



# The World of Lubavitch

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A publication of Chabad-Lubavitch, Toronto

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada for our publishing activities **Canada**

SPRING 2012

VOL. 37, NO. 1 (137)

NISSAN 5772



## The Myth of Relaxation

By Shlomo Yaffe

A recent Wall Street Journal article discussed the results of a fascinating study. People who work under high pressure conditions will often take time off to get away from it all, relax and "decompress"; this, common wisdom assumes, is the way to alleviate the accumulative effects of stress. Alas, the study's findings indicate that a cycle of intense stress followed by utter relaxation does nothing to counter the deleterious physical and mental health effects of chronic stress. The only thing that really helps is learning to respond in effective ways to stress-inducing situations as they arise. Relaxation is not what heals stress, but reshaping our day-to-day behavior in a way that makes for a less stressful life.

Passover is a celebration of our capacity to attain freedom in "every generation" (as the Haggadah challenges us), to leave whichever "Egypt" our souls languish in. Yet when we think of freedom, we usually think in terms of being free of care, worry and the burdens of life -- in other words, freedom equals "relaxation". Passover seems to contradict this with its laws on banishing every crumb of leaven from every nook and cranny of our home, with the requirement to eat precise amounts of matzah and drink a certain measure of wine with each of the "four cups". Religiously speaking -- without eating and drinking the specified amounts, we have not really celebrated the Seder.

Is this focus on detail freedom? Indeed, there is no other true freedom. We are physical beings living in a world of myriad details and minutia. If we say, "I can only spread my wings and feel uplifted when I transcend the body, the earth, and all its petty details," we are basically saying that G-d cannot be felt here in our world. In this model, G-d is imprisoned in the sublime, and we are imprisoned in the petty. Escaping the petty won't help either -- sooner or later we'll need to return from the vacation, and then we're back to square one.

Passover responds by telling us that if we truly want our spirits to soar, we must find G-d in the details of the world we live in -- in the same way that stress is not eliminated by escaping our life-frameworks, but by remaining within them and transforming them from within. At the Passover Seder, the ordinary act of eating embodies the will of the infinite, packaged in a few mouthfuls. G-d is not imprisoned, and neither are we. G-d can be wherever G-d chooses to be, even in the act of eating a piece of matzah or the sounds of a small child asking the Four Questions. And we, too, are set free, as we discover the transcendent in the stuff of everyday life.

## Annual Dinner Honours Jason Kenney

It may have been a departure from the norm, still in this case honouring a politician at the 33rd annual dinner of Chabad Lubavitch in December 2011, drew a large crowd and countless well wishers. Ever since being elected to the House of Commons some fifteen years ago, Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism has never been coy about his support for Israel and traditional values. Indeed,



The Honourable Jason Kenney

this year, notwithstanding the global economic crunch, calling

on the community for support was met with an element of gratitude, in deference to the honouree. As Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum noted, "Jason Kenney is a great friend of Israel and good friend of Chabad."

With numerous dignitaries in attendance, that included politicians from all levels of government, the evening proceedings were flawlessly chaired by Frank Dimant,

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# THE FOUR FACTIONS

Moses said to the people: "Fear not; stand by and see the salvation of G-d which He will show you today. For as you have seen Egypt this day, you shall not see them again, forever. G-d shall fight for you, and you shall be silent."

G-d said to Moses: "Why do you cry out to Me? Speak to the children of Israel, that they should go forward."  
Exodus 14:13-15

We all know the feeling: you wake up one morning to the realization that the world is not as you would like it to be.

A common experience, to be sure, but different people have different reactions. One person embarks upon a quixotic crusade to change the world. A second gives up the world for lost, and retreats into whatever protective walls he can erect around himself and his loved ones. A third takes a pragmatic approach, accepting the world for what it is and doing his best under the circumstances. A fourth recognizes his inability to deal with the situation, and looks to a higher power for guidance and aid.

Our forefathers experienced just such a rude awakening on the seventh day after their liberation from Egypt.

Ten devastating plagues had broken the might of the Egyptians and compelled them to free the Jewish people. After two centuries of exile and slavery, the children of Israel were headed toward Mount Sinai and their covenant with G-d. Indeed, this was the stated purpose of the Exodus; as G-d told Moses, "When you take this nation out of Egypt, you will serve G-d at this mountain."

But suddenly the sea was before them and Pharaoh's armies were closing in from behind. Egypt was alive and well; the sea, too, seemed oblivious to the destiny of the newly born nation.

How did they react? The Midrash tells us that the Jewish people were divided into four camps. There were those who said, "Let us throw ourselves into the sea." A second group



said, "Let us return to Egypt." A third faction argued, "Let us wage war upon the Egyptians." Finally, a fourth camp advocated, "Let us pray to G-d." Moses, however, rejected all four options, saying to the people, "Fear not; stand by and see the salvation of G-d which He will show you today. For as you have seen Egypt this day, you shall not see them again,

and return to Egypt. "G-d shall fight for you" is the answer to those who wished to battle the Egyptians, "and you shall be silent" is Moses rejection of those who said, "This is all beyond us. All we can do is pray."

What, then, is the Jew to do when caught between a hostile mob and an unyielding sea? "Speak to the children of Israel,"

G-d says to Moses in the following verse, "that they should go forward."

## Tzaddik in a Fur Coat

The road to Sinai was rife with obstacles and challenges. The same is true of the road from Sinai, our three-thousand year journey devoted to the implementation of the ethos and ideals of Torah in our world.

Now, as then, there are several possible responses to an adverse world. There is the "Let us throw ourselves into the sea" approach of those who despair of their ability to grapple with, much less impact, the world out there. Let us plunge into the sea, they say -- the sea of the Talmud, the sea of piety, the sea of religious life. Let us sever all contact with an apostate and promiscuous world. Let us build walls of holiness to protect ourselves and our own from the alien winds which

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## Will Moshiach Make Me Wear a Burka?

By Tzvi Freeman

### Question:

I am very concerned about certain aspects of the messianic age or those times right before it. I am concerned that during this time when Moshiach comes, he will set up a Jewish fundamentalist system. I know it has been foretold that obedience will be required of everyone and discipline will be harsh for those who don't obey.

The last thing I want is a situation where I have to wear something like a Jewish burka or can't go out of my house. I don't see this situation as much of a beautiful messianic age. I see it as torture.

### Response:

I've yet to see any plans for

burkas. I could ask around, but it doesn't seem to be on the agenda. A woman represents the Shechina—the Divine Presence—and in the times of Moshiach the Shechina will be revealed in all its glory. So why should women then be hidden inside walking sacks?

You're worried about obedience. I wasn't very obedient in school, so I should also be concerned. But I'm not, because the key aspect of a messianic era is not obedience but wisdom, as Maimonides writes, "The occupation of the entire world will only be to know G d. All of Israel will be great sages in that time and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G d as the waters cover the ocean floor." Just as the first redeemer, Moses, was a teacher, so will the Moshiach be a teacher of wisdom to all humankind.

When there is no wisdom, people must be coerced into proper behavior—either with a carrot or with a stick. But when it is clear and obvious to all that everything is truly G dliness and everything has a G dly purpose, then people know immediately what to do and what not to do.

