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May 2, 2019 27 Nisan, 5779 ב"ס"ד Parshas Achrei Mos Licht Bentching: 7:37

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## ברכת האילנות

## THE BEAUTY OF MONSEY IN THE SPRING

Photo by Matthias Hauser

See Page 18

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KALIVER REBBE ZT"L:  
HARAV MENACHEM  
MENDEL TAUB ZT'L



See Page 22

## TERROR ATTACK AT CHABAD OF POWAY ON FINAL DAY OF PESACH

BY M. C. MILLMAN

see page 46

RABBI EZRIEL  
TAUBER ZT'L



See Page 8

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**Rabbi Dovid Hoffman**

Doesn't it seem like we were just rushing to finish up before Bedikas Chametz? So many things to do and so little time. And now, we look back and we miss Yom Tov. C'mon, everyone loves Pesach - even if it is hard - and not just for the women. Yes, legend has it that women work exceedingly hard to clean the entire house, cook meal after meal, and get everything ready for Yom Tov. But as a man, I can honestly say that staying up two straight nights, conducting a seder in somewhat of a state of intoxica-

tion "vi es darf tzu zayn" is no simple task. (And that's not including the other 7 days of seudos, endless davening, chol hamoed trips and the fact that I didn't see my credit card for almost the entire Bein Hazmanim!) In every home I have seen, once Yom Tov begins, the women tend to breathe a lot easier and for the most part, the men take over. As a father of k"th a "stable" of kids (I use that word loosely), trying to control an almost 6-hour seder from flying off the rails into total chaos and pandemonium is a Herculean feat. My newest daughter-in-law was by us for the sedorim for the first time and by the second night I sheepishly had to concede that what she was witnessing was nothing short of "controlled chaos." (I think she might contend with my characterization of "controlled")

So you see, Pesach is certainly a difficult Yom Tov for the women but it ain't no picnic for the men either. And that's precisely why we all love Pesach so much. "Lefum tzara agra" - the more you put into something, the greater the reward. Not just the spiritual reward we get for doing all the mitzvos - but even the practical, physical, and palpable satisfaction of getting the job done makes us feel good about ourselves and what we have accomplished.

Growing up as a kid and even now, Pesach was always my favorite Yom Tov. We didn't go away to a hotel or to another state or even another country to spend Yom Tov in the lap of luxury. We stayed home, ate the matzos WE baked in our chaburah, drank the wine WE bought with painstaking care,

and davened in the shul WE called our second home. And we loved - and continue to love - every minute of it. Why? Because WE spent the Yom Tov with the people WE love, in the place WE love! Was it hard? Yes ... but that's all the more reason why WE love it!

In a way the holiday of Pesach is meant to define what Judaism stands for. If being a Jew was so easy wouldn't more people want to do it? Apparently 613 mitzvos, plus the thousands of Rabbinic commands and ordinances, are not easy and we know what it means to sweat in the performance of mitzvos. Indeed, that is what rankles the non-Jews (and even the non-religious) and is a real source of their dislike. They see us do it and they can't stand it! It literally bothers them to no end which causes them misgivings toward us.

Vacationing in exotic locales? Wining and dining in fancy hotels? That doesn't bother them because they can do the same. It's when we shvitz to celebrate a Yom Tov like Pesach and love every minute of it - that's what they can't abide by.

So who do we care about more? The non-Jews who are jealous of what we can do or the Holy One blessed be He who is so happy and proud of His children that not only are we rewarded in a spiritual sense, but we are blessed with tangible pleasure and enjoyment for a job well done?

With all blessings,

*Dovid Hoffman  
Editor-in-Chief*

## IN THIS WEEK'S MONSEY MEVASER



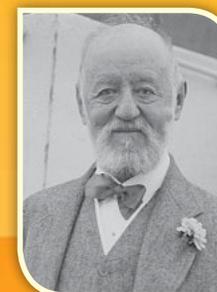
**Skulener Rebbe  
zt"l**  
See page 10



**Rabbi Ezriel  
Tauber zt"l**  
See page 8



**Tosher Rebbe  
of Monsey**  
See page 21



**Nathan Strauss**  
See page 12



**Nikolsburger  
Rebbe**  
See page 25



**Rabbi Yosef  
Viener**  
See page 18



**Rabbi Shaya  
Cohen**  
See page 22



**Kaliver Rebbe zt"l**  
See page 22



**Rabbi Eliezer  
Abish**  
See page 42



**Rabbi Pinchos  
Jung**  
See page 43

## HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE

**Kavod HaTorah right here in Monsey..... Page 15**

**Kids Page ..... Page 44**

**Chacham Rabbeinu Chayim Vital zt"l ..... Page 40**

**A Letter to Rob ..... Page 45**

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## TRESPASSING IS GENEIVAH

Dear Editor,

Many people here in Monsey are not aware that, according to the Shulchan Aruch, we are not allowed to use someone else's property/possession(s) such as taking a shortcut through someone's property without the permission of the owner.

And that doing so without reshuv is geneivah!

A concerned and caring Monsey resident,  
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## YETZIAS MITZRAYIM VS. NON-VACCINATION

To the Monsey Mevasser Staff:

When I saw the cover article 'YETZIAS MITZRAYIM VS. NON-VACCINATION', I expected a totally different approach. To quote: we have always been a nation strong to what we hold and educated in our decisions. Klal Yisroel doesn't just follow along like a crowd of blind sheep behind a shepherd; we try to make informative decisions.

Exactly who do you think is following like sheep? Not the non-vaccinators! They are being hounded and ridiculed for NOT mindlessly following the crowd. To their credit they are sticking to their principles despite the pressure they are under.

In Mitzrayim, the Jews were the first to listen to Pharaoh's call. To show what good citizens they were, they were the first to volunteer, and were the most industrious when they did. I wonder if the 'majority' were upset that the Leviim didn't volun-

teer.

It was the same in the time of the Purim story: The majority felt that Mordechai was making a terrible Chilul Hashem by not going to Achashveirosh's party, and by not bowing to Haman he was endangering everyone else!

Don't you see the parallels?

The hate toward the frum non vaxxers was nebach started by the Yidden themselves, and you are continuing it. The Goyim have only followed our lead. The media is milking the story to insinuate it is the orthodox Jews who are the danger to the rest of society. History repeats itself again; it is always the Jews fault.

The sina spewed out by the 'majority' is not helping the Geula arrive. Although still a minority, there is another shita l'halacha about vaccinating, even to the point of questioning if it is muttar to vaccinate. Those Rabbonim who have objectively reviewed the research understand that it is not a black and white issue.

Instead of just repeating 'an article that has been circulating...' it might make sense to get your facts straight, and perhaps at least hear the other side of the story. The majority of non-vaxxers are NOT Jewish. These are people, among them doctors and scientists who have done their research and have valid questions about the vaccine program. In fact there are lawsuits now going on exposing the fraud and outright lies that are being propagated about the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

The emphasis in medical school for pediatri-

cians is knowing the recommended vaccine schedule, and how to achieve patient compliance. There is little more taught on the subject. Many anti vaccine parents know more about the science of vaccination than the average doctor, since they've done more research than the busy pediatricians have time for.

So no, they don't just follow the crowd.

Sincerely and with true ahavas Yisroel,

Briena Rose

To dialogue, email me at: truthmatters18@gmail.com

## MINHAG KADOSH

Dear Editor,

I love reading the Uncle Ben musings. He's always so on target and practical. I mean almost always. In the last issue, he was poking fun at people that eat chametz on the walls. Why must we poke fun at anyone?

There is a Rosh that brings down about people who used to paint the walls of their house before pesach. The Rosh says not to make fun of them. Because it is a minhag kadosh.

Uncle Ben should recognize this. I was deeply disappointed.

Reuven Klein

Uncle Ben's Reply:

Reuven,

Never was the intent to poke fun, it was to put us on a pedestal and portray us as special. We are special. And a point of the article was to show how unique we

are. How we do more than required.

Tell me did you paint your walls?

Uncle Ben

## SOME IDEAS FOR THE MEVASER

Dear Editor,

I really enjoy your newspaper. I'm sure the rest of Monsey does too. I feel that many people would also enjoy reading fiction stories and serials if you could include that as well for your readers.

Also, I am a 7th grader who really enjoys writing. Perhaps you can make a writing contest for the teens who read your paper? That will make the paper even better for the Monsey Community. Thank you, and keep up the great work.

Sincerely,

Someone Who Loves Writing

## NEVER CRY FIRE BY BIUR CHAMETZ

Dear Editor,

I have been to too many fire burning ceremonies in my life. The way karma had it I was in Monsey this year. I went to the closest fire that I was told was on Maplewood Lane - Bais Tefila fire.

I was pleasantly surprised to see how well the fire was being maintained, and the local fire ordinances were being kept. I, like some other people that don't care for Park ordinances and feeding the ducks, were happy that in this shul they kept to the letter of the law.

They were announcing the rules - no plastic or  
[continued on page 7]

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[continued from page 6]

foil may be put in the fire and everyone was listening. They were ensuring the size of the fire was kept within the township ordained requirements, and it was neat and orderly.

Kudos, to the buchor running the fire and to the shul and board for taking care of it.

*Jacob Ellerson*

**PETITION FOR WATER FOWL ORDINANCE**

Dear Editor,

Yossi Applebaum asked for a place for an on-line petition to abolish the water fowl ordinance. While personally I strongly disagree with him and vehemently oppose to his views, i can recommend an online petition platform. [www.change.org/start-a-petition](http://www.change.org/start-a-petition) is an excellent site for gathering signatures for a petition.

*Ephrayim Ornstein*

**YETZIAS MITZRAYIM VS. NON-VACCINATION - PART II**

Dear Editor,

Over Yom Tov, I came across your newspaper, the Monsey Mevaser, and I must say I was duly impressed - especially when I read your cover article about Yetzias Mitravim and the vaccination problem. Being in the "askanis" business, I deal with many "vaccine-related" issues and I was pleased to

see a strong argument in the area of chillul Hashem regarding the ongoing vaccine problem our kehilla is dealing with. This is something that I have and continue to see and deal with personally. You literally "hit the nail on the head" with your analysis of the situation.

I just wanted to let you know that it didn't go unnoticed, as I, and many others I spoke to appreciated and wholeheartedly agree to the article very much.

Now that I know about this wonderful new addition to the community, i.e. the Monsey Mevaser, and that there is a strong responsible backbone behind it, I will definitely keep my eyes and ears open for it.

I give you a lot of credit. Printing a paper in such a diverse kehilla such as ours is not easy I'm sure, but it looks like the Monsey Mevaser has the wherewithal to do it.

Thank You again and keep up the good work,

*Mr. Yoel Offen*

**Editor's Reply:**

*Thank you for your kind words. Please be advised that our paper is mailed out to close to ten thousand families in Monsey, besides what can be found in all public malls and groceries. So if you don't presently receive it but want to, feel free to send us your address and we will add you to our mailing list.*

**WHY MUST WE BE DEAF IN MONSEY?**

Dear Editor,

As a civil society, I believe our taxes are meant to pay for programs, items and events that better the lives of the people who pay them. If you live in an area where there is lots of crime and graffiti, a portion of your taxes should go to pay for more police presence as well as the cleanup and restoration of your neighborhood. If you live near a body of water, your taxes should go to pay for levies, dams and other neighborhood necessities that protect you from the water. Same goes for an area prone to high winds, hurricanes, earthquakes and floods. This is simple common sense and nobody has a problem paying money when it is used to make our neighborhoods safer and cleaner and all around better.

So therefore, I propose that we, in Rockland County, should all receive noise canceling headsets as part of our tax plan! The minute spring arrives and all the landscaping trucks take over the already congested roads, it becomes almost impossible to carry on a normal conversation over the mind-blowing decibel level of all the lawnmowers, weed-whackers and leaf-blowers as they seem to work in synchronized harmony (or shall I say anarchy?) causing one to run indoors, into a room inside a closet, inside a pantry, inside a sound proof glass enclosed crucible - just to be able to clear one's mind! I mean,

the sound is super annoying and worse than that - it never stops!!

In Monsey, everyone has a lawn and we love the beauty of it. But once the warm weather sets in and the grass grows at a faster pace, there isn't a day when at least 3 or 4 lawns in my immediate area are not being worked on - with sounds that can make a diesel train in a wind-tunnel, with a stadium full of cheering fans on board, all carrying chain saws, as they cut through a metal enclosure of titanium, just as a platoon of F-1 jets fly by at the speed of sound - sound like a whisper!!

Our taxes should be put to the best use it can: We should all receive noise-canceling headsets that fit in our ears and most importantly .... they should look pretty!

Just saying .....

*Mind-Blown Mom*

*Monsey*

**Editor's Reply:**

*Wow! To be able to write such a powerful piece on the needs of our neighborhood and do it with half your mind blown away is quite impressive! Are you looking to become a writer? The Monsey Mevaser would love to hire you in a minute!*

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# Rabbi Ezriel Tauber zt”l - Niftar At Age 79

By Rabbi Dovid Hoffman

A man once came to Rav Ezriel Tauber zt”l and complained about his marital problems. He said, “My wife does nothing around the house! She doesn’t cook or clean. She does not fulfill any of her duties in the home! On top of that, she is always unhappy and miserable! She never smiles, never has a good word to say - always negative and sad. Rabbi, please help me!”

Rabbi Tauber answered, “Okay, I will help you. But you must choose: Either I can hire people to teach your wife how to shop, cook, clean and efficiently run a house. You will have ironed shirts and gourmet meals and she will be domesticated. Or .... I can talk to her and figure out what is disturbing your wife. We can work on achieving inner happiness and peace. We can get her to a place where she will greet you at the door with a smile, with kindness and love! Which would you prefer?”

Rav Ezriel once dabbled in the diamond



Drawing on his vast knowledge, treasure of personal stories and experience, Rav Tauber electrified audiences around the world. He spoke about the Holocaust and other tragedies and helped many people put things into proper perspective. He would say that people should try to not be too extreme. The first two middos in Sefiras Haomer are Chessed and Gevurah. Avraham Avinu stood for chessed (kindness), but his chessed was unbridled and extreme, and



business and would often speak about the art of diamond polishing. The only thing strong enough to polish a diamond is an opposing diamond! They are put on a wheel that causes them to turn in different directions and rub against each other. The machine makes loud shrieking noises as they are literally polishing each other by pushing the other to its limit. If both diamonds were to turn in the same direction, they would never touch each other and simply go in circles, never bringing out the other’s shine.

So it is with marriage and any other area of spiritual growth. The only way to raise oneself up is to have an opposing force pushing one to his limit in avodas Hashem. Undergoing difficult times in life do not pull a person down and make him miserable. Quite the contrary; it is the areas in life that are hardest which contain the greatest potential for growth, greatness and happiness! So don’t get upset at the hardships of life - tell them: “Thank you for being the diamond that polishes mine!”

\*\*\*\*\*

Rav Ezriel Tauber, a Holocaust survivor and successful businessman, was also a renowned speaker and maggid shiur who inspired thousands over the course of his lifetime through his shiurim and writing.

he had a Yishmael. Yitzchok Avinu stands for the middah of Gevurah (strength), but this too was extreme and he had an Esav. Only Yaakov, who combined these two middos of Chessed and Gevurah, merited to have 12 tribes who were all tzaddikim. Why? Because Yaakov Avinu embodied the middah of TIFERES which is the perfect synthesis of kindness and strength.

Rav Ezriel was the driving force behind several institutions dedicated to the dissemination of Torah values and ideals. In 1977, the Ohr Somayach Yeshiva in Jerusalem, established an American campus in Yonkers, New York. After two years, Rav Ezriel together with a group of lay leaders purchased land in Monsey to service a full-time Judaic learning center. Monsey was chosen because of its proximity to New York City (approx. 35 miles northwest of the city) as well as the Jewish local infrastructure that ensured easy availability of kosher food and amenities.

Yeshiva Ohr Somayach, just one of the institutions where his impact was felt. He also founded Shalhevet, an organization aimed at spreading Torah and hashkafa to the masses.

His Levaya was on Thursday night, Leil Bedikas Chametz, at Mechon Leho’rah in Monsey, another institution he helped found. He is buried in the Vizhnitzer cemetery.

\*\*\*\*\*

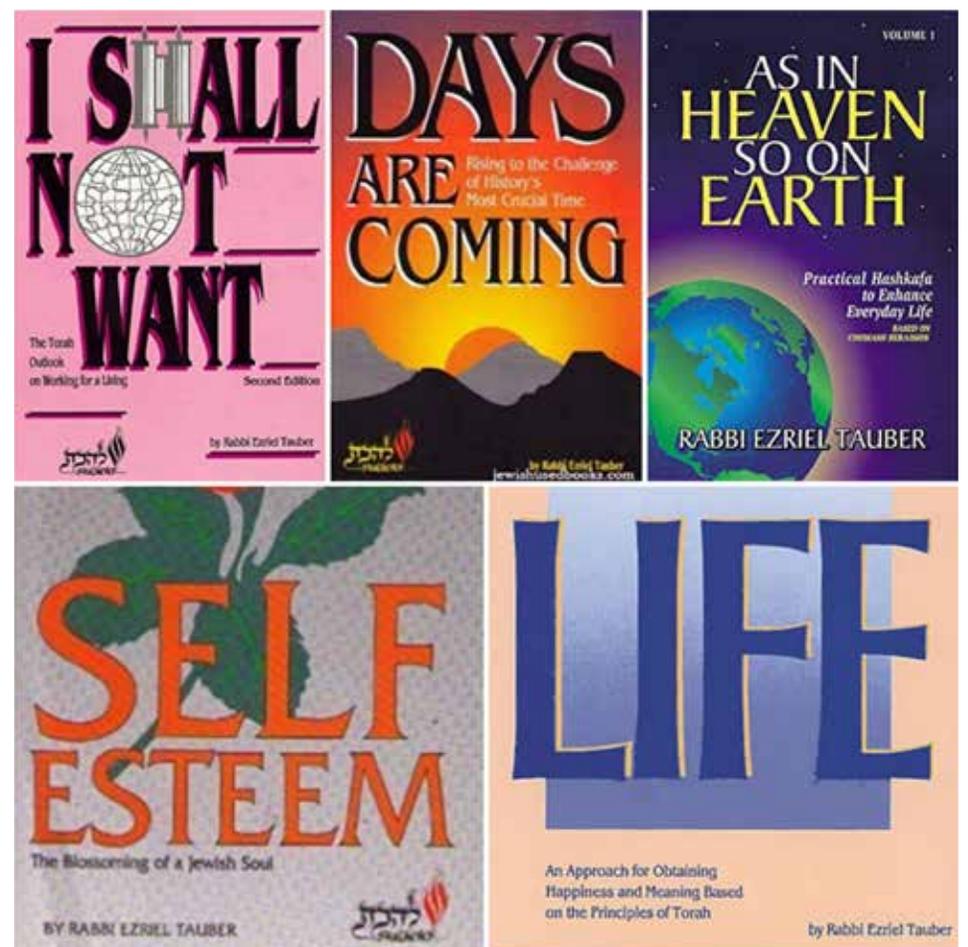
A number of years ago, at a Shalhevet event, Rav Ezriel gave a lecture on the Holocaust in New York city to a secular audience. At the end of his talk, a young lady walked over and told him that she came from an assimilated family in Austria. She explained that her father had been religious before the war, but as the sole survivor of his family, he became so bitter against G-d that he went back to Vienna to raise an assimilated family. The woman had been fascinated to hear a positive interpretation of the Holocaust and eventually she became a complete baalas teshuvah. Her father was devastated. “I ran away from all that. Are you crazy to go back?” But she did go back and even made aliyah, settling in Jerusalem.

Some time later, Rabbi Tauber was invited to deliver a lecture in a hotel in Tiberias over Shabbos Chanukah. The very same woman was there and she told him that her father was visiting from Vienna and she was spending some time with him in Tiberias. Rav Ezriel suggested that maybe if she brought her father that evening to his lecture, it might soften him up a bit towards Judaism. She brought him to the packed lecture hall where Rabbi Tauber spoke eloquently. He drove home the message that each and every Jew is an ambassador of Hashem and as a result, every Jew has the chance to sanctify G-d’s Name. Hashem gave every Jew a pure neshama, a candle to light up the dark, and no one can replace the light he will spread. The light that is not spread leaves a dark area in the world, which prevents Mashiach from coming.

Rav Ezriel explained that there are two types of Kiddush Hashem. One is to die for Him and one is to live for Him. The second is more difficult. He illustrated this idea with a true story. In Treblinka, one of the worst concentration camps, the Germans eliminated more than 800,000 Jews in less than one year. But they were not satisfied in killing them alone. They hung a paroches, the covering from an Aron Kodesh, at the entrance to the gas chambers inscribed with the words, “This is G-d’s gate; the righteous shall pass through it.” These cynical Germans thought they could humiliate the Jews in the last moments of their lives, hoping they would curse G-d before they died. The exact opposite happened. Even the assimilated Jew, without understanding why, would sing, “Ashreinu mah tov chelkeinu” - How fortunate are we that we are being killed as Jews. This drove the Germans crazy. Instead of humiliating the Jews, they lifted them up.

“This,” said Rav Ezriel, “is called dying Al Kiddush Hashem. And if you are going to die, you might as well die sanctifying His Name. The challenge is for those who survived Treblinka. Finding themselves alone in this world without their family, those who walked with Hashem without complaints, who raised a family, made a new paroches that says, ‘This is the gate of Hashem.’ In this generation, we are all Holocaust survivors. Every one of us is a victim of the gas chambers. We are victims of the Western gas chambers. Spiritually we are being poisoned. Our brains do not function. We are addicted

[continued on page 36]



Some of Rabbi Tauber's many books

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# Skulener Rebbe, HaRav Yisroel Avraham Portugal zt"l - on his Shloshim 25 Nisan 5779

By Rabbi Eliezer Abish

It's been more than 30 days already and yet, it is still difficult to digest that the Skulener Rebbe, Rav Yisrael Avrohom Portugal zt"l, is not with us. The Rebbe was the Zkan Ha'Admorim, as well as the last of the Rebbes born in Europe before the holocaust. During the last few weeks of the Rebbe's life, Yidden all around the world poured their hearts out to Hashem begging that the Rebbe be granted a re-fuah sheleimah. Alas, Hashem wanted the Rebbe close to him. At the age of 95, Rav Yisrael Avrohom returned his pure and holy neshoma to shomayim. News of his petira spread rapidly as people responded with heartbreak.

While as a teenager, the Rebbe learned by the Vizhnitzer Rebbe, Rav Eliezer Hager zt"l, his primary Rebbe was his father, the first Skulener Rebbe, Rav Eliezer Zusia zt"l. They left their hometown of Sculeni, Moldova and ended up in Chernowitz, Ukraine, for the duration of the Holocaust. Then, after the war, they relocated to Bucharest, Romania. While there, Rav Eliezer Zusia, together with

again and again. At times they were even tortured. Yet, Rav Eliezer Zusia, together with his son, Rav Yisrael Avrohom, would not stop their holy work. Together they raised and took care of thousands of orphans!

Although they were granted visas to live in the United States, the Rebbe didn't want to leave Romania while he still had orphans there to take care of. Eventually emigrated in 1960 and settled in Crown Heights, NY. They later moved to Williamsburg and Boro Park.

In response to the many who encouraged him to open a Yeshiva, he responded that there are others who will focus their efforts on Yeshivos. He felt it was more necessary to have an organization to help bring Yiddishkeit to the children in Eretz Yisroel who are not receiving a Torah based education. Towards that end, he founded the Chessed L'Avrohom network of schools to which he dedicated his life. He felt so passionately about Chessed L'Avrohom, that he considered it to be Klal Yisroel's organization. In fact, when he once approached the Vishnitzer Rebbe in Monsey to sign a kol koreh calling on Yidden to support Chessed L'Avrohom, the Vishnitzer Rebbe refused. He explained that while he understands the great and important work Chessed L'Avrohom provides, nonetheless, for private and personal reasons, he decided that he doesn't sign any kol kores for any reason. The Skulener Rebbe explained that while he respects the Vishnitzer Rebbe's stance, that should only apply to a regular organization or Yeshiva. Chessed L'Avrohom however, isn't his organization, it is Klal Yisroel's organization. The Vishnitzer Rebbe agreed and made this one exception and signed his name.

