

# The Chassidische Vibe

THE BEIS MEORACH MAGAZINE  
FOR N'SHEI U'VNOS CHABAD



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



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**BEIS**  
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# HASHEM NEVER GIVES UP ON US

פּוֹתֵחַ יָן בְּדַבָּר מַלְכוּת

*The following are two letters of the Rebbe written in Yiddish to one of the Shluchos in the year 5713 (1952/53), recently made public for the first time in Beis Moshiach Hebrew Edition #1272. The letters address the issue of keeping her children in the nursery school of the local Lubavitch institution Yeshiva Achei Tmimim, despite her misgivings, as well as her efforts in promoting the mitzva of Family Purity despite her disappointments [free translation]:*

**B”H 20 Kislev 5714**

**Brooklyn.**

**HaRabbonis Moras Chana Tichye**

**Bracha v’Shalom!**

**In answer to your letter, in which you ask if you should remove your children from the nursery [school], because there are things there that are not suitable.**

**My view is that you should not do that, and your children should continue to go to the yeshiva nursery. And it is a certainty that soon you will find ways to correct the flaw, and Hashem *yisborach* should help you and your husband to raise your children *sheyichyu* to Torah, to chuppa and to good deeds.**

**It would interest me to know if you are continuing your work regarding Family Purity, and if it is with success.**

**With Blessing (signature)**



// IF HASHEM YISBORACH  
CONSIDERS IT FITTING TO DEAL  
WITH EACH OF US MANY TIMES  
OVER, AND DOES NOT CH'V BECOME  
DISAPPOINTED, CONSEQUENTLY  
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LESSON TO NOT BECOME FATIGUED  
FROM DRAWING JEWS CLOSE, MEN  
AND WOMEN, YOUNG OR OLD, TO  
TORAH AND MITZVOS THROUGH  
ALL POSSIBLE MEANS.

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B”H 16 Shevat 5713

Brooklyn.

HaRabbonis Moras Chana Tichye

Bracha v'Shalom!

I received your letter in its time, and I was happy to read in it that you have continued to send your children to Yeshiva Achei Tmimim, and Hashem *yisborach* should help you together with your husband *sheyichye* to raise them to Torah and to chuppa and to good deeds, from an expansive state.

Regarding what you write in your letter that you are disappointed and therefore stopped being active in the matter of Family Purity, that is certainly not a sufficient reason. If Hashem *yisborach* considers it fitting to deal with each of us many times over, and does not ch'v become disappointed, consequently that should serve as a moral lesson to not become fatigued from drawing Jews close, men and women, young or old, to Torah and mitzvos through all possible means. And we are guaranteed, that if only we act with sincerity and with a true desire, then ultimately, a bit earlier or a bit later, we will be successful.

As far as what you write about the mikva in your city, it is a wonder to me that none of the young men that were by me including your husband, not one of them told me about it. I will see to it to find out the situation at the first opportunity.

With Blessing for Chassidishe Nachas from all of their children, together with your husband *sheyichye*

(signature) ■



“

# A New Member Joins Shul

”

The shul and davening experience is one of the most fundamental aspects of Jewish life. How do we pass on to our growing children a love and appreciation for it?

Ariella Dashiff



## HERE'S A COMMON CHALLENGE

mothers and fathers of young bar-mitzva age boys have:

Their boy of thirteen is given a suit, a hat, a white shirt, two pairs of Tefillin and we tell him, “Lebedik! From this day forward, you go to shul three times a day, wearing a hat and jacket, **joyfully** and with ***kabalas ol!*** (emphasis on the text in bold).”

However, the *bochur'l* still has his head in the sandbox and is having trouble adjusting. The parents say: “But a Chassidishe bachur does things with *kabalas ol* even if he doesn't ‘feel like it!’” Then, the child cries out from the sandbox: “So, apparently I'm not a Chassidishe boy!” You blew it. Now, what will you tell him? “You **ARE** a Chassidishe boy!”

This whole problem stems from a lack of understanding of the concept of “*kabalas ol.*” Please pay attention! ***Kabalas ol.***

As opposed to mules, an *ol* (yoke) is something that **people accept upon themselves willingly**. In other words, *Kabalas ol* means **giving over one's individual will**. Parents and teachers can't “snatch” a child's will from him by force, rather they must create a situation whereby the boy **gives his will over** to Hashem.

Marvelous!

By the way, this significantly reduces the feelings of guilt, because there are times when the parent did everything he possibly could, yet the boy or girl decided that they still aren't interested in devoting their souls to Hashem.

While this isn't the place to discuss the matter, a brief reminder would be in order. We must act in a manner of love and affection without applying any force. There are those who bring people closer to Yiddishkeit by using pressure tactics – they want tangible results

from their outreach activities! They focus their efforts on results, not on the child (especially if these results have very lofty names, e.g., “*yiras Shamayim*”, “*Chassidish*”). In such a case, they forget that, (a) Ahavas Yisrael is a mitzva of its own! (yes, there is such a mitzva!), and (b) the objective is not the results, rather to love the child because he's our child, not in order to get something out of him.

When a person feels that they're relating to him nicely in order to attain certain results, he tends to interpret this as cajoling, (and to be frank, that's exactly what it is... a lack of minimal respect. By the way, this is also the correct thing regarding spouses... For this reason, so many people try “to see the other person in a positive light” to strengthen him in mitzvos. Thus, it's no wonder that this approach doesn't usually work!)

## SELF-IMAGE

The foundation and secret upon which everything is built is a person's self-image – how the bachur calls himself and defines himself, to himself. Does he see himself as a successful or failed student *ch"v* – or is he a Chassid?

(NOTE: I wrote Chassid, not “Chassidish”. What's the difference? “Chassid” is a noun, whereas Chassidish is an adjective. “Chassid” is more of a *pnimiyus* term, Chassidish is an external expression. For example, a Chassidishe hat is a hat that belongs to Chassidim, however, first of all, it's a hat. A Chassid is by his very essence a Chassid, while in the external sense, he can even be a train engineer like R' Shloimke Maidanchek, an artist or a plumber...)

The steps depending on us for creating a Chassid self-image within the child are many:

**Personal Example:** First of all, there is setting a true and practical personal example. The



parent is truly pleased to be a Chassid and have his own existence nullified to the Rebbe! The child greatly admires his parents (come, let's try not to disappoint them and not give them a reason to think otherwise...) and follows in their footsteps.

**Talk About It:** Secondly, tell him about the wonderful family to which he belongs! The marvelous *middos* of his brothers and sisters, the stories of personal kindnesses and salvation the family experienced, the lofty roles, wealth, and honesty that have been an integral part of the family... (It isn't for naught that not-yet-Torah-observant people say things like "My grandfather was a big rav." This shows a sense of belonging.) In addition, one parent will tell the child about the outstanding and noble qualities of the other parent – (even if they're divorced! Blood is still thicker than water...).

**Monitor Your Reactions:** To an even larger extent, there is the inner design of a child's manner of speech... This is done through the

feedback they receive from their surroundings, especially from their parents and teachers. For this reason, it is most important **to pay close attention to the way we react.**

If the child receives far more praise and encouragement for his appropriate actions than an adult's negative emotions in relation to his improper actions, this situation can develop a positive self-image. In other words, the child begins to look upon himself in terms of a positive, giving, and industrious person. It doesn't make a great deal of difference what actually happened; what does matter is how he perceives himself. This process requires some thought and consideration because by their nature, children of all ages make many mistakes, and their personal attributes are still insufficiently developed.

**While there is a need to change their manner of conduct, the method must be extremely positive, otherwise the self-image gets stuck on his bad qualities, thereby ruining his efforts to achieve this change.**

// THE FOUNDATION AND  
SECRET UPON WHICH  
EVERYTHING IS BUILT IS A  
PERSON'S SELF-IMAGE – HOW  
THE BACHUR CALLS HIMSELF  
AND DEFINES HIMSELF,  
TO HIMSELF. DOES HE SEE  
HIMSELF AS A SUCCESSFUL OR  
FAILED STUDENT CH"V – OR IS  
HE A CHASSID?

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Let's bring an example: Shoshi has an assortment of Matchbox cars, which she has collected and maintains in a consistently orderly fashion. We can point out to her the fact that this is not appropriate conduct for a girl (Who says so? Is it written anywhere in *halacha*?), but this will merely make her feel that she's strange. The other option is to praise her for being so well-ordered, dependable, and responsible with her collection – something that will surely give her a sense of being an accountable and trustworthy person.

Another example: Avi is a fourteen-year-old bachur. Sometimes, he goes to shul, sometimes he goes...someplace else. When he meets up with his father at Maariv, the father embraces him warmly and says: "Avi, you have no idea how proud I feel to stand near you during davening... Not everyone is so privileged..." That's true, the father is also speaking with his son about the importance of davening in a minyan, including in class. And here he is actually doing it now.

HONOR, REWARD, AND THE  
WAYS OF PLEASANTNESS

If we go back to the sandbox, we can say that it appears to the boy that even the shul has a "sandbox"! And it's even nicer than the one at home...

In a booklet published in memory of **Rabbi Yoram Abergel a"h**, his son tells that in order to encourage them to come to shul, he would smile at them and motion with his hand in the form of a money note, suggesting that "this is what you get if you come." In other words, reward is absolutely a good thing...in accordance with a specific child's age, standing, and overall condition.

In general, the whole process of strengthening and encouraging the younger generation to have *kabalas ol* must be done in a manner of respect, as we have seen with the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach. Respect means uplifting a person because each of us has a unique value – the opposite of disgrace (*zilzul*), based on the word *zol*, cheap, lacking in value.

We should note here that applying significant pressure upon a growing child is the opposite of respect, because we try through speech, even if we don't punish, to create an unpleasant situation. Thus, if this situation is avoided, the boy will agree to go to shul. Therefore, don't be a nudnik! If he goes, he goes, and if he doesn't go, leave him alone. Worst case scenario, we'll express a certain degree of disappointment, focus on the next opportunity, and the ways to achieve greater success.