Here's an analogy from something quite close to you. You use a computer. There are different operating systems on different computers. At one time, to accomplish anything on a PC, you had to type in a line of MS

DOS. If you made a mistake, you risked severe punishment—you could lose files, corrupt your hard drive or crash the entire operating system. And that's what happened—quite often. If you didn't read the manual—and follow it religiously—you were sunk. The same with your word processor and any other program you used.

There were friendlier systems, however. Systems that were designed to be "intuitive." That means they were designed on the principle that the user should be able to take a single look and intuitively know what to do and what not to do. He could always make the wrong decision, but it

would be just silly to do so. Eventually, the friendlier "graphic user interface" won out—and productivity surged. In fact, when the first true GUI for the PC was introduced in 1991 (Windows 3.0), about one trillion dollars had been invested in business technology with no measurable overall payback. After 1991, payback exploded. Windows is still pretty kinky (I'm a Mac guy), but certainly more friendly than those old MS DOS systems.

Okay, I'm grossly simplifying modern history to make a point. I want to make a comparison between our present world and

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### ON OUR COVER

A painting by Kiryat Arba artist Boruch Nachshon called Drawn Curtain. The artist shows an idyllic scene with Jerusalem rebuilt with the Holy Temple at the centre, behind the curtain. The curtain represents the exile in which we live represented by the harsh red colouring.

### The World of Lubavitch Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario

**A Publication of Chabad-Lubavitch**  
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Thornhill, Ontario  
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**Advertising:**  
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**Typesetting:**  
Adler Graphics

Publication Mail Reg. # 09785  
Circulation: 8500  
Subscriptions: \$18 yearly  
\$5 per copy  
SPRING 2012

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Canada



# Annual Dinner *Cont. from pg. 1*



Fred Waks (l.) and Rabbi Z. A. Grossbaum present a crystal etched scroll to the Honourable Jason Kenney

Executive Vice President of B’nai Brith, Canada. In his opening remarks he noted that his affiliation with Chabad goes back to his childhood, having lived around the block from the Lubavitch Yeshiva in Montreal, and his annual visit to Chabad in Thornhill to participate in the Simchat Torah Hakofot celebration.

In appreciation of a successful campaign and in recognition of another year of growth, Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum noted, “precisely 70 years ago Chabad Lubavitch established a presence in Canada with the admittance of 11 Polish refugee students. They were granted entry to Canada via Japan as a result of the superhuman efforts of Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese Consul, posted in Lithuania. From that humble beginning today there is a Chabad presence in seven provinces where there are some 80 educational institutions which includes schools, Synagogues, Chabad House student centres, and summer camps, under the administration of more than 200 Chabad Lubavitch emissaries.”

After enjoying a sumptuous meal, the guests enjoyed a medley of Chassidic and traditional classic melodies by twelve-year-old Mordecai Zirkind who serenaded the assembled guest on the violin.

Senator Linda Frum brought greetings from Prime Minister Steven Harper in which he noted: “Canada is proud to count itself amongst Israel’s closest friends and partners. Minister Kenney is an ardent champion of this special bond, which is based on a mutual respect for democracy, religious freedom and human rights.”

Guest speaker, the noted author and radio host, Dennis Prager, elaborated on the importance to live life with a sense of happiness. While life may be full of challenges, an upbeat and positive approach is of utmost importance and a core Jewish value. This is visible in each of the Rebbe’s Shluchim, wherever they may be posted, notwithstanding the constant challenge to balance the books of the Chabad House.” So too, he continued, “the secret of

Chabad’s success is their non judgmental approach which is laced with an abundance of patience and forbearance.”

In a fitting tribute Fred Waks presented the honouree with an illuminated crystal block, artistically etched with universal Prayer for the Welfare of Government.

After eliciting a few laughs for his rendition of some classic Yiddish phrases, Minister Kenney spoke of his numerous encounters with Chabad. He recounted seeing the young students at work on Fifth Avenue inviting shoppers to step inside the RV and do a Mitzvah. So too, he noted how impressed he was when he joined students for Friday night dinner at the Chabad House at Western, where the Rabbi encouraged students to embrace traditional values. But most moving was his narrative recounting his visit to the Mumbai Chabad House a year after the savage and senseless massacre. While he was touched by the determination of Chabad to reopen the Centre and not be deterred by the terrorist, the experience made an everlasting impression on him, never to be forgotten. “That’s why,” he concluded, “I left with a bullet riddled piece of stone which sits on my desk.”

The annual campaign which culminates with a gala dinner generates the funding needed to sustain and support the operational budget of Chabad Lubavitch and its capital costs, most notable Camp Gan Israel, the 207 acre overnight campsite in Haliburton.

The success of this year’s campaign can be attributed to a long standing committee under the leadership of the Co Chairs, Georganne Burke and Larry Zeifman.

In recognition and in grateful appreciation of the major supporters, Chabad Lubavitch presented all Stalwarts with the newly released tome The Bait HaMikdash, a 200 page historical review of our most sacred House of Worship. It is a ‘coffee table’ depository of much insight and a most welcome treasure for both the novice and academic.

# Daily Study of Jewish Law Increasing in Popularity

By Libby Herz

When the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory, first called for the near-annual study of Rabbi Moses Maimonides’ foundational 12th century legal code known as the Mishneh Torah, he stressed the unity achieved by the entire Jewish People studying the same subject in Torah at the same time.

Almost 30 years after that 1984 call, celebrations at synagogues, yeshivas, and community centers stretching from Toronto to London to Sydney are illustrating the power of collective Jewish study, with hundreds of thousands of people the world over marking their completion of Maimonides’ code and starting again from Page 1.

“This is a study that everyone can access on some level,” explains Rabbi Moshe Spalter, administrator of Chabad-Lubavitch of Ontario, who hosted a grand celebration on Saturday night at the Chabad Lubavitch Community Center in Thornhill. “Hundreds of thousands of people around the world follow the same study schedule. We’re all uniting in a tangible way.”

The Toronto Celebration of the Rambam, as Maimonides is known in religious circles, featured a Melavah Malka dinner, inspirational addresses from Rabbis Yoseph Chazan of Manchester, England, and Rabbi Mordechai Ochs of the Toras Emes Synagogue and Rabbi Dovid Schochet of Chabad Lubavitch.

Hundreds of cities who were not able to organise their own program screened the “Global Online Siyum HaRambam,” which was broadcast live Sunday night by Jewish.TV, the multimedia portal of Judaism website Chabad.org, and featured presentations by Rabbis Manis Friedman of Minnesota, Mendel Kaplan of Toronto, Yehuda Leib Schapiro of Miami Beach, and Yehoshua B. Gordon of California.

“The celebrations serve as an inspiration to people who haven’t yet done so to get on board and learn the Rambam on a regular basis,” says Rabbi Spalter. “And those who have already completed the Rambam can do so with fanfare and start again.”

The Rebbe suggested three different study tracks for all



Rabbi Yoseph Chazan addresses the siyum celebration

Jews, everywhere: A three-chapter-a-day cycle that completes the 14-volume code in just less than a year, a one-chapter cycle that completes the work in just less than three years, and for children and

lists all of the 613 commandments in the Torah.

