

The Weekly Farbrengens



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

THRILLED TO ACTION (I)

PALPABLE EXCITEMENT

The surging crowd pressed close to the table at which the Rebbe Rashab was seated. It was Simchas Torah תרי"ט (1918), the Rebbe was *farbrenging*, and everyone wished to hear his words. The table, no longer able to bear the mounting pressure, collapsed.

Not wishing to disturb the Rebbe's talk, the chassidim carefully lifted the splintered table piece by piece, and passed it hand over hand out of the room. Only when he concluded his talk did the Rebbe notice what had happened. He exclaimed in surprise: "Where is the table?"

"I will tell you a story," he said. "Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev had concluded his study of *shechita* and was preparing to slaughter his first hen. He took the bird in his left hand, and diligently prepared it for the *shechting*. In his right he held the *chalef*. With intense concentration and ecstasy, he recited the *bracha* over the *mitzva* which he was privileged to observe for the very first time. In the meantime, the hen decided that, under the circumstances, it was high time she ran for her life..."

"The Berditchever concluded the blessing and exclaimed (the Rebbe quoted in Polish-accented Yiddish): "*Vi is di hin? Where is the hen...?*"

(שמ"ר"ס ח"א ע' 158, תר"מ ח"ז ע' 54)

The chossid Reb Dov Zev Kozevnikov, the *rov* of Yekaterinoslav before the Rebbe's father, personally witnessed the following incident:

During one of Reb Hillel Paritcher's travels, shortly after leaving a certain city he discovered that his *tallis* and *tefillin* had been left behind. A messenger was immediately dispatched to retrieve them while Reb Hillel waited at the side of the road for him to return. As soon as Reb Hillel caught sight of the messenger carrying the bag containing his *tallis* and *tefillin*, he was fired by an intense feeling of *simcha shel mitzvah*, like a child who has just been handed a toy. He jumped up and ran toward the messenger with all his strength.

(מגדל עד ע' רלה)

WITH LOVE

The Torah speaks of four sons at the *Seder*, among them a *rasha* who asks, "What is this *avoda* for you?" The *Talmud Yerushalmi* interprets this to mean, "What is all this trouble that you are making us do every year?"

The Frierdiker Rebbe explains that the *rasha* may even fulfill all the laws of Pesach, yet he does them unwillingly, as a bother and a load. He thereby excludes himself from all the other *Yidden* who do all the *mitzvos* of Pesach and its preparations out of love.

(סה"מ ת"ש ע' 44)

CONSIDER

Does the excitement while doing a *mitzva* result from fulfilling the will of HaShem or from the meaning of the particular *mitzva*?

Why is he called a *rasha* for considering *mitzvos* to be a bother? What should he do if he's just not excited?

The Baal Shem Tov taught:

If a person is excited about doing a *mitzvah*, he should not let his *yetzer hara* convince him that fulfilling it will lead him to pride. Instead he should urge himself to perform it exuberantly, and this will help him do the *mitzva* without personal interest. As Chazal assure us, "*Mitoch shelo lishmah, ba lishmah*" -by doing a *mitzva* for the wrong motivation one will come to do it for its own good sake.

(כש"ט אות רא)

INEXTINGUISHABLE LOVE

In the course of the midday Sukkos meal, Reb Shmuel Abba of Zichlin was in the middle of delivering a learned discourse on the secret teachings of the Torah, when suddenly the *sukka* was drenched by a furious cloudburst. The *tzaddik* did not interrupt his train of thought. On the contrary, he became more and more inflamed by the sheer ecstasy of the holy words, until the *sukka* was almost covered with water.

Suddenly, he rose from his chair and cried out the words from *Shir HaShirim* that testify to the steadfastness of *Bnei Yisroel's* love of their Maker: "*Mayim rabim lo yuchlu lechabos es ha'hava* - "Turbulent waters will not be able to extinguish the love!"

At once the rain ceased. The clouds dispersed, and the sun shone again on the *sukkah* of the *tzaddik*.

(סיפ"ר ח זיין מועדים 150)

Every year before Pesach, the *bochurim* in Lubavitch would bake *matzos* in shifts. Each shift included ten *bochurim* who had the job of preparing the dough and overseeing the rolling and the baking of the *matzos*. For the drawing of *mayim shelanu* the entire group would go, for they all wanted to take part in the *mitzva*.

Once, watching from his window, the Rebbe Rashab saw the group of Shimshon Vitebsker going to draw *mayim shelanu*. Shimshon went with such *simcha shel mitzva* that he sang a *chassidisher niggun* as he danced all the way to the river and back. The Rebbe called over his son, the Frierdiker Rebbe, and pointed this out to him, saying, "The highest level of his *neshama* - the *yechida* - is now shining." He added that although every *Yid* has this level, the *yechida* of this *bochur* was now glowing because of his excitement as he drew and carried the *mayim shelanu*.

(רשימות דברים ח"ב ע' קי"א)



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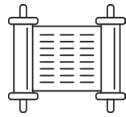
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ERUV TECHUMIN

How do I extend the distance outside of the city that I can walk on Shabbos?

If one wishes to extend the distance he can walk for a mitzva purpose, Chazal allow one to place an eruv techumin. Qualifying purposes include going to the mikva, davening with a minyan, or even taking an enjoyable Shabbos walk or meeting a friend.

One makes the eruv by placing food or condiment sufficient for two meals in a particular place outside of the city, thereby re-establishing his primary dwelling location at the arrival to Shabbos. This is called an "eruv" (mixing) as he is combining the place where he couldn't walk with the place he can walk.