In the book "Father of Israel", the grandson of Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, of blessed memory, former chief rabbi of Eretz Yisrael, tells how once when he was a boy, he got overly "preoccupied" by the computer, and he delayed going to shul to daven. The rav periodically opened the door to the room with a quiet smile, and then closed it again.

And he even served breakfast to his grandson.

Tenderness. You don't always have to speak.

## SHUL: BEFITTING ONE'S PERSONAL QUALITIES

Every mitzva has different facets, and each person connects to the mitzva according to his own personality. In order to forge a significant emotional connection with going to shul and spending time there, let's consider this growing and maturing boy and we'll try to see what his emotional tendencies are, what he enjoys in shul, and we'll provide him with that feeling of enjoyment.

First of all, every child or boy loves his father and mother, and therefore, if we transform the time the child spends with us into "quality time" with special care and attention, this constitutes a powerful means for establishing a greater connection and a sense of belonging between ancient Jewish traditions and the coming generations! How? A gentle embrace during the Torah reading, a pleasant facial expression, a bag of nosh for

Shabbos, etc. – each parent with his own manner of guidance and direction. When we're together in shul, we forget about the times that he didn't come or didn't do as he should. We are here with goodness and love, and we don't pressure our children to sit through the entire davening. We can give some encouragement, a little nudge, a treat – but that's it.

By the way, anyone who wants to help his friend's son should act towards him as if he were his own son – a gentle pat on the shoulder, a heartfelt "Shalom Aleichem", or a piece of candy can achieve a great deal.

As we have stated previously, there are various facets to coming to shul. People do different things there: study Torah, meet with a

CONT. ON P. 31





We spoke with four Chazan sisters: **Mrs. Devorah Greenberg, Mrs. Chaya Scheiner, Mrs. Batya Cohen, and Mrs. Esther Scheinberger**, who go back in time to those dark days behind the Iron Curtain.

**Sukkos**  
**Memoirs**  
**From**  
**Behind**  
**The Iron**  
**Curtain**



## GIVING BIRTH ON YOM TOV

### What do you remember about the Tishrei Yomim Tovim back in Russia?

Mrs. Cohen tells this story:

“One year, on Yom Kippur, in the middle of the davening which took place in our home, my sister Bas-Sheva Mishulovin a”h, felt she was about to give birth. To call an ambulance was dangerous because our secret minyan could be discovered, but there was no other vehicle available. My brother-in-law, Moshe Scheiner, followed the example of the Alter Rebbe and came to the rescue. He took off his tallis and kittel, went outside and a few minutes later he returned with a truck that he got somehow. He took her swiftly to the hospital.

“That year, we celebrated two brissin in the big sukka that we built in our yard. Both nephews were named for the Rebbe Rayatz: Yosef Yitzchok Mishulovin, today a shliach in West Bloomfield, Michigan, and Yosef Yitzchok Greenberg, shliach in Alaska.”

“That year, 5725, I gave birth on 8 Tishrei and the bris was the first day of Sukkos,” affirmed Mrs. Greenberg. “I fasted Yom Kippur night and in the morning some family members came to visit me and said that according to halacha, a woman who gives birth is exempt from fasting for three days after the birth. At that time, new mothers stayed in the hospital for a week, so I was released on Yom Tov. The problem arose in that I did not want to sign on Yom Tov, but without signing I would not be allowed to leave. What would I do for the bris? Boruch Hashem, the doctor knew me and she signed for me.

“We left the hospital and brought the newborn in a carriage since you can carry on Yom

Tov. We thought how wonderful that it was Yom Tov and not Shabbos, for how would we have taken him to the bris on Shabbos if we couldn’t carry? The sandak at the bris was my brother-in-law, R’ Yisroel Friedman. He lived a two hour walk away in Perlovka. He came on foot, of course, accompanied by his sons, and afterward he walked home. With two days of Yom Tov he couldn’t just wait until that night and take the train home.”

## IN-HOME SUKKA

### Was it difficult to obtain the dalet minim?

Mrs. Greenberg:

“Sukkos 5707/1946, our first year in Moscow, my father, R’ Aharon Chazan a”h, heard about a family in the area who had dalet minim. He walked two hours in order to say the bracha, but that was not unusual. Other Jews did the same. What was special was that he took the dalet minim with him back home so my grandmother Rochel, my mother Nechama Leah, and we girls could say the bracha too!

“He came home after walking four hours, ate something, and then went back to return the dalet minim because the family would need it the next day. That Yom Tov he walked eight hours. It’s important to stress that there were no boys or men at home. He did it for the women and girls!”

Mrs. Scheiner:

“In later years, it was easier to obtain the dalet minim because the Israeli embassy would bring some esrogim from Eretz Yisrael to Rav Levin, the rav of Moscow, and R’ Levin would give one to my father. We were able to obtain the other minim ourselves.”

### How were you able to have a sukka under the noses of the KGB?

“When we lived in Bolshevo, before the entrance to the house there was a sort of foyer that served as a buffer for the cold,” recalled Mrs. Scheinberger. “This room had many windows so it was freezing, but it had one important advantage. Part of the roof came off. On Sukkos, we would raise the roof and put on *s’chach* and this way, nobody saw our sukka. But even before we moved to Bolshevo, wherever we lived my father always built a sukka. He set an example for us, not to forgo observing the Torah even under difficult conditions.”

“Obtaining *s’chach* wasn’t simple,” added Mrs. Scheiner. “One year, my husband went to a desolate area where reeds grew. It was a marshy place but he took the risk and cut reeds. He nearly drowned in one of the mud-holes but he continued his work with mesirus nefesh.”

Mrs. Scheinberger adds, “In order to heat the sukka, my father came up with an original idea. He put the kerosene heater in a box that was attached under the table. The little bit of heat could not compete with the brutal Russian cold but it was a little less cold than it was outside.”

Mrs. Cohen recalls, “R’ Zalman Leib Estulin was usually our guest for Sukkos. He would sit in the sukka for many hours, day and night, even when it snowed. When we asked him to come inside, he would always say, ‘It’s a mitzva to sit in the sukka.’ He would use crutches. His foot was injured in the war but he did not want an operation because as a healthy person he would be considered fit for service and would be sent back to the front.”

## ONE PRIMUS AND GUESTS

“When we lived in Klyazma,” said Mrs. Scheiner, “we had only one primus on which my grandmother would cook tzimmes, kreplach, soup, fish and even honey cake. Today, in a modern kitchen, with a stove with four or five burners, women have a hard time before Yom Tov. I don’t understand how my grandmother

“ ‘ ‘ “OBTAINING S’CHACH WASN’T SIMPLE,” ADDED MRS. SCHEINER. “ONE YEAR, MY HUSBAND WENT TO A DESOLATE AREA WHERE REEDS GREW. IT WAS A MARSHY PLACE BUT HE TOOK THE RISK AND CUT REEDS. HE NEARLY DROWNED IN ONE OF THE MUD-HOLES BUT HE CONTINUED HIS WORK WITH MESIRUS NEFESH.”

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cooked so much on just one flame! She worked without a countertop on a table with the primus on it, and next to it a bowl of water because we did not even have running water! And we still invited guests under these circumstances.”

She smiled and continued, “When we wanted to buy fish we had to go to Moscow, an hour’s train ride away where there was a store that usually had fish. I said ‘usually’ because in Russia, shortages were routine. We had to stand on line for about two hours and then had the ‘privilege’ of buying two kilograms (5 pounds) of fish. We were a large family and that wasn’t enough so we had to stand on line again for another two hours to buy another two kilos. There wasn’t always fish available by that time but we learned to manage with what we had.”

“We had to buy chickens in the market,” said Mrs. Cohen, “and it wasn’t easy. There weren’t always chickens available and besides, it was expensive. Then we had to go to Perlovka where the shochet lived, a *yerei Shamayim*. Whenever we came he was bent over a sefer and learning Torah. In later years, my brother-in-law, Moshe Greenberg a”h, learned shechita. He would shecht chickens in the shed in our yard.”

// OUR HOUSE HAD AN ADVANTAGE IN THAT IT HAD A YARD SO THE NEIGHBORS WERE NOT THAT CLOSE AND THE MINYAN COULD TAKE PLACE UNDISTURBED. IN ADDITION, THE PEOPLE IN THE AREA WERE UPPER CLASS. NEAR US LIVED A PILOT, A DIRECTOR OF A FACTORY, ETC. THEY RESPECTED MY FATHER SO THEY DID NOT TATTLE ON US.

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## COLD OUTSIDE – WARM INSIDE

**Under such conditions were you able to feel the holiday atmosphere?**

“Of course,” said Mrs. Scheiner and Mrs. Scheinberger. “From the beginning of Elul we felt the Elul atmosphere. My father was the baal tokeia (one who blew the shofar), the baal korei (one who read the Torah) and the baal tefilla for Shacharis. He was assisted in the davening by our brothers who inherited his sweet voice. From the beginning of Elul he would sit and review the piyutim and niggunim with them and did not stop until they knew it perfectly. He davened with all his heart, but precision was also important to him. By the end of Elul we girls knew all the tunes perfectly too.

“In general, my father taught all of us from the youngest age to know all aspects of Judaism, like how to kasher chickens, nusach ha’tefilla, Krias ha’Torah, shofar blowing, etc. He was constantly afraid that he would be arrested and at least his children would know how to observe the mitzvos and customs.”

“When we first lived in Bolshevo,” said Mrs. Greenberg, “my father attended a minyan that took place in the house of a Jew nearby, but when the man died, the minyan moved to our house for Shabbos and Yom Tov. So we definitely felt the Yom Tov atmosphere.”

Mrs. Scheinberger added, “People who did not come the rest of the year, came for the tefillos on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur. These were old men who remembered the tefillos from their father’s homes, and even women who did not know how to daven and read from the siddur felt that during these days they had to come and daven. These were women whose manner of dress indicated that they lived well, but they were lacking spiritually and they came to fill this need during the Yomim Noraim.

“At that time, the law forbade gatherings and all religious activity was illegal. So a minyan for davening was a double crime. However, boruch Hashem, it never happened that the neighbors tattled to the police.”

