

The Weekly Farbrengens


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AWAITING HIS COMING

YEARNING FOR MOSHIACH

Reb Yitzchok of Radvil heard so much of the greatness of Reb Avrohom HaMalach, son of the Maggid, that he traveled to see him. He arrived in town on *erev* Tisha BeAv. That night, as everyone in *shul* sat on the floor, reading *Eicha* and mourning the *churban*, a bitter cry broke out. Turning around, Reb Yitzchok turned around and saw Reb Avrohom HaMalach sitting with his head between his knees, weeping bitterly. Long after everyone had left, he continued watching Reb Avrohom, who sat in the same position without moving. When the clock struck midnight, Reb Yitzchok retired for the night.

The following morning, when he arrived early to *shul*, he found the *Malach* still mourning, in the midst of a puddle of tears. From time to time, he would lift his head and ask in pain: "He's still not here...?!"

(יחס שטרנבויל)

Tzaddikim living in the time of the *Yismach Moshe*, Reb Moshe Teitelbaum, used to say that he was a *gilgul* of Yirmiyahu HaNovi, who prophesied the *churban* of the First *Beis HaMikdash*. He would constantly cry about this lengthy *golus*, especially during the Three Weeks, and he longed for Moshiach intensely. Whenever he heard some hustle in the street, he would run to the window: Had Moshiach arrived? Next to his bed, his best *Shabbos* clothing always lay prepared. And every night, before going to sleep, he would warn his *shammes* to wake him the moment the *shofar* of Moshiach was heard.

He once received a letter informing him that on a certain date his beloved son-in-law would be arriving for a visit. The whole household prepared excitedly for his arrival. The great day came, but the visitor was nowhere to be seen. The family became restless. What could possibly have delayed him? The *Yismach Moshe* sat in his room engrossed in his *seforim* while some family members waited outside impatiently, when a

carriage suddenly appeared on the horizon. The Rebbe's *shammes* excitedly ran inside to bring him the good news: "Rebbe, he has arrived!"

The Rebbe jumped up from his chair, put on his fine *Shabbosdiker kapota* and *shtreimel* and ran outside towards the approaching carriage. Seeing none other than his son-in-law stepping down from the carriage, he was unable to bear the pain and fell to the ground in a faint. When he came to, his family heard him moaning to himself, "Oy! It's not him... He hasn't yet arrived..."

(ומביא גואל ע' 127 ואילך)

CONSIDER

Why did the chassidim feel that Moshiach was further away after the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus*? How did the Tzemach Tzedek answer their question? What does it mean to "expect" Moshiach? Should everyone avoid making advance business deals?

AT ANY MOMENT

Soon after the Alter Rebbe had passed away, his grandson the Tzemach Tzedek overheard a few chassidim lamenting the *ruchniyus'dike* state of affairs ever since the passing of their Rebbe and concluded, "Only Hashem knows when Moshiach will finally come."

The Tzemach Tzedek entered the room they were in and said, "That is the way Bilaam speaks: 'I see it, but not now; I behold it, but it is not near.' We, Yidden, must hope for Moshiach's arrival every single day!"

He continued, "I heard from my grandfather, that his teacher the Mezritcher Maggid was able to cause even a newborn child to experience the loftiest levels of *yiras Hashem*. His Rebbe, the Baal Shem Tov, could have even enthused an inanimate object. Why did they not do so and then, with the whole world aware of Hashem's presence, Moshiach would have come? Because Hashem did not yet want this. And if the arrival of Moshiach is dependent on Hashem's will, why would the passing of our Rebbe, my grandfather, change that? When the time comes, and Hashem wills it, Moshiach will surely appear."

(סיפור חזון תורה ע' 439)

One of the chassidim of the *Tzemach Tzedek* ran an inn that he rented from the local *poritz*, paying him ten rubles at the beginning of every year. One year the chossid fell ill and sent his son to renew the contract and pay the *poritz* for the coming year. The son decided to ask for a five-year contract at a cheaper rate of thirty rubles, thus saving his father twenty. The *poritz* was so happy to receive the advance payment that he agreed. Full of excitement, the young man returned home and told his father of the great deal he had made.

"Fool!" the father berated him. "You paid the extra twenty rubles for nothing! *Moshiach* is coming straight away, and we'll all go to *Eretz Yisroel*. So the money you've paid for the next four years was all wasted!"

(ומביא גואל ע' 124)

Reb Mordechai Yafeh, author of the *Levush*, writes that he had always wondered: Why don't we read *Eicha* on Tisha BeAv from a *megilla* of parchment, like *Megillas Ester*? He answered his own question: Since we are constantly waiting for these days of mourning to be transformed into days of joy and *Yomim-Tovim*, writing a parchment *megilla* would give the impression that we are *chas veshalom* giving up hope.

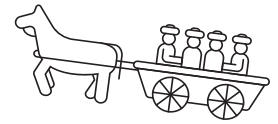
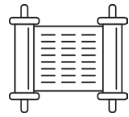
(לבוש סימן תקנ"ט ס"א)

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MEAT AT A BRIS

Who may eat meat at a bris during the Nine Days?

