with The Rebbe



A CHOSSID'S DAVENING

In the Rebbe's presence chassidim were naturally measured. However, there were times when a chossid's self-expression in front of the Rebbe caused *nachas ruach*.

"It happened one year on Purim," related Reb Yisroel Friedman *a"h*, "as we stood and davened *maariv* with the Rebbe at seven o'clock. Since the *farbrengen* would only begin hours later, the crowd was very small, and every motion that anyone did was audible.

"Reb Elya Chaim Roitblat, the longtime *melamed* of Oholei Torah, recited the *Aleinu*

prayer in his place, pronouncing every word with devotion. Everyone in the *shul* could hear him.

"When he reached the words "*she'heim mishtachavim le'hevel ve'larik* - they bow to vanity and nothingness" he muttered to himself almost unwittingly, '*Feh, kelipa!*'

"I will never forget how the Rebbe turned around to look at Reb Elya Chaim. A wide smile spread across his holy face, expressing deep pleasure."

(*Techayeinu Issue 7*)