Mrs. Greenberg explains, “Our house had an advantage in that it had a yard so the neighbors were not that close and the minyan could take place undisturbed. In addition, the people in the area were upper class. Near us lived a pilot, a director of a factory, etc. They respected my father so they did not tattle on us, even though they were aware of the Jewish activities going on in our house.”

Mrs. Cohen tells of an Erev Yom Kippur that she remembers:

“My father was invited to a district educational conference. When he arrived, all the principals in the district were sitting in the room, together with the mayor. They began discussing the big crime of his children not attending school on Shabbos. At the conclusion of the meeting, the mayor warned my father that if he continued this way, they would arrest him and my mother and put the children in Soviet institutions.

“My father raised his voice and shouted, do you want to run an inquisition in Russia, to kidnap children and imprison their parents because of religion?! The assembled were surprised by his powerful response and told him to go home. My father arrived home a few minutes before sunset and barely managed to eat the seuda ha'mafsekkes. People had already begun gathering for Kol Nidrei. My father suggested they have the minyan somewhere else, since he was afraid they would come and arrest him that same night. However, due to the late hour, they decided to daven in our house. But the baal tefilla, R' Chaim Eliezer Gorewitz (who learned in Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch), who was supposed to lead the Kol Nidrei, was afraid lest they catch him as the chazan. He asked that someone else take his place. He had what to be afraid of. He had sat in jail for ten years for the crime of learning Torah with children. My brother Yitzchok (today a shliach in Rome) replaced him. He was a young bachur at the time. He led the Kol Nidrei and Maariv and my other brothers helped him sing the piyutim. Boruch Hashem, that Yom Kippur was uneventful.”

**Perhaps it wasn't hard to feel the Days of Awe but how were you able to rejoice on Simchas Torah under those conditions?**

“It was always joyous on Simchas Torah,” said Mrs. Cohen. “However, in later years, brothers-in-law (Moshe Greenberg, Moshe Scheiner, and Michoel Mishulovin) came to our house and added Lubavitcher chayus. They would farbreng, drink mashke, say Chassidus, make a somersault ... The hakafof took longer, like in a Chabad shul. Jews who were not religious also came. I remember one who did not keep Shabbos due to exigent circumstances but he danced with a Torah with tears in his eyes.”

Mrs. Scheiner adds, “After the hakafof, the people came to our house for kiddush. My grandmother would prepare a feast. I still remember some of the guests, one of them was an intelligent person who worked in photography.

He would come every year on Simchas Torah and sing in Yiddish.”

**Were you particular about Halacha in your home?**

“Of course,” said Mrs. Greenberg. “Even immersing on Erev Yom Kippur. At first, my father and the boys would go to the mikva in Moscow. After a few years, my father was afraid that the mikva in Moscow would be closed, so he built a secret mikva under the floors of our house. The mikva was in the kitchen and the *bor* was in the living room of my house which was part of my parents' house. Since the mikva had been prepared for emergency use, we usually did not use it. But Erev Yom Kippur, my father and the boys immersed in it instead of traveling to Moscow. I still remember them heating the water the way they did back then.”

**Do you have an interesting story for us to end with?**

Mrs. Scheiner: “On Yom Kippur we had guests. One of them was Dr. Solovey, a famous doctor who worked in a hospital in Moscow. Many of Anash were his patients. He was a talmid of the Chofetz Chaim and did not live a full religious life but still learned Rambam and Gemara. Dr. Solovey greatly esteemed my father for his firm stance in fulfilling Torah and mitzvos. On Yom Kippur he stayed in our house the entire time. He would tell of a Chassid who came to him after being sent by the Rebbe. When he wanted to examine him, the Chassid said, ‘The Rebbe did not say you should examine me. He only said I should go to you and I came!’ And the Chassid left without being examined.”

*When we read stories about Yomim Tovim in Russia under communism and we hear about the mitzvaim being done nowadays in Russia, we understand and feel how the Geula is ma-mash imminent. May we merit to rejoice at the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva in the third Beis Ha-Mikdash this year. ■*

# It's Not About Food

"**Hachnasas Orchim**" is really not just about food! In a special "Chassidische Vibe" article, we provide **tips from women who host guests all year round** and we found out how hosting tourists from Africa for a **warm Yom Tov experience** melts their hearts; what is a boring Shabbos in Nechama's house; and why **something as simple** as a bottle of water and cups in the guest room can **save the day** (or night)...

## TWO YEARS AGO, WE SAT FOR

a Rosh Hashana seuda in the Chabad House of **Rabbi Shmulik** and **Chaya Notik** in Nairobi, Kenya.

Between the fish and meat courses, as the overall atmosphere was warming up, Rabbi Notik called for a special round of "getting acquainted." Each person would introduce himself, then provide a little insight by telling a unique story that he experienced or suggesting a niggun for everyone to sing.

The round begins. The first guest tells about an encounter with lions and tigers in the grasslands of Africa, another recalls an accident that changed his life, while the third guest asks that we sing a song that reminds her of home.

Next is Michal, a young smiling woman who looked for ways in which she could be of assistance from the very moment she walked through the Chabad House door. She proceeded to tell her story:

"My friends will tell you that I am the one who dragged them here this evening. However, they also know that until a month ago, I was a totally different Michal. I grew up in a home that was very distant from a religious lifestyle, and my only encounters with the ultra-Orthodox sector were on television and during violent demonstrations in Yerushalayim – where I was even attacked. It's not very pleasant to say this, but I hated you and everything you represented. However, something changed about



a month ago when my friends and I landed in Uganda for a tour.

“When they suggested that we go to the local Chabad House, I angrily declared that I would never step foot in such a place. Only after considerable convincing did I agree to join them. I sat there tensed, just waiting for someone to say something inappropriate and set me off on a verbal barrage – and believe me, I had a lot to say... The minutes passed, and no one tried to attack me. The ‘*dosim*’ that I hated suddenly appeared to me in a way I had never known before. In spite of the fact that I was one of several dozen tourists, I felt as if I was the guest of honor.

“After that seuda, I kept coming until the shlucha became my best friend. And now I’m here, very excited about spending the holiday in such a marvelously inclusive environment.”

Michal sat down, and the atmosphere was completely silent. It’s quite amazing what a welcoming smile and hosting with all one’s heart can do for a person.

Furthermore, we have a great deal of responsibility as hosts, not just towards a tourist who happens to come by a Chabad House somewhere in the world, but towards every Jew.

The subject of hosting guests has been discussed in this magazine on numerous occasions. Truth be told, we have dealt with the

matter ad infinitum. Every *balabuste* knows that you have to invest considerable effort in *hachnasas orchim*. Plenty of food, a clean and sparkling house, and above all, the guest should feel relaxed, welcome, and comfortable.

I am now joined by **Nechama** from Tzfas. The mitzva of *hachnasas orchim* is an integral part of her life, and she gives us a slightly different viewpoint on the whole subject.

## FEEL AT HOME

“Hosting people is a constant presence in our family’s life,” Nechama begins. “We and the children love the concept and we wait for it the whole week long. Sometimes, there are certain “dry” Shabbosim without guests, and then we have more time to spend with the children. At first, I was very happy about this, and I welcomed the opportunity for some family time and more personal treatment for each of the children since I sometimes was concerned that a Shabbos filled with guests robbed them of their ‘family time.’ However, when I heard my children’s disappointment over Shabbosim without guests, complaining how ‘boring’ they are, I realized how much the hosting of guests penetrates their souls.

“The Shabbos preparations begin on Wednesday. Alongside the guests who participate in the seudos, there are also those who come for sleeping accommodations. The magical alleyways of Tzfas draw people from all over the country. Something in the clear spiritual air of the capital of the Galilee brings people to come and visit again and again.

“The children truly enjoy taking an active part in everything connected with preparing the guest room. It’s important to us that the guest should feel as comfortable and relaxed in our home as possible, and when a couple with children comes, the joy is twofold. Our children love meeting and getting to know new friends.”

## SHABBOS SEUDA

“During the meal, we try to combine devoting time to the kids with tending to the needs of our guests. In fact, at the start of the seuda, each child in turn stands and tells a short *dvar Torah* or something on the weekly Torah portion. As the meal continues and the atmosphere warms up, the guests begin to forge a connection with one another. We then go around the table and let each guest say something or suggest that we sing a niggun he likes.

“Despite the tremendous energy and hard work involved in preparing for guests in our home, we see the bracha it brings to our family in general and the education of our children in particular. When the children see our home open to all visitors, and how everyone is welcomed joyfully, they undoubtedly receive a great deal from this.

“One Shabbos, we hosted a woman who had gone through a very rough life with its fair share of hardships *r”l*. To put it quite gently, it wasn’t easy for us to host her. On Motzaei Shabbos, after she left the house, I sat with my children and asked them how Shabbos was for them, and if they would be happy if I invited her again. I was surprised to hear how they tried not to make her feel uncomfortable despite how hard it was. I was delighted to see how the mitzva of *hachnasas orchim* is deeply embedded within them, the great importance it holds for them, and how unwilling they were to give it up, even at the expense of their own personal conveniences.

“When a guest leaves our home with a big smile and a glint in his eyes, this simply serves as our ‘fuel’ for the entire week.” ■

## NECHAMA'S HOSTING TIPS TO GIVE GUESTS A RELAXED AND WELCOME FEELING

- The guest room should be as pleasant, clean, and comfortable as possible.
- Nice looking quilts, properly folded towels, and a fragrant aroma in the room provides an enjoyable holiday feeling.
- Give them the impression that you've been waiting for them. Leave a small chocolate for them on the cabinet with a short letter bearing their names.
- Place a bottle of water and cups in case they're thirsty in the middle of the night.
- Make certain that their room is close to the bathroom and shower, providing them with maximum convenience and privacy.
- In the event that the guests are staying with you for lodging only while eating their meals elsewhere, give them a key in order that they can feel comfortable about returning even when it's very late at night.
- When you're hosting more than one family, it is recommended that you make an early introduction between them so they can speak with one another at the seuda.
- The subjects of discussion at the table should be those in which the guests can take part.
- If one of the guests has a sensitive background (a middle-aged couple without children, a widower, a divorcee, etc.), it's important to explain

this in advance to the children so they shouldn't ask questions that might place the guest in an embarrassing situation.