After his father was niftar in 1982, Rav Yisroel Avrohom assumed the mantle and became the second Skulener Rebbe. The Rebbe, who was born in 1924, personified the twin ideals of living one's life in purity while at the same time looking to assist and uplift others. He learned to appreciate these ideals from how his parents raised him, even from a very young

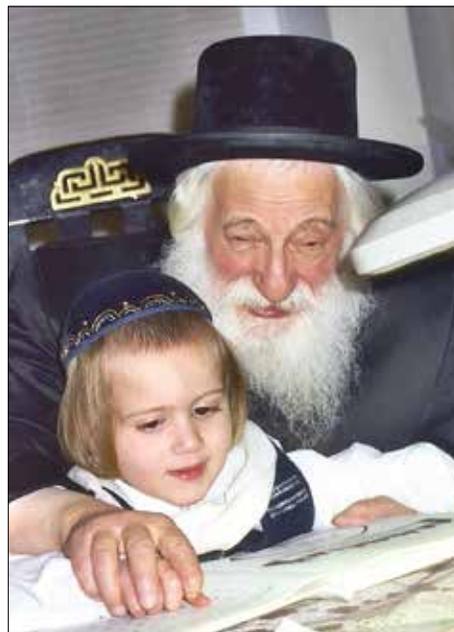


The Rebbe at a mitzvah tantz of an einikel

his son, Rav Yisrael Avrohom, continued their practice of helping orphans and opened an orphanage. Since they encouraged the children to remain frum and keep the mitzvos, the Communist government charged them with treason and arrested them. Thanks to the outcry of dignitaries around the world, they were released with the warning to refrain from teaching the children Torah. However, they still continued to teach the children Torah and were therefore arrested



At the Kever of his father



Learning with an einikel gave the Rebbe so much nachas

age. While growing up in Sculeni, Moldova, his parents already had the practice of taking orphans in to their house and raising them. One time, someone who came to speak with Rav Eliezer Zusia saw that there were children sleeping all over the house. He noticed that while not all the children had beds and some slept on the floor, they all had blankets and pillows. All of the children except for one. He asked the Rebbe how he decides which child doesn't get a blanket if there aren't enough for everyone. He was shocked, and at the same time, warmed, by his explanation. "The child without a blanket and pillow is my child. You see, all the other children are orphans. Without a blanket, they will be cold. My son, boruch Hashem, is warmed by the fact that he has parents. He, therefore, is the one who sleeps without a blanket so an orphan can use it."

It was with this sensitivity that drove the Rebbe to run the multi-million dollar organization of Chessed L'Avrohom and he would travel around the world to raise money for it. One of his close gabbaim, Reb Shmuel Stefansky, described the Rebbe's devotion to Chessed L'Avrohom. Reb Shmuel Stefansky was very close with the Rebbe's father and would help him with whatever he needed. Being close in age to Rav Yisroel Avrohom, he was very friendly with him.

After the Rebbe's petira, Reb Shmuel Stefansky continued his role of gabbai to the new Rebbe. One day, a few weeks after he had become Rebbe, they returned to the Rebbe's home from a meeting and the Rebbe took off his coat to hang up in the closet. Reb Shmuel Stefansky ran to

take the coat from the Rebbe. "Why are you taking my coat?" the Rebbe asked him in surprise.

"Well, now that you are Rebbe, I am serving the Rebbe and would like to hang up the Rebbe's coat."

"Don't be silly," the Rebbe responded. You can treat me like a Rebbe when we are out fundraising for Chessed L'Avrohom. People will be more generous with a Rebbe. But when it's just us, no need to act silly."

The Rebbe looked at himself simply as a conduit to help others and was therefore so amazingly considerate of other people's feelings.

One day while learning in his house, a fellow came in to tell him a fascinating story about a tzaddik whose yahrzeit was



The Rebbe with his son, the new Skulener Rebbe



Hundreds of thousands attended the funeral - both in Brooklyn and Monsey

that day. The Rebbe listened patiently and even asked some clarifying questions. A short while after that person left, a different fellow came in and excitedly told the Rebbe the exact same story that was recounted a few minutes earlier. The Rebbe didn't say he heard the story already. He even asked some clarifying questions. As important every moment was to the Rebbe, the feelings of a fellow Yid was even more important!

Many years ago, a fellow walked into the Rebbe's bais midrash on Friday night to attend the tish and was surprised that other than the Rebbe, no one else was there yet. Even more surprising was seeing the Rebbe sing sholom aleichem with tremendous feeling and unbridled joy as if a 1000 chassidim were watching, while

[continued on page 30]

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# This Day in Jewish History - 28 Nisan 5672 - April 15, 1912

The luxury steamship RMS Titanic sank in the early hours of April 15, 1912, in the North Atlantic Ocean after sideswiping an iceberg during its maiden voyage. Of the 2,240 passengers and crew on board, more than 1,500 lost their lives in the disaster.



The "Unsinkable" Titanic as it sinks into the ocean (Willy Stöwer/Bettmann/Getty Images)

The RMS Titanic was the second of three huge, exceptionally luxurious ships built by White Star Line. The Titanic was the largest passenger steamship in the world at the time. Promoters bragged that it was "the ship that even G-d couldn't sink." After making a few stops to take on passengers from England, France and Ireland, the ship set sail on April 11, 1912, heading for New York, carrying 2,240 people, both passengers, and crew.

The first two days across the Atlantic went smoothly. However, during the day on April 14, the Titanic received a number of coded messages from other ships warning about icebergs along their path. At night, the lookouts had been told to be a bit more diligent in their observations, but the Titanic was still steaming full speed ahead.

The evening of April 14, was cold and clear, but the moon was not bright. That, coupled with the fact that the lookouts did not have access to binoculars, meant that the lookouts spotted the iceberg only when it was directly in front of the Titanic. At 11:40 p.m., the lookouts rang the bell to issue a warning and used a phone to call the bridge. Thirty-seven seconds after the lookouts warned the bridge, the Titanic's starboard (right) side scraped along a massive iceberg below the water line. Many passengers had already gone to sleep and were unaware that there had been a serious accident. Captain Edward J. Smith, however, knew that something was very wrong and after taking a survey of the ship, he realized that the ship was taking on a lot of water. Although the ship was built to continue floating if three of its 16 bulkheads had filled with water, six were already filling fast. Upon the realization that the Titanic was sinking, Captain Smith ordered the lifeboats to be uncovered and for the operators on board to begin sending distress calls (12:10

a.m.).

As it became increasingly obvious that the Titanic was sinking, the rush to get on a lifeboat became desperate. Women and children were to board the lifeboats first; however, early on, some men also were allowed to get into the lifeboats. To everyone's horror, there were not enough lifeboats to save everyone. Once the last lifeboat was lowered at 2:05 a.m. on April 15, 1912, those remaining on board the Titanic reacted in different ways. Some grabbed any object that might float (like deck chairs), threw the object overboard, and then jumped in after it. Others stayed on board because they were stuck within the ship or had determined to die with dignity. The water was freezing, so anyone stuck in the water for more than a couple of minutes froze to death. At 2:18 a.m. on April 15, 1915, the Titanic snapped in half and then fully sank two minutes later.

Although several ships received the Titanic's distress calls and changed their course to help, it was the Carpathia that was the first to arrive, seen by survivors in the lifeboats around 3:30 a.m. The first survivor stepped aboard the Carpathia at 4:10 a.m., and for the next four hours, the rest of the survivors were on board, the Carpathia headed to New York, arriving on the evening of April 18, 1912. In all, a total of 705 people were rescued while 1,517 perished.

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At the turn of the twentieth century, two of the wealthiest and most respected men in America, were a pair of Jewish brothers named Nathan and Isidor Straus. Owners of R.H. Macy's Department Store and founders of the A&S (Abraham & Straus) chain, the brothers were multimillionaires, renowned

for their philanthropy and social activism.

In 1912, the brothers and their wives were touring Europe, when Nathan impulsively said one day, "Why don't we make a detour and stop over in Palestine?" Israel wasn't the tourist hotspot then that it is today. Its population was ravaged by disease, famine, and poverty; but the two wealthy brothers had a strong sense of solidarity with their less fortunate brethren, and they also wanted to check on the health and welfare centers they had endowed with their millions.

However, after a week spent touring, Isidor Straus had had enough. "How many camels, hovels, and stones can you see? It's time to go," Isidor decreed with edgy impatience in his voice. But Nathan refused to heed his brother's imperious command. It wasn't that he was oblivious to the hardships around him; it was precisely because of them



that he wanted to stay. As he absorbed firsthand the vastness of the challenges his fellow Jews were coping with in the Holy Land, he felt the burden of responsibility.

"Isidor, we can't leave now," he protested. "Look how much work has to be done here. Look at the unfortunate people that we have to help. Thank G-d, we have the means to help them. We can't turn our backs on our own people."

"So we'll send more money," his brother snapped back. "I just want to get out of here."

But Nathan felt that money simply wasn't enough. He felt that the Jews who lived under such dire circumstances in the Holy Land needed the brothers' very presence among them: their initiative and their leadership. The brothers argued back and forth, and finally Isidor said, "Listen, if you must, stay here. Ida and I are going back to America where we belong"

The very next day, Isidor and his wife

returned to Europe, while Nathan and his spouse Lena stayed on, traveling the country and contributing huge sums of money to the establishment of education, health, and social welfare programs to benefit the needy. He also financed the creation of a brand-new city on the shores of the Mediterranean. And since his name in Hebrew is Natan, and he was the city's chief donor, the founders named it after him. They called it .... Netanya.

Meanwhile, back in Europe, Isidor Straus was preparing to sail home to America aboard an ocean liner for which he had also made reservations for his brother, Nathan, and his wife. "You must leave Palestine now!" he cabled his brother in an urgent telegram. "I have made reservations for you and if you don't get here soon .... you will miss the boat!"

But Nathan delayed. There was so much work to be done that he refused to leave until the very last possible moment to make the connection. He hurried to England but by the time he reached London, it was already past April 12 and the liner had already left port in Southampton with Isidor and Ida Straus aboard.

Nathan felt disconsolate that he had, as his brother had warned, "missed the boat." This was no ordinary expedition, and this was no ordinary boat. The cruise that he had forfeited due to his unceasing acts of kindness to his fellow Jew, was the much ballyhooed maiden voyage of the most famous ship of the century. This was the Titanic.

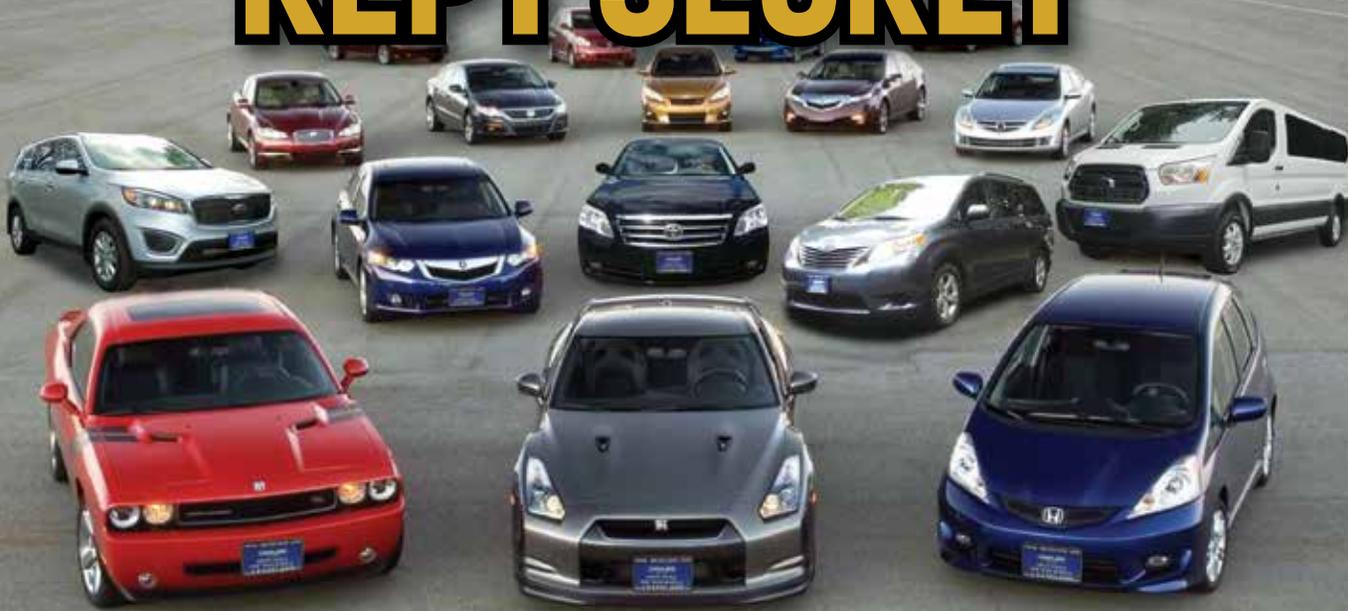
Nathan Straus, grief-stricken and deeply mourning his brother and sister-in-law could not shake off his sense that he had had a rendezvous with history. The knowledge that he had avoided death permeated his consciousness for the rest of his life, and until his death in 1931, he pursued his philanthropic activities with an intensity that was unrivaled in his time.

Today, Netanya is a scenic resort city of 200,000 residents and headquarters to Israel's thriving diamond trade - one of the most important industries in the country. And in almost every part of the city, there is some small reminder of Nathan Straus' largesse, his humanity, and love for his people. His legacy lives on.



A public square in the seaside town of Netanya (la-historia-de-nathan-e-isidor-strauss)

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**by Rabbi Avrohom Weinrib**

1200 bochurim! A wedding hall transformed into a Bais Medrash! Retzufos Seder during Bein Hazmanim!

Vhaarev Na program, the brainchild of Rabbi Dovid Newman, is not merely a learning program but a lifestyle, where bochurim learn and then chazer again and again until they “own” the gemara.

I watched 1200 bochurim gather into the hall to begin a three hour retzufos seder with tremendous hasmada. This was the first day of Bein Hazmanim, following a six month winter zman, yet the atmosphere was like that of the first day of the zman. I took a quick glance at what my tablemates were learning. One set of chavrusos were chazering Masechtas Succah, another were about to complete Taanis for the eighth time. Through this unparalleled, otherworldly Kol Torah they succeeded in creating a kiddush Hashem of epic proportions.

The kiddush Hashem began at the entrance. Posters stating “Disconnect – In Order to Connect” encouraging the bochurim to turn off their phones, greeted them as they entered. Imagine over 1000 teenage boys and not one boy on his cell phone. It felt closer to being in the great Yeshiva of Volozhin in the 1800’s than in Monsey in 2019.

As the seder ended, Harav Yissocher Frand rose to address the crowd. “I have been in Yeshiva for 56 years and have seen thousands of bochurim,” he said. “The ones who are successful are not the ones with the most kishron but the ones with the greatest ratzon.” The room was full of those who,



through persistent chazara, have developed that great ratzon.

Then came the highlight. The misaymim, those who had mastered an entire masechta, were asked to come up to make a joint siyum. Hundreds of boys surged forward, each glowing with pride. The Y’hei



Shmei Raba literally shook the walls.

Then came the dancing. Bochurim from 35 different yeshivos and backgrounds all held hands, dancing together with overflowing simchas haTorah. A band member commented that he’d played at weddings for 10 years but never before had he witnessed

a crowd in which everyone, without exception, were all part of the dancing. But Rabbi Newman wasn’t surprised. “Have you ever seen the Chosson stand on the sidelines? Tonight, everyone here is the chosson. Of course they’re all dancing!”

As we sat down to a lavish dinner, Rabbi Avrohom Mordechai Newman, MC for the evening, introduced his brother by comparing Vhaarev Na to a fire that is spreading rapidly and creating a passion for learning in the hearts and minds of thousands of today’s bochurim. Rabbi Dovid Newman began his remarks by welcoming each of the 35 yeshivos by name, making each one feel special and appreciated. “The greatest display of simchas haTorah and chashivus haTorah is 1200 bochurim dancing with such a bren for the sake of Torah, without a drop of alcohol, showing themselves and Avinu shebashamayim what really makes us high,” he exclaimed.

Rabbi Mordechai Wolmark, Rosh Hayeshiva of Yeshiva Sharei Torah where





Vhaarev Na originated ten years ago, then shared a powerful message. Mastery over Shas seems so far and distant. But Vhaarev Na enables you to be "koneh" a masechta. Once you are "koneh" one masechta, Shas is well within reach.

We were then honored to hear from one of today's greatest askonim, a man who car-



ries the financial achrayus of klal Yisroel on his shoulders, R' Shlomo Yehuda Rechnitz. He shared a lesson of everlasting profundity. "I wish I would have a way to convey and convince you that a blatt Gemara is more enjoyable than any pleasure in this world!"

Coming from an individual who has tremendous economic success made the relevance of his message speak volumes. His moving words shared with such passion, pierced the hearts of the bochurim, all well aware of the material pleasures this world has to offer. R' Shlomo Yehuda then presented two gifts to the bochurim. The first was a brand new song which he composed in honor of the event to the words of "Kulanu

allows access to the true sweetness that lies within the Torah. Some described how they find themselves thinking in learning while exercising, or even in bed while dreaming!

What made this event particularly unique was the kabbalos for the "day after." Each bochur received a kabbalah card to fill out; how many blatt or hours they were pledging to learn over bein hazmanim. Incredibly, over a 1,000 cards were given in!

The final part of the evening was an uplifting kumzitz. The bonds that were created through Torah were now strengthened through song. Rabbi Chaim Nosson Segal's message thundered through the hall. In the past I have referred to you as the heroes and royalty of Klal Yisroel, tonight I say "You are the heartbeat of Klal Yisroel!"

On April 11, 2019 twelve hundred bochurim, from all across the world gathered to celebrate the incredible feeling that comes from chazering, clarity and ownership. As they learned, sang, and danced, the outside world, its challenges and temptations, were reduced to absolute irrelevance. And up in Shamayim, Hashem was surely smiling upon His precious children, Chazu Chazu bonai chavivai....

For more information regarding the Vhaarev Na program please visit [Vhaarevna.com](http://Vhaarevna.com) or email Rabbi Dovid Newman at [vhaarevna@gmail.com](mailto:vhaarevna@gmail.com).





**HaGaon HaRav Gamliel Rabinowitz Shlit'a Rosh Yeshivas Shaar HaShamayim**

A human being cannot and does not accomplish anything on his own; he is merely like a glove of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Consequently, just as no one receiving a present from a friend wearing gloves would thank the gloves for giving him the present, for he knows that it was the hands within the gloves that performed the transaction, the same should be true with anything a person receives: the only One to thank should be Hakaosh Baruch Hu.

If so, what is the whole concept of hakaras hatov — gratitude? Why do we thank

people for performing good on our behalf? More so, Chazal, in discussing hakaras hatov, expressed themselves quite severely, stating that one who is ungrateful for the good he received from a friend is tantamount to being ungrateful for the goodness bestowed upon him by the Omnipresent (Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer 7, p. 137). Why? Wasn't the person merely the glove of Hakadosh Baruch Hu?

I once heard the following explanation from the gaon and tzaddik, Rav Avraham Yurvitz, zt"l. Because we exist in a physical world, where we observe and comprehend everything that transpires from a materialistic point of view, we must therefore utilize our corporal elements. Consequently, when we see with our own eyes how someone has done something beneficial for us, we must thank him and express our hakaras hatov. We must go further, though, and realize that he was simply the glove, and as such, if we were expected to thank the physical pawn who has performed good for us, how much more so — dozens of times over — is it incumbent upon us to thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu! Nevertheless, we have been taught

that we may not be ungrateful to our physical messenger; hence, we are to show appreciation to the glove as well — the emissary of Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

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### The Main Application Of Emunah Is When, G-d Forbid, Things Don't Run Smoothly

When things run smoothly in their lives, most people seem to have emunah and bitachon. They perceive that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is treating them with chessed. However, when life seems challenging, it is much harder to remain steadfast in their emunah that these circumstances, as well, are completely under Divine Providence. Instead, people continuously think "if only" they had acted differently, their situation would have been altered.

This is the main challenge regarding emunah: even when our state of affairs is not so pleasant, and we feel justified to complain, this is when we must strengthen ourselves to believe and trust in Hashem; to live with the emunah that at all times, and in every circumstance, we can recognize that

each crisis that we experience, including all of our problems and disappointments, are Hashem's way of getting our attention, telling us personally, "Come to Me, and I will show you that I am the One Who does everything — not you."

The truth of the matter is, when people are faced with problems, they naturally tend to feel that they have been distanced — Hakadosh, Baruch Hu has dissociated Himself from them. Only when "alcadem' things °311 entirely good do they consider it as an indication that Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants their closeness. For example, if a person wins the lottery, he perceives this as evidence that Hakadosh Baruch Hu cherishes him. After all, he is the sole winner! However, if a person faces, G-d forbid, any kind of personal calamity, although this predicament may also be something unique to him, he may rush to explain this tragedy by assuming that Hakadosh Baruch Hu hates him, chas veshalom.

We must bear in mind that Shivisi Hashem l'negdi samid — "I set Hashem before me at all times" (Tehillim 16:8), refers to all situations. The literal translation of l'negdi

is "against me," implying, even when He is "against me," when things are not running according to the way i wanted them to, and as I planned. At these times, we must remember that this is also from Hashem. As Dovid Hamelech, a"h, said (119:71): "It is good for me to have been afflicted." Dovid Hamelech understood that affliction from Hashem was good for him. Since most people tend to think that they are the ones who arrange and control everything, the Creator sometimes has to show them that He is the One Who is running the world.

We have to realize that even when a person is afflicted with suffering, the Torah tells us (Devarim 8:5): "Just as a man chastises his son, so does Hashem, your God, chastise you." Hashem's intention in sending difficult circumstances is to break the person's haughtiness and ambitions, and make him realize that he possesses nothing at all without Hashem. It is particularly in these challenging circumstances that it is necessary to search for emunah and to identify and discern the ways in which the Almighty is bestowing upon him total goodness, even within the troubles.



**Reb Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin**

Our Parshah begins with the Avodah of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, and the mishneh describes the end of the Kohen Gadol's Avodah on Yom Kippur: "...he was mekadash his hands and feet, took off his bigdei zahav and they brought him his own clothes, which he put on, and they escorted him to his home; and he would make a Yom Tov for his friends, 'besh'a'ah' - in the time 'sheyatzah' - he went out, 'beshalom' - in peace from the Kodesh.

Others correct the words to read, 'al sheyatzah, because he went out, beshalom min hakodesh, in peace from the Kodesh!

The reason for this correction is explained by Meforshim: How could the Kohen Gadol make a Yom Tov in the time

that he went out from the Holy of Holies if it's a fast day? Therefore, the mishneh needs to say that he made the Yom Tov "al sheyatzah", because he went out. And the Kohen Gadol made a Yom Tov, not on Yom Kippur, but the day after Yom Kippur. (The Rambam writes like this also.)

However, there are other Meforshim who don't agree, stating that there is no problem to begin with. It's possible that in the time it took for the Kohen Gadol to light the Menorah in the afternoon, put on his clothes and walk in an honored and relaxed fashion until he reached his home, it would be nighttime already. Then it's possible for the Kohen Gadol to make the Yom Tov that night, and it was after he left the Kodesh!

The explanation given to explain the essential difference between of these two opinions is based on why the Kohen Gadol made this Yom Tov.

1. The Yom Tov was an expression of todah, thanks, that he went out from a makom sakanah, place of danger, similar to the four instances that one needs to thank Hashem for going out from danger. (i.e. Traveled through the desert, was in a place called prison, was sick or crossed an ocean) If a Kohen Gadol was not worthy to enter the Holy of Holies, he did not go out from the Holy of Holies alive!

This is why the Kohen Gadol did not daven for a long time when he was in the Holy of Holies. He did not want to frighten the Yidden to think that he died, that maybe he died in the same way many Kohanim Gedolim died in the Holy of Holies if they were not worthy or if something happened with the maaseh haketores.

2. The Yom Tov was because his actions (and tefillos) were accepted in front of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Proof is that he went out in peace.

The two ways to learn the Mishnah correspond with these two reasons.

According to those who learn "Besh'a'ah sheyatzah" meaning the Kohen Gadol made the Yom Tov in the same time he went out, meaning it was a continuation of his Avodah, then the Yom Tov is like the second way, because the Kohen Gadol was so happy that his actions were accepted by Hashem; therefore, the Yom Tov is a continuation of the Avodah that he did as the Kohen Gadol the same day!

According to those who learn "Al Sheyetzoh," meaning the Yom To was because he went out in peace from the Holy of Holies, which means the reason is like the first way; it's not connected to his Avodah being accepted and it's a Yom Tov to give todah, thanks, because he went out in peace from the Holy of Holies.

When we learn the Rambam we see that he emphasizes that the simcha was not only his own personal simcha; the Rambam adds that it was kol ha'am, the whole nation, who escorted him to his home, and then he omits that he made the Yom Tov for his friends and says, the Yom Tov was for all the Yidden who escorted him home, and not only for his friends.

From this we see that even though the Yom Tov was because he went out in peace, and not for his Avodah of Yom Kippur being accepted, the Yom Tov was still a part of the Avodah of Yom Kippur, which is why all the Yidden participated in escorting the Kohen Gadol and in the Yom Tov he made - because the Kohen Gadol did the Avodah of Yom Kippur as their shliach and brought the kochos of all the Yidden. Going out to his home is considered as the completion and siyum of his Avodah on Yom Kippur!

