

# The Weekly Farbrenge

  
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 EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## FEELING FOR A FELLOW

Before Pesach תרי"ו (1880), two chassidim arrived in Lubavitch to see the Rebbe Maharash. The first chossid, Reb Michoel Aharon Pisarevsky, though not particularly knowledgeable in Torah and Chassidus, had a warm *chassidisher* heart. He was always concerned for others. The second chossid, Reb Leib Posen, was a wealthy man from Vitebsk who gave *tzedakah* and occupied himself with *gemilus chassodim*, but all within certain limits.

When Reb Michoel Aharon entered the Rebbe's study for *yechidus*, the first subject he raised was the situation of his old friend, Reb Nachman Zeltzer. He described the poverty of the family, which included children of marriageable age, and pleaded for *rachmonus* on his friend's behalf. The Rebbe gave his *brocho* that *HaShem* should help him, and Reb Michoel Aharon begged the Rebbe that the *brocho* be a firm commitment.

When he then described his own dire situation, the Rebbe said, "It seems you're even worse off than Reb Nachman!" Reb Michael Aharon answered, "About myself, I know I don't deserve anything better, so I mustn't complain, and I have to be satisfied with what I have." The Rebbe covered his eyes, sat in a state of *dveikus* for a short while and then said, "If a person *davens* for a fellow Yid, his own *tefillos* are answered first. May *HaShem* grant you *hatzlocho!*"

And not long after, both Reb Nachman and his friend Reb Michael Aharon succeeded in their businesses and became very wealthy.

The second chossid, Reb Leib, began his *yechidus* by describing his personal matters at length and asked for a *brocho*. Only then did he sigh and report the situation of his *chaver*, a chossid called Reb Shmuel Brin. Even though Reb Shmuel was a very active and successful businessman, he would learn an in-depth *shiur* in *Gemoro*, *Choshen Mishpot* and *Chassidus* every day. Lately, his business had not been doing well, and swindlers had also thrown him deeply into debt.

Reb Leib related Reb Shmuel's misfortunes and concluded, "Of course it's all from *HaShem*, but he still is to be pitied." The Rebbe covered his eyes and sank deep in thought, but did not reply.

Soon afterwards, a fire broke out on the street where Reb Leib's storage houses stood, and he lost tens of thousands of rubles. At the same time another fire caught onto his shop, causing him an additional loss. He soon traveled to see the Rebbe, and at his *yechidus* he told the Rebbe of his great losses and wept bitterly. With a penetrating look, the Rebbe said, "When tragedy befell Reb Shmuel Brin and left him penniless,

you accepted it calmly, but now, when it has come to *your* merchandise, you cry out. The *you* and the *I* are two separate things!"

Realizing now that his hardships had resulted from his attitude towards his friend, Reb Leib wandered around in a daze, not knowing what to do. After two days he returned to the Rebbe's room, asked to be guided on a path of *teshuvah*, and undertook to think about the welfare of others.

In response, the Rebbe Maharash quoted the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov, that whenever one passes judgment on another, he is automatically passing judgment on himself, whether in a positive direction or the opposite. Thus, if one passes judgment on another for something he has done, he causes the Heavenly Court to press charges against himself. If, instead, he shares in the anguish of that other person and argues that he deserves help from *HaShem*, he himself is dealt with compassionately. The Rebbe then instructed Reb Leib to lend his friend 3000 rubles, and to proceed to Moscow to buy merchandise for his own shop. After the Rebbe gave him a *brocho* he headed for home, ready to do as instructed.

### CONSIDER

Were these Chassidim rewarded  
for what they *said* or for how they  
*felt* regarding their fellows?

However, arriving at Reb Shmuel's home, he found out that his friend had traveled to nearby Lubavitch. So, even though he was anxious to travel to Moscow for his own purchases, he was afraid to deviate from the exact order of the Rebbe's instructions. Finally, when he went to *shul* on *leil Shabbos*, he found the recently-returned Reb Shmuel in a joyous mood and surrounded by chassidim, who were listening excitedly to what he was saying. Reb Leib envied him: despite his losses, he looked like the happiest of men. The *gabbai* then quieted everyone. Reb Shmuel *chazer'd* the *maamar* that he had just heard from the Rebbe, and the following day, he *chazer'd* it twice more.

On *Motzoei Shabbos*, Reb Leib hurried to Reb Shmuel's house to give him the money. Welcoming him warmly, Reb Shmuel tried to raise his friend's spirits by talking about the well-known saying that "after a fire one

prosper." Reb Leib was moved by the way Reb Shmuel was able to console him, when only recently he himself had also suffered financial loss.

Reb Shmuel then told him of the despair that he had felt when he first found out about the calamity that had befallen him. However, not long after, a special messenger brought him a message from the Rebbe, telling him that he knew of his circumstances but did not agree with the way he was responding to the situation.

Reb Shmuel continued, "When I then visited Lubavitch, I was instructed to buy readymade rafts, and received a *brocho* for my merchandise and for a side income as well. So I traveled to Riga to order some fine rafts. On the way home I met a Yid looking for an arbitrator to settle a dispute between two businessmen. I agreed, and after successfully sorting out the matter, I was paid.

