

The Weekly Farbrengens



למען ישמענו • ראה תש"פ • 579
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

A HOLY DAY (II)

DAVENING AND LEARNING

HaShem told Moshe Rabbeinu, "Gather the Yidden on *Shabbos* and teach them its *halachos*, so that future generations will learn from you to gather together in the *shuls* and study on *Shabbos*, and thereby My Name will be praised."

Thus it was that when the Yidden were about to enter *Eretz Yisroel*, the Torah complained to *HaShem*, "What will become of me? Your people will be preoccupied with working the land and will not dedicate enough time to me." *HaShem* reassured the Torah: "I have a match for you – *Shabbos*. On that day the Yidden will abstain from working, and will enter the *beis midrash* and study Torah."

In this spirit, *Chazal* say that *Shabbos* and *Yom-Tov* were given to the Yidden so that they would be able to learn Torah. This applies particularly to those who work during the week, and who can now devote considerable time to Torah study.

(ילקוט שמעוני ויקהל רמז תח, שו"ע סי' ר"צ ס"ג וס"ה)

Speaking of the holiness of *Shabbos*, the Friediker Rebbe once said:

In the past, a *chassidishe baalabos* would be entirely different on *Shabbos*, at ease and unrushed. Before *davening* he would listen to a *maamar* being taught. Then came *davening*, at a more leisurely pace than usual, each individual at his own level. He did not hurry home to the *kugel*. Though he honored *Shabbos* with fine food, he knew that this was not the most important matter. Every person would work on himself with guidance from the local *mashpia*. Today, too, there are many who keep *Shabbos* – but what is with the *kedusha* of *Shabbos*?

(ס"ה תש"א ע' 53)

The Rebbe explains that *Shabbos* is called a day of rest – not because one sits idly, doing nothing, for surely on *Shabbos* one must toil in the service of *HaShem*. Rather, it means that on *Shabbos* one takes **pleasure** in this service, just as one derives pleasure from carrying a heavy sack of precious stones. This is a foretaste of the time of *Moshiach*, "a day of *Shabbos* and rest," when we will experience intense pleasure as we rise to great heights in our service of *HaShem*.

(התועודות תשמ"ג ח"ד ע' 1983)

A CHASSIDISHE SHABBOS

What was *Shabbos* like in Lubavitch? This is how it was recalled by the eminent chossid, Reb Shmerel Sosonkin:

On *erev Shabbos* after *Mincha*, as soon as the tables were arranged, everyone pushed to secure a spot. Then, as together we sang the sweet *niggunim* of heartfelt longing and joy that uplifted everyone's *neshama* from the weekday to *Shabbos*, the *kedusha* of *Shabbos* could be seen on every face.

CONSIDER

What is the reason for additional learning on *Shabbos*: the extra time available or the holiness of the day?

Why should the happiness of a *Yiddishe* home depend on *Shabbos*?

Suddenly all would fall silent, as the Rebbe Rashab, his face radiant, made his appearance. Wearing a *shtreiml*, a silk *kapota* and a white scarf, he would enter the *zal* slowly and take his place, while wrapping his hand with a red handkerchief. He would sit silently for a short while, gazing at his son, the Friediker Rebbe, and then, in a low voice, he would begin to deliver the *maamar*, his face aflame. His voice would gradually rise, and everyone listened in complete silence for the hour-and-a-half that the *maamar* usually took. We would then *daven Maariv* and leave for our *seudas Shabbos*, though some *bochurim* and guests would remain to *chazer* the *maamar* late into the night.

Early *Shabbos* morning, the head *chozer*, Reb Shilem Kuratin, together with his assistants, would gather in the Rebbe's home for *chazara*. Reb Shilem would repeat the *maamar* from memory, and the Rebbe would correct him where necessary. Afterwards, we would review the *maamar* repeatedly throughout the day, while it became the focus of *Shabbos*.

Finally, as *Shabbos* drew to an end and soared to its spiritual peak, the time of *raiva deraivin*, we *bochurim* would again gather together for *Chassidus*, and as we sang soul-stirring *niggunim* until late into the

night, we felt the sheer loftiness of the time. And when Reb Shilem repeated the *maamar* once more, we felt the *kedusha* of *Shabbos* hovering upon us, a taste of *Olam Haba*.

(זכרונות ע' 45 ואילך)

THE PEAK OF SHABBOS

The *Zohar* calls the highest point of *Shabbos* in the late afternoon, *raiva deraivin* – the time at which *HaShem's* innermost will is revealed. At that unique moment, after *Mincha*, *chassidim* would gather to sing *niggunim* and listen to a *maamar* of *Chassidus* in order to experience this *kedusha*, and enable it to inspire and empower them throughout the coming week.