- Occasionally, hosting guests presents us with an opportunity to work on our Ahavas Yisrael as we welcome people into our home who aren't always easy to host (or not easy at all). It's important that they too can have a good feeling and a pleasant experience, and this represents the truest fulfillment of the mitzva of "hachnasas orchim."

### **When we have numerous guests, it's important to take note of the following:**

- The seating arrangements should be done quickly. While it's preferable in most cases to arrange the seating by gender, we should still take into consideration that there are couples who would rather sit together, and we should be accommodating.
- In the event that we are made aware that one of the guests is sensitive or allergic to certain foods, naturally it isn't always possible to prepare the whole meal according to his needs. However, we can try to make a certain special dish for him.
- Sometimes, our children are "overlooked" in the presence of the guests and they lose their opportunity to show everyone what they had learned during the week. We have to try and devote the time they deserve during the seuda.

# 4 SPECIES 4 SONS →

Am I the only one that the Four Species of Sukkos reminds of the Four Sons from the Pesach seder? Apparently, there is a connection between them...

Henny Elishevitz

**ANYONE** looking for an *exact* parallel comparison between the description of the *Arba'ah Banim* (the Four Sons from the Seder) and the description of the *Arba Minim* (the Four Species of the Lulav) is cordially invited to move on to the next interesting article. You won't find it here.

In this article, I would like to hold a little “zoom” conference on those children with us at home, in some countries almost on an uninterrupted basis since Purim of last year. Sometimes, we settle for an image created in the family for each one of them. While this is quite natural, occurring even in every good home, in any case, it might be worthwhile between Pesach and Sukkos to “zoom in”



and examine who plays what role, and whether and how it would be appropriate to “shake” this positioning – at least from our vantage point.

Before we start, let's make it clear that what we're proposing here cannot cover all types of children. Thus, I have tried to focus on certain characteristics comparing the Four Species/Sons, and we shall see that no two are alike.

So, let's proceed:

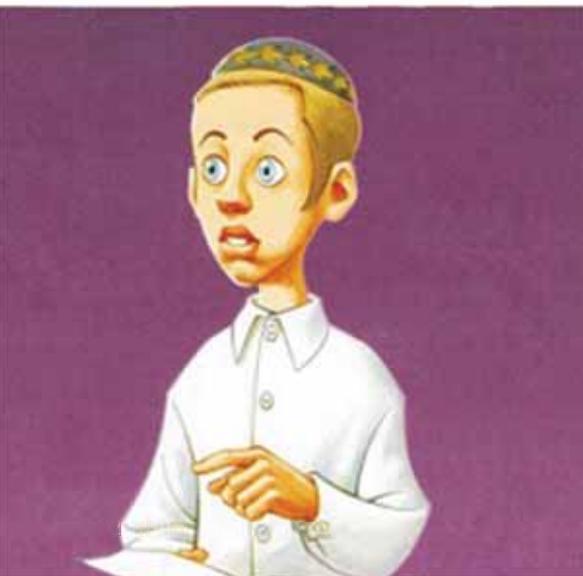
## THE ESROG CHILD

Do you have a child, an “*esrog*”, who takes up space and has a presence at home? He has both taste and smell (and therefore, not in quarantine) and is a constant source of *nachas*?

Then great! However, sometimes you must be careful that he doesn't turn into a ‘smart aleck’ and smell too much due to his great need for attention! Alongside the *nachas* that he gives, Baruch Hashem, guide him towards drawing forth the strengths within him, contributing to society, recognizing his innate value as a Jewish soul with a designated purpose in the generation of the Redemption. Difficult perhaps, but worthwhile in the long run.

## THE ARAVA CHILD

Are you familiar with your “*arava*”? He is quiet and introverted; he also may be trying to be modest, not taking up space. It's possible that this child has nothing special that we can “kvell”



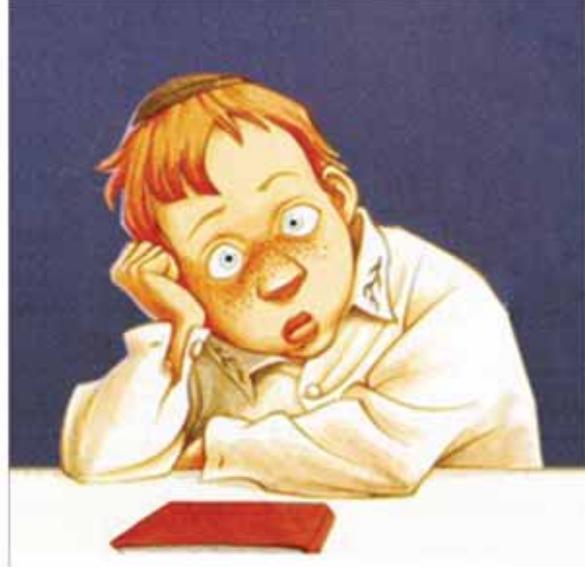
about, and to our great regret, he sometimes dries up rather quickly – because he doesn't have the waters that he needs. Maybe he doesn't know how to demand attention, and perhaps he also doesn't know how to “consume” warm personal relations. However, give him just that! Take care as well that the other children in the family should not transform him into their “beaten hoshana”, and don't “blunt his teeth” simply because he doesn't have the sharp tongue required to answer back. Protect him with a moist towel and give him the strength he needs.

However, there is another quite different kind of “*arava*”. It too lacks a good “taste and smell” – to *your* taste, the edges of its leaves are sharp, and it appears to be slightly withering in our hands. Yet, he is absolutely no *rasha*! He is merely a willow of the brook that requires large quantities of water to flourish, and with proper attention designed to sprinkle it with constant love – *bezras Hashem*, it will sprout forth and grow tall and proud.

### THE HADAS CHILD

The sweet and aromatic “*hadas*” simply gives (like the “simpleton” son) what it has to give, expanding our air passages... As for its leaves – *nu*, our Sages, of blessed memory, have already said that they are like eyes, looking for and deriving pleasure.

But just a moment, it appears that in any case it would be appropriate to advance it a little –



maybe try to give it some taste as well. “Three [leaves] from each point” – more connected to giving to society out of a feeling of true involvement. “Bless us, our Father, all of us **as one**, with the light of Your countenance.”

### THE LULAV CHILD

The “*lulav*” somehow appears to me exactly as “the son who doesn't know how to ask.” While our Sages teach us that every part of him can bring forth a very profound benefit, nevertheless, tell me if you see this on him... He can be one who raises his head proudly, however, in practical terms, his store is devoid of merchandise, temporarily with nothing to sell. Yet, it's also possible that his mouth is tightly shut, like a *lulav* on vendors' stands.



In any case, essentially with all the sons and species, shaking in one manner or another, giving to others (in our case, our children!) with all our heart, “given in order that it may be returned”, and in particular, when we are stringent that each shake begins at the **heart(!)** – they open their mouths, and contrary to the *lulav* – with Hashem's help, pearls come out from them.

And this essentially is our role with each of these categories: “**You must open for him...**” ■



The Rebbe receive the guests  
that came for Tishrei at Yechidus  
Klalis >

# CHAYUS X 2

"When I went to receive a dollar on Sunday, the Rebbe looked at me with big, blue eyes, like an x-ray, and asked me what my name was. After answering "Chaya Chayut" (Chayut is my maiden name), the Rebbe responded, "There should be twice chayus!"

Chaya Parente tells Sara Gopin how the Rebbe's special blessings guided her turbulent youth towards stability and joy.

SARA GOPIN ◦

**ON** Sukkos we leave the comfort zone of our permanent dwellings and reside in temporary dwellings, with emunah and bitachon that Hashem will be by our side. My dear friend Chaya Parente shares her story in which, as a young child, she lost the stability of her home. Yet, with the blessings of the Rebbe MH"m, she raised herself up, built a beautiful Lubavitcher family and serves as an inspiration to others.

## RETURNING TO MY ROOTS

"I'm an only daughter, with three brothers, and was raised in Bat Yam. My parents ob"m kept Jewish traditions, but it was my beloved grandmother, Yael Shitrit ob"m, who was always my role model of a devout woman steeped in pure and simple faith," Chaya reminisces. "Born in Teverya, she was a direct descendant of the holy sage Rabbi Chaim Abulafia ztz"l. I'll always remember that whenever anyone would lose anything, she would give tzedaka and light a candle in honor of Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes. Needless to say, the lost object was immediately found.

"When I was only ten years old my parents divorced. My mother joined her family who were seeking their fortune in California and put my three brothers and myself in different places. I was sent to a secular kibbutz in northern Israel, living together with many other children in the dormitory. We weren't taught anything about Torah and Mitzvos, but the kibbutz did



have some 'reminders' of Jewish tradition, such as eating a fleishig dinner on Shabbos.

"I give the kibbutz credit for encouraging the project that changed the course of my life," Chaya continues. "My class was reaching the age of Bar and Bas Mitzva and we were required to research our roots. When I visited my grandmother and asked her to tell me about our family background, I discovered that we came from a lineage of Sephardic tzaddikim. At the time my class also went to meet a Sofer Stam, and it was fascinating witnessing a Torah scroll being written on parchment. All of a sudden, I was flooded with all kinds of questions, about sacrifices, serving Hashem and everything else, but there was no one to ask..." She adds, "Tragically, there was a group of goyish missionaries volunteering on the kibbutz who tried to influence us, but I immediately saw all of their inconsistencies.

"When I was fifteen, word got to my mother that I was thirsty for Jewish knowledge. Both of my parents had remarried and were busy with their own lives, but they were supportive of my quest to become observant. I transferred to a Dati Leumi school and dormitory, but my neshama needed more..." After graduating high school, Chaya began to attend a Tanya shiur given by the renown Rav Zimroni Tzik obm in her hometown, Bat Yam. It was Rebbetzin Leah Tzik who encouraged her to go to seminary in Kfar Chabad. "The idea was totally foreign to me but I listened and, for me, being in Beis Rivka was 'Gan Eden.' I had the zechus of learning Pnimiyyus HaTorah from an amazing staff of Lubavitcher rabbanim, and finally found the treasure that I had been searching for."