Study opportunities for all the options are available online at Chabad.ca/dailystudy/rambam\_cdo/t/. The site offers Hebrew text, English text, an



those whose backgrounds preclude rigorous in-depth study, a daily examination of the pertinent topics in Sefer Hamitzvot, a companion work of Maimonides’ that

audio class or video class. One can also tune in by phone at 905-731-7777 to get the daily section of either the one chapter per day or the Sefer HaMitzvot option.

# KADDISH

## OUR TIE TO THE PAST. OUR LINK TO THE FUTURE.

The recital of Kaddish is the bond which unites the generations from the immemorial unto eternity. It is the way we show our timeless devotion to our parents and loved ones. In the event you cannot personally observe this hallowed expression of love for the duration of eleven months, alternate arrangements can be made through the Chabad Lubavitch Organization. You may also consider placing bronze name plates of your departed loved ones on our Memorial Board which will insure The Observance of Yartzeit in perpetuity.

**For further information call 905-731-7000.**



# One Thousand Attend Uncle Moishy Concert



Uncle Moishy plays to a full house

“Give the people what they want and they will come.” This well worn cliché was most evident at the Uncle Moishy Chanukah festival, held on the first day of Chanukah at the Chabad Lubavitch Community centre. Some 1000 youngsters blanketed the entire auditorium leaving behind their parents as wall flowers along the perimeter. The world renowned children’s entertainer captivated his audience which enthusiastically embraced the live presence of their favourite DVD hero.

Chanukah is a family oriented holiday when everyone gathers together to kindle the menorah, sing, and internalize the timeless message of “light and warmth” as projected by the flickering flames. At the Uncle Moishy Chanuka Festival the family spirit of inclusion embraced Jews from every walk of life. The free admission event sponsored by Chabad Lubavitch, Tzivos HaShem and an anonymous donor, was the largest Chanukah party in all of Toronto, joining the city into one big happy family. Children, parents, and teens

enjoyed a free concert and public menorah lighting ceremony. Upon entry, each child received their very own Uncle Moishy fedora with the large oversized Hebrew letter “Mem” prominently attached at the center. Naturally, being decked out with an Uncle Moishy trademark hat, made each child feel special. A grand raffle for Woodbine Centre Fantasy Fair passes had all the children clapping and singing and participating so their names would be included in the raffle.

After the hour long concert the fun continued with Chanukah themed inflatable rides, arts ‘n crafts, carnival booths, a picture with Judah Macabee and carnival games. Most welcomed was the opportunity to design and craft a useable Menorah. The hotdogs, cotton candy and latkes were all tantalizing and delicious. This event at the onset of Chanukah set the pace and the spirit for a week of celebration with numerous programs scheduled for the duration of Chanukah all over our great city.

# Purim Permeates Toronto

The natural reflection of joy is its extension to others. You can’t sing and dance alone. Indeed when the Jews of Shushan were miraculously spared from the terrible decree of Haman, the celebration reverberated not only within the family but throughout the cities wherever the Jews resided. So too, in Toronto, Chabad Lubavitch made every effort to bring the joy and celebration of Purim to Jews throughout the GTA. Megillah readings were hosted in numerous locations. Most prominent amongst the 100 venues which included law offices and businesses, hospitals, senior citizen centers and shut-ins, was at the Jewish Community Centre and City Hall where the Megillah was

read during the lunch hour. In addition to giving thousands of people the opportunity to hear the Megillah, twirl their gragers, putting a smile on countless faces the volunteers brought Misloach Manot to be exchanged. Each of the Chabad satellite centres hosted a themed Purim feast, where the décor and the fare reflected the theme. For some it was Purim at the Zoo, for others at the Circus or in the Wild West. Of course this aided



Reading the Megillah at Toronto City Hall

# Farewell Dinner at Chabad on Campus

Beautiful things are happening in Waterloo. In March, as the term was winding down and before the final exams began, a farewell dinner for Jewish graduating students was held at the Rohr Chabad Centre for Jewish Life. A number of students got up and spoke about the impact of the past 4 years on their lives. Many heartwarming words were said, but Phillip's speech really stood out and should be shared with the world. Phillip is a past president of AEPi (the Jewish fraternity), and a regular attendee of Shabbos dinner and the "Pasta and Parsha" lunch and learn on campus. He went to public school, and in his words "I didn't grow up with a lot of Jewish friends and my family is not observant at all. I was not worried about kosher food when I came here (previous speakers mentioned that) because I don't keep kosher. This (Chabad) is the first Jewish community I've really been a part of. When I



The graduates celebrate together at the Chabad Student Centre in Waterloo

first met Rabbi Goldman, I thought he looked kind of weird, but after coming for Shabbos and having many great discussions at pasta and parsha I came to realize what a great guy he is, and I began to appreciate that there is something special about Judaism. "We all want to take something with us from our university lives back home - we wish we could keep our house, our friends, our school life; but if I could take one thing, if I

could have a rabbi and a shul with me back home, I would take this rabbi and this shul. Thank you rabbi and Rivky for everything". This is but one example of the many life changing stories that are happening at Chabad on Campus's eight branches throughout Ontario. Chabad's trademark warm and loving approach to Judaism is especially needed at university, and it is bearing fruit in a very personal way for hundreds of students.

# After 28 years, Model Matzah Bakery Has the Passover Spirit Down Pat

In the early 1950’s, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Herman Wouk met privately with the Lubavitcher Rebbe of righteous memory, and tried to convince him that American Jews couldn’t be forced to do anything they didn’t want to do. The Rebbe’s response was profound: You can’t tell American Jews to do anything, but you can teach them to do everything. It is upon this principle that Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries use a practical, hands-on approach to education, whether in teaching someone how to don tefillin or helping people prepare for an upcoming holiday. In the case of Passover Chabad Lubavitch has helped children get arms deep in flour and water just to teach them how to make the unleavened bread known as matzah.



The Model Matzah Bakery

into a makeshift matzah factory with all of the necessary accoutrements: a huge table; rolling pins; bakers hats and aprons; and a pizza oven with a brick-looking façade. For three weeks leading up to Passover that year, Jewish students from all over the area – from preschoolers to teenagers – arrived in droves, eager to learn how to bake matzah from scratch. As they soon come to discover, time is of the essence when making matzah, and strict attention must be paid to every detail, from grinding down the wheat to mixing the flour to the right consistency. To prevent the dough from rising the time span between contact with water to baking cannot exceed 18 minutes. “What is wonderful about the project was that it is very much a hands-on educational module,” says Rabbi Yossi Gansburg, “While the kids are busy rolling

out their matzah, they are very receptive to hearing about the story of Passover. With each class that comes in, we interact with them intellectually according to their level of knowledge. We ask questions and sing songs. It was more than just an arts and crafts project – it’s a growing experience.” Some of the teachers who bring their students now, were themselves part of the Matzah bakery as children. “As a four year-old, I thought it was so cool that somebody was letting us cook our own food,” Lesley recalls of the experience. “In kindergarten and preschool the teachers usually just tell you the stories, but it was nice this time to be able to actively participate. I’m not sure if as a young child I appreciated it, but I remember it was fun and that it was cool that we were being treated like adults, learning how to make our own matzah. It seemed kind of special.”