The beginning of the Avodah was that seven days before Yom Kippur the Kohen Gadol was separated from his home, as we learn from the way of the Kohanim by the yemei meluim, (in Parshas Tzav) and from Matan Torah. Because the Avodah of Yom Kippur demands separating the Kohen Gadol from his home, this means then, that his returning (going out) to his home, is the Siyum and completion of his Avodah! This is why the whole nation escorted him to his

home. This was not only for the reason of giving him kavod; rather, in order to show and emphasize that going out to his home is part of his Avodah of this day and therefore it's connected to the whole nation! And this is why he made a Yom Tov.

From one side, it was a todah - saying thanks to Hashem for going out from the Kodesh in peace and not as thanks for the Avodah. On the other hand, his Yom Tov is connected to the whole nation, because going out to his home is also part of the Avodah that the Kohen Gadol does on this day, which is not completed until he finds himself in his home. Since the Kohen Gadol is the shliach of the whole nation, the simcha of going out from the Kodesh in peace, the simcha of the completion of the Avodah, is also the simcha of the whole Yiddische nation.

Yehi Ratzon from Hashem Yisborach to complete the Avodah.

*Reb Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin has become a symbol of spiritual endurance and miraculous salvation. Many take inspiration from his letters written during his time in prison, which demonstrate a Jew's ability to grow in emunah and bitachon in the most desolate situation. Emanating from a place of darkness, his messages are a beacon of light and hope.*

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# Selected Halachos of Sefiras Haomer



**By Rabbi Yosef Viener,  
Rav D'Khal Shaar  
HaShomayim**

## Lechayim During Sefirah

*My son is about to become a chassan, and we would like to make a lechayim or vort as soon as possible. Are there any halachic issues regarding making this type of simchah during sefirah?*

One is allowed to mark the occasion of an engagement with a lechayim or even a meal or a vort during the days of sefirah. However, dancing is prohibited even without the accom-

paniment of live music.<sup>1</sup> The custom to refrain from dancing applies even to a small, insignificant dance in a home setting, and even if only a few people participate.<sup>2</sup> Music is certainly prohibited as well.

## Reciting of Shehecheyanu During the Days of Sefirah

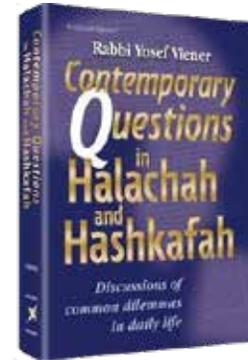
*My family minhag is to keep the laws of sefirah until shortly before Shavuos. I am in need of a new suit, and I have heard conflicting opinions concerning the permissibility of reciting the berachah of Shehecheyanu during the days of sefirah. As I normally recite Shehecheyanu for such an expensive purchase, am I allowed to buy the suit and wear it during the sefirah?*

The custom is not to recite the berachah of Shehecheyanu during Bein Hamitzarim, the three weeks between Shivah Assar B'Tammuz and Tishah B'Av,<sup>3</sup> which is the period of national mourning for the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash. The days of sefirah are not as formal or stringent a time of mourning as the Bein Hamitzarim (the Three Weeks). Although the calamity of the passing of 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva has given rise

to various customs of mourning and avoidance of simchos, the time period of sefirah still retains its distinguished place in the Jewish calendar. It is a time of preparation and excitement as we draw close to kabbalas haTorah with the Yom Tov of Shavuos. The mefarshim stress the holiness of the days of sefirah by pointing out that these days have a status, on an esoteric level, of a Chol Hamoed that connects two Yamim Tovim (Pesach and Shavuos), as well as a time of purification for Klal Yisrael. This distinction between the Three Weeks and sefirah has led many poskim to rule that there is no prohibition to recite Shehecheyanu during the days of sefirah.<sup>4</sup>

Others have ruled that one should refrain from reciting Shehecheyanu even during the days of sefirah, in deference to the theme of mourning that is pervasive during these days.<sup>5</sup> Some rule that even according to these stringent opinions, one may recite Shehecheyanu on Shabbos; many opinions allow Shehecheyanu on Shabbos even during the Three Weeks.<sup>6</sup> Others are stringent even on Shabbos.<sup>7</sup>

Many poskim limit their leniency to reciting Shehecheyanu on new



fruits. They suggest that one try to avoid the purchase of expensive clothing during sefirah, thereby avoiding the recital of Shehecheyanu.<sup>8</sup> If you can delay the purchase of the suit till after sefirah, it may be meritorious to do so, and one may certainly be lenient if he needs the suit immediately. It would be advantageous to wear the suit for the first time on Shabbos and recite the Shehecheyanu at that time. If a new suit is needed for Shavuos and must be purchased during sefirah in order to be tailored on time for Yom Tov, you may buy the suit and recite the Shehecheyanu on Yom Toy, when you wear it for the first time.

Rabbi Yosef Viener, Rav of Khal Shaar HaShomayim and author of Contemporary Questions

in Halachah and Hashkafah, has inspired and enlightened listeners worldwide with his shiurim on Halachah and Hashkafah - crystallizing the Torah's timeless wisdom and applying to our daily lives.

- 1 Magen Avraham 493:1; Mishnah Berurah 493:3.
- 2 Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach quoted in sefer Bein Pesach LeShavuos, Chapter 15, footnote 1, based on his interpretation of rikudim and mecholos.
- 3 Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 551:17. See Mishnah Berurah 98.
- 4 Mishnah Berurah 493:2, see the comment from HaRav Chaim Kanievsky brought in sefer Bein Pesach LeShavuos, Chapter 16, footnote 1, that Mishnah Berurah allows the recital of Shehecheyanu even L'chatichilah. See comment in footnote ibid. for an alternate understanding of the Mishnah Berurah's position; Kaf HaChaim ibid. 4; She'arim Metzuyanim Behalachah 170:7; Yabiya Omer 3:26; Tosafos Chaim on Chayei Adam 131:12.
- 5 Or Zarua 493:1 in the name of Rabbeinu Yerucham; Leket Yosher page 97.
- 6 See Mishnah Berurah 551:98.
- 7 Yafeh Lalev 2:493:7.
- 8 See Yabiya Omer ibid.; Tzitz Eliezer 18:41.

# Birkas Hailanos: Blessing for Blossoming Trees

## Rabbi Moshe Zywica (OU Kosher)

“Hai man denafik beyomei Nisan vec-hazi elanei d'ka milbalvi omer...” (Tractate Brachos 43b)

If one goes outside during the month of Nisan and sees trees that are blossoming he recites a blessing (Birkas Hailanos).

The bracha is noted in the tractate Brachos and the Code of Jewish Law (O.C. 226):

Baruch atah .... shelo chasar bolamo klum u'bara bo b'riyos tovos v'elanos tovim l'hanos bahem b'nay adam.

The G'ra in his siddur substitutes the word davar instead of klum.

This blessing is said on fruit bearing trees (M.B. 226:22). Regarding a fruit tree that has the status of “orlah” – a tree less than three years old – it is the view of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, in his commentary on Code of Jewish Law O.C. 226, that one does not say a blessing.

It is preferable to say birkas hailanos as soon as one sees a fruit tree in bloom, which is usually during the month of Nisan. However the Aruch Hashulchan (226:1) notes that in some countries trees begin to bloom



in Iyar or Sivan and as such those months would then be the proper time to recite the blessing. The Har Tzvi (O.C. #118) says that if you are in a country where trees bloom earlier than Nisan the blessing can be said earlier.

Ideally, Birkas hailanos should be said

on a weekday and not on Shabbos (Kaf Hachayim 226:4), as some authorities are anxious that one may come to shake the tree or break off a branch on Shabbos which is prohibited.

If a tree blossomed in Nisan but one did not see it until later he may say the bracha

as long as the fruit on the tree has not yet ripened (Mishna Berurah 226:4). However, one who saw a fruit tree in bloom during the month of Nisan but forgot or neglected to recite a blessing, may only recite the bracha up until the fruit has begun to grow (Mishna Berurah 226:5).

Though the blessing is said during a specific period of time during the year it is not considered a time restricted mitzvah (Har Tzvi O.C. #118) and as such women are encouraged to take part in this bracha of appreciation.

The sefer Kaf Hachayim (226: 7-8) describes a custom among the Sephardim to say this bracha with a minyan followed by kaddish in addition to several other rituals.

There is a rabbinical debate as to whether one can say this blessing on a tree that has been grafted from two species (Kaf HaChayim 225:26, 226:11).

With this bracha we praise Hashem's ongoing renewal of creation during the season of redemption in which we renew our commitment to serving Him.

(<https://oukosher.org/passover/articles/birkas-hailanos-blessing-blossoming-trees/>)

# At the Schabes Table



By Rabbi Chaim Schabes  
Rav D'Cong. Knesses  
Yisroel

## Ve'ahavta L'reyacha Kamocho

Reb Nachumke zt"l, the Tzaddik of Horodne, once spoke to the storekeepers and merchants who were competing and undercutting each other in the business market of his town. He told them: "We are aware that

it is common for a tradesperson to have negative feelings toward his competitor. However, the Torah tells us, *ve'ahavta l'reyacha kamocho* - that one must love his friend - even though he is just like him! Do you really think that he is taking away your livelihood? *Ani Hashem* - I am the one who gives sustenance to everyone, to you and your competitor(s) together."

## Halacha V'Halicha - The Mitzvah of Birchas Ha'ilanos

Regarding the proper time for reciting the *birchas ha'ilanos*, the unique blessings recited when fruit trees blossom in the spring - while some Poskim hold that it must be said during the month of Nisan, as could be inferred from the text of the *gemara* (Brachos 43a): "When one goes out during the days of Nisan and sees trees that are blooming," nevertheless, the great majority of Poskim write that the *gemara* mentions this not as a condition, but rather as

a common occurrence, and one may say *birchas ha'ilanos* either earlier or later than that. Some opinions hold that preferably, one should try to say it during Nisan, but if he was not able to do so, he may still say it later (Yechave Daat 1:1).

The *minhag* in Eretz Yisrael is not to say the *bracha* with Hashem's name after Nisan; however, outside of Eretz Yisrael we do say the complete *bracha* with Hashem's name. In the southern hemisphere, where spring is in September, the *bracha* over the blooming of the trees is said at that time (Har Tzvi 1:118, Minchas Yitzchak 10:16). Since *birchas ha'ilanos* is said only once a year, if one said the *bracha* in the northern hemisphere in April, and then travels south and sees again the blooming of the trees during October, he does not repeat the *bracha* (ibid), unlike *shehecheyanu*, which could be said more than once a year, even for the same

fruit, if it is a different crop, and is otherwise not accessible.

Although in the past, the multitudes were not as careful in reciting the *birchas ha'ilanos*, the more learned people and *yir'ai Hashem* were always very meticulous in saying this *bracha* (Aruch Hashulchan 226:2). The *bracha* is said specifically at the time of the blooming of the flowers that produce fruits in edible fruit bearing trees, and seeing the buds is not enough.

One may say the *bracha* at night if the trees are properly lighted (Tzitz Eliezer 12:20), and although some write not to say this *bracha* on Shabbos, it is permitted according to *halacha* to say on Shabbos, and if it will be difficult to say it during the week, one should say the *bracha* on Shabbos.

If one didn't see the new trees until the flowers fell off, he may still say the *bracha*, as long as the fruit is not fully grown. However, if one saw the trees blooming,

and did not say the *bracha* the first time he saw them, he may only say the *bracha* as long as the flowers are still on the tree (MB 226:4).

According to the *mekubalim*, the *bracha* is said specifically during Nisan, outside the city, in a field that has many trees (minimally two blooming trees), and preferably with a *minyán* of men. They say a "*l'shem yichud*" before saying the *bracha*, and after saying the *bracha* they give three coins to *tzedaka* for the souls that have become *gilgulim* in trees, etc. However, as we saw, according to *halacha* these are not required, and although it is better to have all conditions met, nevertheless one should say the *bracha* as long as according to *halacha* it is permitted.

Rav Chaim Schabes is the rav of Congregation Knesses Yisroel in New Hempstead and a Maggid shiur in Yeshivat Tiferet Torah in Suffern, New York.

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## TORAH TAVLIN

STORIES AND SAYINGS, WIT AND WISDOM  
FROM OUR TORAH LEADERS

By Rabbi Dovid Hoffman

The *Torah* warns us not to follow in the ways of the gentiles – “Chukas HaGoyim” – and regardless of the technical applications of this prohibition, it is clear that *Hashem* demands a higher code of moral and ethical behavior from His Chosen Nation than that which we see practiced around us. By doing so, we set ourselves apart and remain a light unto the nations.

The following story occurred a number of years ago. A Jewish manufacturer of fine jewelry was operating a successful business when he began to suspect that one of his workers was pilfering small amounts of gold. Each week, he would order a specific amount of raw gold with which to create his special line of jewelry pieces, and at week's end, whatever was left over was inventoried and calculat-

ed to know exactly how much gold was actually used and what was left over. He began to notice that small quantities of the precious metal were missing from the inventory list and after careful consideration and determined scrutiny, he realized that the thief must be one of his non-Jewish workers. He watched the man carefully and the more he observed his actions, the more he was convinced that this man was the thief.

The man traveled to Israel frequently and on one of his trips, the jeweler made his way to Bnei Brak and went to visit and receive a *beracha* from R' Aharon Leib Shteinman *shlit'a*. While he was there, he decided to ask the great Sage's advice. He explained that one of his workers was stealing gold from his inventory and he suspected that it was a specific non-Jewish worker. What, he asked the Rav, should he do? Should he confront the man, accuse him publicly, or just fire him outright?

R' Aharon Leib listened closely to the jeweler and then shook his head. Admittedly, he insisted, “A *goy* (non-Jew)? It's not worth starting up with a *goy* ... *vayl a goy ken hargenen* (for a non-Jew can kill)!”

The man nodded obediently and listened to the Rav's advice. He came home and continued to monitor the situation

closely; however, he did not say a word to the suspected thief or confront him at all. Instead, he watched and waited.

Upon the advice of friends and colleagues in the business, he installed security cameras in his showroom and work areas and now he was able to watch all of his workers constantly, intending to catch the thief red-handed. And that is exactly what happened! While watching the hidden cameras from the safety of his private office, he clearly saw the man in question steal small amounts of the raw gold that were left over. Now, armed with irrefutable proof, he planned to call the man into his office, demand that he return what he stole, and then he would have him summarily fired from his job.

Before he did this, though, he decided to consult with R' Aharon Leib once more. He asked a friend of his to go into the Rav and present the question; this time adding that due to the addition of his security cameras, he had actual proof of the man's guilt. To his utter surprise, the answer that came back to him was exactly the same as the first one: “It's not worth starting up with a *goy* ... *vayl a goy ken hargenen* (for a non-Jew can kill)!”

What should he do? Just allow the situation to continue? This was no way to run a business, thought the man. Perhaps the question wasn't presented to the

Rav properly, or he had misunderstood the response. This time, he sent another close friend of his into R' Shteinman's house and told him specifically, word for word, how to ask the question. The man did precisely as he was told, but when the response came back with the exact same reply, word for word like the previous two, he knew that R' Aharon Leib understood the situation and was giving him an iron-clad response.

It wasn't but a few short weeks later, when the jewelry owner received a phone call that his non-Jewish worker was arrested. He had been standing in line at a local bodega when another man accidentally bumped into him. The first man took exception and the two hoodlums got into a shoving match. Before it was all over, the non-Jewish worker pulled a gun out of his belt and shot the other man at point blank range, killing him instantly! The police arrived on the scene and arrested the man, and he was now facing murder charges, in a case which was sure to put him away for a very long time!

The jewelry owner stared at the phone in his hand in shock! He sat in his place for a long time, as the sound of R' Aharon Leib's voice echoed in his mind: “It's not worth starting up with a *goy* ... *vayl a goy ken hargenen* (for a non-Jew can kill)!”

## אני מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

Every person shall fear his mother and his father.” (19-3)

The *Yid HaKadosh zt"l* of P'shischa was studying an intricate Talmudic subject with his students. The *Rebbe* began to think deeply into a question that was posed by one of the students and, as was his habit, he became so totally engrossed in his thoughts that he lost track of time.

One of his students had not yet eaten that day and was feeling real hunger pangs. Aware that the *Rebbe* would probably be wrapped up in his thoughts for quite some time, he quickly ran home and grabbed a bite to eat. Feeling better now, he was almost out the door when his mother called to him, “Please, can you climb up to the attic and bring down a sack of straw for me?”

In a rush to return to the *Rebbe's shiur*, the young man replied, “Mother, the *Rebbe* may have finished thinking about the question and is ready to explain the answer. I can't afford to be late!”

The mother, who understood her son's concern, sighed. “Fine, my son. Go back to your learning. I'm sorry to bother you but sometimes I have no choice but to ask for your help.”

The boy was speedily heading back to the *Rebbe's* house when he suddenly stopped in his tracks. “What is the matter with me? I am missing the point! *Torah* learning must lead to action; why didn't I help my mother?” he rebuked himself. He quickly turned around, headed home, apologized to his mother and climbed up to the attic to bring down the straw for his mother. Then, in a flash, he ran back to the *shiur*.

Just as he breathlessly arrived, the *Rebbe* picked up his head. A broad smile flashed across his face as he stood up and turned to the young boy standing in the doorway. “What great *mitzvah* did you just do to deserve such a special escort? Do you know who accompanied you here?”

The young man stood in the door-

way, while the other students wondered what the *Rebbe* had seen that they had not. “When you walked in,” he continued, “I saw the *Amora* (Talmudic sage) Abaye escorting you. He enlightened me with the solution to the problem we were grappling with. Tell me, my son, how did you merit such illustrious accompaniment? What great deed did you do?”

Blushing, the young lad told the *Rebbe* everything that had transpired. The *Yid HaKadosh* lovingly explained to his students. “Abaye was an orphan from both his father and his mother. It was for this reason that he received his name, an abbreviation of, “אשר בך ירחם” *For it is with You that an orphan finds pity.*” (הושע יד-ד) Abaye never had the opportunity to honor his parents. Since he passed away, his spirit comes to accompany those who make great effort to fulfill the *mitzvah* that he was never able to fulfill. It was from him that I heard the solution to our question!”

## הוא היה אומר...

Rav Yitzchok Aizik Sher zt"l (*Leket Sichos Mussar*) would say: “לאו אבי לכב - תע לא שדוקה' רבד לא נרהה ייחא - Why was it necessary to directly warn *Aharon HaKohen*, through his brother Moshe, not to enter the *Mikdash* at any time? Can one possibly believe that an order would be insufficient, such that encouragement and the threat of direct punishment was needed? However, as long as a person lives, all the forces of nature act against him, and any concrete realization can influence a person more than a theoretical understanding. Hence, even *Aharon HaKohen* had to be directly warned in this way, by using the concrete image of his sons' death.”

**A Wise Man would say:**

“People are like stained glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is light from within.”

Rabbi Dovid Hoffman is the author of the *Torah Tavlin* series of books on *Torah*, *Haggadah shel Pesach*, *Yamim Noraim*, and other Jewish topics, as well as the acclaimed Holocaust books entitled “*Heroes of Spirit*” and “*Heroes of Faith*.” His weekly *Torah Tavlin* parsha newsletters are disseminated all over the world. To subscribe, please go to his website [www.Torahtavlin.org](http://www.Torahtavlin.org), where you will find archives, *divrei Torah*, stories, articles of interest, and much more. He can be reached at: [Torahtavlin@yahoo.com](mailto:Torahtavlin@yahoo.com)

# When There is No Unity, We All Suffer



**HaRav HaGaon Rav Avraham Katz**  
**Rebbe of Tosh-Monsey**

*“And G-d spoke to Moshe after the death of the two sons of Aharon, after they drew near before G-d and they died: And G-d said to Moshe, speak to Aharon your brother...” Vayikra 16:1-2*

This week's parsha discusses the *avodah* of Yom Kippur. It begins by telling us that Hashem spoke to Moshe “after the death of Aharon's two children” – Nadav and Avihu; then it tells Moshe to speak to “Aharon your brother.”

Why does the Torah tell us that *two* children of Aharon died? We already know about the deaths of Nadav and Avihu – why is it important to note that they are *two*?

Further, why does G-d tell Moshe to speak to “Aaron your brother?” We are aware that Aharon is his brother and usually G-d simply says to “speak to Aaron.”

We look at the Torah through the lens of eternity. What is the eternal relevance of the death of Nadav and Avihu to Yom Kippur?

The answer is that Nadav and Avihu were *two*.

They acted independently in their pursuit of holiness, working

in isolation. They both wished to connect to G-d – but on their own. Both brought an offering in the Holy of Holies but they did work together. There was no unity in their efforts so they could not succeed.

The holy Toldos Aharon explains that often a person will work hard on spiritual and religious pursuits, but he works on his own. He does not feel connected to others. He feels no unity, no association to his fellow Jews. His efforts will not bear fruit.

This is the reason for the *posuk's* emphasis on the fact that it was *two* sons of Aharon. They were two entities. Two separate units. And this was the reason for their failure and ultimately, their death.

After the Torah tells us that they were two, G-d tells Moshe to speak to Aharon his *brother* – to

emphasize brotherhood and unity. When we work in harmony we can succeed. On Yom Kippur we are desperate for our *avodah* to succeed and the Torah is telling us that it all depends on our unity.

This holds true in all areas of life. In order to achieve greatness we must work together – as brothers.

In practical terms, we must remember that in order to grow closer to our Father in Heaven we must grow closer to each other. Without brotherhood and a sense of unity one cannot taste the sweetness of Judaism and Torah. A person should train himself to seek out the good in others and see others in a positive light. In our dealings with others we should be humble and unpretentious.

In the *Iggeres HaRamban*, the holy Ramban writes to his son, “train yourself to speak all your

words softly, to all people at all times” as this will help prevent anger and arrogance and help him judge each person favorably. Consequently, this will help a person become G-d fearing and grow in his spiritual endeavors. The Ramban is teaching us that in order to become closer to Hashem, a person must become closer and kinder to his fellow man.

We need to truly love our fellow Jew; to remove every vestige of jealousy or hatred; to look deep into our hearts and see that we harbor no feeling of superiority over others. A person should never think that he knows best and another's path or method is worthless or pointless. One cannot work just for himself. We must link arms and inspire each other to grow and improve ourselves. Together we will build a lasting relationship with Hashem – our Father.

## Parshas Acharei Mos: Protecting the Yiddishe Neshama



**By Rabbi Simcha Bunim Berger**  
**Rav of Village Green Shul**

In this week's Torah portion, the laws of forbidden relationships are introduced by reminding us of the lifestyle that we were exposed to while in Egypt. The Torah states: “Do not perform the practice of the land of Egypt in which you dwelled, and do not perform the practice of Canaan to which I bring you and do not follow their traditions.”

Rashi, on this pasuk, comments that these acts were more common and more severe among the Egyptians than among any other nations in the world. It's clear, therefore, that these acts of forbidden relationships were the lifestyle of Egypt. Why would

Hashem put His nation, Bnei Yisroel, among such people?

The Maharal explains with the following axiom: Objects develop through friction. It is the pressure that is exerted on an object that causes that object to develop. When things are calm and there is no tension, an object will remain motionless. When pressure is introduced, the object will begin to move and develop. Here is one of his great teachings: What is true for the physical universe and its laws, is also true for human motivation. For example, hunger makes a person look for food. Poverty demands that a solution be found. In an environment with no struggle or conflict, complacency sets in.

This principle is also true on a spiritual level. A soul or neshama can be motivated to a higher level from an opposite environment. In order to understand this, we must establish the basic Jewish concept of body and soul.

### Body and Soul

The Torah, in Bereshis, discusses the creation of Adam, the first person. It describes his creation in two parts. Hashem formed the body from the Earth

and blew into this form a neshama, or soul. Just as the body needs food to live, so does the soul need its food. Therefore, honesty, integrity, morality, and mitzvos, are its food, and deception and immorality are its poisons. Infidelity is another example of soul poisoning which results because an adulterer has a lack of honesty and integrity.

All this is true if a person is aware of and in touch with his soul. If one's body is the driving force in one's decision making, then the sense of responsibility plays little or no role.

### Flood

This dominance of the body and the lack of spiritual awareness were at its peak during the ten generations from Adam to Noach. The Torah states that the world was totally immoral in the time of Noach, and, therefore, Hashem brought the flood.

As the world rebuilt itself, humanity understood the lessons, and the nations kept a moral code known as the Noachide laws. Egypt, however, was the exception. The actions described in our parsha are the same as those of the nations be-

fore the flood. This was also the way the Egyptians lived their lives. Fittingly, they ended up drowning in water just like their predecessors.

So the question still stands - Why, of all places, did Hashem put us in Egypt?