## MORE MIRACLES

"After my first year of seminary I visited my mother in Los Angeles and she wanted me to remain. It was a test for me because I missed her, and I wrote to the Rebbe MH"™, asking what to do. The answer came immediately, 'Return to Eretz Yisrael to Beis Rivka.' After

## USHPIZIN QUESTION

My heart skipped a beat, as they say, when I contemplated upon this question. B'ezrat Hashem very soon it will come true that we'll actually meet, and be able to talk to, each one of our seven beloved Ushpizin! Since presently I must choose only one of them I would say that it would be Dovid HaMelech, accompanied by an outcry to Hashem to restore his glorious kingdom. After pleading to know when, in the near future, this will occur, it would certainly be a zechus to hear how Dovid HaMelech mustered up the strength to forgive those family members who mercilessly pursued him. When he was misled by his trusted counselor, Achitophel, it must have been extremely disheartening, but nowhere near the pain of the betrayals from his very own flesh and blood.

As a lad, Dovid was belittled by his family, who never imagined that he would later be the son chosen to be anointed. As a young man, Shaul HaMelech attempted to trap him, his future his son-in-law, in order to prevent his kingship. When Dovid HaMelech was the king, his third son, Avshalom, made an unsuccessful attempt to usurp the throne and avert the succession of Shlomo HaMelech. Yet Dovid HaMelech always displayed an honorable resilience, engendered by the pure and simple faith that reflected his true greatness.

Saying Tehillim in the sukka is a "virtual" way of inviting Dovid HaMelech. His superhuman strength is our inheritance, through which we keep rising higher, as a nation and as individuals, despite the trials and tribulations of golus.

that summer I was in Beis Chayeinu for Tishrei with a close friend of mine. We were in the yechidus for those returning to Eretz HaKodesh, and when we passed by the Rebbe, together, we both received the bracha, 'Shidduch B'karov Mamash!' As soon as we returned to Beis Rivka we both became kallahs!" Chaya married Yosef Nissim Chai Parente and, as suits his name Yosef Nissim, there were more miracles to come...

"My first birth was an extremely difficult forceps delivery, but my second birth was quick and easy." Chaya's emotions escalate as she continues, "After the birth the midwife, who was obviously very inexperienced, pulled out the placenta while it was still attached to the womb with such tremendous force that my womb was pulled out as well! This was a life-threatening complication! In those days we weren't given epidurals, and I'll never forget the excruciating pain.

"Losing consciousness, I saw myself in a dark corridor that led into a courtroom. There were judges who looked like great rabbis on the right side, and on the left side, and in the middle was a regal red chair, upon which sat the Rebbe MH" M, who was present to advocate on my behalf.

"Whenever I received a sicha from the Rebbe, especially those written to Nshei Chabad, I would read it with intent. Thus, as my best defense, I chose to repeat the Rebbe's words regarding the role of women: 'A mother's mission is to teach her children to observe the Mitzvos!' I emphasized, and added, 'And when difficulties arise who, if not the mother, will pray for her children?' The judges conferred, and I heard their verdict allowing me to return to this world.

"I suddenly found myself wearing an oxygen mask, surrounded by a large team of doctors.



### MY DAUGHTER DEVORY'S RUGELACH

1 cup of oil

1 cup of boiling water

4 cups of flour (Devory uses spelt flour and the results are excellent)

1 package of baking powder

3 tablespoons of sugar or brown sugar (use more if you prefer sweeter)

Combine all of the above ingredients and knead until smooth. Divide the dough into four long rectangle pieces, and then fill it with date spread. (Adding an additional thin layer of chopped nuts adds flavor.) Roll up the dough, and then gently make horizontal dents in it, but not totally. Bake for 25 minutes at 180 degrees.

They all told me that it was a miracle that I'm alive, and that they were going to restore my uterus. The procedure was more difficult to bear than labor but, baruch Hashem, they succeeded. I named my new daughter Penina Hodaya, Penina after my mother, and Hodaya as thanksgiving for the miracle at her birth.

"It took a few days to calm down, but afterwards I understood what the Rebbe MH" M had

said to me in my first yechidus. Before going to Los Angeles to be with my mother, I had spent a week in Beis Chayeinu. When I went to receive a dollar on Sunday, the Rebbe looked at me with big, blue eyes, like an x-ray, and asked me what my name is. After answering, 'Chaya Chayut' (Chayut is my maiden name), the Rebbe responded, 'There should be twice chayus!' Thus ensuring my second chance."

Chaya adds, "As the mother of a large family, baruch Hashem, there are always ups and downs, and moments when there is absolutely nothing more that I can do to help my children in their struggles. My otherworldly experience taught me that my role is to pray for them, which is everything."

Chaya's chayus is unstoppable, and she speaks openly about the miracles regarding her firstborn son, Shneur Zalman. "As soon as I discovered the Tanya, I told myself that I would call my (future) son Shneur Zalman, which refers to the dual illumination, in this world and in the next world. Shneur's bris was on Yud-Tes Kislev, and I expected a promising future. But, to my dismay, at seventeen he didn't continue on to yeshiva, and went on his own path, trying to find where he belonged."

Almost ten years passed, and I was sitting with Chaya at a fundraiser for Yad L'Achim. As they were raffling off the dollar of the Rebbe MH"M, and the price was rising high, I heard her bidding relentlessly. She told me, "If I will take care of Hashem's children, Hashem will take care of my son." Chaya purchased the dollar, and her excitement was beyond bounds when she saw the inscription, "Chai Elul, 5748." This dollar would be a "pidyon" for her son Shneur Zalman, who was born in 5748 (תשמ"ח). Several months later, on Chai Elul, Shneur received his visa and went to Beis Chayeinu. Shortly afterwards he was introduced to Sara Chana, whose birthday is Chai Elul. They got married and are raising a beautiful Lubavich family.

**// AS THE MOTHER OF A LARGE FAMILY, BARUCH HASHEM, THERE ARE ALWAYS UPS AND DOWNS, AND MOMENTS WHEN THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING MORE THAT I CAN DO TO HELP MY CHILDREN IN THEIR STRUGGLES. MY OTHERWORLDLY EXPERIENCE TAUGHT ME THAT MY ROLE IS TO PRAY FOR THEM, WHICH IS EVERYTHING.**

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During our interview, Chaya shared amazing stories of shidduchim that she made with the bracha and advice of the Rebbe MH"M. Unfortunately my space is limited, and I'll end on a geuladik note, sharing the dream that Chaya had when she was only fifteen, and remembers vividly until today. "There was a pauper riding on a donkey in the hills of Yerushalayim, about to announce the Final Redemption, and everyone was elated. An antique key descended from above to open the Gate of Mercy, through which Moshiach will arrive. Suddenly a heavenly voice called out that every person is entitled to ask for three blessings just before it opens." She adds, with chayus, "Now's that an auspicious time! Cry out for the Geula!" ■



*Chani  
Levitin*

## REJOICE, YOU, YOUR SON, AND YOUR DAUGHTER...

A few years ago, there was a Lubavitcher family living in the Chabad community in Buenos Aires. The father had been born and raised in a Chassidische home and his home was conducted in the same way. However, his oldest son dropped religious observance and left home.

This shook up the family. When his parents realized he was sticking to his decision, they decided to move on and prayed that none of his siblings would follow him. Sad to say, their second son also went off the derech, as did several of his brothers. The parents were in despair.

After about half the family had abandoned their parents' way of life, the father asked the rav of the community, Rabbi Y. Y. Feigelstock, "Where did I go wrong? I am a role model of a Chassid ..."

The rabbi, who knew the father well, had the answer. The man was particular about mitzva observance, but he did things in a bitter and sad way. He kept Shabbos and kept Chassidische customs, but it was all done in a tense atmosphere. His children, who saw how their father suffered by being observant, sought a different path in life, a path that would make them happy.

"My advice to you," said R' Feigelstock, "is to start doing mitzvos joyously."

The Chassid took this to heart and slowly began a major transformation in his life. Within a few months you could already see the change. The house became a happy house and mitzvos were done not only because we are obligated to, but in a pleasant atmosphere. Like many stories, this one has a happy ending. Those children who went off the derech began returning when they sensed the change, each at his own pace.

### STORING UP SIMCHA FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR

The verse says about Sukkos, "And you shall rejoice on your holiday, you and your son and your daughter and servant and maid, and the Levi and convert and orphan and widow who are within your gates ... and be exceedingly joyous."

Simcha is emphasized on Sukkos more than any holiday of the year. It starts as soon as Sukkos begins, "the time of our rejoicing," and continues with the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva until the conclusion of the holiday, on Simchas Torah. As Chassidim, we know that the simcha we generate on this holiday accompanies us the entire year.



As parents, we have the halachic obligation to make sure not only that we are happy, but also that our families are happy. At such a time it behooves us to probe more deeply into how vital simcha is to the chinuch of our children in the ways of Torah and mitzvos. How do we determine what true joy is and how do we acquire such simcha?

It turns out that simcha, more than any other factor, is a guarantee that we will be successful in raising an upright, blessed generation. As with other components of chinuch, it depends on us parents. We can do mitzvos and be particular about every hiddur, but if the simcha is missing, why should our children want to adopt this way of life?

There is a Chassidic saying that when the evil inclination succeeds in getting a person to sin, its main goal is not the sin itself, but the sadness which follows in its wake. For when a person is sad, his defenses are weak and he is easy prey for the evil inclination.

Simcha is energizing. Simcha gives a person the motivation to deal with life's challenges, including chinuch challenges. If we want to raise good children who have the resilience to ward off the enticements of life, we need to instill them with the attribute of true joy.

## ACHIEVING SIMCHA

The big question is, how do we do it? The best way is not through talking and stories, but through being a role model. When parents are happy, their children absorb that trait from them. When a teacher enters the classroom with a smile and he is happy, he is much more successful coping with the classroom.

Chassidus has an abundance of practical ideas on how to achieve simcha, but a role model is the first and most important stage. So how can parents achieve happiness?

The answer is through hisbonenus (meditation, contemplation)! One of the principles of Chabad Chassidus is that emotional stability is developed through internal thoughtfulness and mindfulness.