# Friendship Circle Hosts Evenings for Moms



Mom`s Night Out at the Friendship Circle

In addition to the primary program which partners teenage volunteers with special needs children for a weekly home visit, a number of ‘add-ons’ have extended the Friendship Circle perimeter. Quite popular is the periodic Mom’s Night Out when the mothers take the evening off and gather as a group. The program generally features an inspirational speaker, some creative activity such as gourmet cooking or ceramic crafting, and lots of networking. Last month, on Tu B’Shvat, the moms gathered in the home Syliva Ouzzan and enjoyed a lovely evening. “We could not begin the formal program because the women were busy getting acquainted and talking about their child with special needs,” said Goldy Grossbaum.” Naturally, that in itself is of merit and addresses our objective. The featured speaker Esther Zirkind had the audience in tears and in stitches while relating how she continues to overcome her personal challenges. Each attendee was then treated to a massage, reflexology manipulation, manicure, makeup application and a gift. “What a great way to end a hectic day,” said Susan, “I can’t wait until the next get-together.”

“Stress management is all a matter of perspective, and that’s our objective,” said Mrs. Esther Grossbaum, who has spearheaded the Friendship Circle initiative since its inception almost ten years ago. A speaker when explaining stress management to an audience, raised a glass of water and asked, "How heavy is this glass of water," he asked rhetorically. “Frankly” he continued, the weight doesn't matter, it depends on how long you intend to hold it. If you

hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If you hold it for an hour, you will begin aching. If you need to hold it all day, you’re in trouble. In each case, it's the same weight, but the longer you have to hold it, the heavier it becomes. "And that's where stress management enters the picture. If we carry our burdens all the time it becomes incrementally unbearable. When we take some time off to relax, and recharge, the load seems lighter.

Last week at the Mom’s Night Out the women dined on a buffet of Soups and Salads. The evening featured an insightful video clip of a discussion between the Lubavitcher Rebbe and Professor Reuven Feuerstein, a world-renowned Israeli clinical and developmental cognitive psychologist. The professor told of the Rebbe’s influence on his life’s work and how the Rebbe encouraged him to continue his efforts on behalf of individuals with challenges and to never give up on the G-dly spark present in every person. Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum spoke about the upcoming holiday of Pesach and the significance of eating Shmurah Matzah, the food of faith and healing. The women then networked with one another while engaging in a glass etching seminar led by Bassie Spalter. The women each engraved a goblet suitable for ‘The Cup of Elijah,’ a featured detail of the Seder night precedings. “Thanks again for this wonderful evening,” said Judy. “We and our children appreciate all that you do for them. This evening I met some familiar and new mothers in the same situation as myself. I look forward to future Mom’s Night Outs.” Everyone enjoyed the evening and no one was ready to leave before Esther and Goldy

# Gan Israel Overnight Camp to Open this Summer

Finally after years of planning and development Camp Gan Israel, Ontario is open for registration. “Ever since making the announcement we have received interest from families across Canada, the United States and as far away as Moscow, Russia,” said Rabbi Yitzchak Grossbaum, camp director. Our template is to host approximately 150 girls during the month of July and an equal count of boys during the month of August. Using a ratio of 1.3 some 50 teenagers will comprise the staff and serve as activity instructors. Still, in the inaugural seasons enrollment will be limited, in order to ensure orderly development and a systematic integration of the facilities.

“This long standing dream is a direct result of our most successful day camp which for over 30 years has been providing an enjoyable summer to some 600 children, facilitated by almost 200 teenagers who are offered meaningful



Rabbi Yitzchak Grossbaum, Director of Camp Gan Israel, Toronto

fruition. All the structures and infrastructure are new and built to specification. The large and customized kitchen and spacious dining room has been sponsored by Joey and Toby Tanenbaum. The infirmary and on site office was made possible with a gift from Joseph Kerzner.

Just a few years after Rabbi

and numerous venues to utilize the summer days in a meaningful fashion. Today, conditions at home and on the street are such that overnight camping is not a luxury but a necessity,” he intoned.

The Rebbe suggested the name Gan Yisroel (the Garden of Israel) in recognition of Reb Yisroel Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the Chassidic movement, who from a very tender age would spend much time in the forest, and wilderness where he would pray and study in the tranquil setting of nature.

While the importance of this experience is quite obvious, perhaps due to the high cost and limited options, overnight camping did not enjoy the prominence it deserved. Consequently, many youngsters were not afforded this indelible and meaningful experience. Only recently has there emerged a groundswell consensus that overnight camping is of paramount importance and can make a lasting contribution to the overall well being of youngsters. Whether it’s the Shabbat atmosphere, a late night campfire, or the prevailing camaraderie, the endless excitement and positive reinforcement cements lifelong friendships, and bolsters Jewish pride.

For information and inquiries about the program and registration please visit the web site [www.GanIsraelToronto.com](http://www.GanIsraelToronto.com) or call, Rabbi Yitzchak Grossbaum, camp director at 905.731.7000.



The picturesque view of Basshaunt Lake at Camp Gan Israel

employment,” noted Rabbi Zalman A. Grossbaum.

Three years ago Chabad Lubavitch purchased a 200 acre site in the picturesque Haliburton region, with 6,000 feet of frontage on the shores of Basshaunt Lake. This giant leap forward has been made possible through the generosity of leading philanthropic families. The camp is called, The Sidney & Naomi Spiegel Camp Gan Israel in recognition of their leadership role in bringing this project to

Menachem M. Schneerson o.b.m. assumed the leadership of the Chabad Lubavitch movement he recognized the need to provide overnight summer camping for children. In 1956, at a Farbrengen (public address) the Rebbe noted that the urban landscape of North America is drastically different from the close-knit setting of the European Shtetle. “In the alte heim, the relaxed atmosphere and home centered lifestyle allowed for proper supervision

(daughter-in-law) Grossbaum announced a date and place for the next gathering!

The Friendship Circle rallies teenagers from the entire community to volunteer on a regular basis and befriend and interact with a child with special needs. In addition to weekly

home visits, the children meet as a group on Sunday, for pre Holiday programs and Cooking Circles. The teens are afforded the opportunity fine hone their sensitivity, assume responsibility, and recognize that they too can make a lasting contribution to a better society. The special

children, often isolated as a result of restrictive circumstances, soon become more responsive as a result of a new-found friendship. Needless to say, most programs are free of charge being sensitive of the added financial burden these families must absorb.





## King of Morocco Knights Chabad Rabbi



At the knighting ceremon of Rabbi Raphael Benchimol

by Rena Greenberg

Chabad rabbi, Rabbi Raphael Benchimol of the Manhattan Sephardic Congregation was honored with the Knight of the Order of the Throne from Mohammed VI King of Morocco, in New York on March 11.

The ceremony, held at the Center for Jewish History in lower Manhattan, marked a renewal of friendship and cultural ties between the ancient Moroccan Hebraic community and the Kingdom of Morocco. Described by Benchimol as an “illustrious and glorious past,” the history of the Moroccan Jewish community is rich and the community has long maintained strong diplomatic ties with local authorities; indeed at the time of Morocco’s independence from France, which was marked just days earlier on March 2, Jews served in parliament and held at least one ministerial post.

Yet today only 1% of the estimated 600,000 Moroccan Jews worldwide live in the North African country, with the overwhelming majority immigrating to Israel and other western countries.