Placing the eruv close to the end of one's techum allows one to walk an additional 2,000 amos past that point. If the location of the eruv is enclosed with a fence, he can walk throughout that entire area, even if it is larger than 2,000 amos. But if he placed the eruv outside of his techum, it doesn't count, since the eruv must be in a location where he can permissibly walk to on Shabbos.

An eruv placed outside the city extends how far one may walk from his home in that specific direction, but limits him in the opposite direction. Is that limit only outside the city or does limit him inside the city as well?

Some rishonim hold that once he establishes his residence in the location of the eruv, this limits how much he can walk in the opposite direction even within the city itself. Others maintain that he is still allowed to walk throughout the entire city if he sleeps there overnight, but he may not walk out of the city on the other side. The halacha follows the latter opinion.

If in some weeks it is beneficial for him to have the eruv and other weeks he would rather walk in the opposite direction, he may place the eruv with the condition that it should only establish his residence on weeks that he decides to use it. He can even make this decision on Shabbos itself and it can work retroactively (due to the halachic principle of yesh bereira that we rely on in derabonon matters). For a long-term eruv, one should use food items that can last for a long time, such as vinegar, oil, or jelly. (Plain water doesn't qualify, but saltwater does).

1. תה"ד סי' ע"ז, שו"ע ורמ"א סי' תט"ו, שו"ת באר משה ח"ב סי' ל"ז.
2. משנ"ב או"ח סי' ת"ח ס"ק"ו.
3. ראה עירובין ל"ח ע"ב בד"ה אין אלו, שו"ע או"ח סי' ת"ח.
4. רמב"ם פ"ו ה"ג, שו"ע ת"ח ס"א (יש שדנים לפי שיטה זו איך מגיע לעירו בעיר גדולה, ויש שהסבירו שרק מותר ללכת

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

Our Heroes



R. MORDECHAI DOV BER SLONIM

R. Mordechai Dov Ber Slonim was the son of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel, the daughter of the Mitteler Rebbe, and R. Yaakov Slonim. Born in 5600, he was a child when his family moved from Lubavitch to Eretz Yisrael.

A resident of Chevron, R. Mordechai Dov Ber served as one of the directors of Colel Chabad and was a leading figure in the local Chabad community. He was said to closely resemble his grandfather, the Mitteler Rebbe, in his physical appearance. He visited Lubavitch multiple times and developed a close relationship with Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab. R. Mordechai Dov Ber passed away on 5 Teves, 5676.

Having lived for decades in the Holy Land, R. Mordechai Dov Ber decided to make the trip to Lubavitch to visit the Rebbe Maharash for the first time. Though he and the Rebbe Maharash had played together as children, his devoted hiskashrus pushed him to travel to his Rebbe.

The trip had been a sudden decision, and he did not inform the Rebbe Maharash in advance that he would be coming. After a long journey, he arrived in Lubavitch at 2 am. Certain that the Rebbe was awake, he went straight to the Rebbe's home and knocked on the door. The door opened and there stood the Rebbe who greeted him warmly, "Ah! Shalom aleichem R. Moteh Ber!"

R. Mordechai Dov Ber was understandably shocked that the Rebbe recognized him, having last seen him as a young boy almost

forty years ago. The Rebbe addressed his wonderment, "Who else would come and bang on my door at 2 am if not R. Moteh Ber!..."

(מגדל עז ע' ר"ז)

In correspondence with R. Mordechai Dov Ber, the Rebbe Rashab would refer to him as "my son-in-law," and to his son, R. Schneur, as "my grandson." The interesting background to this practice was related by Rebbetzin Shterna Sara to R. Ezriel Zelig Slonim (R. Mordechai Dov Ber's great nephew):

During R. Mordechai Dov Ber's stay in Lubavitch, the Rebbe Rashab, then a yungerman, would spend many hours in his company. R. Mordechai Dov Ber would share with him teachings of Chassidus and many unknown stories about the Alter Rebbe and Mitteler Rebbe that he had heard from his mother, Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel. Whenever someone was looking for the Rebbe Rashab, they knew they could find him with R. Mordechai Dov Ber.

Once, the Rebbe Maharash was searching for the Rebbe Rashab, and finding him with R. Mordechai Dov Ber, he commented, "Sholom Ber, you took for yourself an 'eidem oif kest!'" (Lit. "a son-in-law to support," a Yiddish expression for a close friend that one doesn't part from.)

So dear to him were his father's words that he began to refer to R. Mordechai Dov Ber as his "son-in-law" and then to his son as his "grandson."

(מגדל עז ע' רכב)

A Moment with The Rebbe



FEAR OF PUBLIC OPINION

Ariel Sharon, the celebrated general of the Six-Day War, received unique attention from the Rebbe. In lengthy private audiences, long letters, and private messages, the Rebbe guided this secular-born Israeli sabra after his son tragically passed away, when he publicly laid tefillin at the Kosel, and throughout his military and political career.

There was, however, one letter in particular, dated 12 Elul 5728 (1968), that General Sharon would read over and over again. For many years he kept this letter in his jacket pocket.

In that letter the Rebbe lamented the attitude of the young country's leadership, decrying "the government's fear of what the world will say."

The Rebbe wrote pointedly of a then hypothetical situation: "What if, for example, a fight breaks out between an Israeli boy and an Arab boy, and the Jew, who would presumably be outnumbered, gets beaten up or worse, chas v'shalom? On whose side would the Israeli military police stand, in your opinion?"

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