For a variety of reasons, poskim write that meat should be served at a bris. Besides being a seudas mitzva when the minhag is to eat meat, there are specific precedents for having meat at a seudas mila.

At the bris Avrohom Avinu made for his son Yitzchok, he held a large feast. Rishonim explain that eating at a bris is equivalent to eating the meat of korbanos, and there is support in the posuk, "Those who made a covenant (bris) with Me over a sacrifice." Tzaddikim have said that serving meat by a bris is a segula that the child should have strong emuna and grow to be a talmid Chacham.

The Mordechai, a rishon from Germany, writes that there is a mitzva of simcha at a bris, which would give preference to beef over chicken as on yom tov (see issue 405). If beef isn't available, poultry also generates some degree of simcha. Yet, there is a view that fish is sufficient, and some communities even had a custom not to serve meat to not embarrass those who couldn't afford it.

The importance of meat at a bris is highlighted in the allowance to serve it even during the Nine Days when meat is generally forbidden. During the actual week of Tisha B'Av, the meat at the bris should only be eaten by a limited number of participants - not more than ten people besides the baalei bris and close family members who cannot testify for each other (e.g., parents, siblings, uncles and aunts, nieces and nephews).

In the earlier segment of the Nine Days - from Rosh Chodesh until the week of Tisha B'Av - some apply the same limitations, while others allow meat for anyone who has a connection to the feast and would have come even if it wasn't the Nine Days. When discussing the halachos of erev Shabbos, the Alter Rebbe implies that the week before Tisha B'Av is not subject to the greater restriction.

In practice, before the actual week, it is permitted for any participant who would have honestly come to the seuda in any case.

- 1. ראה מג"א או"ח סי' רמ"ט ס"ק ו'.
2. כד הקמח לרבנו בחיי הל' מילה.
3. ראה שו"ת משנה הלכות חיד"ס
4. ראה שו"ת מנחת חינוך סי' ק"א
5. ראה תשו"ה ח"ב סי' תפ"ה.
6. שבט הלוי ח"ג סי' י"ח. בארץ החיים יו"ד סי' רס"ח מנהג צפת.
7. רמ"א או"ח סי' תקנ"א ס"י ומשנ"ב שם סקעי"ז.
8. לבוש סי' תקנ"א ס"י.
9. משנ"ב סי' תקנ"א סקעי"ה (ונשים בכלל).
10. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' רמ"ט קו"א סק"א.
11. ראה משנ"ב שם.

R. GROINEM

R. Shmuel Groinem Esterman was the first and foremost mashpia in Tomchei Temimim and set hundreds of talmidim in the ways of Chassidus. He was educated by the chossid Reb Avraham, rov of Zhebin ("Reb Avremkeh Zhebiner"). Hundreds of stories and anecdotes were heard from him and transcribed by his students. He passed away in the year 5681 (1921).

know the exact time of the molad (renewal of the new moon) before bentching the new month. Though the siddur only states that it is "proper" everyone runs to the calendar to check the time. Yet, strangely, when it comes to an explicit command of the Torah, "Da es elokei avicha" - know the G-d of your father, which is accomplished through the study of Chassidus, people aren't running...

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א עמ' 281)

At a farbrengen, R. Groinem once turned to a bochur who had a hard time being accepted to Tomchei Temimim, though eventually was admitted, and said:

One of his students recalled:

"Do you remember when you stood crying outside the door when you weren't accepted? It was not you crying; it was your neshama. Even when one moves a finger, our Chazal say that it happens only because it was announced on high; surely for a soul that yearns to enter Tomchei Temimim."

At his farbrengens, R. Groinem would bring out his points with many stories. He had a special talent to bring his episodes to life. He would describe the main character of the story in such a way that we felt as if we had met him. Likewise, in describing the happenings of the story in a way he made us feel like we had experienced it ourselves.

(זכרון לבני עמ' י"ג)

We sensed that the point of it all was to ingrain within us middos tovos and deeper insensibility to life, which would then enable us to properly appreciate the uplifting and pleasurable ways of Chassidus.

R. Groinem once said:

(זכרונות סבא - גורליניק עמ' מ"ג)

It is written in the siddur that it is proper to

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE WORLD TO COME

At a yechidus of Mr. Naftali Deutsch of Los Angeles, the discussion moved to various clashes between secular culture and Yiddishkeit, and how to share Yiddishkeit with people of different backgrounds.

could describe Olam Haba as a place where ripe fruits and freshly baked goods are freely available. When speaking to artists or musicians, we might describe Olam Haba as full of masterworks. But when speaking to university-educated scientists, we should describe Olam Haba as a place where all the secrets of the wonders of the universe are revealed.

"It is important to take into account the mindset of the audience," said the Rebbe.

"And how do we describe Olam Haba to a tzadik?" Mr. Deutsch asked.

As an example, the Rebbe directed him how to discuss the concept of Olam Haba, the place of ultimate good:

When speaking to a poor person, who doesn't always have enough to eat, we

The Rebbe responded, "To him, you don't need to say anything - he already knows."

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