Rabbi Benchimol, who was born in Rabat, Morocco and studied in Chabad Yeshivas both in Rabat and the United States, dedicated himself to servicing the North African country’s Jewish community and shepherding its members abroad. He is known for his vigorous Torah studies and outreach programs, and is the founder of the Aleph Learning Center, which is devoted to teaching Jewish studies, including

Talmud, Kabbalah and Hassidic philosophy to Jews of all ages and backgrounds.

Serge Berdugo, president of the Jewish Community of Morocco, represented the King of Morocco in awarding Rabbi Benchimol at the well-attended ceremony, and was joined by dignitaries Moroccan Ambassador to the United States, Rachad Bouhal; Chairman of the American Sephardi Federation, David Dangoor and Special Advisor to the Secretary General to the United Nations of Yemen, Jamal Benomar.

In his speech Berdugo stated, “Moroccan Jews, even after leaving their country, retain attachment to and love for Morocco, as confirmed by the beautiful words of the late Yitzchak Rabin: ‘Moroccan Jews are the only Jews that never renounce their country, nor were they rejected by their country.’” In response, Rabbi Benchimol, on behalf of the American Sephardi Federation, presented a magnificent traditional silver crown of a Torah scroll as a tribute to “a remarkable country,” the Kingdom of Morocco.

“The king recognizes the merits of Moroccan Jews, wherever they settled,” he said, “by honoring them with the highest medals of his kingdom. This special ceremony of recognition and of mutual respect between two peoples, Jewish and Muslim, is just another testament to how unique and distinct Morocco is, and how exceptional the royal family is. Although we left Morocco, Morocco never leaves us. It is deeply engraved in our hearts.”



Rabbi Jonathan Sandler



Gabriel Sandler, 3



Aryeh Sandler, 6



Miryam Monsonego, 8

The tight-knit Jewish community of Toulouse was thrown into turmoil Monday morning, the peace of the southwestern French city shattered by a gunman's bullets. As police counted shell casings, authorities released the names of the deceased, their lives snuffed out just steps from the Ozar Hatorah high school when a man riding a motorcycle opened fire.

In all, the unnamed assailant—whom reports are saying may have had a hand in similar fatal attacks recently on French soldiers in the area—claimed the lives of Jonathan Sandler, a 30-year-old Judaic studies teacher at the school, his 3-year-old and 6-year-old sons, and Miriam Monsonego, the second-grade daughter of another faculty member.

The children were waiting for a bus to take them to the Chabad-Lubavitch-run Gan Rashi elementary school.

"The whole community is anxious and on edge," reported Rabbi Haim Hilel Matusof of Jeunesse Lubavitch-Beth Habad Toulouse, a Chabad Jewish center in the city.

"That school is on a little street in a calm area. There's no sign, and it's a very secure place. He had to know it was a Jewish school."

A 15-year-old boy, whose Hebrew name is Aharon ben Leah, was injured in the attack. Matusof urged people around the world to pray for his recovery.

"Schools are, of course, closed for the rest of the day," said the rabbi, adding that psychologists and counselors were already helping students and their families deal with the crisis. "People will be in synagogue tonight, seeking to make sense of this horrific tragedy."

A friend of Sandler's, who identified himself to reporters as Baruch, said that he spoke to the man just before the shooting.

"I saw him, greeted him and left toward the school. Seconds later, I heard shots. I didn't turn around, and started running toward the synagogue that is about 10 to 15 meters from the entrance gate," he detailed.

"Everyone started shouting... and fled. At some point the shooter entered the school and began firing inside. We hid behind the synagogue in a shed, until the police came and escorted us out."

The scene outside the school could only be described as chaotic, with groups of parents and children huddled together, some in shock, others wailing. Older boys still wore their prayer boxes known as tefillin, carrying their hastily bunched prayer shawls through the streets.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy and his opponents in this year's elections effectively cancelled campaigning, and Sarkozy ordered more security at Jewish schools throughout the nation. He visited Toulouse with Jewish community officials later on Monday.

Calling the shooting an attack on the entire community of France, Sarkozy told those gathered at a hastily called press conference at the school that investigators would bring those responsible to justice.

"We will find him," he pledged. Sarkozy was also present for a memorial service held at a junior high school in Paris.

He briefly addressed the students and reiterated that everything possible was being done to find the gunman, adding that the children killed "were exactly like you... the attack could have happened here."

Hundreds of mourners gathered at the main synagogue in Toulouse on Monday evening. In Paris, thousands staged a silent vigil in central Place de la Republique, while political leaders joined a solemn remembrance ceremony at the grand synagogue.

The bodies of the slain were flown from Toulouse to Paris by the French Air Force and handed over to El Al, which flew them to Israel to be buried in Jerusalem on Wednesday.

In an agonizing development it was discovered that three year old victim Gabriel is named Gavriel Noach after Gabi Holtzberg, the Chabad Rabbi who was murdered in the Mumbai attack.

As we go to press a hundreds of French police have surrounded a flat in Toulouse where the 24 year old Algerian Moslem who perpetrated these attack is holed up.



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## Atlanta Jewish Film Festival Engages Female-Only Audiences

By Libby Herz

One of the most-widely attended Jewish film festivals in the United States shined a spotlight on the lives of religious women last month, treating all-female audiences to screenings of a uniquely feminine work of art and a chance to get to know the film's director.

With a cast dominated by religious women and girls – many of them from the Chabad-Lubavitch run Beth Rivkah High School in Brooklyn, N.Y. – “The Heart That Sings” hit theaters last year after the success three years prior of director Robin Garbose’s similarly female-centric “A Light for Greytowers.” It tells the story of Miriam Bogen, a 20-something Holocaust orphan who must find her way into the hearts of young summer campers through dance and music.

At the showing at the Atlanta Jewish Film Festival, Dassie New, a Chabad-Lubavitch emissary who directs Chabad activities in Georgia, introduced Garbose and the film’s star, Rivka Siegel, to the audience for a question-and-answer session after the closing credits. Most of the questions from the packed 350-seat theater centered on the challenges presented to religious women in the arts.

“The bulk of the women in the crowd were not observant,” observed New, who brought a group of 40 women from Chabad-Lubavitch of Georgia to the showing. “There were a lot of questions about kol isha, the Jewish concept that holds a woman’s singing voice as sacred. Women were impressed to see this niche where women in the traditional community can express themselves through the arts.”

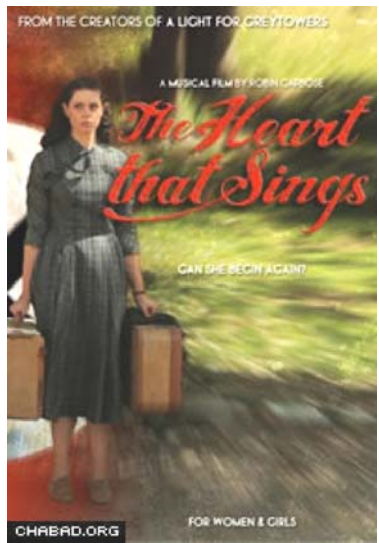
Garbose agreed, noting that,



Miriam Bogen, left, played by Rivka Siegel, adjusts to life in a Catskills summer camp in Robin Garbose’s “The Heart That Sings.”

she produced “The Heart” and “Greytowers” as windows “into the observant world which women would not otherwise have.”