### The Jewish Nation

There is a fundamental difference in how the Jewish people became a nation as opposed to the rest of the world. Every nation created its identity by carving out a homeland. They claimed their independence at the same time they were able to claim a territory. The Jewish nation, however, became independent when we separated ourselves from society.

The nature of a chosen people is one that can rise above the physical trappings of this world, so Hashem was interested in forming and molding a spiritual nation as opposed to a physical one.

It's for that purpose that Hashem put us in a society that promoted the opposite of the moral and spiritual fiber that he wanted to create and instill. He was confident that, as moral and

decent children of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, we would develop properly in that environment. Indeed, the Jews wanted nothing to do with Egypt. They wouldn't dress like Egyptians, speak their language or refer to themselves with Egyptian names. From the very beginning, Jews never assimilated with the Egyptians; even before times were bad and they were enslaved and oppressed. They were revolted by the Egyptian way of life. Hashem had complete confidence in the Jewish soul; it wouldn't allow itself to get lost in the lure of that immoral society and indeed, we didn't.

As long as we stay in touch with our spiritual roots, we need not worry about the dangers of assimilation. Our “yiddishe neshama” - Jewish Souls - won't let us. It's when we forget or don't feel aware of our soul, that other elements can control and change our essence.

Rabbi Berger is the Rabbi of the Village Green shul and a Maggid Shiur at Yeshivas Ohr Reuven. He has spent many years building Torah in the community and guiding his talmidim to become the best that they can be.



**By Rabbi Shaya Cohen  
of Priority 1**

**Question:** My daughter and I have always enjoyed an exceptionally close relationship. But everything changed around the time she turned fifteen. Since that time she is quick to get annoyed at me and does not seem even remotely interested in interacting with the family. She

**chats with her friends for hours, but if I ask her how her day went, all I receive is monosyllabic answers before she retreats to her room. I often feel that she is deliberately trying to provoke me. My husband thinks that she is being chutzpadik and that we should confront her about her behavior. What should I do?**

**Answer:** The first thing to know is that, as painful as your daughter's attitude is, it is also entirely normal. Many children with strong connections to their parents feel a need to pull away to discover their own identity. Additionally, part of measuring the strength of a relationship is to test its endurance. Very often children will subconsciously push the boundaries of their parents' love in an attempt to prove its resilience.

As a parent, it is easy to feel dejected – as if all of the work that you put into your relationship with your child was wasted. But nothing is further from the truth. Human beings need their parents' love and approval as much as they need food and air. It was only after my father's passing that I truly understood how much I needed him. I had already raised a large family and was a Rosh Yeshiva for several decades, but I never stopped requiring my parents' approval and encouragement.

This stage will pass. With time your daughter will discover herself and reconnect with you and the family, and, if you acted properly during this time, with an even stronger bond than that which existed originally.

Right now your child needs to find herself, and, in the process, she may try to distance you and even provoke your anger. Do not react. Give your child her space and let her know that you are always there if she needs you. Fighting with your daughter and

demanding that she engage with you is a mistake. Step back and do not smother your child, but at the same time make it clear that no matter her provocations, your love for her is entirely intact. Eventually, this stage will pass and your daughter will emerge as a stronger, healthier person and will openly crave a deep relationship with you.

**Story:** Our relationship with Hashem exists on many levels, and just like the most rebellious son still craves a relationship with his parents, so to, even those who have completely thrown off the yolk of Heaven still, deep down, crave a relationship with Hashem.

I once met a fellow who had wholly dropped religious observance. He was once a typical yeshiva bochur, but a series of unfortunate events led him to reject the Torah and run away from home. When I met this person his entire body was covered in tattoos, but while I was talking to him I noticed something odd. Standing in stark

contrast to the rest of his body, his left arm was utterly devoid of any tattoos.

"Why don't you have any tattoos on your left arm?" I asked, curious at the strange lack of symmetry.

"I doubt that I will ever find my way back to Yiddishkeit," the man said. "When I got my first tattoo I know that I was permanently branding myself as an outcast of my old religion. But I could never get myself to tattoo the area where I used to put on tefillin. I knew that if I ever wanted to return to Hashem I would not be able to face the prospect of putting on tefillin over a tattooed arm. I decided to keep this arm clean so that – if I ever return – I can put on tefillin without disgrace."

*Rabbi Shaya Cohen is the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Zichron Aryeh and founder of Priority-1, a multifaceted educational organization that initiated the Teach to Reach program, providing workshops and materials to enhance the world of Chinuch.*

# Eldest of the Admorim, Rav Menachem Mendel Taub zt"l, Passes Away at 96 at His Home in Jerusalem.

**The Rebbe's step-grandson, appointed as new Rebbe, is only 28 years old but is considered to be a genius in Torah.**

The Kaliver Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Taub zt"l, the eldest of the "Admorim," passed away Sunday afternoon at his home in Jerusalem after undergoing extensive resuscitation efforts.

About two weeks ago, the Rebbe tripped in his home and since then had been very weak and unable to leave his home.

Close associates of the Rebbe say that until a few weeks ago he functioned as usual, but before Pesach his medical condition deteriorated.

Thousands of participants took part in the funeral procession of the Kaliver Rebbe on Sunday, who passed away at the age of 96.

During the funeral procession, Rabbi Yitzchak Bronstein, a disciple of the Rebbe, announced that according to the will, the Rebbe's step-grandson Rabbi Yisrael Mordechai Yoel Horowitz shlita, will continue his path.

The new Rebbe is only 28 years old,



Kaliver Rebbe zt"l, with his step-grandson at his side

but is considered to be a genius in Torah, and serves as the head of the Kaliver Torah institutions throughout Israel. Over the past year, he has managed to raise huge sums for the Kaliver institutions

that were in danger of collapse.

A Holocaust survivor who suffered at the hands of the infamous SS officer Josef Mengele during his captivity in the Auschwitz concentration camp, the Nif-

tar later immigrated to the United States, gaining US citizenship before moving to Israel.

Active in Jewish outreach, the Rebbe was also known as one of the greatest commentators on the Holocaust and encouraged saying the Shema prayer in commemoration of martyrs of the Holocaust at the end of religious events.

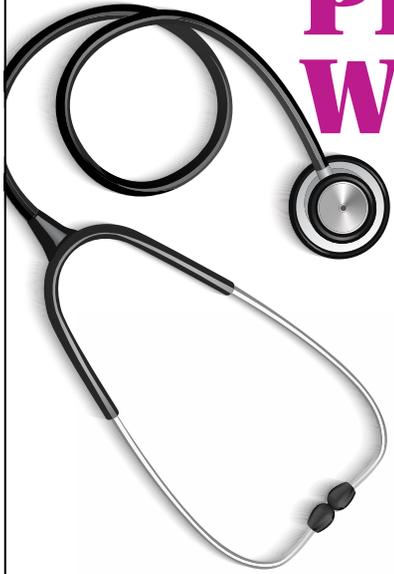
One of the Rebbe's hallmarks was the song Solo Kokosh Mar ('the rooster crows' in Hungarian), a song passed on by the founder of the Kaliv dynasty, Reb Yitzchak Isaac Taub, who heard a shepherd singing it and changed it to an allegory about the longing for Moshiach. The Kaliver Rebbe would sing it at events and Holocaust memorials, including at the banks of the Danube, and listeners would join in the last line, sung in Hebrew, "May the Beis Hamikdash be rebuilt and the City of Zion filled with Jews."

Zechuso Yagen Aleinu

(Arutz Sheva-INN)

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At the erev Pesach bris of Boruch Schlosser in Passaic

Chashuvei Monsey at a yearzeit tikkun on Chol Hamoed Pesach

Two generations of Chashuvei Monsey at Sharei Tefillah



Rabbi Yisroel Kahan, Spring Valley Fire Fighter and Legislator Aron Weider at Spring Valley chometz burning

Olam Chesed Cheese Distribution helped by volunteers from Ohr Avraham

At the Hoffman Bender engagement



Ari Kohn enjoying his favorite chol hamoed outing - watching Union Road repaving operation

Chashuvei Monsey at BM Ohr Hachaim

Pre-Pesach food packing at Tomche Shabbos



Greater Adventure Chol Hamoed Learning Program



At the bris of Yitzchok Moshe Ebstein



Rav Yaakov Bender, Rav Peretz Steinberg and Reb Pinchos Hoffman at the Hoffman Bender Lachayim



Chometz burning at Manny Welder Park



Legislator Aron Weider and Spring Valley Trustee Asher Grossman



Two of Chashuvei Monsey enjoying the beautiful Chol Hamoed weather



Reb Avrumi Ebstein making a siyum on erev Pesach



Town of Ramapo Supervisor Michael Specht at Chometz Burning



Chashuvei Monsey have everything under control on Chol Hamoed



Rabbi Mordechai Zev Jungreis, Nickolsburg Rebbe from Boro Park burning Chametz



Chometz Burning at Park and Ride on Route 59



Singing and dancing at the Chametz burning at BM Ohr Hachaim



Chometz Burning in Spring Valley





## Local News From Around Town



Yitzzy Ebstein enjoying his chol hamoed outing despite being outside Jumping Jax

### MONSEY

#### Jumping Jax Burns the Chometz, Three Days Behind Schedule

By Ben Ebstein

The Jumpin Jax indoor playground located in Paramus, New Jersey was abruptly shut down on the first day of Chol Hamoed, Monday, April 11. While many people were enjoying their family Chol Hamoed trips, the visitors in Jumping Jax had to evacuate the building. A smoke alarm went off at approximately 1pm.

Police and fire rescue were dispatched to the scene. The police arrived promptly, with the fire chief and the rest of the fire crew shortly after that. The source of the smoke was a burnt piece of toast. Baruch Hashem, there were no injuries, and everyone was evacuated safely. Local askunim were on scene to ensure the public's safety.

Once the fire department gave the okay, visitors were allowed back into the building. Everyone was relieved to be able to go back in to enjoy the fun, although some young visitors said they didn't know what was better, taking pictures with the policemen on site or climbing on the jungle gym.

#### Monsey Holds Dor Yeshorim Bain Hazmanim Mass Screening for Boys

Just thirty years ago, genetic diseases plagued the Jewish community; bringing unbearable suffering and heartache to families across the spectrum. The scourge of Tay Sachs was particularly devastating.

Dor Yeshorim was born from one man's indescribable grief and heartache as he helplessly watched four beautiful children die of Tay-Sachs. Determined to ensure that no parent would ever endure the agony of losing a child to this devastating genetic disease, Rabbi Josef Ekstein galvanized a grassroots organization to eradicate Tay-Sachs forever.

Using his hard-earned knowledge and

insights, Rabbi Ekstein and his colleagues arrived at a brilliantly simple yet hitherto unheard of the solution: a confidential premarital testing system to screen for the gene responsible for the disease. Though simple in theory, garnering rabbinical and communal support for the actualization of his groundbreaking idea took tremendous time, energy and convincing. Rabbi Ekstein faced an uphill battle; swimming against the tide during an era when understanding, acknowledging and acceptance of the seditious nature of genetic diseases was not an openly recognized concept. Rabbi Ekstein persevered.

Today, Dor Yeshorim is a globally acclaimed organization, standing at the forefront of genetic research and advances. Dor Yeshorim is credited with singlehandedly eradicating Tay Sachs from the Jewish community and effectively closing the Tay Sachs ward at Kingsbrook Medical center forever.

Since its inception in 1983, Dor Yeshorim's efforts to prevent fatal and debilitating genetic diseases remain ongoing and relentless. Following intense research, it has expanded its testing panel to include additional genetic recessive disorders such as Cystic Fibrosis, Familial Dysautonomia, Canavan Disease and many more. Dor Yeshorim is a household name, operating in eleven countries including the United States, Canada, Europe and Israel; supported and endorsed by leading rabbinical authorities and medical experts the world over.

Dor Yeshorim continues to set the industry standard for cutting-edge, comprehensive genetic research. Leading medical authorities agree. The Dor Yeshorim program is the best application of preventive medicine and the most successful application of genetic sciences to date — anywhere in the world. Dor Yeshorim utilizes the latest technology, alongside a certified clinical diagnostic laboratory (CLIA) which employs the most extensive, complex, and expensive molecular DNA methodologies available.

Dor Yeshorim's highly regulated, confidential system ensures that the vast, Jewish worldwide population we screen is fully protected. The organization screens an astounding 25,000 plus young adults annually and offer guidance and future prevention measures to families whose children are affected with genetic disease. Dor Yeshorim stands at the forefront of genetic research and is responsible for the identification of numerous genetic mutations.

During mass/school screening events (or private appointments) blood is drawn for testing, and each participant receives a nine-digit Identification number. Blood samples are sent for intensive DNA analysis and results entered into a centralized database. Individuals seeking a partner in marriage have unlimited, 24-hour access to the Dor Yeshorim automated hotline where they are asked to enter both parties' ID number and day and month of birth. Within a few business hours, a trained specialist returns the call and informs both parties whether or not they are compatible. Couples found to be incompatible are offered guidance and assistance. or Yeshorim screens for fatal and debilitating recessive genetic diseases prevalent in the Jewish population — both Ashkenazi and Sephardi- worldwide. The current standard Ashkenazi panel consists of nine diseases with an optional testing panel of seven additional Ashkenazi diseases. These diseases are less commonly found, yet share the same severity as the standard panel of diseases. You can request this optional panel of testing for an additional \$75. The Sephardi panel of tests includes testing for 16 diseases.

Monsey's Dor Yeshoraim Bain Hazmanim Mass Screening for boys took place on Tuesday evening, April 30 at Stolin Hall on Main Street. Along with their date of birth, participants shared the country of grandparents' origin, ancestry - Ashkenazi or Sephardi; and optionally provide their social security number. Results will be made available in three to four months, although expedited results were available for an additional fee over the regular \$200 cost of administering the basic test. For more information on Dor Yeshorim call (718) 384-6060 or email [info@DorYeshorim.org](mailto:info@DorYeshorim.org) or visit the website at [www.DorYeshorim.org](http://www.DorYeshorim.org).

### NEW CITY

#### Health Department Offers Free Fish to Utilize for Mosquito Control

To help County residents reduce the number of mosquitoes on their property, Rockland County is offering free mosquito control products. Rockland County residents can receive a free one month's supply of Mosquito Dunks from the Health Department, Building D, 50 Sanatorium Road in Pomona, Mondays - Fridays, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The Mosquito Dunks will be available now through October 31st, while supplies last. Dunks are small, donut-shaped objects that float on the water's surface and release bacteria that kill mosquitoes in their larval stage in water, before they become flying, biting adults. They are for use in closed or unused private swimming pools

and spas and are effective for approximately 30 days. A single dunk will treat an area of about 100 square feet. Always follow the label instructions when using Mosquito Dunks or any other pesticide. It is important to know the approximate dimensions of your pool/spa to ensure that you get the proper number of dunks for effective treatment. In addition, residents can request free larvicide tablets by calling the New York State Department of Health at 1-888-364-4723.

"Mosquitoes can sometimes spread diseases such as West Nile Virus or Zika Virus. The West Nile Virus has been found in local mosquitoes, and Rockland County has had cases of the virus in people which was spread from local mosquitoes. To date, the Zika virus has not been found in local mosquitoes, and our only cases of Zika to date are from people who have traveled to areas where the Zika Virus is spreading," said Dr. Ruppert.

To help keep your property mosquito-free: be sure to check around your property for any items that can hold water and get rid of the items or empty the water out and scrub the objects at least once a week. For more information call the Health Department at (845) 364-3173 or visit the New York State Department of Health webpages.

### ROCKLAND COUNTY

#### Rockland County Second Highest Property Tax Rates in Nation, New Study Says

ATTOM Data Solutions, the curator of the nation's premier property database and first property data provider of Data-as-a-Service (DaaS), released its 2018 property tax analysis at the beginning of April for more than 87 million U.S. single-family homes. The study shows that property taxes levied on single family homes in 2018 totaled \$304.6 billion, up 4 percent from \$293.4 billion in 2017 and an average of \$3,498 per household — an effective tax rate of 1.16 percent.

The average property taxes of \$3,498 for a single-family home in 2018 was up 3 percent from the average property tax of \$3,399 in 2017, and the effective property tax rate of 1.16 percent in 2018 was down from the effective property tax rate of 1.17 percent in 2017.

Nine counties out of 1,408 U.S. counties with at least 10,000 single family homes are listed as having average annual property taxes of more than \$10,000. Rockland County comes in as the second highest with an average of \$12,925 right behind Westchester County which has an average of \$17,392. After Rockland County comes Marin County, California (\$12,242); Essex County, New Jersey (\$12,161); and Bergen County, New Jersey (\$11,771). In the Hudson Valley, homeowners in Putnam pay an average property tax bill of \$9,725, followed by Orange County which has an average of \$7,745 and Dutchess County which averages \$6,959.

While the New York suburbs had the highest average property tax bill, upstate New Yorkers were hit with the highest effective

[continued on page 27]



[continued from page 26]

property rates, Binghamton pays 3.19 percent, Syracuse pays 2.89 percent, and Rochester pays 2.88 percent. The effective tax rate was the average annual property tax expressed as a percentage of the average estimated market value of homes in each geographic area.

“Property taxes levied on homeowners rose again in 2018 across most of the country,” Todd Teta, chief product officer for ATTOM Data Solutions, stated. “While many states across the country have imposed caps on how much taxes can go up, which probably contributed to a slower increase in 2018 versus 2017. There are still many factors at play that can contribute to local property tax hikes, and without major changes in the way a community runs public services, tax rates must rise to pay for them.”

## Spring Rockland Repair Café is May 5th

Residents are encouraged to bring beloved broken items to Rockland BOCES in West Nyack to be fixed, free of charge, by volunteer Repair Coaches

The Spring Rockland Repair Café will take place Sunday, May 5th, 2019, from 10 am – 2 pm at Rockland BOCES Jesse Kaplan School in West Nyack.

The event pairs volunteer Repair Coaches, who are neighbors with fix-it expertise, with people who bring in items to be fixed such as lamps, computers, clothing, frames, small appliances, wooden items, toys, and electronics.

Anything that can be carried in by an individual will be considered for repair, except for items with gas engines (i.e. no lawnmowers, chainsaws, gas-powered landscaping equipment). Repair Coaches will assess your item and fix it for free, provided they have the materials needed on-hand. Repair Coaches almost always have the know-how!

Repairing broken items instead of throwing them out minimizes truckloads of trash traveling to landfills for disposal. This is crucial, according to Anna Roppolo, Executive Director of the Rockland County Solid Waste Management Authority. “Repairs not only save money and resources, they can help minimize CO2 emissions. Reducing what we put into the trash is how we can make the greatest impact,” says Roppolo.

The ability to fix or repair items is a dying art, and Repair Café celebrates the time, talent and transfer of fixer’s expertise, ensuring that their knowledge is shared with others – especially young people.

“The benefits of this partnership are extensive and transformational; preserving repair know-how skills by passing them on to the younger generation is critical to Rockland’s shared future,” said County Executive Day. “I ask that you join me in this important initiative because only by working together, fostering a true sense of community, can we complete the renaissance that we have begun in this county.”

Repair Café is a free, youth-friendly community event sponsored by Rockland Conservation & Service Corps (a program of the

Rockland County Youth Bureau), Rockland County Solid Waste Management Authority and Rockland BOCES.

Grab your broken items (limit of two) and join us on May 5th! For more information, or to call ahead to check if a volunteer Repair Coach can fix your item, call 845-364-2932 or e-mail rcsc@co.rockland.ny.us.

## Rockland County State of Emergency Renewed

New City, NY - Rockland County has issued a second declaration of a local State of Emergency, renewing the original declaration that was due to expire at 11:59 pm, Thursday, April 25, 2019. The renewed State of Emergency took effect at 12:00 am, Friday, April 26, 2019, and will remain in effect until 11:59 pm, Saturday, May 25, 2019.

There is no new Directive as part of the renewal of the State of Emergency. It does not contain the Measles Outbreak Emergency Directive, prohibiting unvaccinated persons from entering indoor places of public assembly which was rescinded (4/16). However, the Rockland County Department of Health (RCDOH) will continue to enforce the new Commissioner’s Orders that were announced last week. This State of Emergency serves to reaffirm the actions taken by RCDOH and support their efforts to combat this outbreak.

The first Order is an RCDOH Communicable Disease & Exposure Exclusion Order, which is a Commissioner’s Order, and which has three components:

Any person diagnosed with the measles or exposed to a person diagnosed with the measles as evidenced by laboratory evidence or a measles tracing investigation conducted by RCDOH must be excluded from indoor and outdoor places of public assembly located in Rockland County for a period of up to 21 days.

The individual is prohibited from going to or being present at any place of public assembly for any period of time with exceptions for medical care, emergency situations and court appointments.

Individuals are required to cooperate with RCDOH public health authorities by providing information regarding details of one’s illness, exposures, and contacts.

Failure to comply can result in a \$2,000 fine per violation per day. Parents and guardians served with this order on behalf of an exposed minor are responsible for compliance by their child.

Five of these Orders have been issued to those exposed to measles and to those confirmed to have the disease.

The second Order involves students who are required to have the proper MMR immunizations and to date have not demonstrated that the vaccines have been administered. New York State (NYS) Public Health Law Section 2164 and New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Title 10, Subpart 66-1.6 requires mandatory immunizations to be in school unless the student has a medical or religious exemption.

“Many students, even in schools that have

now achieved the required 95% vaccination rate, have not yet been immunized. This has to change,” said Commissioner of Health Rupert. “I have the authority from the State Commissioner of Health to exclude those children who are not up to date on their immunization. With this outbreak, I am implementing further exclusions of students without evidence of proper MMR vaccination effective immediately. This is addressed to the school administrators and principals.”

The second Order is a Commissioner’s Order, which has two components:

- Pursuant to an audit conducted by NYSDOH/RCDOH, schools/daycares are required to exclude from school/daycare students who have been identified as having neither a valid certificate of immunization on file for the MMR vaccines or laboratory evidence of immunity against measles, mumps, and rubella, nor a valid medical or religious exemption on file.
- Schools/daycares are required to submit to RCDOH a notarized affidavit sworn under penalty of perjury or if unable to take an oath, a notarized affirmation affirmed under penalties of perjury, identifying students who have been excluded from the school/daycare.

Failure to comply can result in a \$2,000 fine per violation per day. These Orders were delivered to 16 affected schools on April 16, 2019.

331 students were affected by these Orders. 19,279 MMR vaccinations have been given within Rockland County since the outbreak began in October of 2018. This number has increased by 2,321 since the declaration of the original State of Emergency on March 26, 2019.

## FORSHAY

### KOLEL BEIN HAZMANIM ZICHRON NESANEL: Continuing the Legacy of Habachur Nesanel Levin a”h

By Yaffa Lev

Monsey is the home to so many interesting people; public figures, private ones, public figures with private lives the like of which most would never imagine from the outside. Just such a figure is Mrs. Linda Levin, Monsey resident for many years, (former interim principal for limudei kodesh at Bais Yaakov Ramapo, former assistant principal for general studies at Ateres Bais Yaakov Elementary) currently middle school math teacher at Kushner Hebrew Academy and teacher in The New Seminary. Mrs. Levin also gives a popular Shabbos shiur in Forshay. And as if that isn’t enough for one person, Mrs. Levin is also a prolific freelance writer published in numerous places. But the above just scratches the surface of who Mrs. Levin is. Below the surface, there is more, much more.

It was the year 2005, and Mrs. Linda Levin was living in Toronto. Pesach was fast approaching. Her 22-year old son, Nesanel was home from the yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel for bein hazmanim. Nesanel was the third of her

seven children and her oldest son.

She remembers how while he was in Eretz Yisrael, she continuously worried about his safety. It was a time of high tension in Israel with almost daily terror attacks. She had warned her son, “Don’t go over the Green Line”, “Don’t travel by bus, take a cab instead” and other such motherly warnings. She was, of course, certain that he ignored them all.

Mrs. Levin could never have imagined that the real danger was lurking right there in Toronto not ten minutes away from her house. During the two weeks he was home, he filled his time visiting friends, helping with Pesach errands and, as always, learning. Not a day went by without him learning, even during bein hazmanim. His hasmada and love of learning filled his parents with tremendous nachas.

It was Wednesday evening before Pesach. Nesanel planned to pick up a Slurpee and head to the beis medrash to learn. He never made it. An out of control, mentally disturbed driver t-boned his car on the driver’s side as he turned left into 7-11. His brother came home trembling and shaking in a panic having witnessed this terrible crash. The Levin family was thrown into turmoil.

Mother and father met the ambulance at the hospital. The doctor on call was grim. The parents were told that Nesanel had no chance of waking up; he had suffered a devastating brain injury. Friends and family surrounded them with food, love, and prayer in the hospital as they waited for the inevitable. Friday morning his neshama departed, and shortly afterward, they buried their beloved son. There was no shiva as Shabbos was erev Pesach.