We need to think about Hashem standing and looking after us with hashgacha pratit at every moment and teach children that whatever happens, good and bad, is in Hashem's hands. The world is constantly brought into being by Hashem. When a person internalizes this, he becomes happy.

Another way to achieve simcha is to teach ourselves and our children that through fulfilling mitzvos we become close to Hashem. The word mitzva is from the root that means

connection. When a child knows that with every mitzva he becomes connected to the King Himself, he becomes happier. We don't do mitzvos simply as a mindless response to the fact that we were commanded or because we will be rewarded, but because right now, we are connecting to Hashem.

## TEN PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR RAISING HAPPY CHILDREN

1) In most instances, when we see a sad child, the reason is the parents or the home situation. To tell a child, "be happy," or "put on a smile," is not what will make him truly happy. Before educating our children, we need to educate ourselves.

2) Simcha is not frivolity or going with the flow. As parents, we need to explain to our children what real simcha is and where it comes from. Simcha is not ignoring life's challenges.

3) A person is born happy. In Koheles it says, "And G-d made man straight and they sought many calculations." The ones who ruin simcha are ourselves, with the thoughts that we think. We need to instill large doses of emuna in our children that everything is in the hands of Hashem. A child who grows up in a home where they don't only say they believe but act that way in every detail of life, even when life is not so rosy, is a child who will be happy and content.

4) The real source of simcha is the meditation on the meaning of our lives in this world. When we think that through doing mitzvos we are connecting with the One who commanded the mitzva, this gives us great joy and satisfaction.

5) Another component is kabbalas ol. Kabbalas ol is when a person does not do mitzvos based on his personal understanding and pleasure but only because Hashem said so. Real simcha is possible when a Jew serves Hashem with kabbalas ol. It is through this

that he feels the infinite bond with G-d which makes his joy infinite too.

6) Sometimes, meditation alone does not help. In Sichos and Igros Kodesh, the Rebbe speaks about the need for a person to throw himself into a joyous state and in the end, he will be happy. In a letter, the Tzemach Tzedek writes to a Chassid who complained that it is hard for him to be happy, that he should think-speak-act happily, even if he doesn't feel it, and ultimately he will be happy.

7) Let us teach a child to recognize his strengths, talents, and abilities. Don't exaggerate about non-existent talents. Focus on the strengths and have the child express himself through them. Broaden his horizons in those areas where he is successful. True success leads to simcha.

8) Teach children to forgive and model that teaching yourself. Teach a child to rise above his ego. When a child is in touch with himself in a healthy way he will forgive, but if a child grows up spoiled and self-centered, this leads to anger and sadness.

9) Teach your child to give, to care about others. This leads to simcha. When a child brings joy to another person, he himself becomes happier. In general, it is worthwhile to teach a child to look at the good that lies hidden in other people and situations. This will help him successfully handle difficulties.

10) A child is born seeing the world in a positive light. When do the problems begin? When he has to deal with situations that are not handled well by us. If he feels that we don't understand him, that we don't listen to him, and that we don't help him with his problems, he will become frustrated and sad. It is important to be alert and identify difficulties and not be afraid to deal with them and fix them. ■

friend, sing niggunim, have some refreshments at a farbrenge, while the kids can play in the courtyard, recite Tehillim (when there's an excellent opportunity to have permission to yell loudly), and receive prizes.

For children adept in organizing events, games, or other activities, it would be appropriate to let them set up for Tehillim in shul. As for those who enjoy getting together with others, we should emphasize public gatherings such as farbrenge, and who among us doesn't like some tasty food? Those coming to learn can find themselves a chavrusa, those who enjoy singing can strengthen their vocal cords during davening and later become a chazzan (make sure to give him a *Yasher Koach*). Even the Kiddush after the minyan represents an incentive for the animal soul to come (dare I say that nice and elegant clothes are a proper incentive for the girls). Naturally, we should be careful to get our priorities straight and not let what is secondary in importance become the main thing.

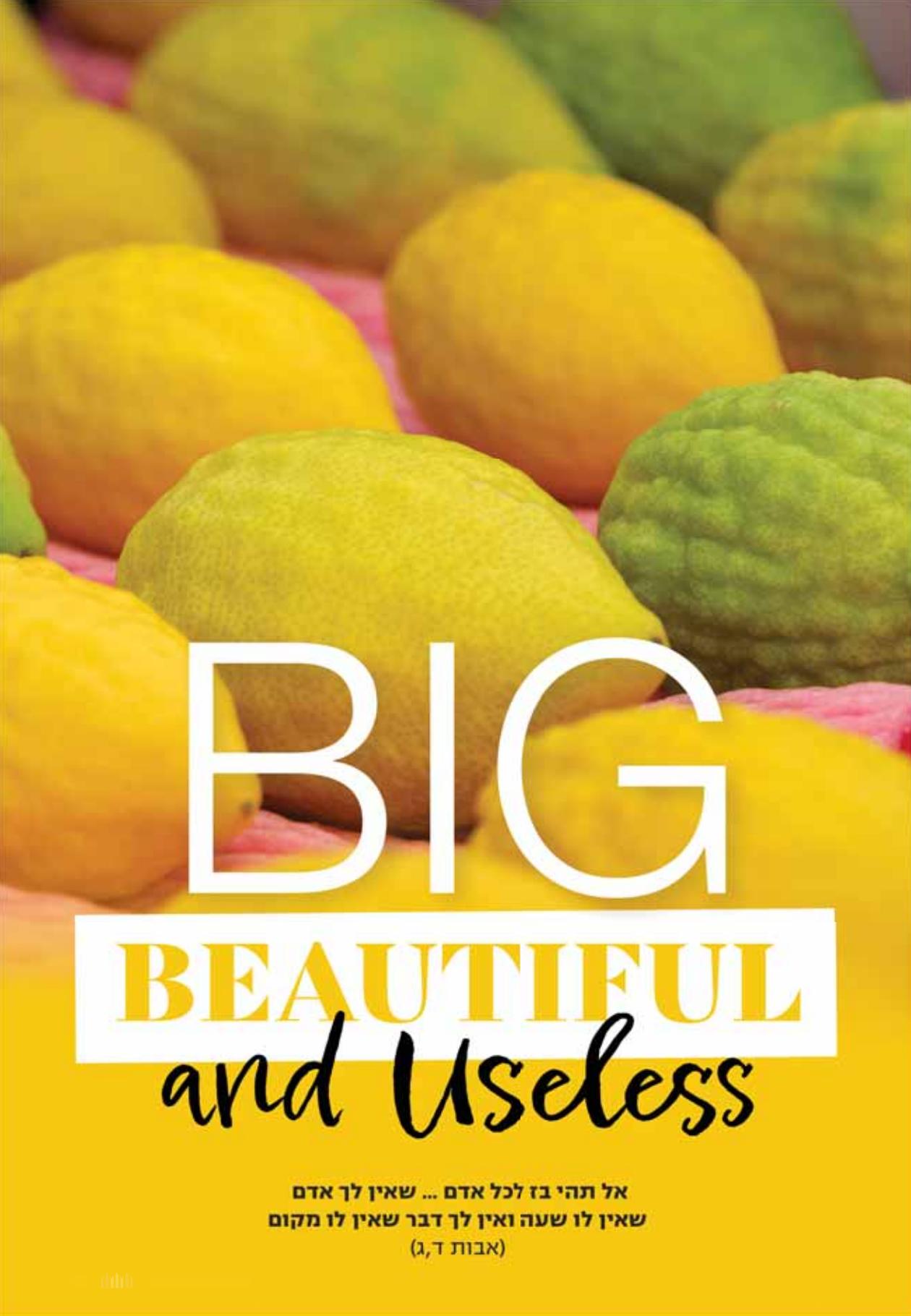
Last and by no means least, there is the concept that the eventual action points to what was initially in thought. To our immensely good fortune, we are Chassidim! We speak to our animal soul, "get its head straight", pointing it in the direction of the G-dly soul through studying Chassidus, participating in farbrenge, and hearing Chassidic stories. Here again, the parent focuses on those concepts with the greatest educational draw: "Shlomi, you see Zalman there in the corner? That's how a Chassidishe yid looks after years of learning Chassidus before davening. Such a pleasure!" "Did you notice the ozer giving people a pinch of snuff? They say that even the neshama derives enjoyment from the sense of smell..." "Aryeh the gabbai announced after Maariv that there will be a 'Shalom

Zachar' at Levi's house. Come with me after the seuda. Your friend Shmulik said that he'll be coming too."

As women, our merit of Torah learning is in all the aforementioned, based on the possibilities available to us – and this is most significant! We should do everything we can in the ways of peace and pleasantness with our children and our spouse in all things spiritual. Don't get into a dispute – strengthen and give encouragement.

Thus, we gradually pull the bochur's head out of the sandbox and place him in an atmosphere of goodness and holiness in accordance with his nature. Then, the focus on going to shul moves from matters of *kelipas nogah* to Chassidus, Ahavas Yisrael, and *kedusha*. ■





# BIG

## BEAUTIFUL

### *and Useless*

אל תהי בז לכל אדם ... שאין לך אדם  
שאין לו שעה ואין לך דבר שאין לו מקום  
(אבות ד, ג)

## LIKE A GROUP OF THIRD- GRADE

bullies, they turned to their roommate and taunted ‘You are so small! You are so skinny! You are just good for nothing!’ Little Citry was silent. They were right. She was tiny. Maybe she *was* good for nothing. So why did it hurt every time they said it, their jeers reverberating in her mind? She came home that day, her tears cascading down her slim frame. “Mommy. Will I ever become anything? Will anyone ever want me?” “Don’t worry my dear”, her mother answered her pitiful cries, “Hashem makes everyone for a purpose. You’ll have your time to shine.”



The snow fell silently, sprinkling the mountaintops with white wisps of cotton candy. The horse trudged it’s way along the path, as the gentle drifts turned into a full blown storm. “I’m not sure how much longer we can continue traveling like this,” murmured Ivan, feeling the chill even through his thick Russian fur. As the sky turned from crimson to a deep purple wine, Ivan begrudgingly decided to stop for the night. “I’m no match for this kind of weather, especially in the darkness of night.” He expertly constructed a protective covering, using twigs and branches to create a tent-like shelter. Collapsing in exhaustion, he let sleep overtake him. Suddenly, his thoughts jolted him awake. “Oh no! The precious package!”