With all their dramatic and comedic value, each film stands out in the motion picture



“The Heart That Sings” saw two showings in Atlanta.

industry due to their focus on the religious woman. In keeping with the actresses’ request for exclusively women viewers, the Atlanta Festival advertised “The Heart” as “intended for female audiences only.”

Garbose, whose insistence upon all-female audiences has sometimes been met with resistance, was pleasantly surprised at the accommodating stance of officials at the Atlanta festival, considering their 26,000 tickets and 70 narratives makes the project one of the top Jewish film festivals in the country.

“The mission of the Jewish film festival is to explore Jewish religious practice and promote cross-cultural understanding,”

## Synagogue Opens in S. Petersburg Prison: Russian Prison Reforms Allow Inmates to Practice Faith

by Rena Greenberg

- S. Petersburg, Russia

Russian Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar, center, presides over a prayer service Dec. 12 at the opening of the synagogue at S. Petersburg’s new Yablonevka Prison 12.

Chasidic masters teach that through prayer one becomes freed of all limitations. A new synagogue inaugurated this December 12th in a S. Petersburg prison, will allow Jewish inmates to experience this spiritual freedom. The correctional facility, S. Petersburg number 7, also known as Yablonevka, is only the eighth prison in all of Russia to provide a synagogue for incarcerated Jews.

Russian Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar, S. Petersburg Chief Rabbi Mendel Pewzner, and Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia military and law enforcement liaison Rabbi Aaron Gurevich, all Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries, presided over the opening ceremony. Joining them in the ribbon-cutting and dedication were Federal Penitentiary Service regional director I.V. Potapenko and the agency’s deputy in charge of social, psychological and educational programs, Vladimir A. Zatonsky.

Although the number of Jewish prisoners at Yablonevka is small—seven to twelve prisoners at a time, and the number of Jews who take part in the prayer services and Torah classes led by S. Petersburg Rabbi Avraham Abramov is six at most, the synagogue provides a welcoming oasis where Jews can seek spirituality.

“There are no people lost to society,” declared Lazar. “According to Jewish tradition, every person is an entire world. And if six Jews need a synagogue, then we must do everything within our power to make that happen! When a person, even if he is in an institution, realizes that he can

explained Garbose. “There is something inherently worthwhile about different groups of women coming together and enjoying a cultural experience together. It’s a model that can happen in every city across the country.”

In fact, film-goers in Atlanta fully embraced the work, said guest coordinator Dina Fuchs-Beresin.

“We had people come to the screenings from all walks of life,” she said. “We added



Prisoners celebrate the synagogue opening with Jewish community leaders and corrections officials.

continue to evolve and to grow spiritually, that is a special moment. Hence, he is able to correct his previous mistakes.” The Jewish prisoners sought support and encouragement from the visiting Rabbis. “What will it be like after release?” one inmate asked. “Will we be a part of the Jewish community?” The Rabbis replied in the affirmative, describing a rehabilitation program that has been set-up to help released convicts find work and integrate into the Jewish community.

The small synagogue is equipped with Torah scrolls, prayer books and other books on Judaism in Russian, donated by members of the S. Petersburg Jewish community. Rabbi Abramov will visit the prison once a week to host prayer

services and Torah classes.

The first synagogue established at a Russian prison was opened two years ago in a correctional facility in the Arkhangelsk region as a joint initiative of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia and the Federal Penitentiary Service of the Russian Federation. After that, a few more were opened at other institutions in Mordovia (a prison for foreign nationals), elsewhere in the Arkhangelsk region, and one at the in the infamous Butyrka jail in Moscow.

These synagogues mark a new era for Russian Jewish prisoners, ensuring that despite their physical incarceration they remain spiritually free and stay connected to their families, communities and Jewish heritage.



Russian Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar, center, presides over a prayer service Dec. 12 at the opening of the synagogue at S. Petersburg’s new Yablonevka Prison.

screenings because the response was so overwhelming.”

Carmelle Danneman, 17, an observant young woman and budding actress, attended the film with her mom and fell in love with the story line.

“It was inspiring how one girl with a really hard past went to this camp and changed everyone,” she said. Debbi Kalwerisky felt empowered by the collective embodiment of women’s talents.

“To me, the main value of the film was seeing a performance written, directed, acted, and produced by women,” she shared.

After the question and answer session, women and girls clamored towards Siegel, requesting her autograph.

“For many people, this was their first exposure to religious Judaism,” said the actress. “It’s an honor and a privilege to be a part of this.”





## Jewish Family Life Inspires Oprah Winfrey



Oprah Winfrey sits down with Rabbi Aron and Shterna Ginsberg and their family. (Photo: George Burns / Harpo, Inc.)

By Joshua Runyan

After spending the day immersed in Chasidic Jewish life and culture, television personality Oprah Winfrey concludes that Judaism’s focus on family life and on developing individuals’ innate potential offers a wealth of lessons for people all over the world.

Sharing her thoughts with the Judaism website Chabad.org, Winfrey – who toured Jewish homes and communal institutions in the New York neighborhoods of Crown Heights, Borough Park and Brooklyn Heights as part of her new “Oprah’s Next Chapter” show on OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network – says that the greater world’s reliance on popular entertainment has caused society to lose focus on what really matters. In stark contrast to that trend are families like the



Rabbi Motti Zeligson of Chabad.org interviews Oprah

Ginsbergs of Chabad, who, Winfrey notes, are not only not “plugged in,” but are just as happy as their secular counterparts.

“It’s amazing to me that you can raise children in this world and not have them” consume hours and hours watching television or texting friends or playing videogames, says Winfrey.

“What’s gonna happen when people see this family and see that it’s possible that in the United States of America, in Brooklyn, you can have nine children and none of them are watching television, and none of them are on computers all day long, and none of them are sassing their parents, and they’re well-mannered and live in harmony with their families.”

During her visit to New York last fall, Winfrey sat down with two Jewish families, enjoyed a traditional meal, discussed communal affairs with five women and toured a Chabad-Lubavitch run Jewish ritual bath, known as a mikvah, in Brooklyn Heights.

“The moment I walked into the Ginsbergs’ home, I felt welcomed and I felt a sense of warmth, and I felt a sense of family and

comfort and values,” details Winfrey. There’s a “sense of reverence for acknowledging that there [is] the power of G-d that is greater than yourself.”

Winfrey’s entire interview can be seen on Jewish.TV, Chabad.ca’s video site, at [http://www.chabad.ca/multimedia/media\\_cdo/aid/1764563/jewish/Oprahs-Visit-to-Hasidic-Brooklyn.htm](http://www.chabad.ca/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/1764563/jewish/Oprahs-Visit-to-Hasidic-Brooklyn.htm)

By Atara Beck

In a world where large families are not unheard of, it’s not uncommon for a student at a Chabad-Lubavitch run yeshiva to find a cousin or two among his peers. But at the Tomchei Temimim post-high school rabbinical school in Kiryat Gat, Israel, a full 10 percent of the student body and a teacher recently learned they were all related.

