

The Weekly Farbrengens



844 • כי תבא תשפ"ה • למען ישמעו
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

TRUE HUMILITY

THE BEND OF TRUTH

The Rebbe Rashab once described a painting he had seen, depicting a field of grain stalks on a sun-drenched day, in the midst of which a little bird stood perched on one of the stalks.

Many professional artists who viewed this painting were overawed by its lifelike projection. Along came a farmer, took one look at the artwork, and said, "It's all good: the field looks authentic, the grain is drawn well... but the little bird standing on the stalk is unrealistic. For when a bird stands on grain, although it is small and light, its weight needs to somewhat bend the stalk on which it stands. Yet in this painting, the stalk is standing as straight as all the others!"

The Rebbe Rashab concluded with the lesson to be derived: "Everything could be first rate, as if it was alive, but if the 'bend' is missing, then it's all unrealistic. It's missing *emes*..."

(סה"ש תרצ"ו ע' 47)

A SIGN OF GREATNESS

A *misnagdish* rof once asked the Alter Rebbe, "I have a *sefer* called *Noam Elimelech* which, as I have discovered, was written by a chossid, a disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch. I have put the *sefer* under the bench, but can you tell me something about its author?"

The Alter Rebbe replied, "Even if you would put the *tzaddik* of Lyzhensk himself under your bench, he would be silent and not say a word. Such was his humility!"

(בית רבי ע' סג)

The Rebbe Rashab was once traveling incognito by train, and a Yid sitting in the same car asked him where he was from.

"Lubavitch," the Rebbe replied.

"Do you know the Rebbe?" the Yid inquired further. "They say great things about him. Are they true?"

The Rebbe answered humbly, "Whoever he is, he is; but he doesn't approach the greatness of his ancestors!"

(שמו"ס ח"א ע' 105)

CONSIDER

*Why is a 'bend' a sign of life?
Why did Reb Noteh justify the
Chassidim's conduct? How
would someone else have
seen it?*

WHO AM I?

The esteemed chossid Reb Noteh of Malastirzineh was a very simple and humble person, and whenever he visited Lubavitch, he presented himself like a commoner. Once he arrived there on a market day. At such times, so many thieves roamed the streets looking to take advantage of the trade season, that the *Tzemaich Tzedek* instructed the local residents not to allow any strangers to sleep in the *shul*. Reb Noteh had just arrived and was about to lie down to rest in the *shul*, when some young men, who did not recognize him, told him that this was not allowed.

Reb Noteh pleaded with them, trying to convince them that he was not a thief. The young men persisted and started to forcefully remove him from the *shul*. Amidst the commotion, the *Maharin*, Reb Yisroel Noach, the son of the Rebbe,

entered the room. When he saw the situation, he shouted, "What are you doing?! This is Reb Noteh!"

They boys knew of Reb Noteh and were shocked and embarrassed. To their surprise, he turned to the *Maharin* and said, "What do you want from them? This was the instruction of the Rebbe! They were right! And who am I, anyway...?"

(בית רבי ח"ב ע' 30)

Hearing so much praise sung about Reb Noteh, one of the younger chassidim wanted to meet this great *chossid* and get to know him. Such an opportunity presented itself during one of his trips to Lubavitch, when he found out that Reb Noteh was also there. He hurried excitedly to where Reb Noteh was being hosted. Just as he was about to enter the inn, he noticed someone on his way out. "Is Reb Noteh from Malastirzineh here?" the young chossid asked, pronouncing the name Reb Noteh with great reverence. The man however, answered with lackluster, "Eh! People exaggerate! There's a tiny village out there called Malastirzineh, and over there can be found a simple Reb Noteh... and this they turn into something spectacular."

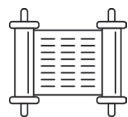
Hearing such dishonorable words being spoken about Reb Noteh, the young man angrily rebuked the other, even slapping him on his cheek. The great chossid continued on his way and the young man entered the inn, again inquiring where he could find Reb Noteh.

"He just walked out; you must have seen him," he was told.

Realizing that the man he had spoken to earlier had been Reb Noteh, he was filled with remorse and hurried to ask forgiveness. Reb Noteh laughed and asked, "For what? What have you done to me?"

(שמו"ס ח"א ע' 262)





SELICHOS AT NIGHT

I have difficulty going to Slichos at midnight. Can I say it at a different time?

According to Minhag Ashkenaz, we begin the first *selichos* on a *motzaei Shabbos*. The text of the *selichos* states *b'motzaei menucha*, "at the outgoing of the day of rest we approached You first," so we recite it as close as possible to Shabbos, when this statement is most accurate.¹

Yet, these first *selichos* are recited after *chatzos*.² *Al pi kabbalah*, it's not appropriate to recite *selichos* and the Yud Gimmel Midos before *chatzos*, except on Yom Kippur night.³ Since the first half of the night is influenced by *gevurah*, reciting the Yud Gimmel Midos at that time can have the wrong effect. (Even if a congregation is saying them, one should not say it along.)⁴

While Reb Moshe Feinstein allowed a community that could not gather at night to recite *selichos* earlier — arguing that there's no prohibition, only that the Yud Gimmel Midos don't have the desired effect, and they will at least have the *tefillah*⁵ — other contemporary *acharonim* showed from the above sources that it's better not to recite them at all than to recite them before *chatzos*.⁶

In his Siddur, the Alter Rebbe allows for reciting *tikun chatzos* from the beginning of the "second watch" (*ashmura*), which begins one third into the night. Some want to argue that one can similarly recite Yud Gimmel Midos at that time when necessary.⁷

However, on *Motzaei Shabbos*, there is a further problem, since it is an extension of Shabbos, and one does not recite *tachnun* or *selichos* until after midnight.⁸

An alternative option would be to recite them on Sunday morning (as is done on the other days of *selichos*). If staying up late will cause one to sleep in, this is indeed preferable.

