

The Weekly *Farbrengens*


MERKAZ ANASH
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LOVING EACH OTHER (III)

A CLOSE COMMUNITY

The Alter Rebbe said:

The *mitzva* of *ahavas yisroel* extends to anyone born into *am Yisroel*, even if you have never met him. How much more so does it extend to every member - man or woman of the Jewish community where you live, who belongs to your own community.

(היום יום ג' אדר"ד)

The Rebbe Maharash once told the Rebbe Rashab:

The Alter Rebbe had *mesirus nefesh* and invested tremendous effort so that all chassidim should literally be like one family, and that every chossid should seek out his friend's material good with real love and affection, as if they were all children of one family.

(אג"ק מהור"י צ"ח"ד ע' לד)

The Rebbe once said that the first step for chassidim to bring about *achdus Yisroel* at large is to create *achdus* among themselves.

(תר"מ ח"ו ע' 124)

BROTHERLY LOVE

The Frierdiker Rebbe once said: "The love among the chassidim of old was like the love between two brothers. In fact Reb Kushe Dokshitzer, the famed *chassidisher melamed* of Dokshytz, once described the love between two biological brothers by saying that "their love is *like the love between two chassidim*."

(סה"ש תרצ"ו ע' 14, 47)

When one chossid meets another, he customarily asks him, "*Bruder, vos machstu?*" - "Brother! How are you?" However, this phrase has become just a routine and a chossid follows it merely because that's what his father, grandfather and great-grandfather used to do. That's a dry *ahavas Yisroel*, lacking life. One ought to recognize

another's qualities with a love whose life-giving sap communicates warmth.

(סה"מ תש"י ע' 264)

CONSIDER

How were chassidim of the past so loving to each other? Did they not have personal worries and problems?

Why is true closeness among *Anash* reached specifically through sharing Torah and memories of life in Lubavitch?

The Frierdiker Rebbe once said:

In the past, chassidim cared for one another and took a genuine interest in the material and spiritual wellbeing of every other chossid and his family. When chassidim met, that itself was a reason to be happy and they would talk to each other with open hearts.

Today, things are quite different. People are busy with themselves, one person does not really care for the other, and when they meet, they do not talk openly as chassidim used to do. In the past people also had problems, yet they always had room in their hearts for others.

(סה"ש תרצ"ט ע' 348)

Reb Aizel Homiler saw an original message in the *possuk*, "*Zachor eis asher asa lecha Amalek*:" Amalek can attack only a person who is "*lecha*," separate from other chassidim. Whoever is united with his fellow chassidim is protected from Amalek.

(לשמע ארון ע' 213)

A similar message was shared by Reb Yisroel of Ruzhin.

Chazal say, "*Kol hagadol meichveiro, yitzro gadol heimenu*," which simply means that one who is greater than his fellow, his *yetzer hara* is greater as well.

But the Ruzhiner explained it as follows: "*Kol hagadol - meichveiro, yitzro gadol - heimenu*," one who is great, it's because he connects with his fellow, but if his *yetzer hara* is great, it's because he remains separate.

(בית ררוזין ע' נה)

BONDING GLUE

In the month of Kislev תרצ"ה (1934), the members of Igud Talmidei HaTemimim wanted to publish a journal to unite the *temimim* who had long since left the village of Lubavitch, married and settled far apart. The journal would consist of *Chassidus, chiddushei Torah*, stories of chassidim, and news.

When they suggested this to the Frierdiker Rebbe, he replied: "*Ahavas Yisroel* is a foundation established by *HaShem's* commandment in the Torah. Loving friendship is a trusty, trodden path in *darkei haChassidus*; it is the basis of the *farbrengens* that are customarily held at joyous times; it arouses people to devote time every day for learning; and it enhances the love between friends."

The Frierdiker Rebbe noted that since the First World War and the Communist Revolution of 1917, the *temimim* had been scattered and they were all eager to find out about the wellbeing of their old friends.

He added: "True closeness among *Anash* is possible only through Torah and through memories of the days of old, days which shone with the friendship and good *middos* that unite hearts and that strengthen the love which transcends restrictions of place."

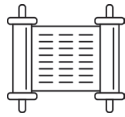
(אג"ק מהור"י צ"ח"ג ע' קנב)

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ERUV IN A CITY

What are the challenges with making an eruv in a city?

Halacha says that while a tzuras hapesach ("doorway" eruv) can enclose a karmelis, to permit a bona fide reshut harabim, it is necessary to have walls with doors at the entrance. While some consider any public street that is 16 amos wide (approx. 24 feet) to be a reshut harabim, halacha is lenient to only consider it a true reshut harabim if there are 600,000 people.¹

Although earlier poskim – including the Alter Rebbe – use an expression that “nowadays we don’t have a complete reshut harabim,” the Rebbe – as well as various achronim – note that it isn’t the case today when we clearly have cities with such a population, and they can therefore be considered a reshut harabim min hatorah.²

How are the 600,000 people calculated?

Although Halacha discusses a “reshut harabim” where 600,000 people pass daily, many rishonim specify a “city” with a population of 600,000 since the streets were made for that number of people who reside in the vicinity. Other rishonim add even those entering the city from elsewhere – as we find with Yerushalayim.³ Contiguous cities with a combined population of 600,000 is a debate among poskim.