(סידור עם דא"ח - סדר סעודה שלישית, אג"ק ח"ד ע' קיא, סה"ש תנש"א ח"ב ע' 664)

During one of his many travels, the Baal Shem Tov once spent *Shabbos* together with his *talmidim* in a little village. As the holy day drew to a close, the local innkeeper gathered all the *Yiddishe* villagers to join his guests at the table, where they all partook of a generous Third Meal and sang *niggunim* of praise.

Seeing that this occasion was accepted so warmly Above, the Baal Shem Tov asked his unlearned host why he chose to honor the *shaleshudess* meal so lavishly. The man explained, "I have heard people say that they want their *neshama* to leave their body while they are among *Yidden*. I have also learned that on *Shabbos*, every Yid has an additional *neshama* – so every *Shabbos* I want my additional *neshama* to leave me in the company of fellow *Yidden*."

Hearing that response, the Baal Shem Tov was visibly pleased.

(כתר שם טוב אות שפו)

Once, during the years that the Friediker Rebbe was in *Otvotzk*, Poland, he complained to one of his *chassidim*, "How can it be that at the very time when *raiva deraivin* is revealed, a *yungerman* can sit and munch on grapes with his legs crossed?"

(בכל ביתי נאמן הוא ע' 66)

The Friediker Rebbe writes: There will come a time when everyone will recognize the complete truth – that the happiness of a *Yiddishe* home depends on keeping the holy *Shabbos*.

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ה ע' רפב)

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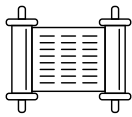
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GOOD NEWS.



CRACKERS, PRETZELS AND FLATBREAD

Are flatbread crackers *mezonos* or *hamotzi*?

Hamotzi and *birkas hamazon* are recited on bread that is normally eaten as the basis of a meal. The *bracha* for grain pastries normally eaten as a snack is *mezonos* provided that one (a) eats less than the equivalent of six *beitzim* (336 grams), and (b) doesn't become full. One who eats four *kabeitzim* (230 grams) and will be full—including from side foods—recites *hamotzi* on the snack bread; otherwise, he recites it over a *kezayis* of regular bread.¹

An illustration of "snack bread" brought in the Gemara is "*Pas Haba'ah B'kisin*." There are three approaches among the *rishonim* in defining this term (either from "*koseis*" meaning "nibble" or "*kis*" meaning "pocket"):

(1) **Ingredients** – The dough itself is cake-like since most of its liquid is something other than water—such as honey, juice, oil, milk, or eggs—thus making it flavorful and not fit to be eaten as bread. The same applies if regular bread dough was flavored to the extent that most people wouldn't fill themselves up on it.²

(2) **Filling** – A sweet filling—such as honey, sugar, nuts, fruits, or spices—was inserted into regular bread dough before baking and the filling is the primary part (e.g. apple turnover). Fillings consisting of food eaten for satiation or eaten with bread, such as cheese or vegetables, don't take away its bread status.³

(3) **Texture** – The dough is baked as dry crackers which are nibbled for snack and not as a meal.

In his *Shulchan Aruch*, the Alter Rebbe quotes all three views and rules that since *safek brachos l'hakel* we do not recite *birkas hamazon* on any of these, (rather *mezonos* and *al hamichya* which are somewhat appropriate even for bread). He notes, however, that a *baal nefesh*—a spiritually sensitive person—should eat the first and third categories, flavorful bread and crackers, only during a bread meal (when one will anyways be *bentching*).⁴

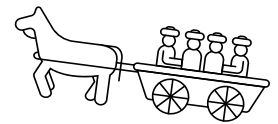
Crackers and pretzels, besides fitting the third category, may also fit the first. They are often made with oil and other liquids, which places them in the first category if they are the majority. The same would apply if they are distinctly spiced or flavored.⁵

In his *Seder Birkas Hanehenin*—a practical guide to *brachos* which was written later—the Alter Rebbe omits the third approach regarding crackers.⁶ Some understand this omission to be deliberate and therefore avoid pretzels or crackers made with a majority of water except during a meal.⁷ Others argue that it was simply left out of the more practical guide since crackers weren't prevalent in that time and place, and they remain *mezonos*.⁸ If the crackers are spiced or flavored, even the more stringent view concedes that there is room for leniency.⁹

