

The Weekly Farbrengens



לחמן ישמעון • אחרי-קדושים תשפ"ג • 720
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

THRILLED TO ACTION (II)

SPLENDOR AND FANFARE

The *Mishna* describes how the Yidden would bring their *bikkurim* to the *Beis HaMikdash* with pomp and ceremony:

The people from the little villages would assemble in a central town and would lodge for the night in the streets. Early in the morning, the leader would announce, "Arise and let us go up unto *Tziyon*, to the House of *HaShem*, our G-d!"

An ox whose horns were overlaid with gold and crowned with olive leaves would head the procession, and flute players would play throughout their journey. When the pilgrims neared *Yerushalayim*, they would send messengers to notify of their arrival, and would adorn their *bikkurim*.

The townsmen of *Yerushalayim* would then come out to greet them, "Our brethren of such-and-such a place, welcome!" The flute players would continue to play until they arrived at *Har HaMoriya*, the Temple Mount. Each person would then set his basket upon his shoulders, and carry it up the hill and into the *Azara*.

(ביכורים פ"ג מ"ב ומ"ג)

CELEBRATING THE TORAH

In this letter the *Friediker Rebbe* describes the intense joy that used to accompany the completion of a *Sefer Torah* and a *hachnosas Sefer Torah*, and the great value of emotional involvement in Torah and *mitzvos*:

"In reply to your letter concerning the purchase of the *Sefer Torah* which, G-d willing, you are preparing to soon complete and bring to *shul*...

"Various *seforim* expound on the greatness of fulfilling this *mitzva*. They praise, admire, and hold holy every action and minute mark of honor that is shown when beginning to write the *Sefer Torah*, when it is completed, and when it is brought to *shul* with a multitude of people and fanfare, with a *chuppa* and lit candles, with song and musical instruments, the people dressed in their *Yom-Tov* clothes, and in tangible joy with dancing and the singing of hymns.

"One must make every effort to enable all the *Yidden* present, men and women and particularly children, to have the merit to kiss the mantle of the *Sefer Torah* while it is being carried to *shul*. That is a *segula* for health and long life. Some people used to bring their

children still in the cradle to the processional path of the *Sefer Torah*, in order to place the its mantle on the child's face...

"The accepted custom is that a few days before the *Siyum Sefer Torah*, announcements are made in all the *shuls* of the city that on such and such a day there will be a *Siyum*, and all congregants are invited to come to give honor to the Torah. That day was a holiday on which *Tachanun* was not said, and all the townsmen would prepare for the celebration in honor of the Torah. *Chassidim* and *anshei maase* immersed themselves in the *mikve*, and during the *tefilos*, additional candles were lit in *shul*.

CONSIDER

Why is this ceremony not seen as an artificial form of celebration?

"After the ceremony of the completion - with the sewing of the parchment, placing the mantle and the sash, and the initiation of the *Sefer Torah* with a public reading - it was time for the *tahalucha*, the festive procession. The celebrant and his relatives would surround the *Sefer Torah* under the *chuppa*, and sing, while all those present would bless them with *Mazal Tov!* The celebrant would carry the *Sefer Torah* from his house for a number of steps, and pause. Then the honors of carrying the *Sefer Torah* would begin. They would announce that so-and-so should step forward to honor the Torah, and he would carry it for a few steps. Then a second person would be honored, and a third, until they arrived at the *shul*. A few steps before they arrived, the celebrant would again be given the honor of carrying the *Sefer Torah*. His relatives would form a guard of honor around him, and they would bring the *Sefer Torah* into the *shul*.

"As they prepared to enter, the *gabbai* and his assistants and the *chazzan* of the *shul* would open the *Aron* and take out all the *Sifrei Torah*. Before opening it, the *chazzan* would say: "*Sifrei Torah*, you are requested by all the holy community, the congregants of this *shul*, to allow yourselves to be brought out in order to welcome the *Sefer Torah* which so-and-so has merited to write and to bring in to this *shul*, in an auspicious and successful hour." They would then take out the *Sifrei Torah* and stand

in two rows, while the celebrant and his relatives would pass between the two rows with the new *Sefer Torah*.