Every year, the Jews of Sislotch would await the arrival of a precious package of beautiful esrogim, sent with a messenger from the nearby town. Sislotch was a small townlet, with a mere minyan of Yidden. What they lacked in numbers and Jewish commodities, they made up with their warmth and love for Mitzvos, each year sending enough money to the rabbi

of the nearby town for him to send them a package with a lulav and esrog for each family.

That year, Yankel the wagon driver who usually did the esrogim delivery, fell ill and in his place Yankel sent Ivan — a reliable, Russian wagon-driver whom he was almost certain could get the job done well.

Key word: Almost.



It was trip day. They all bundled up warmly, giddy with excitement. “I just love traveling!” gushed one. “I can’t wait to actually get there and meet all those new people!” said another. They didn’t forget about Citry though, although it may have been better if they would have.

“Why are *you* excited?” They taunted her “No one’s gonna need you anyway!” And all the friends laughed that evil type of laugh from the videos. Like the Haman character or something.

Citry just sat there quietly, half listening, repeating to herself what her mother told her “Hashem makes everything for a purpose. You’ll have your time to shine.”



The rabbi prepared Ivan for his journey. He showed him a large, handsome esrog and explained “these are very, very important. Especially” he pointed to the pitom, “this part. Make sure to take really good care of them and you will be paid handsomely!” “Yes, yes, of course!” Ivan assured Rabbi Zalman. “Ivan is very careful. Ivan take very good care.”

The rabbi gently wrapped each of the ten esrogim in layers of fine flax. There was one smaller one too; he tucked it into the side of the

## USHPIZIN: REVERED YET RELATABLE

If I could go for coffee  
With the wives  
Of some of  
The Upshizin  
I would get a table  
At the back corner  
With the Imahos

I would ask Sara Imeinu  
For her best hosting tips

Rivka Imeinu  
For some inspiration  
On juggling twins

Leah for advice  
On raising good kids  
Brothers who stick up for their sister  
Boys who pick flowers for their mother

And I would ask Mama Rochel  
Which song about her  
She likes the best

box before sealing it shut, praying it should get to its destination in peace. He placed the long box of Lulavim into the back and then slowly, lovingly, lowered the box of precious esrogim deep into the middle of the wagon, covering it carefully. “Travel safely Ivan,” he called out, as the wagon disappeared into the distance.

Rabbi Zalman sat down to study at his favorite spot by the window and was surprised to notice a snow flurry, coming down from the overcast heavens. “Strange”, he thought, “the weather seemed nice and sunny till now. I hope it won’t get in Ivan’s way!” And with that, he continued poring over his holy books, his sing-song chant filling the air.



As we already know, the snow flurry quickly turned into a full blown storm and Ivan had to stop for the night. He was suddenly jolted awake by the thought of his precious package in the back of his wagon.

“Oh no! Those fruits! The rabbi told me to be extra careful with them! What if someone takes them while I’m sleeping? Then Ivan won’t get his ten rubles!” He took the box out of the wagon and stuck his hands in his pockets, deep in thought.

“I got it!” He cried out. His horse neighed politely in response. “My pocket knife! The Rabbi told me to be extra careful with the tops, so I’ll carefully slice them off and keep them safely under my pillow.” Giddy with excitement, he took out each of the ten esrogim and one by one, sliced off each pitom. He placed them into a small bag and finally lay down to rest peacefully. “Ivan is so smart,” he told himself as the snow fell. “Ivan is the smartest in the world.”



It was two days before Yom Tov when the sound of hoofbeats could be heard approaching Sisilotch. Cries of joy erupted. “Finally! Our lulavim and esrogim arrived! We were getting so worried because of the winter storm.” They told Ivan. “But Yankel the wagon driver assured us that we could count on you!”

“Of course, of course, Ivan is the best and also the smartest! Come, take your package and give me my money. It was a rough journey, you know!”

Mottel, the leader of the group, paid Ivan and then eagerly took down the lulavim and esrogim, bringing them into his warm home. His daughter Faiga gingerly unwrapped the box and let out a yell. “Tatty! Come quick!”

Mottel ran back into the kitchen and his face turned white. He hurriedly unwrapped each esrog and then put his face into his hands, barely able to contain his sobs. “What are we

going to do?” cried Faiga, “The pitom’s have all been sliced off! These esrogim are not kosher! We will never have time to go get more esrogim now! How are we going to shake lulav and esrog this year?” And tears began to roll down her cheeks too.

Mottel took a minute to compose himself and ran to confront Ivan at the local *kretchme*. “What did you do?!” He demanded. “Well, Ivan took very good care of fruits. Ivan didn’t want anything to happen to the tops. Tops very important. Look, I forgot to give to you but I have right here...” And he took the small sachet of pitoms out of his pocket and gave them to Reb Mottel.

Suddenly, little Faiga burst into the inn. “Tatty, come home quick. I have a surprise for you!” They ran home together and Faiga showed her father what she had discovered. Buried deep inside the esrog box, was a small, scrawny esrog. Ivan must’ve not bothered with it, thinking it was worthless. But it was kosher, and the most precious discovery of the day that would now allow the entire town to fulfill the beloved mitzva of *Arba Minim*.



Cityry glowed with pride as the Yidden from Sislotch took turns passing her around. Each bracha was filled with emotion as they grasped her with love, shaking her in all directions. As her mother told her ‘Hashem makes everyone for a purpose. Just you wait and see’.

As for her friends, Esrog jelly can also be a *raison d’etre*, don’t you think?

(Adapted from *The Little Esrog*, Kehot Publication Society) ■



## ANZAC BISCUITS

There’s something about Sukkos that calls for a stash of freshly baked (or bought :) goodies filling the freezer shelves. Here is a good old Aussie recipe developed by the Australian soldiers who had no access to fresh eggs. Enjoy!

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup oats
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup coconut
- 1/2 cup (125g) margarine
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp water

### Method:

- Pre-heat oven to 350
- Melt margarine, water and maple syrup together.
- Mix dry ingredients in a separate bowl.
- Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and mix together.
- Shape and bake for 10-12 minutes.

# "HAVE TO" VERSUS "GET TO"

BY YEHUDIS HOMNICK

I realize I've been telling myself I have to get into Tishrei mode.  
I have to plan and prepare all the meals.  
I have to have guests.  
I have to get the children clothes.  
I have to get to shul.  
I have to make arrangements.  
I have to be happy.

I have to.  
I got it all wrong. I get to.  
I get to celebrate Yom Tov.  
I get to plan and prepare all the meals.  
I get to have guests.  
I get to go shopping.  
I get to make the arrangements.  
I get to be healthy enough to organize  
and cook and get ready and go to shul.

How fortunate I am!  
It would have been enough if You had just given me  
life. How grateful I am. It would have been enough  
if You had just given me a husband. Dayeinu. It  
would have been enough if You would have just  
given me a child. Dayeinu. But You have given me a  
husband, a child, a home, the ability to prepare  
for Yom Tov, to go to shul and rejoice on this holiday!

*Based on an article by Sara Debbie Gutfreund in Binah magazine #426*



### YOM TOV GEFILTE FISH

*I ate this delicious fish on Rosh Hashana many years ago at SCS's house. She said she got the recipe from someone else but, to me, it will always be S Fish.*

- 1 defrosted gefilte fish
- 1 egg
- a little pepper
- 8 oz can tomato sauce

Mix and fry fish, egg and pepper as 10 patties in a non-stick frying pan.

Then add an 8 oz can of tomato sauce and 8 oz of water

Boil the patties in the sauce for 15 minutes. Serve at room temperature.

*The Diaries of*  
REBBETZIN  
CHANA'S  
TRAVELMATE



YOCHAVED ZALMANOW

TRANSLATED FROM YIDDISH BY DOV BARON



CHAPTER VII

AT THE POKING D.P. CAMP

After securing a room for the Rebbetzin, we took a room for my dear father and brother. Hadassah and I ended up sleeping near a little wall in a hallway.

Yet, the knowledge of what had happened in that very location pierced us like hot iron rods. Right here, in this electrically fenced camp, the Nazis, may their name be erased, tortured hundreds and thousands of our innocent holy Jewish brothers. From here, they sent them to the gas chambers of Treblinka, Majdanek and others. They were burned and tormented for only one reason – because of their Jewish identity, for their Jewish ancestry, because they were G-d's chosen nation! It seemed as if, from under the blinding darkness, one could hear the terrible screams of millions of innocent Jews.

The next day, they again packed us onto trucks, traveling further across the hateful German soil. We finally reached the huge Jewish camp in Poking, in the American Zone, under the command of the American Military Police.

In general, following the terrible war years, the broken, bombed out Europe busied itself with re-establishing its lands and citizens. They hardly thought about the tortured, half-alive, exhausted Jewish survivors. Only Jewish organizations from America and Eretz Yisrael cared for us.

Most of the support came from the Joint, which was established in 1914. The Joint was

established when a number of charity organizations merged. Their goal was to provide assistance for European Jews, especially Russian immigrants, during the years of World War I. They provided help and support for many European Jews.

After World War II, the Joint supported and provided for the Jewish People who had survived the concentration camps, partisans from the forests, and those who were in hiding - the wandering, orphaned Jewish survivors seeking refuge from a corrupt world. They organized temporary relief camps to provide much needed food, clothing and other basic provisions. They focused on bringing the survivors to the protected camps.

Lubavitchers were also considered survivors, but of a different sort. Everyone considered the Lubavitchers to be strong self-sacrificing Jews who escaped Communist Russia in order to spread Torah and Judaism. We had spiritual goals – to build the spiritual splendor of the Jewish Nation, according to the direction and influence of the holy Frieddike Rebbe.



Poking was one of the biggest refugee camps on German soil, approximately 120 kilometers from Munich, in the American Zone. During the war, it had been a German air force base. The camp was like a small town, with paved streets and long barracks. It was fully inhabited by Jewish refugees from different countries (Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary



A GROUP PHOTO OF THE POKING BRANCH OF TOMCHEI TMIMIM

and others), from different communities with different customs and languages.

