

## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2010

I have been in love with stories and storytelling since I was a little boy hiding under the bedcovers at night to read long after my parents had ordered me to go to bed... It was only in the last ten years however that I came to discover and enjoy legendary tales of the impassioned Hasidic rabbis.

Now that Spring is about to awaken in the gardens at Temenos, I would like to share with you a story of Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezritch who lived over three hundred years ago. When he died, his senior students gathered to share memories of their beloved rebbe. Hours passed as they exhausted all the wisdom of their teacher that they could remember. After a period of silence Reb Zalman of Ladi spoke:

"Our teacher was a sage of infinite wisdom, but some of his actions were confusing to say the least. For example he used to leave his home before dawn every morning to walk around the lake where the frogs congregate and croak. Do any of us know why he did this?"

Reb Zalman then answered his own question. "This is what I think. We learn from the *Perek – Shirah* that when King David finished writing the Book of Psalms he called to God and said "Is there any creature who sings more praises to you than I?"

Suddenly a frog jumped up in front of him and said "What arrogance, even for a king! I for one recite far more songs of praise than you, and each of these contains three thousand interpretations! And that is not all! There is a creature at the edge of this pond whose very life depends on eating me. When he is hungry I give myself to him in fulfillment of the verse 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him.'

Reb Zalman continued, "Every aspect of creation, from the smallest to the greatest, from the inanimate to the animate, carries a melody into this world and sings it each in its own way. Even frogs have their song. He paused to see whether his friends were following him. "Don't you see this was the reason our beloved rebbe walked to the lake each morning. He went to learn the song of the frog that he might pray among them."

Sitting in The Little Way or The Well I am often aware of the exquisite hymn of nature that we are blest with here in the gardens of Temenos. Bumble bees, honey bees, ladybirds, frogs... mandarins, weavers, peacocks, hagedas, doves..... One of my favorite meditations is listening to the voice of the Beloved in the cooing of the doves. Try it sometime, and you will discover your own heart's mantra. Or sing along with Solomon

*'Come now my love, my lovely one come,*

*Show me your face; let me hear your voice.*

*For your voice is sweet*

*And your face so beautiful'*

May spring be for you a time of renewal, awakening and pure delight!

With love

Billy