

The Weekly Farbrengens

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

A DELIGHTFUL EXPERIENCE

TO LIVE IT

Reb Aizik Homiler once came to Chernigov, and the local *chassidim* prepared a festive meal in his honor. During the meal, Reb Aizik repeated a *maamar* of *Chassidus*, and as soon as he was done, the students of *Chassidus* (the *maskilim*) left to review his teachings. The *baalei batim* on the other hand continued with the meal.

One of the *balei batim* then turned to Reb Aizik and said, "We all heard your teachings of *Chassidus*, understood them and will review them when we get home. Why do these *maskilim* rush out to review the *maamar* right away?"

Suddenly, the bell of the post office next door rang. The manager of the post office quickly got up and ran out to see what was the matter. Reb Aizik turned to the questioner and said, "You see, we all heard the bell, but only the post office manager cared about it because it's his livelihood. So too with these *Chassidim*, since *Chassidus* is their life, they care about it and hurry to review it immediately."

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"ב ע' 172)

PHYSICAL PLEASURE

Reb Hillel Paritcher would say: "If the *baalei tayve* would only know the great *geshmak* of recognizing *Elokus*, they would leave all their worldly desires and run after it."

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"ג ע' 229)

In response to someone who had complained to the Rebbe about physical weakness, the Rebbe advised him amongst other things to learn regularly a subject in *nigleh* or *Chassidus* that would give him real pleasure. The Torah that he studied would then heal him.

(אג"ק חכ"א ע' קכ)

Even when *kabbolas ol* was called for, the Rebbe emphasized that this should not be the ultimate destination: one must eventually come to

understand and also appreciate what is expected of him. *Kabbolas ol* and servitude is the "beginning of *avoda*," but only the *beginning*.

When a *Yid* realizes that his Torah study binds him with HaShem, he should be so excited that even a passerby will notice. The same is true for carrying out HaShem's will by fulfilling *mitzvos*. He should feel that with his every word of Torah and every *mitzva* he is taking over the world and reducing its spiritual limitations.

(לקו"ש ח"ג ע' 881, תו"מ חמ"ד ע' 250)

CONSIDER

Why is *kabbolas ol* only the "beginning of *avoda*"? Isn't action the main thing?

How will the excitement of the *frum Yidden* cause all *Yidden* to be more observant?

A VITALIZING FOUNDATION

At a *Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengens* the Frierdiker Rebbe once contrasted the warmth of the Yiddishe home in earlier times with the way things are today:

In the Yiddishe home of former days, the Torah and *kedusha* were valued as supremely precious. In the eyes of every man and woman, an *ehrlischer Yid* was precious, and the letters of the *alef-beis* and the *nekudos* were holy.

The happiest event in the home was the privilege of leading a child to *cheder* for the first time. There, he would be taught by an *ehrlischer melamed*, who dedicated himself wholeheartedly to instilling *yiras Shomayim* in the child, encouraging him to wash *negel-vasser*, to sleep with a *yarmulke*, to

recite *brachos*, *Shema*, and *Amen*, *Yehei shmei raba*, to heed his parents' instructions, and to make a *bracha* over his *tzitzis*. The parents would see to it that his *peiyos* remained intact. And how great was their joy when their child became a *bar-mitzva*, and how sweet was their *nachas* as he flourished in a *yeshiva*.

Today, however, a bitter frost has overtaken the Yiddishe home. Even after a kosher *korbon* has been brought, the blood can still congeal and become invalidated.

Today, too, a *cheder* is established – but whom do they take as a teacher? They don't look for an *ehrlischer melamed*: they want one with special "methods." *Yiras Shomayim* and the *kedusha* of the letters and *nekudos* are not regarded as important; people have grown frigid. A widespread lack of *chayus* has caused *chassidim* not to learn *Chassidus* regularly, not to express a love for one another, and not to *farbreng* – never mind toiling in *avodas hatefilla* like the *chassidim* of old.

We excuse ourselves by saying that society in general has declined and become coarse. True, the limbs of the Jewish people have become weak, and today we must address at *farbrengens* such matters that once even a preacher of *Mussar* didn't have to mention. But in fact, it is all the fault of the "congealed blood."

A few weeks ago I received a letter from a worldly young man asking for a *bracha* for his travels. I don't know him, but his letter was sincere, so I wrote to him that wherever he went he should influence those around him toward the observance of *mitzvos*. Today I received a letter from him: he followed my instructions and has already influenced several young men to observe *kashrus*. And there are many such instances.

The 'limbs' are weak, but as long as the 'blood' is healthy and pumps with vitality, the 'limbs' will eventually become healthy as well.

(סה"ש תרצ"א ע' 771 ואילך)

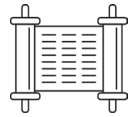
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SHABBOS WALK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

I want to take a Shabbos stroll in the countryside. What do I need to know?

On Shabbos, one may not leave the city's boundaries (*techum Shabbos*). Many *rishonim* hold that the prohibition is *min haTorah*, derived from the *posuk*, "each man mustn't leave his place," and it applies to walking a distance of 12 *mil* (12,000 *amos*) beyond a city. According to all opinions, *miderabonon*, one may not walk anything more than 2,000 *amos* (3149 feet) outside the city.¹

From what point are the 2,000 *amos* measured?

If when Shabbos begins, one is situated in an open area outside of a city—e.g., on the highway—then we start counting after a virtual box of 8 *amos*—4 *amos* in each direction—is drawn around him. If one is in a house or fenced area outside of the city, the count begins from the surrounding fence or wall. (An exception to this is if the fenced-in area is larger than 133 sq. feet (*beis sasayim*) and it wasn't gated for dwelling purposes—e.g., a large parking lot or farm.)