Mrs. Levin had become paralyzed by grief. She could not function. Someone must have made Pesach for her. She was dazed, stunned. She felt as if she were living a nightmare. This surely couldn’t be happening to her. The emotion was so strong, so overbearing that it filled her entire being- She could not think, could not eat, could not sleep, could not breath.

Although she knew that there were none, she was frantic for answers. She traveled to Eretz Yisrael twice, meeting with gedolim and sharing her pain-filled story with anyone who would listen. Her son’s rebbe from Toronto, Rabbi Yosef Lipschutz, suggested that she meet with Rav Moshe Shapiro zl on one of those visits. She trusted the rebbe’s judgment and agreed to meet with Rav Shapiro. Mrs. Levin had been told that Rabbi Shapiro himself had suffered through the loss of a child.

The meeting with Rav Shapiro was pivotal. Having gone through his own tragedy, Rav Shapiro z”l understood the dynamics of grief. He understood that grief needs to be channeled into something lasting and worthwhile before it consumes you with its fury.

Rav Shapiro made a suggestion: The Levins should start a Pesach bein hazmanim kollel fillui nishmas their son. It sounded like a good idea given that Nesanel loved to learn with all his heart and soul, and Mrs. Levin

[continued on page 43]



## Chaverim Cleans Up

By Mindy Cohn

Before Pesach Chaverim dispatchers received a call from a homeowner regarding her cleaning lady who she was sure was cleaning out her cash and other valuables while cleaning her house. Chaverim told

the homeowner just what to do. She left cash around after pictures were taken of the serial number and called Chaverim a few minutes before her cleaning help left the house. Chaverim volunteers made sure that the woman didn't escape nor have a chance to hide the money which the homeowner

established was missing. When the police arrived, it was confirmed that the woman had indeed stolen the money and she was arrested.

"Sometimes, we actually put in hidden cameras," says Yossi Margaretten, Chaverim of Rockland Coordinator. "We didn't

need to do that in this instance, but we have done it before on other occasions when people realize that the cleaning help are stealing money or jewelry, and many times we even get back the stolen items once the help realizes that we have them on camera."

## Tomche Shabbos of Rockland Encourages Swiping in Local Groceries

By M. C. Millman

Tomche Shabbos enables shoppers to turn every shopping trip into something more. With a single swipe of the Tomche Shabbos special key fob, a shopping expedition turns into a chalek in Tomche Shabbos's mission - that of helping those in Monsey who need assistance the most.

The Tomche Shabbos Swipe program is a new twist on an old idea that was the original brainchild of Mrs. Dvorah

Adler. When Mrs. Adler saw people donating at the register of a regular chain store to fund an organization, she realized the power of the spontaneous register sale. By now, donating at the register has become a habit to many Monsey shoppers to the point that people would look around for the barcoded cards each time they unloaded their groceries.

So now, "Instead of having to look around the register," says Alan Rosenstock, "to find the scannable cards to donate and being frustrated because

you cannot find it, the keyfobs are right there in your pocket, ready to go."

Swiping the keyfob triggers an automatic amount added onto your shopping order. One hundred percent of the funds which are given in denominations of one dollar, three dollars or five dollars go to the needy that Tomche Shabbos supports in so many ways.

"By swiping," says Mr. Rosenstock, "A family who might be three or four people behind you in line will have enough money to buy the groceries they

need."

Tomche Shabbos uses the funds to pay when individuals have maxed out the credit stores have extended to the point that the store can't extend it anymore. That is when Tomche Shabbos steps up to the plate and the swipes of many add up to allow a family to continue to shop with dignity and put food on the table.

To order your own Swipe key fob call 845-356-0202 or email at help@tomcheshabbos.org.

## Yedei Chesed Launches Mishmar Program for Special Needs Teens

By Ben Lelchook

A well rounded Thursday night for the average bachur means a night out at mishmar and a geshmak conclusion that includes cholent and potato kugel. Now Thursday nights mean the same thing for a group of Yedei Chesed teens who are part of the recently launched Yedei Chesed Mishmar program. Yedei Chesed Mishmar takes place

on Thursday nights at one of Monsey's local shuls.

The group learns parsha and prepares a d'var Torah to share with their family on Shabbos. Subsequently, they are treated to cholent and all the fixings at a local restaurant where they are able to feel yet again like one of the Thursday night crowd. The new mishmar program allows the boys to go out on Thursday night and learn just like their

brothers do.

The same group attends a Sunday learning program as well. "It's such a good way to start the week," says one enthusiastic participant who appreciates the program immensely. The boys learn mishnayos with their rebbe on their level, after chazering over the mishnayos from the week before. The positive feedback from both attendees and their family for both learning programs has been tremendous.



## SPARKStudio Brings Hope and Relief for Parkinson's

By M. C. Millman

SPARKStudio in Pomona, the Parkinson's movement therapy center opened in February 2018 by Sparks of Life. The SPARKStudio is currently the only studio in the United States which utilizes the Alex Kerten method for Parkinson Warri-

ors. Alex Kerten is the renowned author of "Goodbye, Parkinson's Hello, Life" and is founder and director of the Gyro-Kinetics Center in Raanana, Israel. Alex has been treating clients with movement disorders, specializing in Parkinson's disease, for over thirty years. SPARKStudio is also the first and only Rock Steady Boxing

affiliate in Rockland County with a certified RSB coach, Yuri Milshtein.

"What we have found," says Susan Lust, Sparks of Life Managing Director, "is that Parkinson's Warriors do not come just for the exercise alone. It is the incredible connections they develop and the social aspect that is also very rejuvenating.

One member in class the other day said, 'Thank you for having SPARKStudio — it is saving my life.' People come to tell me that the classes are the best thing for them, and these are PwP who never wanted anyone to know. Talking, connecting

[continued on page 30]

# When you swipe for your groceries, *will you swipe for theirs?*



*A young man who lost his job while caring for his sick wife. His wife is no longer alive, and now he is looking for work while trying to care for his orphaned children.*

*An almanah who lost her husband to cancer and doesn't earn enough money to support her family alone.*

*A man in his 40s who lost his job as a computer programmer and is still looking for employment.*

What do these people have in common?  
**They walk the same aisles as you but cannot pay for their groceries.**

**When you swipe a Tomche Shabbos card while checking out, you help cover their grocery bills while paying for yours.**

Tell a family you care.  
**Swipe a card today.**

Look for Tomche Shabbos cards at the register in your local grocery.





[continued from page 28]

and socializing are a huge part of the healing process and go way beyond even the exercise.”

It is this need for connection that has led Sparks of Life to explore an entirely new avenue – that of one-on-one programming or training or private sessions. “One-on-one participants can skype with Alex Kerten together with a local therapist, for the initial consultation and goal setting,” says Susan. “Kerten can do diagnoses if needed, and then we arrange for private trainers as well to come in a couple of times a week for one-on-one work. It’s the combination of both class-work and the one-on-one training that is turning out to be a real winning combination.” This is because each person with Parkinson’s has unique symptoms making one-on-one private treatment an important component in PD care as well in order to help individuals break old behavior patterns and learn to reprogram neural pathways. Brains are plastic. Neuroplasticity is the idea that the brain can change. This idea is brought out in private practice and into the group classes as well although more private trainers are needed as well to keep up with demand.

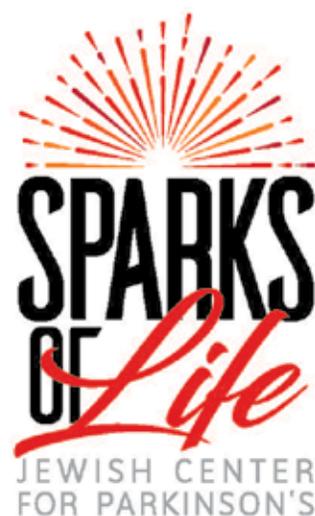
Members are seeing improvements in themselves and improvements in each

other, and the camaraderie alone brings improvement. Sparks of Life trainers have received feedback from neurologists that they are seeing advances in their

Sparkstudio members who are actively involved and taking responsibility for their health.

Upcoming events with Sparks of Life include an event to generate positive thinking with Rabbi Jonathan Rietti. The night of support, which will take place in May, will be exclusively for members, their families, and care partners. The theme of the evening will be, Goodbye, Illness, Hello Health with a focus on Breaking the Stigma - Using Thought and Positive Thinking, as well as overcoming the stigma so many associate with Parkinson’s which is a serious concern which must be broken.

In other upcoming events, Sparks of Life will be holding a major event in the fall on Parkinson’s, Positivity and The Power of Proper Nutrition. The day-long workshop will include Dr. Laurie Mischley ND, MPH, Ph.D. a Parkinson expert who has given presentations on Parkinson’s Disease research at conferences in the U.S. and abroad. Dr. Stu Isaacson, a well know, Movement Disorder Neurologist participate will be a keynote speaker and panelist as well. The focus of the day will be The Biological Basis of PD and Common Nutritional Deficiencies and Interpreting Laboratory tests. Dr. Isaacson will speak about what patients can do to facilitate collaboration



with their doctors. The doctors will both speak together on various ways to tackle symptoms, each from their unique perspective. Channi Feuer and Susan Lust will be producing the events in association with Sparks of Life. Sponsorship proposals are presently being accepted. Three hundred PwP and their care partners are expected to attend.

Sparks of Life was founded in March of 2016 by Rabbi Moshe Gruskin, a Lakewood resident who has become a Parkinson’s activist, as someone who has turned his diagnosis into a drive to help others challenged with PD. Sparks of Life’s mission is to better the lives of Jewish Parkin-

son’s patients by empowering individuals with the knowledge and awareness that they can fight their Parkinson’s symptoms and reclaim productive healthy lives. Besides informing and empowering inquirers with the latest treatment options and personalized suggestions for each case, Sparks of Life, a nonprofit has been hosting public awareness events across the tri-state region area. The organization also provides an array of emotional, medical, financial and educational resources.

Sparks Workshops are arranged throughout the year with guest speakers, teacher training workshops, volunteer training, group shares, and educational talks to motivate and inspire Parkinson’s warriors to give life their all. SPARKStudio classes encourage members to rise above their medical diagnoses, alleviate symptoms and return to productive, purposeful and fulfilling lives. SPARKStudio will be taking a Spring Recess until May 1st.

To learn more about Monsey’s SPARKStudio classes and workshops or to register, please call Susan Lust at 845-300-4511 and if you are an interested therapist or personal trainer wanting to learn. For further information on the Sparks of Life Jewish Center for Parkinson’s organization call our office at 845-377-3781.

To view SPARKStudio spring schedule visit <https://sparksoflifejcp.tumblr.com/>

*To have your chessed organization's news included in the next issue, contact [MCMillman@MonseyMevaser.com](mailto:MCMillman@MonseyMevaser.com).*

[continued from page 10]

in reality, other than him, there was no one watching. He worked up the courage to ask the Rebbe to explain his interesting behavior and perhaps it would be better to wait a few minutes until some other people show up so he doesn’t sing to himself in a large empty room.

The Rebbe explained simply that he isn’t singing sholom aleichem to 1000 people, nor to 10 people or even to one person. He is singing sholom aleichem to welcome the angels, and they are here!

The Rebbe was a very practical person and had a very deep understanding of human nature which he used to help the thousands of people who came to him for advice and brochos.

He was once asked why we dance with the sefer Torah on simchas Torah and not on Shavuos which is when we received the Torah? He explained that we don’t make a big deal that we accepted the Torah. The main thing is to keep the Torah. We first have to go through a summer with all its accompanying spiritual tests. Only then can we dance with the Torah!

This was one of the Rebbe’s primary

focuses, to help people live a spiritually pure life as a Yid. A couple who was married for many years without children came crying to him for a brocha for children. In response to his question as to whether they have a TV, they responded that they have three at home. The Rebbe said that if they get rid of the televisions, he will give them a brocha for children.

The husband returned two weeks later and reported to the Rebbe that he threw out two of the televisions. He explained that he can’t throw out the third as his wife wants to keep at least one in the house. The Rebbe was apologetic but explained that the tumah that emanated from the TV will block his brocha from taking effect. A day later the husband returned and reported to the Rebbe that they threw out even the third television. The Rebbe then showered him with a beautiful brocha for children. Indeed a year later, they had triplets!

A young Yeshiva bochur once came to the Skulener Rebbe, for some advice. “For the past few months,” the bochur confided to the Rebbe, “I have been having a very difficult time controlling my Yetzer Hara. Please, give me some advice as to what I

can do to resist the Yetzer Hara. Give me a brocha. Please help me! It is bad and getting worse! Just telling me to learn more Torah isn’t working for me as I already spend most of my day in Yeshiva learning Torah.”

The Rebbe looked him straight in the eyes and said, “Listen to me, young bochur. Every day you live, you are one day closer to the day of your death. Hopefully, you will live to be 120 years old. At that time, in all probability, you will be in a hospital bed with some sort of machine attached to you. If you have lived your life properly, if you have overcome your Yetzer Hara and your base desires, then you will be joyous. You will happily anticipate your next step, your step into the world to come where great reward will await you and you will bask in the presence of the Shechina. If, however, you did not overcome your base desires, but listened to your Yetzer Hara and indulged yourself in forbidden activities, then the pain and suffering you will experience at that moment will have nothing to do with the machines you will be attached to or from the illness you may be dying from. Rather, it will be

from the absolute terror of facing your final judgement in heaven!

Keep this in mind,” concluded the Rebbe, “and you will have the fortitude to always make the correct decisions. Indeed, this will enable you to joyously sing Hashem’s praises while on your deathbed.”

While already in his 80’s, the Rebbe recognized the deleterious danger the internet posed. Instead of leaving it to younger askonim to deal with it, the Rebbe used his last kochos to deal with it. Along with Rav Mattisyahu Solomon, the Rebbe arranged the highly successful Kinus Klal Yisroel at Citi Field Stadium on Erev Rosh Chodesh Sivan, in 2012. 42,000 Yidden gathered in Citi Field with another 20,000 gathered in nearby Arthur Ashe Stadium to watch the event on closed circuit TVs. Indeed, the widespread use of the organization TAG was born from the kinus.

The Rebbe was niftar on April 1, 2019, כ"ה אדר ב' תשע"ט. He eldest son, Rav Yeshaya Yaakov Portugal, the Rov of Mare Golah in Montreal, assumed the position of Rebbe.

Yehi zichro boruch.

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### Yeshiva Ohr Reuven Mesivta Taking Oral and Written Bechinahs at Conclusion of Zman



### Dr. Snitzle Pays a Visit to Cheder Chabad

Dr. Snitzle, AKA Rabbi Michoel Goldin, paid a whirlwind visit to Mrs. Tammy Eckstein's fourth graders at Cheder Chabad. Each boy made their own tornado in a bottle. Dr. Snitzle also demonstrated how to make a fire tornado as well as a waterspout tornado demonstrating what a tornado on top of water would resemble.



**100th day of School Celebration in Mrs. Schwab's Second Grade at Bais Mikroh**

### Mesivta Lev Tmimim and the Hebrew Academy's Unique Partnership



It's a Friday morning at approximately 10:30 a.m. and the sound of learning can be heard emanating from the large multi-purpose room at The Hebrew Academy of New City. Upon entering, one finds boys of the Academy's second through fifth grades sitting across from Yeshiva bochurim of Monsey's Mesivta Lev Tmimim Lubavitch deeply engrossed in learning.

What you are experiencing is the fruition of The Hebrew Academy's Morah Devorah Arnstein's efforts to instill a sense of vitality and excitement in the boys' Torah learning. Today, parents are caught up with the burden of providing for their families material needs and don't always have the time and presence of mind to really tune in to what their children are learning in school. This affords the younger boys a chance to gain from the attention of a positive role model that the older Yeshiva students provide.

Morah Arnstein, who has been an educator for many years, has a very unique approach to

### Ohr HaChaim Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim Program

The Ohr HaChaim Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim started on Sunday, April 14, the 9th of Nisan and boasted a full house during the entire program. As in the past, there was *Matan Schara B'tzida*, breakfast and lunch provided for all participants – as well as a full schedule of shiurim on inyana d'yoma. Although the Yeshiva Bein Hazmanim officially only started on April 14, attendees came the week before as well to enjoy learning in the Ohr Chaim atmosphere, even without the *Matan Schara B'Tzidah*.

The learning took place from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Each day included interesting shiurim given by various rabbanim and roshai yeshiva. Speakers included Rabbi Yaakov Kapelner, Maggid Shiur Igra DePirka Monsey who spoke on *Chumros on Pesach in General, and Gebroks in Particular*. Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Weinberg, from Yeshiva Shaarei Torah, spoke on *Eating Less than the Shiur of Chometz*. Rabbi Yitzchok Lopian, Rosh Yeshivas Mikdash Melech spoke on *Sefiras Ha'omer*.

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, Rosh Kollel Bais Medrash Ohr HaChaim spoke on *Halachos for the First and Last Days of Pesach that Fall on Shabbos and Eiruv Tavshilin and preparing the Kneidelach for the Last Day of Pesach*. Rabbi Elchonon Jacobovitz, Maggid Shiur gave a shiur on the topic of *Chometz in Dog Food*. Other speakers included Rabbi Lankry, Mara D'asra, and Rabbi Yosef Viener, Rav of Kehillas Shaar Hashamayim of



Wesley Hills who has been a highlight of the YBH for many years, sharing from his vast treasure trove of knowledge on a variety of topics.



chinuch. "I feel that it's crucial for students to feel an excitement in their Jewish learning," she says. "All too often we, as educators, get caught up in teaching the skills and technical side of the content that the neshama - the true soul and message of the lesson can be left out." She is therefore constantly on the lookout for ways to motivate her students and increase their love for Torah and Mitzvos.

Rabbi Avremel Kotlarsky, Dean of the Hebrew Academy and Judaic principal, agrees. "We've seen a noticeable change in the boys." "They eagerly await the opportunity to meet with the bochurim and show them what they've been learning."

In addition to learning Chumash or Mishna, the boys sometimes play ball together as well. This teaches the students that Torah study and physical health and fitness are not a contradiction to each other.

The Hebrew Academy students are not the only ones to gain. Mesivta Lev T'mimim students gain, as well, through the exchange. By giving up their time and themselves to help the students grow, they bolster their own spiritual growth. As we know, the best way to help oneself is by helping others.

The relationships are bolstered throughout the year to the point that the older students participate in the younger student's milestones, like siyumim and other celebrations.

This was never more evident than during the month of Adar when Mesivta Lev T'mimim students, in a display of unity, danced energetically with The Hebrew Academy students hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder.

May the merit of this partnership bring blessing to all participants and may it usher in the ultimate redemption with the coming of Moshiach.

### Yeshiva Ohr Avrohom Takes the Cheese at Olam Chesed

Bochrim from Yeshiva Ohr Avrohom were privileged to be part of the team of volunteers of the amazing Oam Chesed organization," says Rabbi Avromi Moldaver, administrator of Yeshiva Ohr Avrohom. "The energy of simcha and ahavas Yisroel was felt by all."

The bochurim helped to pack and prepare a wide variety of cheese donated by Natural and Kosher which was distributed before Pesach to those in need. Natural and Kosher is also donating a refrigerator along with the cheese so that Olam Chesed will be able to keep the cheese fresh at the warehouse for future distributions. The need-based distribution took place at Knesses Yisroel in New Hempstead and also included three different types of salt, cases of water, high-quality napkins, and brooms. The bochurim happily carried everything to the cars which parked near the Olam Chesed distribution truck and loaded the items into the trunks for each family.

Following the culmination of the distribution, Rabbi Moldaver and two students continued the giving spree by driving to Passaic to personally deliver items to a handful of families there as well.



### Bais Mikroh's Third Grade Goes on a Mission to the Moon

Mrs. Feuer's third grade at Bais Mikroh enjoyed a Mission to the Moon on their recent trip to the Challenger Space Center. Students learned that being an astronaut requires teamwork, communication, problem-solving and of course fun hands-on experiments. The young astronauts divided their time between working in a mission control center and working as members of a flight crew in a simulated spacecraft during their educational adventure at the Challenger Learning Center located in Airmont.

The visit to the Challenger Learning Center stimulated the natural curiosity and enthusiasm the students have for space through its interactive and engaging STEM learning experiences enabling them to perform similar "hands-on" tasks done by real scientists, engineers, and astronauts. The Learning Center's mission control and spacecraft simulators allowed the third graders to apply the knowledge they learned in the classroom to authentic, real-world experiences through their team missions. The visit promoted Problem-Based Learning and 21st Century Skills including leadership, communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.



### Acting out the Story of Pesach in ASHAR's Preschool Department



### Project Pesach Empowers at BYCC of Pomona

Bais Yaakov Chofetz Chaim girls had Project Pesach down pat, passionately helping mothers and grandmothers to prepare for the Chag with perfect decorum and palpable energy.

Project Pesach Help included cleaning, babysitting, and watching younger children: or good behavior from the younger students to allow their mothers to clean. It also included recording the amount of time helped per day and totaling the points weekly. Helping b'simcha with a smile earned ten bonus points per day.

Bnos Bais Yaakov Chofetz Chaim also placed extra emphasis on davening each day of Pesach vacation. Talmidos participated and proudly returned their Pesach Tefillah charts. Aside from their kavanos, mitzvos, and s'char, every participant of grades fourth through eighth entered a Tefila Raffle. The lucky winners received siddurim and sifrei Tehillim.

### Yeshiva Ketana Ohr Reuven 7th Grade Toured the Monsey Eruv with the Rosh HaYeshiva, Rabbi Betzalel Rudinsky.



*To be included in Monsey Mevasser's next issue, please send school news and pictures to [MCMillman@MonseyMevasser.com](mailto:MCMillman@MonseyMevasser.com).*

What do I do? My daughter went out eight times and then it was decided that the shidduch wasn't going to work. How do I treat the shadchan at this point? After all, the shidduch didn't work, but the shadchan did put in a lot of effort. Do I owe the shadchan anything?

In Klal Yisroel, there is a clear inyan of hakaras hatov. The fact that this is even a question on this page shows that people are confusing the inyan of hakaras hatov with what one might owe for shadchanas. In this case, no shidduch was made, so no shadchanas is owed, but it's not about owing shadchanas. It's about owing hakaras hatov which should be a given despite the fact that the inyan of hakaras hatov seems to be one that is lost.

A shadchan has dedicated time for *your* child. No one goes into shadchanis for money. A shadchan dedicates times for your child in order to make a difference in Klal Yisroel. One date, eight dates, even just the *potential* of an upcoming date. No one knows the efforts that go behind the scenes just to get a yes from either side for that first date. All of these are huge, and hakaras hatov is owed at every stage. And by eight dates, for sure an even greater level of hakaras hatov is in order - a monetary gift, a certificate, a present all of which should be accompanied by a thank you note even if the end result was not a match.)

Shadchanim put in a huge investment into every match - successes and failures alike. Offering hakaras hatov at every stage will help assure that these dedicated people feel that their efforts in going the extra mile continue to be appreciated.

Even after shadchanas has been paid, hakaras hatov is still appropriate. I try to call every single one of my children's shadchanim on the couple's anniversary. I also try to call them when each grandchild is born to share *their* new grandchild with them as well.

Hakaras hatov is appropriate forever!

*Dvora Adler is the founder of Care to Connect - an organization that makes sure that each single is given the attention they deserve by reaching out to network and make the right connections. For information on how to volunteer your time to create more matches through Care to Connect's Shidduch Center in Monsey or in the Five Towns, Whatsapp or text Dvora at (914) 806-2823.*

\*\*\*\*\*

There are no actual rules, but there have been many when I have been the recipient of chocolate, flowers or cake on erev Shabbos. I have also received gift cards, and shalach manos from those I have tried for. But none of that is mandatory.

One should just keep in mind that because being a shadchan is voluntary, and we put a lot of work and effort into things, when people show hakaras hatov it gives us the energy and a push to want to do more and rhedt more shidduchim.

Also if you want the shadchan to try again after such a long saga when you show hakaras hatov it is also beneficial to yourself and helps to jump-start the whole process again.

*Mrs. Bracha Modaver lives in New Hempstead and is a shadchan, dating coach, and sheitel macher. She can be reached at (347) 524-5335. Resumes can be sent to brachawigs@gmail.com.*

\*\*\*\*\*

The middah of Hakoras Hatov is the symbol of Yiddishkeit. We first need to refine our definition of hakaras hatov. We usually interpret it as gratitude, expressing appreciation. The literal translation of the phrase is "recognizing the good" - to simply recognize when you see good. Appreciation is the expression of your recognizing the good, but the essence of hakaras hatov is the recognition itself. True hakaras hatov is a pure recognition that is untainted by outside components.