When we arrived at the camp, it was already quite full. They set aside a few barracks for us Lubavitchers on a side street near a wooded area. Every family received their own room, and we were finally able to settle on firm ground, thank G-d.

The first priority for the wandering Lubavitchers was to open a Yeshiva “Tomchei Tmimim” for older students, a Cheder for children, a Shul, and a Beis Medrash for adults. Then we established a special place to receive food supplies and clothing from the Joint and UNRRA. This was all accomplished with the influence of the Frieddike Rebbe, through his extraordinary efforts in America and through the Joint. Thus, the whole neighborhood of Lubavitcher blocks looked like an organized, separated “kingdom” – Poking-Lubavitch.

Despite our decent accommodations, the fact that we found ourselves on that abhorrent German soil, soaked and drenched with Jewish

# 10



**RECAP:** *Noa, a shlucha in a Yerushalayim neighborhood, visits her mother's gravesite. A large chareidi family arrives at the cemetery helps to make a minyan for Kaddish. Noa feels that there's some inner connection between this family and her late mother. She sets out a search to find out more. She turns to the daughter Devora, but she really doesn't want to cooperate. She put out feelers among the sisters-in-laws, but failed to get more details. However, she did reveal that the relationships among the family were a bit problematic.*



**THURSDAY** afternoon. The public square near the neighborhood supermarket.

Good, tired, hard-working people are quickly running errands, making the necessary purchases for Shabbos, waiting in line at the post office or near the ATM machine, picking flowers out of the salesman's buckets, and filling out a lottery ticket...

These are the moments that Noa loves the most in preparing for Shabbos. Going out with a battalion of young shluchim for Mivtza Neshkek. The pleasant disorder in preparing the Shabbos candle kits at home, the happiness of those distributing the sets, the smiles of those

# A GRAVE SITUATION

A SERIALIZED EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

ALUMA S.



receiving them, her serene sense of satisfaction. She recalls her turbulent days in high school and seminary, when she helped make Shabbos candle sets by the dozens, even the hundreds. Today, even twelve sets, three of which were distributed to religious women who undoubtedly light on their own already, and another two given to Arabs (by mistake...), are perfectly fine for her.

Chana starts to whine. Noa sits on an old bench near the bulletin board and feeds Chana with a bottle, the bag filled with Neshek sets placed next to her. The children come and go, with happy and shining faces.

Noa watches them with great interest: Racheli is very cautious, standing on the side, following a woman with an intense look until she feels confident enough that she can bashfully approach her. Dovi takes greater initiative, organizing himself with a set in every pocket and even one in each hand. He turns to whomever comes in his direction, regardless of race, color, or creed. Mushka approaches people with a disarming sweetness, wishing them a "Shabbat Shalom!" Mendel does himself and everyone else a favor by trying not to get lost...

"Hi, Noa, can I sit next to you?" Noa lifts her eyes, bringing herself back to reality. "Rina! How nice! Come, sit. It's good to see you!"

Rina, a large-sized woman, exhales deeply as she sits on the bench. "Your babies have grown!" She smiles and coos at Chana'le. "This rascally one is literally a pocketsize Rabbi Daniel," she laughs. "Look how he gives out the candles with such relentless energy, leaving no one behind!"

Noa smiles. "And this one, Racheli, such gentility!" Rina continued. "She came out just like you, Noa..."

"Very interesting!" Noa replied. "You know, Rina? I never thought about that. Anyway, I used to give out candles the same way – very carefully. To this day, I give them out that way,

although I won't say so openly – coward that I am."

"You gave out candles, Noa?" Rina asked in amazement. "Isn't this outreach campaign something new?"

"Not new at all, Rina. It's been going on for more than forty years..."

Without understanding why she chose Rina, of all people, to share suddenly the memories filling her mind, she started to recall them:

"My mother would take me for 'Mivtza Neshek' activities every Friday. The house was already spotless, and the food was all prepared, and we went down to the pedestrian mall together. Back then, there weren't those nicely printed boxes... However, it was important to her that the candles be presented in a special way. We would distribute the long white candles. Each pair of candles was tied with a curly gift-wrapping bow, with a real rose from a bouquet she bought that morning placed in between. We invested a lot of effort in arranging and distributing these sets. With a cheerful smile on her face, she would approach a woman and offer her one. It was simply impossible to turn her down!"

Noa stopped for a moment. She quietly looked at her children, the throngs of people, the setting sun, and Chana nodding off in the carriage.

"You're far too stringent with yourself, Noa," Rina suddenly said, as if she heard what Noa didn't say, what she hardly dared to think. Life once was quite different, people had more free time. You have small children and you work as well. What do you want? Good for you that you manage to go out with them this way!"

Noa wasn't convinced by Rina's arguments. Still, her efforts were very calming and genuinely warmed her heart. "Thank you, Rina," she smiled. "You're right, and I'm glad that I shared this with you!"

The two got up, Noa to gather her children and Rina to continue her errands. Noa's telephone rang. Rina started to say something, but Noa had already taken the call. Rina remained quiet, waiting near the bench.

"Hello, did you call 'Chocolate Supreme'?"

"Me?" Noa replied in complete surprise. "Absolutely not."

"Hmm...interesting," said the woman on the line. "Because I see an unanswered call made from this number last night at nine o'clock."

In a flash, Noa suddenly realized her mistake. "Are you Hinda Erlstein?"

"Hindy, yes," she answered in bewilderment.

"I was looking for *you* yesterday, not 'Chocolate Supreme'..." Noa laughed. "I got your number from your sister-in-law, Devora. Can you talk now?"

"From Devora?" Her voice hovered between total surprise and hesitation.

"Yes," said Noa, concentrating on the conversation as she instinctively rocked the carriage with Chana'le already sound asleep. "I'm trying to clear up something from the past in connection with your mother-in-law *a"n*. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions I have?"

"I have time," Hindy replied. Her voice sounded like bells gently ringing, her way of speaking almost melodic. "You see that I called you back. I thought that you were interested in a design for a chocolate bar..."

Rina sighed. She realized that the conversation would take a while. She collected her packages and walked towards the post office, taking one last look at Noa.

"The truth is that it sounds very interesting and tasty," Noa said, feeling the need to establish a rapport with this sister-in-law more than the others. "And I would be happy to see and receive from you a few tips. My husband and

I are shluchim of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and quite often I need to arrange a bar for women's events and farbrengens."

"You're really a shlucha? Like those they write about in the papers?" Enthusiasm can be heard in her voice.

"Really and truly," Noa chuckled. An inner voice within her heart wanted to add derisively, "*Yeah, right...*" She tried to ignore it, for now anyway.

"One day, we should have an official meeting in my store. It'll be worth it for you, or should I say, sweet!..." she laughed. "And now to the reason why you called."

As per Hindy's request, Noa proceeded to tell the whole story that brought her to this moment.

"Oy, how moving!" Hindy reacted. "I'm truly impressed by your faith and your courage, setting out on such a journey!"

A long minute of silence on the line. Noa's eyes searched for Mendel, making certain that he hasn't wandered off too far.

"My mother-in-law was a very unique and refined woman. However, while I loved her very much, I didn't have a chance to know her well. She passed away just two and a half years after our wedding. Even during those years, she was already very ill.

"She had many friends, special women who would come to be at her side when she endured a difficult hospitalization. However, based on what you are saying, your mother was no longer in Yerushalayim fourteen years ago."

"That's right," Noa sighed. "Apparently, she wasn't one of them." Another door closed.

"Just a moment," Hindy suddenly aroused a flicker of hope. "Maybe you should speak with my sister-in-law Gita? She's the oldest sister-in-law among us all. She surely had enough time to get to know her better than any of us!"

“I spoke with her,” Noa shared. “She had nothing more that she could tell me.”

“I guess there’s no point in trying any further,” Hindy told a despairing Noa. The other sisters-in-law are younger than me. They don’t remember anything...”

“You know what?” she added. “I don’t know why Devora sent you to us. She’s the only one who can help you!”

“Can you speak with her for me?” asked Noa, trying to take advantage of a favorable opportunity.

“I don’t talk to her,” Hindy declared unequivocally. “I’m sorry to disappoint you, but even if I try, it will do no good. When you speak to her, it’s as if you’re talking to the wall. She doesn’t understand what people are saying to her...” ■

*To be continued...*

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blood, sorrow, and suffering, the likes of which never occurred in the entire human history, caused us constant pain and endless grief.



Since my first encounter with the respected righteous Rebbetzin Chana, royal mother of the Rebbe MH”M, the leader of our generation, our relationship was like that of a mother and her child. This is despite the fact that I did not know her lofty roots. The Rebbetzin had nobility, splendor and dignity, coupled with a kind personality, goodness, wisdom, and devotion to every individual and to the community as a whole. This drew me close to her with a strong love, reminiscent of the love I had for my own mother of blessed memory, whose shining gaze could lighten every pain. The special connection I felt to her was also due to the memory of the Rebbetzin’s words upon deciding to leave Russia, “I will go with these young people,” and the responsibility that those words implied.

I never asked anyone who exactly this noble lonely woman was and what type of Rebbetzin she was. For me the word “Rebbetzin” was very abstract and unfamiliar. In Russia, we had to

be very careful not to use the word, even when referring to my dear mother.

“Mrs. Chana” was close to me, beloved and inspiring with her lofty personality. She was an exceptional mentch to every one of us.

When I would visit her, she would be relaxed and happy. She would hug me dearly and say, “My child! When you come you bring joy to my heart.”

Our meetings would bring joy to both of us, and in those times, joy was a rarity.

At times, she would say achingly, “My heart gnaws with a great longing for my children!” Then she would modestly add, “I have a son in America,” and not another word. Then, her face would shine brightly with motherly love and holiness.

Often she would speak of the bitter dark period of her husband’s imprisonment, but never talked of his greatness. She only told about the hardships and experiences of a Chassid and tzaddik.

About her personal difficulties and suffering, she spoke very little. ■

— *To be continued* —