Yitzchok Raskin’s discovery made news in Israel when research into his family tree revealed that of the 200 students at his institution, 20 were descended from Rabbi Chaim Ben-Zion Raskin, a devout Lubavitcher Chasid who was born in 1864 in Belarus. A loyal follower of the Fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Sholom Ber Schneersohn, and his son, the Sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, Raskin traced his lineage to followers of the First Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi.

The Sixth Rebbe wrote of Raskin in the highest regard.

“There’s a Jew who lives in Moscow and wakes up at 4:00 in the morning to study Torah,” the Sixth Rebbe recorded in a letter. “But first he recites the Psalms and sheds tears like flowing water. Why is he crying? He is beseeching the Almighty to guide his children and grandchildren towards the correct path.”

Raskin, of course, had much to be concerned about the future of his family in a land where Communism was taking root and where Jewish youth were lost to the perils of secularism. But 74 years after his passing, hundreds of his descendants all over the world learn in yeshivas and serve as Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries. “Rabbi Raskin had the privilege that his progeny not only remained Jewish, but continued as followers of Chabad teachings,” stated Rabbi Naftoli Marinovsky, a great-grandson who teaches at the Tomchei Temimim institution in Kiryat Gat.

Raised in Kfar Chabad near Tel Aviv, Marinovsky said that given the decades of Soviet assimilation, it was “highly unusual” for so many descendants to have remained steadfast in their Judaism.

“My late mother was his granddaughter,” added Marinovsky. “We came from Russia to Israel when I was one year old, in 1966. My son is



Rabbi Chaim Ben-Zion Raskin among the 20 students [of the Raskin line] at the yeshiva.” Student Mendel Mondshine, 17, grew up in Moscow. One of 11 children, he said that his American-born parents had moved to Russia to serve the



Descendants of Rabbi Raskin pose at their yeshiva in Israel.

community as Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries. He hadn’t realized that so many of his peers were cousins, and he was “amazed” when he found out.

“We always knew we were a pretty big family,” he said. “I used to hear stories about [Rabbi Chaim Benzion Raskin], but now it’s more real.” Hillel Sperlin, 18, hails from Montreal.

“My mother is a Raskin from Morocco,” he said, explaining that her family lived in North Africa because the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory, sent Rabbi Yehuda Leib Raskin there to serve the thousands of Moroccan Jews. “I knew about some of the cousins, but not all of them,” said Sperlin. “I didn’t know they were in yeshiva with me. It’s beautiful and really cool.



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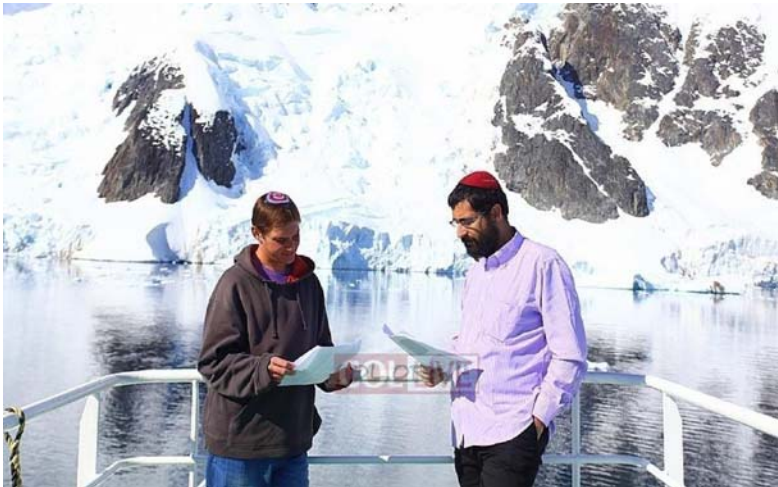


## Shabbos with the Penguins



Meir Alfasi, a Chabad photographer from Israel, sailed last month on a cruise to Antarctica, the world's southernmost continent, encapsulating the South Pole. Aside from taking photos of the scenery - 98% of Antarctica is

people live - even a single Jew," he told the daily Israel Hayom. "In Antarctica there are a few Jewish researchers and obviously, Israeli backpackers," he added. The cruise left from Argentina and surprisingly - or possibly not



Some Torah study among the glaciers

covered by ice - he had a mission to fulfill. "There is an instruction from the Lubavitcher Rebbe to print a Tanya in every place Jewish

- Alfasi had a minyan and kosher food. "There were 10 other Jews - 4 of them Israelis - on board, some of them working on the ship," Alfasi said. For food, he brought along 2 loaves of bread, a few spreads, fruits and vegetables. He spent Shabbos with another observant Jew who was there and together they prayed, ate and sang traditional Shabbos melodies. "There was no more special way to greet the Shabbos with everything white around us, floating glaciers, ice covered mountains, penguins and dolphins." The Antarctica edition of the Tanya was Alfasi's 50th that he is printing around the world during his photographic journeys.

## Canadian Foreign Minister Reiterates Country's Strong Support of Israel

By Joshua Runyan  
Declaring unequivocally that "Israel has no greater friend in the world" than the globe's second-largest nation, Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird took the opportunity presented by his third visit to Israel to denounce Palestinian terrorism and further cement his country's strong ties to the government in Jerusalem.

Accompanied by Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and, for part of the trip, Rabbi Chaim Mendelsohn, director of public affairs for the Canadian Federation of Chabad-Lubavitch, Baird helped inaugurate a new international seminar wing at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum, spoke at the 12th annual Herzilya Conference on Israel's coast, and held meetings with Israeli President Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority leaders.

On Tuesday, Baird also visited communal institutions and met with terror victims and their families in the central village of Kfar Chabad. He was joined by Flaherty, Mendelsohn, Israeli Ambassador to Canada Miriam Ziv and Canadian Ambassador to Israel Paul Hunt.

"This meeting is important to me, because until now I have only known about terror attacks through dry reports," Baird said during his sit down with terror victims coordinated by the Chabad Terror Victims Project. "But now, [I know of terrorism's effects] through the pain worn on the faces of the living."

According to the Ottawa-based Mendelsohn, who has known the foreign minister for several years, the degree of Baird's personal concern with the survival of Israel and its citizens is rare among many politicians. "John Baird has been very responsible for helping shape his government's vision on foreign affairs," said the rabbi. "He's been an unashamed supporter of Israel and its security for a long time."

At Yad Vashem, where Baird introduced the crowd to Mendelsohn by saying that "although, I am not Jewish, I have a rabbi ... who is my advisor on Jewish affairs," the foreign minister reiterated Canada's support for Israel's safety.

"Canada does not stand behind Israel," he said. "Canada stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Israel."

He expanded on that theme at Kfar Chabad when, after sampling the product at a



Rabbi Chaim Mendelsohn, center, director of public affairs for the Canadian Federation of Chabad-Lubavitch, leads Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird on a tour of communal institutions in Kfar Chabad, beginning with the headquarters of Chabad-Lubavitch operations in Israel. Rabbi Menachem Brod, director of publications for the Lubavitch Youth Organization in Israel, stands behind them. (Photo: Meir Alfassi)

kosher-for-Passover matzah bakery, he met with the terror victims and their families.

He told a story of his experience several years ago when, prior to his ascendancy to the top of Canada's foreign ministry, he reviewed a report on an act of Palestinian terrorism.