The shadchanim today spent countless hours invested in redting, networking, and guiding the shidduch. If we don't compensate them for their time, they might not be able to stay in the shadchanus field. There is a high "burnout rate" when it comes to shadchanim. Most people need a dou-



ble income in today's society. Unfortunately when it comes to shidduchim it's not about "closing the deal." The shidduch needs to be the right fit for both sides. There needs to be a mutual interest, compatibility, attraction from both parties. Most shidduchim that people set up don't end up coming to fruition. If society as a whole compensates our shadchanim for the time they put into each series of dates, we would alleviate the burnout rate and keep out talented shadchanim helping our community. Personally I think if a couple went out eight times, there was numerous hours spent on behalf of your child dating. It would be basic menschlichkeit to compensate the shadchan for their time and effort. It would be the right way to express Hakqoras Hatov and in return it will keep our shadchanim in the field to be able to use their experience and expertise in helping the klal.

*Mrs. Ahuva Cherns  
ahuvacherns@gmail.com*

*Please send your shadchan questions to  
Editor@MonseyMevaser.com*

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**Dear Bubby,**

Sefirah just started and I have never yet managed to get all the way to the end with a bracha. Do you have any tips for me on how I can do this mitzvah completely?

*Shani Schultz*

**Dear Shani,**

Boy am I glad you asked this question. How many times have I heard women complaining how much they want to do this mitzvah but always forget. (Including me). I will try to give you a few tips. Better than tying a bow on your finger.

1. Get a Sefiras HaOmer Calendar and place it on your refrigerator or any other place you will surely look at in the evening (a snack maybe).

2. Designate one of your older children (husband or friend etc.) to remind you at night when they are saying the bracha.

3. Put a reminder note on your bedroom mirror.

Hope this helps. Let me know if it works. (I will try it too and be in touch)

*Bubby*

**Dear Bubby,**

I am a sixteen year old boy and my parents are urging me to make summer plans. I don't want to go to camp but there aren't many other options for me. Can you suggest a good idea that my parents and I will both agree to?

*Sincerely,*

*What to do this summer*

**Dear Summer,**

Since you did not write a reason for not wanting to go to camp, or where you live, it is difficult for me to give you options, but I will try.

Would your parents be happy if you could work at a local day camp? Maybe get a chavrusa for the evening and work in camp by day.

Do you have any family going up to the mountains for the summer? You could possibly get a job in a camp in the bungalow colony. With your parents approval, of course.

Since these options would probably not be as much fun as camp, maybe you should rethink the original idea.

Whatever you do, do it well, and that the experience will make you grow to be a smarter and better person.

Hope you have a happy, healthy and successful summer.

*Bubby*

**Dear Bubby,**

The week after Pesach is jam packed with weddings. My husband and I both have good friends that are getting married this week but it's just not possible to go to all of them. Specifically on one night, my roommate from seminary is getting married in Brooklyn while my husband's younger chavrusa is getting married in Lake-wood. He is not happy to go by himself to his friend and I'm not too keen about going myself either. Trying to make it to both means probably missing both as well. What should we do?

*Signed,*

*Packed with Simchos*



**Dear Simchas,**

Everybody should have such problems! Too many simchos!

Since you mention that it is only this week, I think you can extend yourself to make it work.

Why don't you start out with the chuppah in Brooklyn and have the meal and dancing in Lake-wood? (Or vice-versa, depending which is closer to where you live, that should be the later simcha.)

Your husband probably won't know the people at your roommate's wedding and you won't know those at his chavrusa's wedding. Maybe make an exception and try to be happy even though you won't be together.

Whichever works best for you will be fine and remember it's only one night. So go ahead and enjoy the opportunity to be part of the simchos. Being M'Sameach a choson and kallah is a very great mitzvah.

*IYH the next simcha should be yours.*

*Bubby*

**Dear Bubby,**

Over Pesach, I met a friend from the neighborhood and I greeted him with a hearty shalom aleichem. Then, being in the Yom Tov spirit, I said to the lady he was standing with, "You must be his mother." She replied: "Oh, no! I'm his wife. I must look really terrible." If only the ground could have swallowed me whole! I was mortified and called my friend that night to apologize. He told me that his wife is sick and going for treatment. We are still friendly, but he is cooler to me now. Is there anything more I can do?

*Mortified Neighbor*

**Dear Mortified**

The first thing you can do is Never Ever Talk Before Thinking!

Many years ago I made a similar mistake. At a wedding, I met an old friend from school. After our emotional hellos and trading news of the past years, I mentioned I had three children, and then I asked, "So how many children do you have?" When she answered, "We don't have children yet," this left me traumatized for weeks. And I promised never to ask personal questions again.

Is there anything more you can do? Yes. Be a good neighbor by always smiling hello and inquiring about his wife, and ask if there is some way you can help. I know the feeling well and can sympathize.

You sound like a kind and caring person. Remember, we all make mistakes. We are only human. Don't beat yourself up over it. But make a conscious effort to learn from your mistake so it won't happen again.

*Been there, done that.*

*Bubby*

**Dear Bubby,**

We spent a beautiful Yom Tov with our married children, and the grandchildren are simply adorable. My son in law and daughter seem to have taken on new minhagim as far as what is kosher for Pesach and what should not be used. This caught my husband and I by surprise since these very same kids have spent Pesach in our house for the past 10 years and none of these issues ever came up. I tried to hold my tongue and did so most of the time but my husband kind of "had words" with our kids during the last meal and tempers flared a bit. We need your advice, Bubby, on how to put things back the way they were. I would hate for our relationship to sour permanently because of one argument.

*Signed,*

*A Bubby who needs advice*

**Dear Bubby II,**

So sorry to hear that your Yom Tov was spoiled

because of an argument at the last minute. You are not alone. It is common for families to disagree and sometimes "have words". But that by no means, is a permanent situation. Every loving family may have bumps in the road. The trick is how to navigate them.

Of course we want our children to respect and honor us. However, we always want our children to surpass us in every way. Certainly to be more stringent with mitzvos is not a negative.

There are those who feel that not to rehash or bring up the problem is the best way to heal. But you know your children best, maybe if you ignore the whole episode it will be forgotten (and forgiven).

Then there are those that need an apology. It isn't easy, but if that is the way to keep Shalom in your family then that's the way to go. (Swallow your pride - it is worth it at the end. I know) Also, this is a great way to model behavior to your children. They will admire you and maybe someday do the same with their children.

May your prayers be answered. (That's another good thing to do!)

And may you see continued Shalom in your family.

*Bubby*

**Please send in your questions for Bubby to [hhrremember@aol.com](mailto:hhrremember@aol.com). She'd love to hear from you!**

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# Sefiras HaOmer and the Seven Sefiros: Seven Ways to Uplift Us and Strengthen Our Middos

By Rebbetzin Raize Guttman  
Author, Lecturer, and  
Mechaneches

Monsey Mevasser

So Pesach has passed over us and now what? All that cleaning and cooking, and believe it or not, nothing is clean and nothing is left to eat. So what have we all gained from this Yom Tov, besides a nice couple of pounds?

The truth is we have imbibed lots and lots of spiritual energy to carry us through until the next Yom Tov. Pesach sets the stage for Shavuos. In fact, the entire period from Pesach until Shavuos is considered one long holiday with all the days in between like Chol HaMoed. The days of Sefira are great and holy days because they allow us to acquire fully what lifted us up on Pesach.

There is a triangle upon which all of Yiddishkeit is based: "Kudsha Brich Hu, Yisroel, V'oraisa Chad Hu." Hashem, Klal Yisroel and the Torah are ONE. They are inseparable. This period exemplifies this bond. Pesach represents the revelation

of Hashem. It is at this time that Hashem made miracles for His beloved nation. He revealed Himself to the world as the One and Only Omnipotent power of the world. This is Pesach. And this is why Pesach is the holiday of Emunah.

Shavuos is the time that Hashem revealed His great Torah to the world. It is the day that we celebrate the greatest gift that was ever given in the universe, for it is actually the purpose of the universe. Shavuos is the revelation of the greatness of Torah.

The days in between, all the holy days of Sefiras HaOmer are the revelation of the greatness of the Jew. These are the days that we count, day by day, upwards and work on the beautiful middos that make us great. The way to truly raise oneself up to greatness is ONLY through avodas Hamiddos.

One can have lots of yichus or lots of money but the only way he can truly become a great person is by working on the 7 middos. These middos, or sefiros, are what we use to describe Hashem. We say every morning in Shacharis, "Lecha Hashem Hagedula (chessed), v'hagevurah, v'hat-

iferes v'hanetzach, v'hahod, ki kol basho-mayim uvaaretz (yesod), lecha Hashem hamamlacha (malchus)." These are the 7 middos that are really the way Hashem shows Himself to us in this world. If we want to get close to Hashem then we must emulate Him, and the way to emulate Him is by copying His middos.

Last week was chessed, this week is gevurah, and next week is tiferes. These 3 middos all work together as they represent our Avos, Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov. Avraham was the epitome of Chessed. Chessed means kindness and the way to perform chessed, which truly emulates Hashem, is by giving to others, not because they deserve it or for any other reason, but simply out of the kindness of your heart. Being good to others simply for the sake of kindness and not expecting anything in return, this is what we are meant to be striving for, because this is what Hashem does for us. He gives and gives, not because we deserve anything, but because Hashem is a giver.

Avraham was the personification of chessed, but his chessed had no limits. Chessed with no limits is not good and therefore Avraham had a son Yishmael. Yitzchok was the direct opposite of his father, he epitomized Gevurah. Gevurah means strength. It is strict justice. Yitzchok was exacting in his Avodas Hashem. He was totally and completely focused on how he can be close to Hashem. He took this to an extreme and he had a son Esav, who rebelled against everything his father

held dear.

The way that we must work on gevurah is by being strong about the things that are important. We must not be swayed by "what everyone is doing" and we must detect the yetzer hara inside ourselves and how he manages to pull us down. Very often, by us women, the yetzer hara dresses us as BM = Bad Mood. Once we are in a bad mood we think we can act however we want. Beware of this yetzer hara and may Hashem help us be misgaber.

Next week is the midda of Tiferes. This is the midda of Yaakov Avinu. It is the midda of truth because it is the perfect synthesis of chessed and gevurah. Yaakov took his Zaida's chessed and his Tatte's gevurah and he harmonized them in perfect synchronization to create the Emes, the truth. The way to work on this midda is by trying to find balance in life and looking for the real truth in the situations we find ourselves. Yaakov was zoche to 12 sons who were all tzaddikim. This is the reward of truth.

So dear women, Passover has passed us over, but we certainly have our work cut out for us during this very special and uplifting time. Women have a special affinity toward chessed, and a very special and unique strength. Women also have the intuition to strike the balance and find the truth in most situations. This is a great opportunity to utilize the great gift of middos that Hashem has bestowed upon us. Enjoy this "Chol Hamoed". Let us truly reflect the revelation of the greatness of the Jewish woman.

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[continued from page 8]

to the stupidity of Western society. Those who live in the warmth of Yiddishkeit, are like those liberated from the camps. This is the time to rebuild ourselves by becoming proud Jews. This is the reason Hashem made miracles for us, enabling us to survive!"

When the lecture was over, this young lady ran over to Rabbi Tauber. She said that her father was in the audience and he wanted to talk to him. A few moments later she escorted her father to the front. He walked with his head down, and when he lifted his face up, Rav Ezriel could see that his eyes were swollen with tears. He said in a Polish Yiddish, "I was in Treblinka working at that gas chamber. I saw my family killed in front of my eyes. I saw the paroches which you spoke about, and that made me an apikorus. I couldn't forgive G-d for keeping me alive with all these horrific memories"

Rav Ezriel asked him whether he had found his answer tonight. Hadn't he thought that he could get away with raising an assimilated fam-

ily? And look, one daughter was married to a gentile and the other, who had been non-religious, had come back to Hashem. "Your daughter is the one who is making that new paroches with her own hands," he told him. "This is the Gate of Hashem. Can you run away from that?"

Slowly but surely, the Yid from Vienna became a baal teshuva.

\*\*\*\*\*

Who will merit to be part of the geulah, asked Rav Ezriel? Those who truly believe Moshiach will come, unlike the Jews that died in Egypt.

The words "הבלי משיח" - literally, the "birth-pangs of Moshiach" come from the word "הבל" which means a rope. At the end of days, Hashem will "shake up the world" as if He is shaking a rope, and only those who hold onto the reins with perfect faith will be saved! May we all be zoche to hold on tight and greet Moshiach speedily, in our days.

Yehi Zichro Boruch

# The Duck in All of Us

By Mrs. Chani Juravel, LCSW

There's a new phenomenon I've come to see in a lot of the wonderful people that I meet. It's not exclusive to any one age group or social circle. It's not found in one community more than others and isn't limited to one given gender. It is a phenomenon that applies across the board, to people of all ages and stages. It manifests in different areas in life, depending on the person. It's what I've come to call the "duck phenomenon." Yes, we are all like ducks in at least one area of our lives! Allow me to explain.

Imagine that idyllic scene we've come to know and adore: the charming group of ducks gliding along a lovely, clear pond. Their movement seems so smooth and effortless. They seem so relaxed...so easily in sync with their surroundings, gracefully navigating the water, bobbing every once in a while to calmly collect the occasional crumb. Hard to imagine the duck as anything but easygoing. Yet there's a very different scene going on beneath the water's surface. The duck's webbed feet are working a lot harder than you realize. They're paddling and pumping frantically to keep the duck going, working that much harder at the turns and even treading water to keep the duck afloat when it seems to just be resting in one place.

That brings us to my "duck phenomenon."

Recently, speaking to a few women about parenting, one asked how to stay calm as a mother. Thinking back to my years with young children, I wondered if, often even in the calm times, my kids realized that I was very much the duck. On the surface, I might have been snuggled up with them, relaxed on the couch, reading a favorite book for the umpteenth time. But there were so many times that beneath the surface of that scene I was busy "paddling:" thinking of the doctor's visit to plan for the child who might have strep, or wondering if there was bread in the freezer for the lunches that still needed to be made, or mentally reviewing my 'to-do' list for the late night ahead. Treading the waters of responsibility is no small feat. You can be that regal mother at the Shabbos table, a look of idyllic serenity on your face, while working very hard...eyeing the table for signs of boredom, making sure that the kids are eating, trying to catch the eye of your husband to signal him to start that d'var Torah or involve that child that always gets lost in the crowd somehow.

In all areas of occupation we manage to play the duck. An employer can seem so confident and direct his staff with expertise. Yet behind the closed door of his office he is desperately figuring out how to make payroll or win new clients. No one would



Commons.wikipedia.org

guess how insecure he really feels "under the water." A teacher can deliver her class masterfully, all the while furiously paddling in the way she deals with the intimidation she feels from some of the not-so-enthused students she has that year, whose parents are prominent members of The Board. Her students have no idea that she was told that her job was on the line and that she had one year to prove herself. A therapist can come across as understanding and wise, with her client having no idea of how her issue is one that the therapist shares and finds herself sweating over. A loving grandmother can be hugging her grandchild and seeming to have nothing else on her mind, when in fact she is reeling from a diagnosis that she just received. She's not just holding on to that precious grandchild; she is holding on to dear life.

So often clients will share with me what their "paddling" feels like inside. The world may see them as happy, successful, thriving adults, and only they know what it takes to keep on gliding in that image. No one recognizes the exhausting effort it takes to get through the day or conversation or interaction that is most difficult for them. The young father who experienced such a nightmare of a childhood that he questions every decision he makes for his children, sure that he's unfit for parenting. The single woman who is panicked on every date, seeing herself as unwanted and un-loveable since the awful experience she had of dating someone seriously who was dating someone else (who he married) at the same time. The young mother who lives what looks like a blessed life...who

has a genetic disease and feels like a ticking time bomb. The couple that looks like they have it all, both coming from wealthy homes, desperately trying to pay their bills since neither of their parents ended up coming through with promised support.

We paddle in ways both dramatic and daring, at times that are mundane as well as monumental. In the words of a beloved mentor of mine, we often have a *reshus harabim* (public domain) face and one that remains in the private realm of the *reshus hayachid*. She told me that after suffering a devastating loss, when all wondered in amazement how she was able to function so beautifully and seem so incredibly positive. Only her inner circle knew what was going on under her water. If we are lucky, we have one or two friends who know about our paddling and help cheer us on and keep us going. If we are smart, we make time to get out of the water every once in a while, to rest our weary webbed feet and just 'be.' But for most of us, there will be more paddling to do because that's just the way it is.

A few months ago, a lovely woman (I'll call her Atara) told me that she was juggling a lot of issues and thought that starting a Tehillim group would be a good idea. She was hoping that it would offer a *zechus* in ways she desperately ached for. A woman who joined stopped her before leaving the group on the first morning. "It's so nice that you started this," she said. "It's nice that someone like you, with everything going for her, would think of doing something like this for people who need help." Atara let her mask fall and revealed all that

she was dealing with. The other woman was in shock. "I'm not sharing this with you for sympathy," Atara gently said. "I just want you to know that everyone's life is a much bigger picture than you imagine. We're all in this together."

I don't believe that we need to assume that all people have it hard. Hopefully that's not the case and hopefully I don't have to imagine others having pain to make me feel lighter about my own. But the duck syndrome will be part of all of our lives in ways big and small. Maybe thinking about it will give us an even deeper appreciation of the way we get through the day and make us that much more impressed with others, realizing that even "regular" roles and activities may take more energy and effort than we first thought. Rather than assuming that things come easily or that talent is natural, imagine that it takes more paddling and pumping than you think. Smile that much wider at people who are there for you in any capacity, and say "thank-you" with that much more meaning, knowing that others need encouragement for those *underwater* activities that were probably part of what showed. And acknowledge your *own* bravery and give yourself a tight hug for all the work that kept you afloat...especially when the world just thought you were coasting.

Chani Juravel LCSW is a popular lecturer and therapist living in Rockland County. She treats individuals and couples in her private practice. Many of her classes can be accessed on Aish.com and on Torahanytime's ladies' site. She can be reached at [chanijuravel@gmail.com](mailto:chanijuravel@gmail.com)

The weeks between Purim and Pesach are a time where most women are focused on taking care of everyone else's needs from costumes to cleaning and cooking to serving. Once the dishes are put away and the house is restocked it's a perfect time to regroup and make May the month of me! I like to use the calm before the precamp storm to focus on some self care.

On my list for the month of me is going to sleep earlier, getting some movement in, drinking more water and preparing real meals. Macro meals, as I like to call them, are meals that combine all the macro nutrients for optimal satiation and hormonal balance. Plus, prepping real nutritious food feels loving and attentive.

This forkless salad is one of my go to lunches that is perfect for on the go. I love having a useful way to use up leftover chicken from the soup. Don't get me wrong, I'm an advocate of eating while sitting without distractions but even when it's not erev Yom Tov, sitting down with a fork isn't always doable. This lettuce boat allows you to enjoy your salad even while on the run. Use the month of May to focus on self care, your body will thank you.

Rorie

# This Lettuce Boat Allows You to Enjoy Your Salad Even While on the Run

What You'll Need: Chicken salad / Crunchy roasted chickpeas / Romaine lettuce boats / Spiralized beets and carrots

## Chicken Salad

For chicken salad, I recommended making a chicken soup with three or four chicken tops on the bone, then using the chicken for this recipe. Otherwise you can boil the chicken on its own.

## Ingredients:

- 4 chicken tops on the bone
- ½ large carrot, grated
- ½ cup shredded purple cabbage, finely chopped
- 1-2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- Rorie's Creamy Dressing OR homemade or store bought mayonnaise
- Seasoning to taste

## Directions:

Boil chicken tops in chicken soup or plain salted water. Allow to cool, then remove from pot and squeeze out liquid. Using your hands or a fork, mash chicken until it resembles flaked tuna fish. Combine with remaining ingredients. Adjust mayonnaise or dressing depending whether you prefer a wetter or dryer mixture. I find that my creamy dressing has just the right seasoning for this salad. If you are using mayonnaise, add salt and pepper to taste.

Stores well in the refrigerator for 3-4 days.

## Crunchy Roasted Chickpeas

## Ingredients:

- 1 can chickpeas
- Avocado oil
- Garlic salt

## Directions:

Preheat oven to 450°F. Drain and rinse canned chickpeas. Pat dry with paper towels and spread on a baking sheet. Drizzle with oil and toss with garlic salt. Bake for 20-25 minutes until crunchy.

## Assembly:

Wash, check and dry lettuce boats. Place spiralized beets and carrots on top of lettuce. Divide chicken salad among the lettuce boats. For those who are more metabolically sen-

sitive, and either don't need or should not have a heavy carb load at a meal, the carrots and beets may provide enough carbohydrates for satiation.

I top my lettuce boats with crunchy chickpeas for additional starch, fiber, protein and fun!

*Rorie is a health coach certified in integrative nutrition, a recipe developer, creator of Rorie's Dough Mixes and founder of Full 'N Free, LLC. In her practice, Rorie specializes in helping women with metabolic issues and hormonal imbalance, combining her training in integrative nutrition and functional medicine with the principles of the Rambam and other Torah sources. To learn more about Rorie and her dough mixes, recipes, programs and services, visit [www.fullnfree.com](http://www.fullnfree.com).*

*All statements are suggestive only. Please consult with your doctor before making any dietary or lifestyle changes.*





Wishing you all a  
happy summer!

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# Chacham Rabbeinu Chayim Vital zt"l - 29 Nisan 5380 - May 2, 1620

The great Mekubal HaRav Chayim Vital zt"l was born in 5380 (1542) in the mystical city of Tzefas (Safed), two years after his family moved there from Calabria, Italy. The city of Tzefas was a center of learning in the 16th century. Among the great men who lived there, was Rav Yosef Caro zt"l, author of the Shulchan Aruch, Rav Moshe Alshich zt"l, the renowned darshan (preacher), the famous paytan Rav Shlomo Alkabetz zt"l, and the saintly Kabbalist Rav Moshe Cordovero zt"l. Later, in 5330 (1570), the Arizal, HaRav Yitzchak Luria Ashkenazi zt"l, arrived from Egypt. These great men were the outstanding Talmudic scholars of their age, as well as the leading Kabbalists, who studied the Zohar and revealed the secrets of the Torah. A young boy named Chayim Vital grew up in this holy atmosphere of learning and prayer, studying under the Alshich Hakadosh from the age of 14, and later, becoming the foremost talmid of the Arizal. It was he who wrote down his mentor's teachings and brought them to the world.

The Arizal, who died at age 38, taught Rav Chayim Vital for only two years. But Rav Chayim diligently transcribed, edited and organized all the Arizal's teachings - today known as Kisvei Arizal - which have served as the basis for all subsequent study of kabbalah.

Rav Chayim's other works include Eitz Hadaas, Shaar Hakavanos, and Shaarei Kedusha (a guide to achieving ruach ha-kodesh and nevuah). He died in Damascus in 5380 (1620). Hundreds of years later, his kever was surreptitiously moved to Israel, in the cemetery at Kiryat Malachi.

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When he was just a boy of twelve, a palm-reader foretold that young Chayim would find himself at the crossroads of life. He was gifted with an inordinate amount of potential. However, said the soothsayer, the path forward was unclear: if Chayim chose the wrong path, he could become the most wicked man on earth, but if he chose the correct one, and continued along the path of Torah and mysticism, he would become the greatest Kabbalist of his generation. Other diviners, who had the power of foreseeing future events, also told him that he was an unusual person and warned him to take great care of himself.

Rav Chayim Vital grew to be the greatest Kabbalist of his day, after the death of the Arizal, and he records an unusual occurrence that happened to him. At one point, Rav Chayim became deathly ill and he prayed for his recovery. Suddenly, he was shown a vision of two pillars of fire, and as he stared at them, his body began to heal. However, the sight of the fire damaged his eyes, blinding him and



The city of Tzefas at sunset (tzfatvilla.html)

singing his vision. All he saw was bright light going up and down, causing him great pain.

He was told about an Arab Sheikh nearby who had the power to heal people with herbs. However, this man was also a renowned fortune teller, who dabbled in the black arts and hidden knowledge of sorcery. Rav Chayim was unsure if he should ask this man for help, but eventually, he did go to him to receive medication and treatment for his eyes.

The moment he arrived, he encountered a waiting room that was overflowing with people waiting for their turn to receive salvation from the Arab. No sooner had Rav Chayim walked into the man's tent, when the Sheikh himself came rushing out. He ran over to the great Chacham and said: "Come, enter, wise man of the Jews! It is not proper for a great man like you to bother himself by coming to me. You could have sent for me and I would have come to you!"

Rav Chayim was surprised, as were the others present. He had never met the Sheikh; how did he know that he had come? Perhaps this man really did have an ability to see what others could not. Rav Chayim entered his room and the Sheikh said to the others waiting, "Return to your homes, for as long as the rabbi is here, I cannot help you in any way."

The people grumbled and left the waiting tent. Then, Rav Chayim told the Sheikh why he had come. He was experiencing pain in his eyes and he could not see at all. He asked if the Sheikh had any medicine. "I heard you have an ability to heal people. Not through sorcery," said the Chacham, "but through medicinal herbs and the like."