"After announcing the *psukim* of *Ato Horeysa* as on *Simchas Torah*, seven *hakofos* were made, and during each *hakofa* they would dance with the *Sefer Torah* as on *Simchas Torah*. When the seventh *hakofah* ended, they said *Sisu vesimchu besimchas Torah*, and while saying this passage an eighth *hakofah* was made, in order to distinguish between the *hakofos* of *Simchas Torah* proper and these of a *hachnosas Sefer Torah*. After *Yehallelu* all the *Sifrei Torah* were returned to the *Aron*, and *Aleinu* and *Kaddish* were said.

"They would then celebrate with a festive meal in honor of the *mitzva*, complete with Torah teachings, and words of inspiration. Together they would resolve to set aside fixed times for the group study of Torah, for the dissemination of Torah with *yiras Shamayim*, and undertake to support those who study Torah..."

[Parallel to the obligation to study the Torah, there is an ideal called *shimusha shel Torah*, which in this context means a total and loving involvement in everything that the Torah stands for.]

"The study of Torah and *shimusha shel Torah* are not only of equal importance, but in our generation we have clearly seen the tremendous moral deficiency that results from abstract study alone. Even in the eyes of those who cherish the text of the Torah, and believe in its holiness, it is like a body without a soul. Thus, *Chazal* have said that sometimes *shimusha shel Torah* outweighs the study itself, since it is specifically *shimusha shel Torah* that upholds the study."

The *Friediker Rebbe* then speaks of the importance of *shimusha shel Torah* that is communicated through *chassidische* stories and at *chassidische farbrengens*, and the superiority of genuine feeling (*regesh*) over understanding. He then concludes:

"Even the external honor of the Torah with its great beauty and the multitude of people can arouse the feelings of the soul, like all matters of beauty and splendor. Besides this, the glory and honor of the Torah arouse the *pintele Yid* that is present within every man and woman. This arousal is precious in itself, and can spark an arousal of *teshuva* that will bring a person to choose the ways of Torah and *mitzvos*."

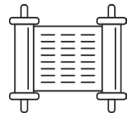
(א"ג אדהר"י צ"ח ע"ג ועי' א"ג)

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CELEBRATIONS DURING SEFIRA

Can I make a bar mitzva celebration with music during sefira?

Between Pesach and Shavuot, we mourn the passing of Rabbi Akiva's students. Poskim rule that it is forbidden to have dancing at an engagement party held during this period, and later poskim add that one may certainly not play music.

At a celebration that is a seudas reshut, the Alter Rebbe writes that one should refrain from simchos yeseiros added elements of joy (merrymaking, or recorded music today). At a seudas mitzva, those are allowed.

The Rebbe encouraged holding lag ba'omer rallies, even if they must be pushed off to another day. But to avoid halachic issues, the Rebbe recommended simultaneously holding a siyum maseches so it will be a mitzva-related simcha and the gathering will be considered a seudas mitzva.

A bar mitzva celebration on his actual birthday qualifies as a seudas mitzva, and even on another day if the boy expounds on Torah.

In practice, contemporary Chabad rabbonim debate the matter: Some prohibit dancing at a bar mitzva altogether. Many permit conservative dancing - e.g., a chassidische circle - which isn't the lively dancing discussed in halacha, and basic recorded music, but not live music or a DJ.

After kiddush levana, there is a minhag Yisroel to dance as an indication of the dance that will take place when the Yidden will unite with Hashem (like the unity of the sun and moon). During sefira days, one may conduct a small dance as it isn't dancing from joy.