"How will you pay the people who will deliver the rafts?" Reb Leib asked. Reb Shmuel reassured him that he had the Rebbe's *brocho* and *HaShem* would no doubt help.

Not knowing how to properly broach the topic, Reb Leib blurted out, "Don't worry about the money! I've brought you a certain sum for that!" And he told him of the loan of 3000 rubles that he had in his wallet. When Reb Shmuel refused to accept it, Reb Leib told him the whole story.

Reb Shmuel said, "You have done what the Rebbe has told you to do. However, our *chachomim* assure us that *HaShem* considers a good thought is as if it was actually done. I am not accepting the money."

That same night Reb Leib traveled to Lubavitch, complained to the Rebbe about Reb Shmuel's refusal, and left the bundle of rubles on the table. Early Monday morning, a messenger from the Rebbe knocked on Reb Shmuel's door with a sealed envelope and a note written by the Rebbe: "I am sending you three thousand rubles until after you sell the rafts. Have *hatzlocho!*"

Reb Shmuel accepted the money, bought the rafts and sold them at a handsome profit. At the same time, Reb Leib traveled to Moscow, where the suppliers agreed to sell him merchandise on credit. Moreover, he won thousands of rubles in a lottery and on the advice of the Rebbe, bought and sold flax for an incredible profit.

All the above four chassidim finally enjoyed great success and remained wealthy throughout their lives.

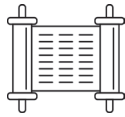
(התמים חוברת ד' ע' קג)

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PICTURES IN A SHUL

Is there a problem davening near a window at night when it reflects like a mirror?

The Shulchan Aruch teaches that one should not daven facing decorative tapestries hanging in a shul since they can distract one's focus. For this reason, shuls that have drawings on the walls should not have them at eye level but rather higher up.

Another concern with images of humans is that it can appear that one is davening to them ch"v.

There is an old custom to feature lion images in shul to symbolize the lions carrying the kisei hakavod and to remind us of how we should be strong like a lion in our avodas Hashem.

At one point, the gabboim of the Beis Menachem shul in Kfar Chabad planned to add depictions of the shevatim and their corresponding animals around the sides of the shul to complement the existent eagle images inside the shul's dome.

Although the primary issue is on the eastern wall at the front of the shul, the Rebbe noted in the yechidus that practically, people end up davening facing in all directions.

Facing a mirror during davening gives the appearance that one is davening to his image and is prohibited even with closed eyes.

- 1. שוער ס' צ' סכ"ב.
2. ראה פת"ש יו"ד ס' קמ"א סק"ו.
3. ראה ערוה"ש או"ח ס' צ' סכ"ח.
4. ראה לקו"ש חכ"ה ע' 309 הע' 1.
5. ראה יחו"ד ח' ס' ס"ב.
6. ראה ר"ן ליומא נד ע"א. מג"א או"ח

REB PINCHAS REIZES

Reb Pinchas Reizes, one of the greatest chasidim of the Alter Rebbe, was an incredible gaon. The Rebbeim trusted him fully, often involving him in private and clandestine activities involving themselves or chasidim at large.

Though Reb Pinchas's father was a great gaon in Shklov, his last name, Reizes, was taken after his mother-in-law Reizah. This came about after the following story:

His mother-in-law, an especially wealthy woman, was greatly impressed by the Alter Rebbe after his visit to Shklov. "Look," she said, "A maggid hailing from Vitebsk shows up riding a horse with no entourage, and yet, when he discussed Torah issues with the geonim of Shklov, he could respond to

everything they asked, while they couldn't answer three of his four questions."

She had three sons-in-law and promised that whoever would spend time learning by the "Magid of Liozna" would inherit all her wealth, and Reb Pinchas agreed. When he arrived in Liozna he discovered that the Alter Rebbe was traveling through various towns to speak before the simpletons.

Reb Pinchas took the money and gave it to the Alter Rebbe for public matters. The Alter Rebbe blessed him with Torah and riches.

(סד"ש תרצ"ו ע' 126)

The Alter Rebbe once complained to Reb Pinchas, "Pinchas, Pinchas! You say that I am a tzaddik, but if so, why do I feel so 'cold'?"

(למען ידעו ע' 253)

A Moment with The Rebbe



TO LOOK OUT FOR ANOTHER

Reb Leibel Dubov was a bochur at the 770 yeshiva in the 5700s (1940s), during the nesius of the Frierdiker Rebbe. The yeshiva was then a small group of bochurim, a spot in the ocean of American materialism, holding steadfast to chassidishe values.

"We once learned a great lesson in ahavas Yisroel from the Rebbe, who was then the Rebbe's son-in-law," related Reb Leibel.

"There was a bochur at the yeshiva, somewhat timid by nature, who had lost his mother at a young age. Her yahrzeit was on the 20th of Av,

the same day as the Rebbe's father.

"On the 20th of Av, 5707 (1947), as the Rebbe stood at amud preparing to lead the mincha davening, all the yeshiva bochurim gathered in the main zal for this rare opportunity to daven with the Rebbe's son-in-law. This bochur stood in the side room, wanting to arrange another minyan, but was somewhat intimidated.

"Suddenly the Rebbe turned around and seized the situation. The Rebbe said, 'We will not begin the davening until there is also a minyan in the other room!'"

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