

The Weekly *Farbrengens*


MERKAZ ANASH
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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 בס"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 HaMikdosh*. Through his rejoicing he is meriting a revelation of the essence of the *neshama*, as it is in the world of *Atzilus*, and even higher."

(ספר השיחות תש"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 חל"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)

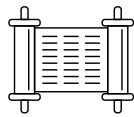
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GOOD NEWS.



SUKKAH ON A PORCH

What can invalidate a sukkah on a balcony?

The maximum height of a *sukka* is 20 *amos* (31.5 ft.), which is measured from its floor. Thus, there is no problem for a *sukka* to be constructed high up on a roof or a porch, as long as the *schach* is within 20 *amos* of its own floor.

High places tend to be windier. The *sukka* and *schach* need to be strong enough that a standard wind in that location won't move or dismantle them (see more details in issue 585).¹ The *Gemara* teaches that a *sukka* on a boat only needs to be strong enough to withstand wind on the land and need not withstand wind of the sea.² Based on this, *poskim* write that a rooftop *sukka* only needs to withstand the standard wind at ground level in that locale and not the extra wind due to the height.³

The *schach* must be the only roof of the *sukka* without anything on top of it, and covered *schach* is invalid, thus it may not be constructed underneath a higher story's porch. However, there are ways for a *sukka* to be kosher if it is only partially covered.

A *sukka* requires at least 3 walls, and preferably 4 walls. If a roof or porch protrudes into the *sukka* from one side, the wall on that side can still be counted as one of the *sukka's* walls — as a *dofen akuma*, a bent wall — providing it's within four *amos* (6.3 ft.) of the kosher *schach*. However, one may not eat under this "bent wall."

When the *sukka* has 7 by 7 *tefachim* of kosher *schach*, interruptions of air up to 3 by 3 *tefachim*, and of invalid *schach* up to 4 by 4 *tefachim*, do not invalidate the *sukka*.⁴ One may even eat under this invalid *schach* if it is less than 3 by 3 *tefachim*.⁵ These guidelines can be used to determine the status of an air conditioner that protrudes on top of a *sukka*.

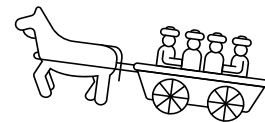
Wires are thin and certainly don't invalidate a *sukka* underneath them. But what if there are multiple wires within 3 *tefachim* of each other—do we view them as connected under the rubric of *lavud*?

The Alter Rebbe writes that the kosher *schach* in between poles prevents the poles from joining as *lavud*. Additionally, the space between the wires isn't meant to be filled.⁶ While it isn't an issue according to the *halacha*, there is room to avoid it when possible.⁷

1. סוכה כהלכתה פ"ד סי"א.
2. שו"ע או"ח סי' תרכ"ח ס"ד.
3. ספר הסוכה ח"א פ"ט סי"ב ע"פ ספר סוכה כהלכתה שם, וראה תוס' הרא"ש כ"ג ע"א ד"ה דתניא.
4. שו"ע או"ח תרל"ב ס"א משנ"ב סק"ח. וראה פרמ"ג א"א סי' תרל"ב סק"ד שהפסול הוא בד' על ד'.
5. משנ"ב סי' תרל"ב סק"ג. ספר הסוכה ח"א.
6. ראה מנח"ש סי' צ"א אות ט'. וראה מקראי קדש סוכה ח"א כד - שכאן בלבד דרוש שתי פעולות לאסור, לקרב ולסתום, וזה לא אמרינן.
7. ראה שו"ע ר"י תרכ"ד סי' ד' ומג"א שם סק"ו, וראה ספר הסוכה פכ"ז ס"ד וס"ה.

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

Our Heroes



R. YISRAEL YAFEH OF DUBRAVNA

R. Yisrael Yafeh of Dubravna was a chossid of the Alter Rebbe from the early years of his nesius in Liozna, and was the head of the *menagnim* by the Alter Rebbe. After the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe, R. Yisrael would travel to R. Aharon of Strashele, and in his later years to the Tzemach Tzedek. His *kesavim* in Chassidus were published in a sefer titled *She'eiris Yisrael*.

the concern of bittul Torah, we see that despite the disturbances, the Alter Rebbe managed to author incredible works.

Hearing this, the Alter Rebbe stood up from his place, went over to R. Yisroel and pat him on the shoulder and said, "With my Yisroel I won't argue!" and he laughed.

Once, a group of the Alter Rebbe's *talmidim* entered the Rebbe's room to learn at the designated time and found him upset. He began to bemoan the fact that people were troubling him about their physical problems, disturbing him from Torah and davening. Moreover, how could he answer them when it was only the *neviim* who knew such information.

R. Yisroel was an expert musician and would often play by the Alter Rebbe. At the great chassunah in Zhlobin, when the Alter Rebbe went to rest after the chuppah, he stood near the door and began playing on his violin. The Alter Rebbe opened the door and invited him to play for him inside, and he then recited a *maamar* beginning with the words, "And it was as the as the musician played, the hand of Hashem came upon him."

The students all stood silently, but R. Yisroel, who was the youngest among the students, spoke up. He quoted proofs from various *tannaim* who engaged in public matters, but the Alter Rebbe rejected all of his arguments. At last, he mentioned the Rambam who engaged in healing the sick and dispensing advice. And about

When the Rebbe's meshares heard that the Rebbe was saying Chassidus, he quickly ran to the various guesthouses to call the chassidim. The Alter Rebbe then continued saying Chassidus until 7 am.

(ס' שארית ישראל, היכל הבעש"ט גליון כ"ו ע' 128)

A Moment with The Rebbe



YIRAS SHAMAYIM MUST BE TAUGHT

A principal of a Lubavitch school was once asked to speak at the annual convention of Torah Umesorah. When he asked the Rebbe what to address in his talk, the Rebbe responded in a note:

only source for *yiras Shamayim* is the school, therefore it must be taught.

"It is imperative that you say – in my name or not, as you see fit – that it is absolutely necessary to teach the children *yiras Shamayim*.

"And giving the children 15 minutes a day to learn a *mussar sefer* of their choice cannot suffice at all. In fact, it sends a negative message, because the child says to himself that every other subject has a mandatory timeframe, from a specific book, and a special teacher is hired – so this topic must be inferior!"

"All agree that one cannot be a doctor without studying medicine, so how could they expect the children to be *yerei Shamayim* without teaching it?

The Rebbe concluded the note, "Say this with a full *breitkait* (confidence), without fear, with a great *tumult*, with force. And Hashem will grant you success."

"In days bygone, this was absorbed at home, and the children saw it on the street. But times have changed. The

(Simpson Teshurah, Cheshvan 5771)