

The Weekly Farbrengens



למען ישמענו • בראשית תשפ"ה • 798
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SIMCHAS TORAH

PRECIOUS HOURS

The Frierdiker Rebbe related, in the name of his father, the Rebbe Rashab: "The 48 hours of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah must be held very precious, for at every moment one can draw pails full and barrels full of treasures, both *b'gashmius* and *b'ruchnius*. This is accomplished through dancing."

(ספר המאמרים תשי"א ע' 79)

A certain chossid, distraught, once made a long trek to visit one of our Rebbeim. (When the Frierdiker Rebbe narrated this incident, he added: "And I'm not going to tell you who was the chossid and who was the Rebbe.") That chossid had come to report that his mentor had come to him in a dream with fearful news: It had been decreed in Heaven that one of his children would pass away. The Rebbe heard his words, sighed, and did not answer.

Since it was before Succos, the chossid remained near his Rebbe until after *Yom-Tov*, and before returning home, he asked him for a *beracha*. The Rebbe said, "It will be good; the child will live."

The chossid asked the Rebbe for a promise that this would be so. The Rebbe promised, and then asked him, "What did you do on Simchas Torah?"

The chossid replied, "When everyone was dancing at *hakafos* I stood by the oven and cried. But then I reminded myself that it was Simchas Torah, so I washed my face and went to dance with the Torah."

The Rebbe replied, "You should know that by doing so, you reversed your situation."

(ספר המאמרים תרפ"ז ע' 241)

Once, while dancing during *hakafos*, the Frierdiker Rebbe (before he was Rebbe) told a certain chossid: "Granted that we are not up to the *avoda* of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. But the *avoda* of Simchas Torah – dancing – that we *can* do. So dance! Raise yourself up!"

(מפי השמועה, וכע"ז בסה"ש תשי"ג ע' 8)

PASSIONATE DANCING

During *hakafos*, the Mittlerer Rebbe was in such a state of *dveikus* that he was unable to hold the *sefer Torah* alone. He would take a few steps and then someone would have to go behind him and hold onto it.

(סה"ש תרצ"ז ע' 163)

CONSIDER

What is the joy of Simchas Torah about? How does it apply to everyone?

One Simchas Torah, the *Tzemach Tzedek* danced energetically at *hakafos* without tiring. Robust young men could not keep up with him. A few even collapsed from exhaustion. While dancing, he encouraged them, "Dance, *Yidden!* Dance! Rejoice on Simchas Torah and be blessed with children, life, and an abundant livelihood!"

The wife of the *Tzemach Tzedek* complained to her father, the Mittlerer Rebbe, that her husband was wearing out the chassidim with his dancing. The Rebbe replied, "A revelation of the light of Simchas Torah is now shining for him as it shone in the *Beis HaMikdash*. Through his rejoicing he is meriting a revelation of the essence of the *neschama*, as it is in the world of *Atzilus*, and even higher."

(ספר השיחות תשי"ג ע' 11)

REJOICING WITH THE TORAH

Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev once observed a simple person dancing with gusto on Simchas Torah. Recognizing that he was utterly unlearned, the *tzaddik* asked him what he was rejoicing about. The *Yid* answered, "When my

brother marries off his daughter, should I not participate in his rejoicing...?"

The Rebbe explains that in fact Simchas Torah is not "a brother's *chassunah*," the celebration of some other *Yid*, but rather every individual's personal rejoicing. The joy on Simchas Torah is about the essence of the Torah, which is accessible to every *Yid*, for when he studies even the smallest segment of Torah, through it he is connected to the entire Torah.

(תו"מ חלב"ב ע' 92, שיחור"ק תשל"ח ח"א ע' 86)

The Frierdiker Rebbe once expressed himself: "It is not enough that on Simchas Torah we rejoice with the Torah; the Torah must also be happy with us."

(ספר השיחות תש"ב ע' 3)

One year after *davening* on Simchas Torah morning, the *Tzemach Tzedek* sat down to *farbreng*. During that time he drank a large quantity of *mashke*, taught a lot of *Chassidus*, and spoke a great deal about his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe. Whenever he mentioned his *zeide's* holy name his face was aflame, and his eyes filled with tears that streamed down his cheeks like two springs of water. The *farbrengens* extended throughout the day and continued until the early hours of the morning.

After everyone left and the *Tzemach Tzedek* returned to his room, some chassidim peeked through the cracks to see what he was doing. They saw him sitting with a *Gemara*, learning with delight and enthusiasm.

(סיפורי חסידים מועדים זוין ע' 239)

Early in the morning, after a night of *hakafos* on Simchas Torah, the Rebbe would return to his study. One year, a young boy was curious to know what the Rebbe was doing at such an hour, so he climbed up, peeked through the window, and saw the Rebbe sitting and learning from a big *Gemara* or *Shulchan Aruch*.

(מפי בעל המעשה)



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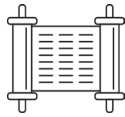
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SIMCHAS TORAH ALIYOS

How should be *aliyos* be given out on Simchas Torah?