The Sheikh was quiet for a few moments. Then, he whispered, "Master, I know nothing!"

ing!"

The Chacham was surprised. "How can you say that you do not know? Did you not come out to greet me?"

He said to him, "That is the point! All my power is derived from the forces of impurity. Suddenly, I was told: 'The wise man of the Jews, righteous and pure, has arrived - and it is not in our power to remain in his presence!' They left and all my power has been taken from me!"

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Every year at his Pesach Seder table, the Chid'a would recount the following story. Many years ago, in the holy city of Tzefas, the body of a Jewish woman was inhabited by a Dybbuk, a wayward soul that enters a human body, and literally takes over that person's mind and conscience. For her part, the woman suffered terribly, not only from the pain of a foreign being inside of her, but even more so the psychological strain of a thinking, speaking and acting neshama overtaking and controlling her mind and actions.

Her family was terrified and immediately brought her to the Arizal, to do something to remove the Dybbuk. The Arizal called his closest disciple, Rav Chayim Vital and instructed him to talk to the Dybbuk and convince it to leave.

Rav Chayim prepared himself accordingly. Then, he approached the woman, whose face began to contort into a painful grimace, and she turned away, unable to look at the face of the Tzaddik.

Rav Chayim spoke in strong and even terms. "Why are you here and how did you manage to enter this woman?"

The Dybbuk, speaking through the mouth of the hapless woman, replied, "One day, she was striking two stones together in an attempt to create a spark and build a fire. It was not working and she became frustrated. After another attempt, she dropped the stones and her anger flared up. She began to utter a string of curses, mostly directed at her herself, but her language was foul and at that moment, I was able to take control of her body."

Rav Chayim continued to inquire. "Just because she got angry one time, you were able to inhabit her body? Is this the punishment for anger? There must be something more."

At this, the woman's head began to nod and the Dybbuk continued to speak through her voice. "Yes, there is more. The reason why she is subject to all this is because she is a fraud. She fakes her Emunah for others to see. On the night of Pesach, as her husband and entire family stay up for hours retelling the story of the Exodus and how the Jewish people were taken out of Egypt with the strong Hand of Hashem, amidst wondrous miracles, she does not believe in any of it. She goes along with it but deep down, she does not believe. As a result, Hashem felt that she should be punished."

Suddenly, a transformation overcame the woman and now she burst into tears, her whole body convulsing with each sob. Apparently, the frightened woman had returned



Kever of Rav Chayim Vital in Kiryat Malachi

and the Dybbuk was pushed back. "I do believe," she cried out, "I really do believe!" She wept openly in front of Rav Chayim, all the while insisting that she has done Teshuvah and her earlier thoughts of Apikorsis (heresy) were behind her. She begged the Chacham to help her complete the Teshuvah process and she vowed to never let such heretical thoughts enter her mind again.

Rav Chayim stood firm and looked right into her eyes. "Tell me right now," he ordered in a loud commanding voice, "do you believe in the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim? Do you believe that Hashem performed all those wondrous miracles in Egypt and at the Yam Suf? Do you have full Emunah in Hashem?"

The woman screamed that she did believe and she will always believe - and instantly the Dybbuk was gone!

Zechuso Yagen Aleinu

# Nutrition Facts

By Yocheved Millman, MS Nutrition, Certified Personal Trainer  
Serving Size – 1 Greater Monsey Community

Dear Yocheved,

What is this new fad with probiotics these days? Is it true I should be eating more foods with probiotics or taking a probiotic pill?

Esti – Spring Valley

Dear Esti,

Probiotics can be confusing as there is a lot of information out there on the topic. Here is some information you need to know when deciding if probiotics are something you feel you should add to your diet.

## What Are Probiotics?

Probiotics are live microorganisms (microscopic organisms) beneficial for gut health. These microorganisms are found in a variety of foods and are also found in supplement forms. Consuming probiotics helps improve the good bacteria in our bodies – and yes, our bodies require bacteria to function properly. These good bacteria help with digestion, promote gastrointestinal health, fight against harmful bacteria, and also produce vitamins.

**Fun fact:** Our bodies are made up of more non-human microorganism cells than actual human cells!

## Foods that Contain Probiotics:

Probiotics can be found in foods such as:

- Dairy products - yogurt, kefir (a fermented milk drink)
- Fermented vegetables - sauerkraut, pickles, kimchi
- Fermented soy products – miso, tempeh, soy sauce
- Kombucha (fermented black or green tea)

## Don't Forget Prebiotics!

You may or may not have heard of prebiotics, but prebiotics are essential as well. Prebiotics are commonly found in fructooligosaccharides and inulin, which are indigestible fibers. The microorganisms ferment the prebiotic fibers in the large intestine of our bodies, feeding the beneficial microorganisms and helping them grow. Fructooligosaccharides can be found in foods such as bananas, onions, garlic, leeks, asparagus, soybeans, Jerusalem artichokes, and whole grains. You may recognize inulin from the ingredient list on your food labels, as it can be used in processed foods as additional fiber and also as a low-calorie sweetener.

## Probiotic Supplements

Probiotic supplementation is a complex topic because there are so many variables involved. The quality varies among different brands, and it is hard to know which supplements are pure and effective. Prebiotics and probiotics are natural ingredients found in everyday food, and so it is not necessary for the general population to take the supplement forms of probiotics.

Probiotic supplements often claim to aid in weight loss, increase immunity, reduce the risk of cancer, and improve gut health. However, the claims on the bottles are not backed by science or by the FDA. A doctor may recommend probiotic supplementation for those on strong antibiotics because antibiotics kill the good bacteria along with the harmful bacteria.

## Effectiveness of Probiotics

Although there is extensive research on probiotics, there is still so much that remains unknown. Research on commercial probiotic supplements is lacking, and different brands contain different strains of probiotics, so the effectiveness of probiotics supplements as a whole is hard to assess. Because such a vast number of microorganisms exist, research is still unclear regarding which strains of probiotics are helpful and which ones are not. We also do not know much about the effective dosage of probiotics, or who would benefit most from taking it. The FDA has not approved probiotics for preventing or treating any health conditions.

## Safety of Probiotics

Prebiotics and probiotics are generally recognized as safe, and side effects are rare. Nevertheless, it is important to note that individuals with other health issues, such as weakened immune systems, should be careful with probiotics. If you think you would benefit from a probiotic supplement, it is important to speak with your doctor or registered dietitian first, especially if you have other health issues.

## Recommendation

There is still so much that remains unknown about probiotics, so I always recommend getting probiotics and prebiotics from the food you eat. Keep your gut healthy by incorporating fermented foods into your diet and eating enough fiber and foods rich in fructooligosaccharides and inulin.

Best of luck!

Yocheved Millman, **MS Nutrition, Certified Personal Trainer**

Questions for Nutrition Facts can be sent to [yochevedrm@gmail.com](mailto:yochevedrm@gmail.com) or call (845) 598-6103 for a personal nutrition consultation.



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Rabbi Eliezer Abish

... יתגדל ויתקדש שמייה רבא

"May His Great Name be exalted and sanctified"

# Book Excerpt: Portraits of Prayer

From the following incident we can see that it is not only the words of Kaddish that accrue merit for the departed neshamah but indeed, proper actions can bring even greater merit to the departed neshamah.

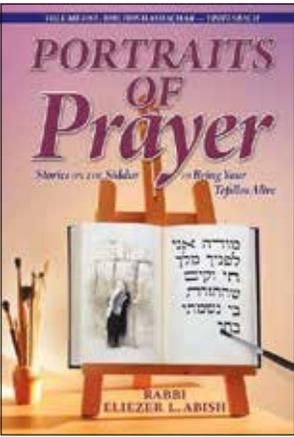
In the 1920's in Eretz Yisrael, the incessant Arab attacks on the Yidden living there caused tremendous damage. While they had the drive and will to rebuild and go on, they lacked the necessary funds to do so. The rabbanim in Europe got together and worked on raising funds for their brothers and sisters in Eretz Yisrael.

Rav Elya Meir Bloch, the rosh yeshivah of Telz, was asked to go to the city of Ponevezh to speak about the dire situation and solicit funds. Not one to procrastinate, especially in times of emergency,

Rav Elya Meir got up early the next morning, boarded a train in Telz, and traveled to Ponevezh. He took the first train out which departed so early in the morning that he was compelled to miss minyan in yeshivah and he davened on the train.

When he returned, some of his talmidim who felt very close to him asked him why he could not leave a little later in the morning to travel to Ponevezh. "After all, didn't the rosh yeshivah have yahrzeit for his mother? Wouldn't leaving on a later train have enabled the rosh yeshivah to recite Kaddish?"

"Do you really think for a moment that my



mother would rather I recite Yisgadal v'yiskadash Sh'mei rabba, or would she rather prefer I act and cause Yisgadal v'yiskadash Sh'mei rabba?"

\*\*\*\*\*

This concept is not limited to performing acts in public that sanctify Hashem's Name. When Rav Yaakov Yitzchak Ruderman was a fourteen-year-old bachur learning in the Slabodka Yeshivah, he completed the entire Talmud. Not one to rest on his laurels, he decided to review the entire Talmud during the semester between Sukkos and Pesach!

A few weeks into the semester, a bachur came to the rosh yeshivah, the Alter of Slabodka, and informed him that he had just heard that the father of young Yaakov Yitzchak Ruderman had passed away.

"Don't tell him! Don't let him find out!" was the Alter's immediate response. "What would he gain? What could possibly be achieved by telling him now?"

The bachur was taken aback by the Alter's reaction. "Doesn't he have to say Kaddish for his father?"

"Yaakov Yitzchak Ruderman learns Torah with such tremendous diligence, it is as if he declares Yehei Sh'mei rabba the entire day! His diligent learning will bring infinitely more pleasure to his father's neshamah in Gan Eden than his reciting Kaddish!" explained the Alter.

\*\*\*\*\*

Years ago when Nicholas I was the czar of Russia, Jewish boys from the age of eight would be forcibly separated from their families and made to live with Russian peasants for a few years. These drafted Jews came to be known as Cantonists. They would be forced to work beyond their capabilities and in general, were exploited and abused. Once these young boys reached the age of fifteen, they were forced to abandon their Yiddishkeit in exchange for compulsory service in the Russian army for twenty-five years. Those who would tenaciously cling to their religion would be beaten and often starved. Some, unfortunately, did not even make it out alive after serving their term in the czar's army.

A rabid anti-Semite, the czar forbade Jews to live in St. Petersburg, the capital city of Russia. That being the case, there was only one shul in the entire city. That shul was for the Cantonists who completed their twenty-five years in the army and were therefore permitted to live in St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, by the time the Cantonists were discharged from the army, most would have few, if any, memories of how a Jew is meant to live. Some would go to shul just to sit there and watch their fellow Jews daven as they tried to absorb some of the holiness of

[continued on page 43]

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# Understanding Sefiras Haomer



**Rabbi Pinchos Jung**

**Y**ou have surely found, on occasion a free sample of a toothpaste, soap, or hand cream amongst the wanted and unwanted items in your mailbox. May-

be you experimented with it, and perhaps you even favored it over the equivalent product you were using previously. You are fully aware that if you would like to make the change, you will have to pay for the new choice.

The idea that follows is not some individual's novel suggestion. It is an idea quoted in numerous sifrei kodesh, based on the Arizal and therefore its roots are in the Zohar Hakodesh.

All the wonders of the actual night of the Exodus, the first night of Pesach, were done, as the Haggadah emphasizes, by Hashem himself. This was without any input of any sort from us, from the malochim, or any other kind of heavenly agent. It had to be this way as we were simply unable to initiate it after 210 years

of oppression in Egypt an environment of intense tumoh. We just didn't have the tools to do our share. So this event or series of events was a gift, a kind of free sample.

Much as a gift received directly from Hashem would seem to be unsurpassable in quality; it does have a distinct disadvantage. It cannot last. For it to last, we have to invest in it ourselves. Thus, after the initial "free sample" the impact of the experience is bound to wear off, and we will have to start all over on our own.

This time we must function in an orderly fashion, stage-by-stage, and reclaim what we had, essentially for one night. This process will take us seven weeks after which we will be back where we were the first night of Yom Tov, but with a dif-

ference. This time it will be ours to keep. It will involve effort from our end, and as a result, the gains will be lasting. The Bnei Yossoschar (Nissan 12:3) and others explain the theme of the sefira period along these lines.

A deeper thinking participant at one of the Igra D'Pirka shiurim posed an insightful question. So we have to do more than simply to count away the seven weeks to reach Shavuot. We are told to work on our middos, one midah combination per day, starting with chesed sheba-chesed. This surely sounds incredibly idealistic but maybe equally unreal. To work on a midah can take weeks, months if not years. So how can we conquer a new midah each day?

Whilst he has a valid point in that such a goal sounds way beyond

reach, could we offer a possible suggestion here? Granted, that one cannot acquire forty-nine virtues in such a short time. Maybe this is rather a theme, a focus of attention for the particular day. There might just be an opportunity on that day to employ the named midah as defined in various books and seforim now available on this topic. That way awareness is generated and the virtue recommended is not lost on us.

Does anyone out there have a better answer? It is very likely that some readers will have a thought on the subject...

*Rabbi Pinchos Jung is a well-known mechanech with decades of experience, currently involved in several mosdos in Monsey, NY. He also lectures, nationally and internationally for the Ani Maamin Foundation.*

[continued from page 27]

made a verbal commitment to create and fund a Bein Hazmanim Kollel. It would become a place for her grief to find a "home".

She returned to Toronto with a plan and direction in place. However, Hashem had some other plans. Four years after this tragedy, the Levins moved to Monsey. New house. New community. New jobs. The kollel plans were placed on the "back burner".

Settling into a new home and community took some time and lots of energy. Through it all, she thought of her unfulfilled promise to Rav Shapiro. Knowing that she had told Rav Shapiro that she would take on this project, and she still hadn't done anything about it, troubled her greatly. Moving was a valid excuse, she told herself. But after a few years in Monsey, her list of excuses dried up.

It would soon be the eighth Pesach since this terrible loss. Mrs. Levin said to herself, "Enough! It is either now or never!" Finally, she was on a "mission" to see the kollel happen.

Mrs. Levin mailed letters soliciting funds to help launch Kolel Zichron Nesanel. Friends and family honored her son's memory sending the funds needed to help the kollel get start-



ed for that first year. Next, the kollel needed a place and yungeleit. Rav Shapiro's idea was indeed taking shape. The Cliffwood Yeshiva, under the leadership of Rav Shimon Alster, shlita graciously allowed the use of their beis hamedrash. Excellent yungeleit were recruited and offered a stipend.

Since its inception, the kollel has been very successful and has grown in size. Every year there are more requests from young men who

wish to join. The yungeleit learn a half day starting from Rosh Chodesh Nisan for a week. Bein hazmanim Pesach this year saw the kollel's seventh session. Thirty-two married men learned l'illui nishmas Nesanel.

For the past several years, the Levins have sponsored poskim, magiddei shiur and rabbanim to address the kollel thus enhancing the learning atmosphere. This year the kollel members were treated to hear Rabbi Moshe

Taub, Rabbi of the Young Israel of Holliswood and Ami magazine columnist, speak on the issue of machine matzos. In addition to Rabbi Taub, Rabbi Moshe Kahan, renowned posek from Lakewood NJ, delivered a shiur on Inyanei Pesach.

The success of the kollel is due to the caliber of the yungeleit who come at a time when they are officially off and to the seriousness of their learning. And in no small measure, it is due to the efforts of Nesanel's mother who is committed to keeping the "candle" burning.

The kol Torah that echoes far beyond the bais medrash walls brings a sense of closure and peace that Linda hadn't known since Nesanel was taken from her. Out of the ashes of a personal churban, a makom Torah was born. Truly pain transformed to gain.

To partner with Kollel Bein Hazmanim Zichron Nesanel, tax-deductible checks can be sent to Ruach Chaim Inc. 14 Macintosh Lane Monsey, NY 10952

**To have your news included in the next issue, email [MCMillman@MonseyMevaser.com](mailto:MCMillman@MonseyMevaser.com).**

[continued from page 42]

the place. A few Cantonists even remembered how to daven, and they would meet in shul on Shabbos and Yom Tov to daven together.

Rav Yitzchak Elchanan Spector and Rav Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin went to St. Petersburg to petition the government not to enforce an anti-Semitic law they had just passed. The appointment they received to meet with the minister was on Erev Yom Kippur. As much as they wanted to be home for Yom Kippur, they were quite aware of the importance of their mission and were resigned to the fact that they

would be spending Yom Kippur in St. Petersburg.

Having no choice, they went to the one shul in town to daven. The Cantonists immediately recognized that these two people were holy people and asked them to daven at the amud for them. When they reached Ne'ilah, the Cantonists motioned to their distinguished guests that they should not lead the congregation in prayer, as one of the Cantonists would be the chazzan.

As one of the Cantonists limped slowly up to the amud to daven, the shul was quiet. Then,

before he even began to say Kaddish, he said aloud, "Hashem, when a Yid davens to You by Ne'ilah, what does he daven for? He davens for children, for life and for livelihood. But what can we daven for? For children? We are not able to marry, as we are too old. For life? Our lives are so torturous we would rather be dead than continue living with our bruised and beaten bodies. For livelihood? We get all our food and clothing from the czar."

He continued, "So then for what do we Cantonists daven by Nellah? Only for one thing. We have only one request of You, Hashem." And

then, lifting his voice and in the traditional haunting melody of Ne'ilah, he began, "Yisgad-al v'yiskadash Sh'mei rabba - 'May His Great Name be exalted and sanctified!'"

*Rabbi Eliezer Abish learned in Telz Cleveland and Mir Yerushalayim. He received his Semicha from Rav Shraga Feivel Zimmerman. A Rebbi and principal for more than two decades, his lectures and workshops inspire his listeners to believe in themselves and reach new heights. His best-selling book, Portraits Of Prayer, continues to enthuse and motivate thousands with actually enjoying their davening.*



# Nostalgia from Uncle Ben ....

## Oiy, How I Miss Pesach in Der Heim ...



Not everyone knows this but Pesach in our house growing up was nothing compared to Pesach today. Talk to the previous generations, ask them what they used to make. Ask them when they used to begin their preparations, ask them what the menu was. And then compare that to what we have today.

The meals were simple. They were beautiful. There's an old expression we used to say: "Less is more." We were satiated with the singing, with the aura, with the warmth and Kedusha of Yom Tov. And then, some more singing. No need to try keeping up with the Jones' of today

who demand and require every delicacy imaginable - I mean I saw somewhere kosher l'pesach sushi, pizza and macaroni.

Food preparation for Yom Tov began AFTER bedikas chometz. Not a month before, not a week before, the day before. If you saw what was on the menu, you would begin to realize why. It was a simple menu with delicious healthy food. Gefilte fish - the way Mama used to make it, the smell was so intoxicating. I remember her mixing the matzo meal and onions and ground fish. There wasn't a whole array of dips with colors ranging from every end of the spectrum that had more color than an artist's pallet. No we didn't go for that, it didn't even exist. If we wanted color, we just had some potato salad.

Mama would make chicken with onions and spices, "Seder chicken" we called it. We would wait the whole year, for this "delicacy." I cringe at the thought of what children today need. The meat and standing rib roast, the pepper crusted pastrami with Delmonico steaks. Spoiling the children didn't work years ago - why do we

have to now?

For side dishes we would have carrot salad or Tzimmi. Tasty, nutritious and healthy. We didn't have these fancy or fattening side dishes. Those were the simple days. No wonder Mama was able to put together an entire Yom Tov in one day. These days, boy we are far away. I was at my daughter's house yesterday they were busy pounding some meat and making beef fry, or maybe jerky beef or was it beef jerky? It is an entire process to make it. First it needs to sit in a marinade overnight then it needs to stay in a hydrator for 18 hours. They bought a special hydrator for Pesach. This is not the type meat we had growing up - but today's generation is something else.

Did you see the advertisements for the hotels? Offering everything that Pesach is not. Skip the cleaning, skip the cooking - why not skip the whole Yom Tov? Have we completely lost our focus of what Yom Tov is all about? The Kedusha of the Seder. The intimacy and connection to Hashem. The link in a chain of mesorah we give over to our kids. I'm afraid, the bond we forge with our children and

grandchildren is getting weaker and fraying at the seams.

I read a transcript from a survivor recently recounting his experiences and memories. I'll quote a small passage on Pesach. "The last year we got permission to bake our own "matzos" from flour allotted to us from the whole weeks bread rations. But we can only do it midnight in the camp "kitchen" on an iron plate under which we had to light a coal fire. While kneading the little dough we said Hallel. "Hale'luka Hallilu Avdei Hashem - Betzeis Yisroel Mimitzrayim." From all the efforts we put in, the end result was 3 little matzos the size of a Tam-Tam cracker per person. These had to last us the whole 8 days. But Marror - we had plenty of! Oh! What a difference in feelings the Mesiras Nefesh we had. But, the Pesach today with only lifting a telephone receiver everything is delivered to the door! The only hardship is the payment of the big grocery bill!"

For now we remain in this galus - Lishona Haba B'Yerushalem Habinuya!

Until Next time,

Uncle Ben

## A Letter to Rob

### The Art Of Appreciating Real Art

Dear Rabbi.

I'm not really sure why I'm writing you. I'm a smart guy. I can look at a situation and understand it. I can open a Chumash and read what it says. Why should people ask Rabbis or Daas Torah for guidance or advice?

Signed,  
Rob

Dear Rob,

You've hit the nail on the head with your question about guidance. Most people believe they're quite savvy and clever. I'm sure you've noticed that even foolish people think they're smart! However, no matter how smart you are, you won't be able to grasp a situation completely without a guide.

Say you went to a museum. You might see a painting and say, "Nice. Not thrilling; not wow. Nice." But if you had a museum guide taking you through the exhibit, he might enlighten you to the details you don't even know to look for. There might be color transitions or certain brushstrokes that



convey an emotion. They can tell you that across this artist's body of work, when he does X, Y, or Z, it's because he's communicating a certain feeling or making a specific statement through his work. Only then would you begin to appreciate the depth of what you're seeing.

The guide might tell you about this artist's life or circumstances that led to certain choices in his work. Maybe he had to develop his own materials and find other ways of



creating his art. These nuances are reflected in the painting for those who know what to look for.

Rabbis are like the museum guides who've dedicated their lives to studying the work of the Master Artist, Hashem. They, too, have been guided by those who have gone before them and after a while, they develop a sense and feeling of what the Artist wishes to convey that one cannot glean simply by objectively looking at what's in front of them in the moment.

When you go to a Rabbi, you're not going to an art critic, but an aficionado, one who gets to the truth of the art because he

appreciates that the Artist has so much more to offer than meets the eye.

As an added bonus, over time, you can develop your own appreciation of Hashem's art and begin to guide others, but the first step lies in asking someone to show you the way.

Rabbi Jonathan Gewirtz is a musmach of Telshe Yeshiva in Cleveland and a prolific writer whose works have appeared in publications around the world. Drawing on thousands of years of Jewish wisdom and humor, Rabbi Gewirtz writes both Torah and observational prose with an appealing mixture of lofty ideals and homespun practicality.



## This is Our Heritage

Malchus Shomayim in the entire world, and especially within Klal Yisroel itself.

So the thousands of people who have joined and will be joining the simcha of the Siyum HaShas is a monumental symbol of our being an Am Hashem and rejoicing in our commitment to limud haTorah.



The Siyum HaShas, the Daf Yomi learners, and all those who have been learning a masechta or have been joining in making all kinds of siyumim show our pride in being the shluchoi hakadosh of the Ribono Shel Olam in bringing Torah to Klal Yisroel. The Chavrei HaSiyum and the Mas-

meidei HaSiyum are two new and wonderful ideas to bring young and old into the army of lomdei Torah, joining together in Klal Yisroel's celebration.

Learning Toras Hashem is our heritage from the time of Yetzias Mitzrayim and Maamad Har Sinai, and we will im yirtzeh Hashem carry this forth until the days of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

May all our efforts combined bring us to the geulah sheleimah bimeheirah beyomeinu amen.

For more information and to watch these shiurim: [TheSiyum.org](http://TheSiyum.org)

email: [Info@thesiyum.org](mailto:Info@thesiyum.org). Sign up for updates at [TheSiyum.org](http://TheSiyum.org) or text SIYUM to 313131.

A message from the Novominsker Rebbe Shlit'a

It's a zechus for me to take this opportunity to share a few words about the meaning, the message and the underlying concept of the simcha that we're going to be celebrating at the upcoming Siyum HaShas.

This is a simcha for all of Klal Yisroel, but especially those who learn Torah - Daf Yomi or other masechtos - which connects us all together and brings us all into the Am Hashem that we are proud to be.