1. סדר ברכה"נ פ"ב ה"ב.
2. סדר ברכה"נ שם ה"ז.
3. סדר ברכה"נ שם ה"ח.
4. שו"ת א"ח סי' קס"ח (וע"פ מ"ש בסדבה"נ בהערה לאח"ז).
5. ויש שהעירו מל' אדה"ו "שערב בה תבלין בלישתה" שצ"ל מעורב בעיסה עצמה.
6. סדר ברכה"נ פ"ב ה"ט.
7. קצוה"ש סי' מ"ח בדה"ש סק"א. ובסק"ג מדייק בן מלשון אדה"ו בסדב"נ "חוץ ממים" (סברותיו מובאים בהערות כ"ק אדמו"ר על סדבה"נ).
8. והעירו ע"ז מלוח ברכת הנהנין (שהוא "הלכות הצריכות ושכחות במדינתנו") פ"ח ה"י: "כמו שרגילין שכוססין עוגות יבשות (שקורין קיכל"ר) בסוף הסעודה".
9. קצוה"ש שם בדה"ש סק"א (מצרף גם שיטת הב"י שרק צ"ל נגיש ולא רוב). ועד"ז מובא בס' ממלכת הכנים ע"י נ"ח מהרב שלום חסקינד ע"ה שאדמו"ר הרי"צ נהג לברך במ"מ על קרקורי טאם-טאם מתובלים.

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

Our Heroes



REB BEREL KURNITZER

Reb Berel Garfinkel, born to Chabad chassidim from the city of Kurenitz, studied in Lubavitch during the years 5676-7 (1916-7). Later he served as *mashgiach* in several underground branches of Tomchei Tmimim in Russia. After leaving Russia in the year 5696 (1936), he was appointed as *mashgiach* and general *menahel* of the *yeshiva* in Otvotzk, Poland. He brought a new *chayus* into the *yeshiva*, and he would often walk among the tables encouraging the *bochurim* in their learning, calling out, "*Lebediker! Lebediker!*" He married shortly before World War II. In the beginning of the war he was *mashgiach* of the *yeshiva* in the Radom Ghetto. He and his wife were killed *al kidush Hashem* in Auschwitz in the year 5703 (1943).

In his youth, Reb Berel once told his friends, "Come with me, I will ask the Rogatchover Gaon a question that he won't be able to answer!" They went to the Rogatchover and Reb Berel asked, "The Torah writes '*Vayehi erev vayehi boker*,'—night and then day. The *Mishnah* as well begins with the *din*

of *Shema* at night. If so, why does the *Shulchan Aruch* start with the *halachos* pertaining to the morning?"

The Rogatchover was quiet for a very long time, and finally told the astonished *bochurim* that he does not have an answer. After taking leave of the *gaon*, Reb Berel said to his friends, "This question the Rebbe Rashab asks in a *maamar* and does not give an answer. I was therefore certain that the Rogatchover would not be able to answer this question either."

Reb Mendel Futera related:

Reb Berel was five years older than me had incredible capabilities. When he was seventeen years old he was fluent in the three "*Bavos*" and additional *masechtos* with *Rashi*, *Tosfos*, and other *rishonim*.

When we met next, he was twenty one. I asked him where he was up to, and he replied sincerely that he knew all of *Shas* with *Rashi*, *Tosfos*, and other *rishonim*, as well as all the printed *maamorim* – all by heart! He said it without any air of pride or "humility." He wasn't proud at all.

(ר' מענדל ע' 253)

A Moment with The Rebbe



QUANTITY DOESN'T COUNT

Mark, a French Jew, shared his experience with the Rebbe:

When I entered the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe said that he wanted to talk to me and offered me a seat. I was ecstatic that the Rebbe was giving me, a twenty-five-year-old, his precious time.

I posed a question that had been bothering me. As a child I once saw cat climb a tree and kill birds with cruelty, although he didn't even look hungry. He did this since it was his nature, without choice. It reminded me of the Germans. I couldn't see how this was good, and how to reconcile it with the *posuk* that states, "And Hashem saw all that He had made, and it was very good!"

I expected a deeply intellectual answer

from this Torah genius. But as I spoke, the Rebbe looked at me deeply, and I felt that the Rebbe was asking my painful question together with me. When I finished, the Rebbe said, "You have touched on the deepest question of all."

And the Rebbe immediately shifted to talk practically, how we need to improve the world, through leading a *Yiddisher* life: "And here quantity doesn't matter. There are billions of people in the world, the *Yidden* are only a few million, and the *frum* are even fewer. But it's important to remember that there are many more times the amount of grains of sand in the world than grains of gold."

(Teshurah Vichnin, Adar 5759)