It is best not to schedule a siyum sefer Torah during these days due to the Alter Rebbe's stringent opinion. Yet, if they want it to coincide with the date of the yahrtzeit, there is room to permit dancing with live music.

1. מג"א אור"ח סי' תצ"ג סק"א. עה"ש שם
2. ראה מג"א שם, ומשנ"ב שם סק"ג.
3. שו"ע"ר סי' תצ"ג ס"א. מזה שהוא מכ"ל סעודת קידושין בלי ריקודין ומחו"ל וכו'
4. לקו"ש חל"צ ע" 122.
5. ראה מג"א סי' רכה ס"ד ויש"ש ב"ק פ"ד סי' לו, ע"פ הגמ'. ומדבריהם מובן שעיניקר השמחה היא ביום שנעשה בר מצוה ולא לאחר מכן. ובשו"ת דברי מלכיאל ח"א סי' ג התרעם על מי שרצה לדחות הב"מ ליום אחר.

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

R. YEHOSHUA FALLIK GURARY

R. Yehoshua Fallik Gurary was born in Kremenchug in 5646 to the famous Gurary family of Chassidishe gvirim. His father, R. Mendel was a gvir and askan, and his brother, R. Shmaryahu, would later become the Friediker Rebbe's son-in-law.

A talmid of Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, he married his first cousin, Faiga Vita, the daughter of R. Nosson Gurary, and went on to become a Chassidishe gvir and askan himself. R. Fallik lived in Leningrad, where he was arrested by the Communists and exiled to Siberia for his activism on behalf of Torah. He died during the siege of Leningrad (c. 5703).

While in Lubavitch, R. Fallik was offered to acquire for a large sum tefillin parshiyos written by the Alter Rebbe's legendary sofer, R. Reuven of Yanovitch. Unsure if they were authentic, R. Fallik asked to be allowed to show them first to the Rebbe Rashab.

The Rebbe looked at them and said that they were without a doubt R. Reuven's writing. "Take them," the Rebbe told him, "You need them. If you don't take them, then I will." R. Fallik bought and wore them, and they were recognizable by their large size.

(לקו"ס פרלוב חדש ע' שיד)

Suffering from doubts in emuna, R. Fallik went into yechidus to the Rebbe Rashab, who advised him to learn Masechta Kerisus. The Rebbe explained that sfeikos come from chatos ne'urim (sins of the youth) which dulls a person's spiritual sensitivities.

The Rebbe then added, "As difficult as it is for you to share, it's even harder for me to hear it. But it must be said!"

(רשימות וויינגארטען, וראה היכל הבעש"ט גליון מב ע' רג)

After being released from prison, R. Fallik didn't return to his home since it was situated on a main boulevard. Instead, he hid in the home of his brother-in-law, R. Leizer Karasik, while his wife told neighbors that she had thrown out the "traitor" and his whereabouts were unknown.

Notwithstanding the difficult situation, they continued to raise their children with staunch dedication to Yiddishkeit and Chassidus, and their son Zalman grew his beard, despite knowing that it put him in great danger.

(ענד אברהם אנכי ע' 101)

R. Fallik would often say at farbrengens: "We're part of a lofty corporation - and a corporation one must be careful not to dishonor."

(לשמע אוזן ע' 229)

A Moment with The Rebbe



A CAUSE FOR CONCERN

As the Rebbe stood at the door to his room, turning the key in the lock, a distraught chossid approached the Rebbe.

He explained that his daughter was very sick, and he wished to mention her name to the Rebbe. He added that the doctors were not giving her any chances to recover.

The Rebbe turned around to look at him and raised both hands in the air, "Since when are they balebatim (authorities) in this regard?"

"So will the Rebbe give his bracha?"

"If it is dependent on me, I grant all the brachos," the Rebbe responded.

"So, there is no need to worry?" asked the father anxiously.

"Worry?" said the Rebbe. "One need worry about one thing only - why Moshiach has not arrived yet."

(Hiskashrus 1235)

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