Many unique customs are observed due to the special joy of Simchas Torah. The Rama's list includes the custom of calling many people up to the Torah and reading the *aliyos* multiple times to accommodate everyone.¹

Doing so renders honor to the Torah and engenders everyone's rejoicing over the Torah. Chassidische seforim explain that the transcendent levels of Elokus (*makif*) shine on this day, and thus, there are fewer limitations than usual.² Although we avoid giving consecutive *aliyos* to a father and son due to *ayin hara*, it isn't an issue on Simchas Torah when the *ayin hara* is powerless.³

To carry this out in the best manner, some shuls give each person their own *aliya*, and keep repeating the *kriah* over and over. However, due to constraints of time and manpower, many shuls give multiple people an *aliya* together, with each person saying their own bracha.⁴ It seems that this was the practice in 770.⁵

From the Yerushalmi, it appears that two people should not get an *aliya* together since they can't both say a bracha over the same mitzva.⁶ However, some differentiate between then, when the *olim* read the Torah themselves, and today, when the *baal korei* reads it on their behalf. Others say that the problem with the double bracha is that their voices cannot be heard by the crowd, and on Simchas Torah when the Torah is dear to all, the multiple brachos on the Torah can be discerned and heard.⁷

The Rama quotes another minhag to give an *aliya* to all the children (*kol hane'arim*). This strengthens their connection to the Torah and increases their love for the Torah. It also is a remembrance for Hakhel when even small children participated in listening to the Torah being read.⁸

Children can join the *aliya of kol hane'arim* with at least one adult who recites the bracha on behalf of the children who can't,⁹ or they could receive an *aliya* with their father. It is not the Chabad *minhag* to spread a *tallis* over the children during *kol hane'arim* or to recite Hamalach Hagoel.¹⁰

1. רמ"א או"ח סי' תרס"ט ס"א.
 2. בני יששכר חודש תשרי מאמר י"ג.
 3. סה"ש תש"ג ע' 12.
 4. משנ"ב סי' תרס"ט ס"ק יב.
 5. וראה נט"ג חג הסוכות פצ"ח הע' ט"ז שכ"ה "מנהג חב"ד", וצ"ע מנ"ל.
 6. וראה תו"מ חכ"ד ע' 146.
 7. וראה תו"מ ח"ג ע' 55.
 8. וראה אוצר שער.
 9. וראה תו"מ ח"ג ע' 55.
 10. וראה אוצר שער.
 11. ברכות פ"ה ה"ג.

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

Our Heroes



THE TORAS CHESSED

The *gaon* Reb Shneur Zalman Fradkin, known as the "Gaon of Lublin" or by his *sefer* "Toras Chesed", was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek. He was for many years a *rov* in Lublin, and eventually moved to Eretz Yisroel. He had a rare genius mind that was able to completely retain what he read just once. He passed away on the 5th of Nissan, תרס"ב and is buried in the Chabad section on Har Hazaisim.

The maternal grandfather of the Toras Chesed was a chossid of the Alter Rebbe. Once when this grandfather was by the Rebbe, mentioning his family members for a *bracha*, he forgot to mention his young daughter. The Alter Rebbe, sensed this, asked him why he had failed to mention her, and the chossid off-handedly replied, "She's just a small girl." The Alter Rebbe told him, "From this little girl will come a son who will illuminate the entire world with his Torah!"

The Alter Rebbe then requested that the child that would eventually be born should be named after him, Schneur Zalman.

Many stories are told of the unparalleled genius of the Toras Chesed:

The great genius and author of the Halachic encyclopedia *Sdei Chemed* once visited the *Toras Chesed*. He commented that the *Toras Chesed* certainly does not read his *seforim*, since it is a contemporary *sefer*. The *gaon* told him, "I do look in to your seforim and I can prove it," and he began reciting portions of the *sefer Sdei Chemed* verbatim.

The *Toras Chesed* was once traveling on a train from Polotzk to another city. In his car, sat a learned young man, who noticed that the lips of the *gaon* were constantly moving. The man initiated a conversation with the Toras Chesed and asked him what he was saying the whole time. The *gaon* was forced to admit that every month he reviews, by heart, a *sefer* of one of the *acharonim*, and he was currently reviewing the *sefer Chavos Ya'ir* (responsa by a German *rov* in the 1600's).

The famous chossid and *mashpia* Rashbatz earned a living through selling *seforim*, particularly to the chassidim and *rabbonim* who visited Lubavitch. He generally allowed his customers to browse through a *sefer* before buying it – except for the Toras Chesed since once he looked through the *sefer* he had no need to buy it...

A Moment with The Rebbe

לזכות שניאור זלמן בן חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות



MASHKE

A delicate balance was always drawn with saying *l'chaim*. "Mashke is sometimes used to remove a growth in the lung," the Rebbe said, "but if one drinks over the limit, *halevai* (one needs to hope) it won't cause new growths..."

While spending an uplifting Tishrei 5736 with the Rebbe, Reb Naftoli Kraus, an Israeli journalist, wrote up his experiences in the famous Maariv newspaper.

One day, he was summoned to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe was sitting at his table, with a copy of the article. Smiling broadly, the Rebbe gave him a *yasher koach* for the article, but also had some criticism.

"Why did you have to write 'vodka'? Why not 'mashke'?"

Vodka, the Rebbe explained, has a connotation of people going wild.

(*Toras Menachem Vol 44 p. 100; Hasipur Sheli Issue 30*)

לעילוי נשמת

מרת מוסיא בת ר' אברהם ישע' ע"ה שטראקס

נפטרה כ"ה אדר תשפ"ד