From the Alter Rebbe it is understood that anyone who uses any of the public city streets or plazas – men, women and children, both Jewish and not – are combined to the count of 600,000 people, and all of the city streets become a reshut harabim (provided they are 16 amos and not roofed or enclosed with three walls). This is like the roads in the Jewish camp in the midbar, which were a reshut harabim although the 600,000 did not travel on one particular street.⁴

When the question arose about constructing an eruv in Manhattan and in Brooklyn in the 1950s, R. Moshe Feinstein ruled that they were reshut harabim, and it was accepted as final and binding.⁵ When some challenged that psak in 1979, many rabbonim, including Lubavitch rabbonim like R. Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, upheld R. Moshe’s psak, which had become the halachic standard in New York City.⁶

As the topic of eruv is complex, it must be ruled on by a scrupulous rov who is thoroughly proficient in these halachos, particularly as ruled by the Alter Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek who differ from poskim of other communities.⁷ In case of a question, the rov should follow the stricter opinion and not look for leniencies.⁸

1. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' שמ"ה סי"א, סי' שס"ג. סי' ד' וסי' שס"ד סי' ד'.
2. שיחת י"ב תמוז תשמ"ה, שיחה ד' - ashreinu.page.link/jwyD. תשובות הרבי באנגלית ובלה"ק נתפרסמו לאחרונה.
3. ריטב"א עירובין נ"ט ע"א, שלט"ג בעיי- רובין פ"א - הביאו ביה"ל ד"ה שאין.
4. שו"ע"ר סי' ת"ד סי"ב, ומשמעותו סי' שני"ז סי"ז וסי' צ"ב סי"א. ומש"כ בסיומן שמ"ה סי"א אינו סתירה לזה כי י"ל שכל רשות

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

Our Heroes



REB SHOLOM REB HILLEL'S

Reb Sholom HaKohen Huminer of Beshenkovitz was known as Reb Sholom Reb Hillel's because he was a devoted talmid of Reb Hillel Paritcher. He had a store in Beshenkovitz that his wife ran, while he would accompany Reb Hillel on his travels.

still he wasn't intimidated by me. Indeed, he must be a true tzaddik." Eventually, the manager calmed down and noticed Reb Sholom, and he asked him what he wanted. Reb Sholom replied that he needed a certain amount for tzedaka. The man didn't hesitate and immediately gave him the desired amount.

On one of their journeys, they arrived at the estate of a wealthy poritz and they stayed with a local Jew. The manager of the poritz's estate was also a Jew and came to greet Reb Hillel. But when Reb Hillel saw that he was dressed like the squires and he trimmed his beard, Reb Hillel lowered his eyes, answered him coldly, and bade him farewell without conversing.

Time passed and Reb Hillel came to the town again, and they were greeted by a changed man. As time passed, the manager became a chossid.

Later, Reb Hillel sent Reb Sholom to visit the manager at home, and told him not to leave until he donates a certain sum for tzedaka. Reb Sholom was taken aback and reminded Reb Hillel of the manager's surly face when he left. Reb Hillel just repeated the instruction without any explanation.

On another journey, Reb Sholom and Reb Hillel visited a village in White Russia. Reb Sholom started to daven ma'ariv and davened until daybreak. He refused to go to sleep, since it was now time to prepare for shacharis. After about an hour he began shachris, and by mincha time was only up to Shema. When the innkeeper came to daven Mincha and saw Reb Sholom still in middle of shacharis, he said in surprise, "What is wrong with this Jew that he davens all night and day? He must have a blocked head!"

When Reb Sholom arrived at the house, he found the manager pacing back and forth, very perturbed. He didn't even notice Reb Sholom, and he was saying to himself, "He [Reb Hillel] surely knew that I have the ability to grind him like a pebble and turn him into nothing, and

Reb Hillel later said, "The three years that Reb Sholom learned Chassidus by me did not affect him as much as the words of that innkeeper..."

A Moment with The Rebbe



I'D NEVER SAY SOMETHING I DIDN'T MEAN

Mr. Charles Ramat relates:

"When I was 16, my mother fell terminally ill. One day in 5729 (1969), my rosh yeshiva at Keren B'Yavne, Rabbi Chaim Goldvicht, asked me to drive him to a meeting with the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Seizing the opportunity to discuss my mother's illness, I approached the Rebbe as he was taking leave of Rabbi Goldvicht, half-expecting that he would put me off. It was 3:30 a.m., but the Rebbe said, 'Please, please come in.'

was very sympathetic and helped me prepare for the worst. He never said that a miracle would happen. Because he was so realistic and did not raise any false hopes, he captured my heart. At that moment I felt that he was the wisest man on the planet.

"When the audience was finished, the Rebbe said, 'Please keep me informed as to what happens.' And being the chutzpan that I was, I shot back with, 'Are you just saying that? Or do you really want to hear from me?'"

"It turned out the Rebbe knew the doctors who were treating her and, hearing the grim prognosis, the Rebbe

"The Rebbe answered, 'I would never say something that I didn't mean.'"