When reciting *selichos* without a *minyan*, one does not recite the Yud Gimmel Midos (from "*Vaya'avur*")⁹ or the sections in Aramaic.¹⁰

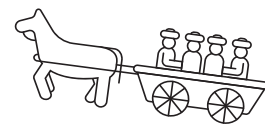
1. שיחות קודש תשל"ד ח"ב ע' 435.
2. ספר המנהגים ע' 54.
3. שער הכוונות ח"א דרושי ערבית ע' של"ט.
4. שו"ת רמ"ז הוצאת קול בטחה או"ח סי' ח'.
5. אג"מ או"ח ח"ב סי' קה.
6. יחוה דעת ח"א סי' מ"ו. וראה מט"א סי' תקפ"א ס"כ. חקרי מנהגים ח"ג סי' פה.
7. ראה משמרת שלום - פרלוב סי' מ"א אות ד.
8. ראה שע"ת סי' תקפ"א סק"א ובמט"א שם ס"כ.
9. שו"ע ורמ"א או"ח סי' תקס"ה ס"ה. וראה אוצר מנהגי חב"ד אלול ע' כו - אפילו בטעמים.
10. כף החיים סי' תקפ"א סק"כ. מט"א שם ס"כ.א. ובשו"ת אהרן דרב סי' כ"תרנז הכריע שיכול לאמרו אם התחיל עם הציבור או אם יש במקום ציבור שמתפללים אפילו שחרי"ת.

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

DEDICATE AN ISSUE

in honor of a simcha or yahrtzeit

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HARAV YAAKOV VIDEREVITCH

Harav Yaakov Viderevitch (5595-5671) was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash. A *yoshev* in Lubavitch by the Tzemach Tzedek, he was later chosen to serve as the publisher of the Tzemach Tzedek's *teshuvos*. He served as the Rov of Kopishok and later as the Rov of the Chassidim in Moscow, and he corresponded with the Rebbe Maharash on matters of *halachah*.

In 5653, the Jews were expelled from Moscow, and R. Viderevitch moved to America where he was appointed as the Rov of a union of "Nusach Sefard" shuls. He was one of the leading Rabbonim in America at the time. R. Viderevitch was famous for his sharp sense of humor and witticisms, and many witty stories are told about him. A number of *teshuvos* written by R. Viderevitch are extant in manuscript.

The Frierdiker Rebbe related:

While in Moscow, R. Viderevitch was once taking a walk with Mr. Zev Wissotzky, founder of the tea company and Rosh Hakahal. R. Viderevitch respected Wissotzky for his incredible *tzedaka*, but he was displeased with how he ran the community, by handing it over to modern elements.

As they strolled on the Chistye Prudy boulevard, they noticed young rich Jews walking their well-adorned dogs, big and small, in the latest style. Those with small dogs could lead the dogs, but those walking big dogs, it was the dog leading the owner.

Mr. Wissotzky turned to R. Viderevitch, "Look at the new style of these young people - to love and befriend dogs?! They have found new friends to walk with! What do you say to that?"

"What should I say?" R. Viderevitch replied, "They're creating a new society in which people are led by dogs. And the richer one is, the bigger the dog..."

(אג"ק ריי"צ ח"ז ע' קג-קד)

When R. Viderevitch settled in America in 5653 (1893), he had a sign hanging outside his home naming him the "Chief Rabbi of America." When someone questioned who appointed him to this position, he answered wittily, "The sign painter!"

When asked why he chose this title, he replied that they will need to come together from all across the country to demote him.

(אוצר זכרונות יי אייזנשטיין, עמ' 77)

A Moment with The Rebbe



לזכר נשמת מרת חוה לאה בת ר' שמשון הכהן ע"ה

DO YOU WANT TO SWITCH ROLES?

Israeli politician Mr. Shimon Peres merited two lengthy *yechidus*, in which the Rebbe shared with him his views on security matters and on the Mihu Yehudi problem.

The *mazkir* Reb Binyomin Klein related:

At one of these *yechidus*, Mr. Peres told the Rebbe that before he was born, his parents had no children. They ultimately went for a *bracha* to

the Rebbe of Belz, after which he was born.

"A person born thanks to the bracha of the Belzer Rov should look accordingly!" the Rebbe told him.

"Hashem will help..." Shimon responded.

"My job is to say that Hashem will help, and your job is to execute," the Rebbe replied. "Do you want to switch roles and take my place?"