If one is situated inside a city, we start counting 2000 *amos* from the city's boundaries. This applies even if there is no fence around the city, since the entire city is considered one dwelling place.²

Where does a "city" end?

The city ends when no more houses are near each other with a space of 70 *amos* and four *tefachim* (111 feet) of unenclosed area. Much attention must be given to rural areas where such spaces are common. (If there are two *groups* of three houses each, they can connect if there are less than 141 *amos* between them.)

When measuring a city, we first square the city to the due directions, before adding 70 *amos* and four *tefachim* of the city border and the 2000 *amos*.³ For a larger city, the square can substantially add to the size of the city, since the city line will be past the house that jots out the furthest. As these measurements are extremely complex and include many considerations, each location should be assessed by a *rov* proficient in these *halachos*.

The Gemara speaks of a river dock used by the residents and considered part of the city, despite not having an enclosure. *Poskim* raise the possibility that this would apply to all outdoor areas that are used by the residents for strolling — such as sidewalks or playgrounds — unlike roads that are used for travel.⁴ In practice, one should consult a *rov*.

1. שמות טו, כט. רמב"ם הל' שבת 3. שו"ע ר סי' שצ"ו ס"א.
2. שו"ע ר סו"ס שצ"ו. שם סי"ג.
3. מג"א סי' שצ"ו סקי"ג, שו"ע ר.
4. שם סי"ג.

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

Our Heroes



R. YECHIEL TZVI HIRSH GURARY

R. Yechiel Tzvi Hirsh Gurary was born in 5643 in Kremenchug, where his father R. Nosson was a well-known *chossid* and *gvir*. R. Hirshel was one of the early *talmidim* in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, where he learned from the *mashpia* R. Hendel.

A son-in-law of the Radziner Rebbe, R. Hirshel lived in Kremenchug where he owned a tobacco factory and was a leading *gvir* and *askan*. After the Communist revolution, he fled Russia and settled in Warsaw where he served as a member of the administration of the local branch of Tomchei Temimim. R. Hirshel died in the Warsaw Ghetto in 5703, together with most of his family. His only surviving child was Chaya Devorah, the wife of R. Nochum Goldshmid in Eretz Yisrael.

An outstanding *maskil* and *oved*, R. Hirshel was grabbed as a son-in-law by the fourth Radziner Rebbe, R. Mordechai Yosef Elazar Leiner. The Radziner Rebbes were known for renewing the *mitzvah* of *techeiles* in *tzitzis*, and when R. Hirshel joined the family, he was expected to don it as well.

Knowing that the Rebbe Rashab rejected the renewal of *techeiles* — based on Kabbala that it will only return after the *geulah* — he was in a quandary, and he asked the Rebbe what to do. The Rebbe Rashab instructed him to wear it at home out of respect for the Radziner Rebbe, who was a great person.

The Rebbe lists R. Hirshel among those special *chassidim* who put on four pairs of *tefillin*.

(נשיאי חב"ד ובני דורם על 89 לקו"ש ח"ב ע' 507)

During WWI, the Tomchei Temimim *yeshiva* escaped from Lubavitch to Kremenchug. R. Hirshel bought a large three-story mansion surrounded by an orchard that had belonged to a nobleman, and made it available to the *bochurim* for learning and sleeping. He also arranged meals

and other needs for the hundred *bochurim* who learned there.

R. Hirshel had a room in the building where would come to learn *Chassidus* each day.

(זכרון לבני ע' 78, ס' הזכרונות דה"י ע' יח)

At a *farbrengen* in 5681, during the Russian Revolution, the Frierdiker Rebbe spoke emphatically about the need for *avoda*. R. Hirshel was taken aback and asked, "Now?! When Alter [Simchovitch] is being forced to clean the streets, the Rebbe is demanding *avoda*?"

The Rebbe replied that although we are small in comparison to the *mesiras nefesh* of Rebbi Akiva, since Hashem chose us for this task it is a sign that we can succeed.

(ס' השיחות תרפ"א ע' 24)

R. Hirshel's younger brother, R. Zalman Gurary, related:

The *chassuna* of the Frierdiker Rebbe's daughter Shaina to R. Menachem Mendel Horenshtein took place in the Polish town of Lentvaris, and accommodations were arranged in a large barracks. Having arrived late, my brother R. Hirshel didn't have a bed and he laid down to sleep on a bench.

Present at the *chassuna* was a *bochur* named Moshe Gittelles. He had once learned in Lubavitch, but later transferred to the Mir *yeshiva*. I had brought him previously to the Frierdiker Rebbe who tried to impress upon him the importance of learning *Chassidus*, but Moshe countered that *Mussar* is just as effective.

But when he saw this esteemed and wealthy *chossid* sleeping on a bench, Moshe was stunned, and he admitted, "By us, such *bittul* doesn't exist!"

(דער ליובאוויטשער רבי ע' 14)

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

A team of reporters from CNN were standing near the Rebbe, filming the thousands file by in the dollars line on 12 Cheshvan 5752 (1991).

The Rebbe turned to the group, gave them a dollar, and said, "This is for charity."

One reporter seized the moment, "Can you tell us a message you have for the world about the Moshiach?"

"It was printed in the press in all countries," the Rebbe replied. "If you want to repeat to them, repeat to them. Moshiach is ready to come now, it is only our part to do something additional in the realm of goodness and kindness."

"People should be doing goodness and kindness for him to come?" the reporter asked.

"At least a little more," the Rebbe responded, "then Moshiach will come immediately."