The Torah is the staple of our lives. It's the unwritten shlichus that we have from Hakadosh Boruch Hu, conveyed by the Torah, to bring kevod Shomayim, to proclaim

## Terror Attack at Chabad of Poway on Final Day of Pesach

By M. C. Millman

The world has once again rotated on its axis as Chag HaPesach came to a close and the horrific news spread from Poway, California. Another domestic terrorist attack at a shul in California leaving Klal Yisroel yet again in mourning as we stand in solidarity with the Chabad of Poway, which suffered the loss of a founding member. Mrs. Lori Gilbert-Kaye hy"l, died at kid-dush Hashem at the hands of a nineteen-year-old terrorist inspired by last month's New Zealand mosque massacre. She was sixty-years-old and was described by Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein of the Chabad Community Center as a pioneer member of the shul and a person of unconditional love.

Non-life threatening injuries were sustained by Rabbi Goldstein who lost his left index finger. His right index finger was shot off as well but was saved during surgery. Two others were also injured in the attack: an eight-year-old girl, Noya Dahan, who took shrapnel in the leg and face, and her



Flowers outside Chabad Center in Poway

uncle, thirty-four-year-old Almog Peretz, who was struck with shrapnel as well while shielding and evacuating children from danger. Noya witnessed the entire shooting attack from a hiding place including the moment when Lori stepped in front of the

rabbi and died from the bullet that would have killed him.

"He could have easily turned left, gone into the sanctuary where the seats were full for the memorial (Yizkor) service," Rabbi Goldstein said of the terrorist during a press conference, "and he could have just used all the clips that he had. The potential blood bath could have unfathomable."

Instead, the gunman armed with an AR-15-style rifle turned right and ended up in the social hall face to face with Rabbi Goldstein who put his hands up to shield

active shooting event, with being tremendously helpful in the evacuation. "Members ducked down and crawled out," Rabbi Goldstein, who refused to leave with the paramedics until all shul members were accounted for, recalls.

Instead, Rabbi Goldstein, stood bleeding in front of his congregation and delivered a drasha telling his congregation, "Am Yisroel chai! Nothing will take us down! This is what we live with. We are going to stand tall, and we are going to stand proud of who we are. We are going to come



Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein speaking at a press conference on Sunday, April 28 after surgery saved one of his two index fingers shot off by terrorist

his face, before rushing to the children in the hall, including his four and a half-year-old granddaughter. While the gunman's rifle jammed, Rabbi Goldstein remained completely oblivious to his injuries at first. He gathered the children and herded them out the door, finally wrapping his bleeding hands in a tallis.

Rabbi Goldstein credits the fact that he and other shul members attended a conference in Poway on what to do during an

through this and get through this!"

From his hospital bed, directly after coming out of surgery, Rabbi Goldstein requested that next Shabbos, all Jews go to shul. "Fill up the sanctuaries. Let them see that nothing will take us down. Let them see that this is not going to deter us or scare us. Jewish unity is what we need now more than ever ... A little bit of light pushes away the darkness; a lot of light will certainly push away this horrific darkness."



Chabad of Poway

## Agudath Israel of America Statement on San Diego Attack

Once again, a Jewish house of worship was the scene of hate-fueled bloodshed, when a man, reportedly a white supremacist, attacked those gathered for prayers at a Poway, California

synagogue on the final day of Passover.

Agudath Israel extends its condolences to the family and friends of Lori Gilbert Kaye, killed in yesterday's attack, and prays for the speedy recovery of those wounded,

including the synagogue's leader, Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein.

Such evil acts of violence and the attitudes that lead to them must be condemned by all civilized people, and should reinforce

the need to fight hatred wherever it rears its ugly head and do whatever we can to protect houses of worship and other targets of malign individuals.

## Joe Biden's Entry Sparks a Sharper Edge to 2020 Democratic Race

Joe Biden's campaign launch on Thursday ushered in a new phase in the nominating contest. With the field largely set, the leading candidates have begun to turn on one another, raising the prospect of an ugly fight for the future of the party that could have lasting consequences for Democrats' quest to reclaim the White House.

Progressive groups aligned with Warren and Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont took aim at Biden, portraying him as out of step with today's Democratic Party. They railed against his connections to big corporations, his past support for a "grand bargain" that would have cut Social Security and Medicare, and his support for a 1994 crime bill that disproportionately hurt minorities.

"For numerous reasons, Joe Biden is the least electable Democrat that we could possibly nominate," said Adam Green, co-founder of the liberal group known as the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, which has long supported Warren's presidential ambitions. "We're in a new moment. This is not Joe Biden's moment."

Sanders' campaign manager slapped at the former vice president in a fundraising message titled "Joe Biden."

"Not only are we taking on a political and corporate establishment that will do and spend whatever it takes to stop us, but we are running against a record number of candidates at the same time," Faiz Shakir wrote. He added: "There are a lot of candidates in this race right now. But there is only one Bernie Sanders."

Biden's campaign said Friday it raised \$6.3 million in the first 24 hours since announcing, narrowly besting Sanders' first-day haul.

Desperate to deny Trump a second



term, Democrats can ill afford any lasting divisions that could depress turnout come November 2020.

The early infighting has already caught the attention of party leaders like Democratic National Committee member Robert Zimmerman, of New York, who helped raise money for former President Barack Obama and Biden in years past.

"The No. 1 issue that I've seen across the country is Democrats staying focused on beating Donald Trump. I demand that Democrats remain positive with each other," Zimmerman said. "Any Democrat who tries to build their message by maligning or attacking personally their opponent is going to disqualify themselves."

Yet the battle lines are quickly hardening. With emboldened liberals on one side, pro-Biden establishment leaders in Con-

gress and labor unions are lining up on the other.

Biden, who served in the Senate for nearly four decades, won immediate endorsements from Sen. Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, Sen. Chris Coons of Delaware and Sen. Doug Jones of Alabama, while Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California had already declared her support. None of the other 2020 contenders has the endorsement of more than one U.S. senator.

The largest firefighters union in the country, the International Association of Firefighters, was also preparing to endorse Biden. Group leaders have said they would be "investing" heavily in his campaign.

Biden himself took an indirect swipe at his Democratic competitors earlier in the month as he defended his liberal bonafides: "The definition of 'progressive' now

seems to be changing. And that is, Are you a socialist?" he said. Sanders, who is Biden's closest competitor in recent polls, describes himself as a democratic socialist.

The establishment support lining up behind Biden could embolden his critics on the left.

Prominent black Democrats seized on the 1994 crime bill, which Biden helped craft and is now blamed for creating an environment of mass incarceration that disproportionately hurt people of color.

"So @JoeBiden you were the author of the 94 Crime Bill, it's champion, and #1 cheerleader," tweeted Bakari Sellers, a former South Carolina state Democratic elected official and prominent African American voice on television. "This bill has led to mass incarceration and specifically targeted black and brown people. What are your plans to unravel the damage you helped to cause?"

Of course, there's time for Biden to win over the critics. Primary voting begins in roughly nine months, and the general election isn't until November 2020.

Some of Biden's liberal attackers indicated they would support him over Trump should Biden win the nomination. In a nod to his opponents, he also hired former Sanders' aide, Symone Sanders, to serve as a senior campaign strategist.

Biden and his wife "are a class act," tweeted Symone Sanders, who isn't related to Bernie Sanders. "Over the course of this campaign, Vice President Biden is going to make his case to the American (people). He won't always be perfect, but I believe he will get it right."

(AP)

## Editorial: A Yom Tov Without Politics

By M. Kracko

What a pleasure it was not to be "in touch" for a week, with all the politics of our land. We are saturated with information. The media onslaught, even on "quiet days" can be overwhelming.

And then comes Yom Tov! An oasis of ruchnius. Late sedorim, followed by long davening, followed by joyous Seudos, learn-

ing and resting. All to be repeated on the 2nd day of Yom Tov. Then comes Chol Hamoed. I get to sleep later and daven at 8:30! This is simchas Yom Tov. No 6 am wipe the snow off the car shachris in the middle of January!

Then seudos and enjoyable trips with family. No time to be busy and worried whether or not President Trump used Russian dressing on his salad which will cause some talking head on CNN to believe that

it was some deep conspiracy between him and Vladimir Putin! Yes ... a week off from the 24 hour news cycle.

Now, I'll be the first to admit - it wasn't a cold break. I checked Yeshiva World News enough to find out the latest news. Biden is in the race! Yawn, we knew he would join the fray. Anyway, the media has become so predictable with their coverage of the President that I could guess their reaction to

every story.

So, Kudos to the Aibishter for physically taking me out of my routine and allowing me to breathe freely for a week. Now, if you'll excuse me, I just felt my phone vibrate which means that there is some news alert!

*Rabbi Moshe Kracko is the rabbi of Pine Valley Rehabilitation Center, a teacher and a freelance writer with an eye on politics*



## FROM A TO ISRAEL: AMAZON PREPARES TO ENTER NEW MARKET

**The company currently makes deliveries through the Israeli postal system, mainly from the United States and Europe, causing long delays and high shipping costs that deter Israeli customers from placing orders.**



Amazon Go store. Credit: SounderBruce/Wikimedia Commons.

(JNS) Amazon is expected to enter the Israeli marketplace, with the online retailer sending an email on Monday night to Israeli sellers already using its site “to register to reach customers in Israel,” reported *Ynet* on Tuesday.

Amazon will operate in the Jewish state as merchants will operate on the platform and be responsible for shipping and handling, according to *Ynet*. This system is known as a “fulfillment by merchant,” or FBM.

The company currently “makes deliveries to Israel through the Israeli postal system, mainly from the U.S. and Europe, causing long delays and high shipping costs, which may deter Israeli customers from placing orders with the company,” according to *Calcalist*.

“This is indeed Amazon’s first foothold [in Israel], as we have seen in other markets around the world to test market viability,” a representative of DealTas, a Boston-based shipping company that sends products from the United States to Israeli buyers, told *The Jerusalem Post*.

“However, it is not about opening Amazon warehouses and direct sales in Israel. Usually, this stage will be a matter of several years, during which Amazon will evaluate local regulations for the establishment of an operations and logistics system based on the size of the market.”

## ISRAEL’S AMBASSADOR TO UN GOES BIBLICAL DURING MEETING WITH SECURITY COUNCIL

**Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon said the four pillars for Israel’s existence are: “the Bible, history, international law, and the pursuit of international peace and security,” in that order.**

(JNS) Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon said during a special session of the U.N. Security Council that the Bible does “prove the case for Jewish ownership of the

Land of Israel.”

Danon, who addressed the global forum on a debate regarding the Palestinian question, wore a black *kipah* and quoted from the book of Genesis as evidence of the Jewish people’s connection to the land of Israel.

“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant. And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. And I will be their God,” he said.

The Israeli ambassador added: “From the book of Genesis; to the Jewish exodus from Egypt; to receiving the Torah on Mount Sinai ... and to the realization of God’s covenant in the Holy Land of Israel; the Bible paints a consistent picture. The entire history of our people, and our connection to (the Land of Israel), begins right here.”



Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon addresses the U.N. Security Council during a meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. Credit: U.N. Photo/Loey Felipe.

“This is our deed to our land,” he asserted.

Danon went on to say that the four pillars for Israel’s existence are: “the Bible, history, international law, and the pursuit of international peace and security,” in that order.

The Israeli ambassador also criticized the Palestinians for calling U.S. President Donald Trump’s expected Mideast peace plan as “dead on arrival” and listed a number of occasions where the Palestinians and Arabs have rejected peace.

“Israel accepted the 1947 [U.N.] partition plan, Arabs rejected it, attacked Israel. Jordan maintained control of Judea and Samaria [the West Bank], Egypt and the Gaza Strip,” he said.

“It was the Arabs who insisted that the 1948 lines were not permanent borders,” emphasized Danon. “Because of this, Jewish residents of the West Bank have not crossed international borders.”

## AFTER CARTOON UPROAR, ISRAEL’S US ENVOY CALLS NY TIMES A ‘CESSPOOL OF HOSTILITY’

By RAPHAEL AHREN and TOI STAFF

Israel’s ambassador to the US, Ron Dermer, in a speech Monday marking Holocaust Remembrance Day, attacked The New York Times in harsh terms, after it published a caricature that the paper has since acknowledged was an-

ti-Semitic and for which it has apologized.

“We have... seen one of the world’s most prestigious newspapers become a cesspool of hostility towards Israel that goes well beyond any legitimate criticism of a fellow, imperfect democracy,” Dermer said.

“The same New York Times that a century ago mostly hid from their readers the Holocaust of the Jewish people has today made its pages a safe-space for those who hate the Jewish state. Through biased coverage, slanderous columns and anti-Semitic cartoons, its editors shamefully choose week after week to cast the Jewish state as a force for evil.”

US President Donald Trump on Monday lashed the Times as well, though he appeared to be focused chiefly on the newspaper’s attitude toward him.

“The New York Times has apologized for the terrible Anti-Semitic Cartoon, but they haven’t apologized to me for this or all of the Fake and Corrupt news they print on a daily basis,” he tweeted.

“They have reached the lowest level of ‘journalism,’ and certainly a low point in @nytimes history!”

Trump has often singled out the Times as a target for his ire, repeatedly dubbing its reporting on his presidency as “fake news.”

The cartoon showed a blind, skullcap-sporting Trump being led by a dog-like Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, with a Star of David collar around the latter’s neck.

On Sunday, the paper said it was “deeply sorry” for printing the cartoon in its international edition last week. It attributed the misstep to a lack of oversight and vowed to revamp its editorial process to ensure “nothing like this happens again.”

It said, “Such imagery is always dangerous, and at a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise worldwide, it’s all the more unacceptable.



A caricature of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump published in The New York Times’ international edition on April 25, 2019, which the paper later acknowledged “included anti-Semitic tropes.” (Courtesy)

“We have investigated how this happened and learned that, because of a faulty process, a single editor working without adequate oversight downloaded the syndicated cartoon and made the decision to include it on the Opinion page. The matter remains under review, and we are evaluating our internal processes and training. We anticipate significant changes.”

It also published a column by its own columnist Bret Stephens who called the caricature “a textbook illustration” of anti-Semitism and said it “might have been published in the pages of [Nazi propaganda paper] *Der Stürmer*.”

He acknowledged that the cartoon’s print-

ing was in error, but asserted that such an error could only occur because “torrential criticism of Israel and the mainstreaming of anti-Zionism, including by this paper... has become so common that people have been desensitized to its inherent bigotry.”

Stephens also said the Times “owes the Israeli prime minister an apology,” though he did not say the same of Trump.

Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan on Sunday said the drawing was “shocking and reminiscent of Nazi propaganda during the Holocaust.”

Israel’s Channel 13 news reported Saturday night that Danny Dayan, Israel’s consul-general in New York, had protested to the newspaper about the cartoon.

ADL chief Jonathan Greenblatt told The Times of Israel on Saturday that the cartoon was “anti-Semitic propaganda of the most vile sort.”

## LIBERMAN DIGS IN HEELS ON COALITION DEMANDS, SAYS WON’T CAVE ON RELIGION MATTERS

**Just before MKs are sworn in to 21st Knesset, Yisrael Beytenu chair says he’s ready to remain in opposition if ‘key issues’ not resolved**

By RAOUL WOOLLIFF (TOI)

Hours before the swearing-in ceremony for the 21st Knesset, Yisrael Beytenu chairman Avigdor Liberman said Tuesday his party’s five MKs could still end up in the opposition if his policy demands are not met by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud.

Without Yisrael Beytenu’s five MKs, Netanyahu would be able to muster only 60 of the 120 Knesset seats for a right-wing/ultra-Orthodox coalition, a fact that gives Liberman significant bargaining power in the negotiations for the new government. Ultimately, despite his threats, Liberman is seen as highly likely to join the coalition, probably as defense minister.

“Everyone agrees that we need to establish a right-wing national government as soon as possible. No one has strength for another election,” Liberman said in the first party press conference of the new parliament.

“But we will not give in on the the demands we have made,” he stressed, reiterating that his party would not join a coalition led by Netanyahu unless his demands are met on security,



Deputy health minister Yaakov Litzman seen during a press conference after meeting with president Reuven Rivlin at the President’s Residence in Jerusalem on April 15, 2019. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu meets with President Reuven Rivlin in the President's Residence in Jerusalem on April 17, 2019 (Haim Zach/GPO)

immigration, and religion and state issues.

Liberman said that his number one priority was setting the state pension and disability benefits at NIS 3,800 per month (approximately \$1,050), 70 percent of the current minimum wage. But he admitted that his party's position on religion and state issues presented a bigger obstacle.

"There are many obstacles. Many, many obstacles," he said.

Liberman, whose base of supporters is largely made up of secular immigrants from the former Soviet Union, campaigned on opposing "religious coercion," and supports public transportation and allowing mini-markets to remain open on Shabbat, in addition to ending

the Chief Rabbinate's control over marriage and divorce, and passing the enlistment bill.

"We support and want a Jewish state but we oppose and will not accept religious coercion," he said Tuesday.

Liberman insisted that he is "not trying to change the status quo. There is an attempt to move this country much closer to a halachic state," using the Hebrew term for a state based on Jewish law. "We will oppose it."

One of the thorniest issue is legislation regulating — and limiting — exemptions to military conscription for ultra-Orthodox students, which the secularist Liberman is insisting should be passed without amendment, while ultra-Orthodox parties have said they will not join the coalition if it is advanced without changes. Both Yisrael Beytenu and the ultra-Orthodox are essential for Netanyahu if he is to assemble a governing coalition with a majority of at least 61 seats in the 120-member Knesset.

In 2017, the High Court of Justice ruled that a 2015 version of Israel's draft law granting most yeshiva students exemptions from service was unconstitutional, telling lawmakers they must pass new guidelines for ultra-Orthodox enlistment. In 2018, the court granted the government another month and a half to pass

the bill, extending an early December deadline to mid-January, but the Knesset was then dissolved and elections set for April 9.

Earlier this month, the leader of ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism (UTJ) party insisted that he would not join Netanyahu's new government if the proposed legislation on drafting ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students into the army isn't changed, heralding tough coalition-building negotiations for the premier.

Yaakov Litzman, the current deputy health minister, said all his party's demands were coordinated with fellow ultra-Orthodox party Shas. UTJ and Shas have eight Knesset seats each.

Another condition Litzman mentioned for joining the government was related to construction work on the Tel Aviv light rail and a new pedestrian bridge which has been taking place on Saturdays, the Jewish day of rest. "Shabbat is an important issue, and if it won't be taken care of, I won't be in the government," Litzman said, without elaborating or detailing a specific demand.

Liberman has backed Netanyahu as the next premier, cementing the right-wing coalition at 65 seats. But his party holds five of those seats, just enough to bring Netanyahu to the brink of collapse if he leaves the coalition — as he did in November in a spat over what he said were

disagreements with the prime minister's Gaza policy, shrinking Netanyahu's coalition at the time to just 61 seats.

Coalition talks were mostly on hold during the Passover holiday last week. Netanyahu technically has 28 days to form a coalition, giving him until mid-May, and he may ask President Reuven Rivlin for a two-week extension.

Before the break, negotiators for Yisrael Beytenu and Likud met for the first round of coalition talks, with the former presenting a list of demands on security, immigration, and religion and state issues.

In an official statement, Yisrael Beytenu said the meeting was carried out "in good spirits," that the party had presented its demands in various areas, and that the teams agreed to hold another meeting soon.

Liberman said last week that he wants to be defense minister again, and also wants the Absorption Ministry for his party, and threatened that issues of religion and state could be a deal-breaker.

On Tuesday he said that portfolios was not being discussed yet.

"Until we have not reached agreement in our key issues, we will not talk about portfolios. That's the end of it. Once those are agreed the issue of portfolios will become clear," he said.

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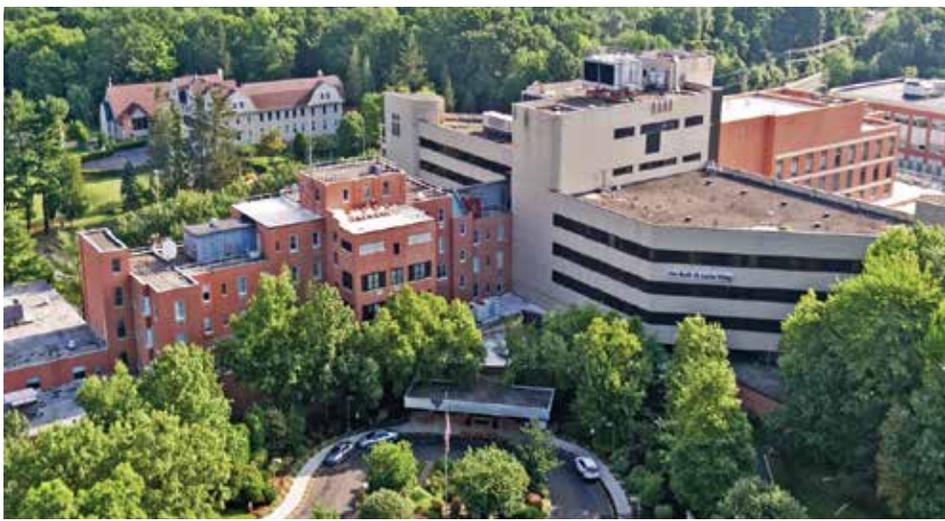
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# New Health Series - From Refuah Health Center



**Dear Dr. Golden,**

My neighbor's son got a tick bite last summer and was eventually diagnosed with Lyme disease. The weather is finally getting nice out, and I love to have my kids outside playing. What can I do to help prevent them from getting a tick bite this summer?

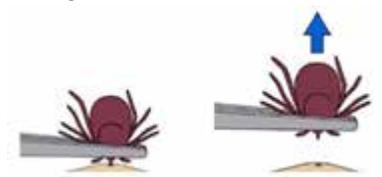
*Thanks,*

*Concerned Mom in South Fallsburg*

\*\*\*\*\*

all ticks carry the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, and most ticks need to be attached for more than 24 hours to transmit the disease.

*Remove the tick.* Use a pair of tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible, and pull upwards. Do not use a twisting motion.



**Dear Concerned Mom in South Fallsburg,**

Great question! With the advent of nice weather, we're seeing a lot more people outside enjoying the fresh air. It's a wonderful transition, but brings new concerns for parents, and finding a tick on your child can be alarming. Here is what you need to know.

Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne infection in the United States and is caused by a bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi*. In this area, the Ixodes Scapularis, known as the black legged or deer tick, is the most common carrier. Deer ticks are tiny in size. Nymph ticks (the baby ticks) are the size of a poppy seed and adult deer ticks are the size of a sesame seed.

Infection is most common in late spring to early summer when baby ticks are active/abundant. Children between the ages of five to 14 years, who are actively exploring the outdoors, are most likely to be infected.

**Prevent tick bites by:**

*Wearing protective clothing.* including long sleeve shirts and pants, in wooded or grassy areas.

*Applying insect repellent.* Remember to read labels first. Some products are not approved for young children. Also, avoid applying repellent to children's hands as they often end up in their eyes, mouth, etc.

*Checking for ticks after children have been outside.* Ticks like to hide under the arms, by the ears, in the hair/on the scalp, in the belly button, around the waist, on the back of knees and between the legs.

*Drying clothes on high heat* for 10 minutes will kill any ticks left behind.

*Bathing within two hours of being outside.* While this won't remove ticks that have already attached, it may remove ticks that are not firmly attached and make all ticks more easily visible.

**If you find a tick on your child:**

*First, don't panic!* Please remember that not

After the tick is removed, the area should be washed with regular soap and water. Applying petroleum jelly, nail polish and other home remedies do not effectively remove ticks and are not recommended. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ticks recovered after a bite do not need to be sent to a laboratory for testing. Diagnosis is based solely on clinical symptoms.

*Monitor your child* for the development of a "bull's-eye" or target like rash. Some children develop a small red bump at the bite site. Other children develop a local irritation. This type of irritation is usually present immediately and disappears after a day or two. Most often the bull's-eye rash characteristic of Lyme disease presents three to 30 days after the initial tick bite. You may notice the characteristic rash without ever seeing/removing a tick. If a bull's-eye rash appears, head to your doctor.

If you have any concerns regarding a tick bite or possible infection, please visit your doctor. Remember, not all ticks carry the disease and most often they must be attached for more than 24 hours to transmit it.

Hope you and your family have a wonderful spring and summer enjoying the beautiful outdoors!

*The information provided in this article is for general informational purposes only. You should always seek care from your own pediatrician regarding any concerns for your child.*

*Dr. Pamela Golden is a passionate pediatrician with experience treating children of all ages and needs. Known for her warm personality and delicate bedside manner, Dr. Golden completed her residency at Westchester Medical Center and has served the area ever since. Dr. Golden is currently accepting new patients at RefuahHealth's Main Site, 728 North Main Street, Spring Valley, NY 10977.*

*Refuah is excited to help concerned parents through this bi-weekly Q&A column. Have questions for the doctor? Email them to [askthedoc@rhcny.org](mailto:askthedoc@rhcny.org).*

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