An advisor told him that it would be better for Canada to not take sides, given that "we can't tell the difference between the white hats and the black hats."

Baird took a piece of paper and drew a black hat and a white hat. Underneath the black one, he wrote the words "Hizbullah," "center of world terror," and "our enemy."

Underneath the white hat, he wrote "Israel," "free and democratic state," and "our best friend." "I showed the drawings to [the advisor]," said Baird, "and I told him [that] we know how to distinguish between the black hat and the white hat. And it's completely clear to me on whose side I'm on."



Rabbi Mordechai Shmuel Ashkenazi, chief rabbi of Kfar Chabad, watches as Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird samples some of the matzah at the village's kosher-for-Passover bakery. (Photo: Meir Alfassi)

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AS. Where are you from?

MM: North Miami Beach Florida.

AS. North Miami Beach and Toronto are very different communities. Besides the winter, what surprised you the most about the Toronto community?

MM: Well this year’s winter wasn’t much different from Florida. I do find that the community here is very concentrated thus having a very *Heimishe* feel whereas Miami has many Jews but they are more spread out and harder to notice. In addition, Jews with many backgrounds all live in the same area which you usually don’t find even in places where there are concentrated Jewish communities. So at Bathurst and Lawrence, for example, we find all kinds of secular and observant Jews sharing the same Lawrence Plaza.

AS. What brought you to Toronto?

MM. I’m sure that your readers are familiar with the concept of Rebbe sending out shlichim to distant places to teach torah and Mitzvos. However, there is another type of Shlichus instituted by the Rebbe that many don’t know about - namely, shlichim to Yeshivas! I was sent as a shliach to the yeshiva here in Toronto.

AS. What does it mean to be a Shaliach for the students of a yeshiva? What are your responsibilities? How long does the assignment last?

MM. One of the ideas very much emphasized by the Rebbe, is that when one has learned Torah he should share what he knows with others who don’t, and that is something that we try to live by. Continuing with that theme, ever since 1967 the Rebbe created a system that when a student reaches the age of 20, rather than continuing his studies in Crown Heights New York, he is sent together with a group of his peers to a yeshiva which caters to students younger than he for a year or two, in order that they strengthen the learning in the yeshiva by providing an atmosphere and excitement in learning. In addition they can assist with various extracurricular learning and outreach activities such as the weekly Friday visits, as well as holiday programs.

AS. What kind of visits are you organizing for the Yeshiva boys?



In this issue, we interview Rabbi Mendy Marlow, Shaliach in Yeshivas Lubavitch, Toronto.

by Ahava Spillman

MM. A good way to describe these visits, is that they are “mitzvahs on the go for people on the run” where a pair of students would visit a person in the hustle and bustle of his office or business, and inspire him with some words of torah, or encourage him to do a mitzvah or just to say good Shabbos and leave some literature on the Torah Portion.

AS. How many on a given day are involved and where do you go?

MM. On Friday afternoon when the yeshiva gives them time to prepare for Shabbos, the students dedicate this time to reach out to Toronto Jews wherever they are. Some students visit elderly people, in Baycrest or at their homes, many visit businessmen at their office, to just connect to them, to share a little Yiddishkeit and let them know we care. There are about 130 students that go out in pairs of 2 making 65 pairs, so on Friday afternoon we have a pretty strong presence in the greater Toronto area.

AS: Is this voluntary or compulsory for the boys?

MM: Totally voluntary, Pure Ahavas Yisroel (love of a fellow Jew)

AS: What kinds of activities do the boys do on a visit?

MM. It varies on the person, some appreciate an insight on the Torah portion, and some like to do a quick Mitzva like Tefillin or affix a mezuzah on their door. For others, the students leave Shabbos candles or simply remind them what time candle lighting will take place. We also have a weekly publication on the Torah Portion called *The Lamplighter*, and each week about 1,500 are distributed. Before each holiday, holiday guides are distributed, as well as the holiday necessities, for example over 3000 menorah kits were distributed before Chanukah.

AS. How long does the average visit last?

MM: A visit can last anywhere from 60 seconds just to do a quick mitzvah, to an hour of Torah discussion.

AS. Do relationships develop? Do the same boys ever visit the same people every week?

MM. Yes, each of the students visits the same people each week and many even keep in touch after they graduate. There are also people that the student may meet on the street just for a moment don tefillin and possibly

never meet again, many a time the mitzvah would inspire them to do another.

AS. Last Friday night two of our Shabbos guests mentioned that they had donned Tefillin earlier that day. One was a North York Lawyer and one was a midtown Real Estate Broker. Could your team have anything to do with this?

MM. It’s very possible. We see so many people from so many walks of life. The Lawyer may have been brought up in an Orthodox home and drifted away from observance over

time. When he is approached and asked if he put on Tefillin that morning, he is not offended as you think he might be; quite the contrary, he is delighted. He puts on the Tefillin willingly and happily and thanks the Yeshiva boy for reminding him of many fond memories. The Real Estate Agent, on the other hand, has never before put on Tefillin and is fascinated by the prospect. He asks many questions and is intrigued by the answers, then he arrives at your house for Shabbos dinner and his whole life may change direction.

AS. Give us some positive stories of how people respond to you?

MM. A little while ago a group of students were flying home from yeshiva. While in the airport, one of the students approached a middle-aged man and asked him if he would like to put on tefillin. “Of course,” was his answer, “my mother passed away a few days ago and I wasn’t able to find my tefillin.” After he put on tefillin, he was able to say Kaddish with a minyan for the first time. There was a story printed in the “*Shalom Toronto*” a few years

Continued on pg. 14



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# Dear Rebbby

By Rabbi Aron Moss



## Plagued by a Question...

We always get stuck on the part of the Haggadah where the rabbis argue about how many plagues the Egyptians suffered. First it says there were Ten Plagues. Then Rabbi Yehuda makes them into three groups: Dtzach Adash Beachav. Then we hear there were ten plagues in Egypt and fifty additional plagues at the Red Sea. Rabbi Eliezer then says that each plague was really four plagues, so there were 40 in Egypt and 200 at the Red Sea. Finally Rabbi Akiva says each plague was actually five plagues, so there were 50 in Egypt and 250 at the Red Sea!!! Can you shed any light on what in the world is going on here?

### Answer:

The Exodus from Egyptian slavery represents the soul's liberation from evil forces. In every generation we have to see ourselves as if we are leaving Egypt, leaving behind our own inner resistance to goodness, our evil inclination, so we can march to Mount Sinai and receive the Torah.

But to truly be free from slavery, your Egypt has to be afflicted with plagues. Before you can express your inner goodness, you have to clear away layers of resistance that get in the way. For every positive impulse there is a negative counterforce that attempts to quash it. Every time I want to do a good deed, my inner Pharaoh, my evil inclination, has an excuse why I shouldn't do it. I have to break through these blockages in my heart to open myself up to goodness.

This is the deeper meaning of the plagues. Before the Jewish people could receive the Ten Commandments, there were ten layers of evil that had to be vanquished, each layer being the blockage to fulfilling one of the Ten Commandments. After the ten powers of evil were subdued through the ten plagues, the Ten Commandments could be received and observed, and the powers of goodness could reign free.

But the Torah has more than ten commandments. There are in fact six hundred and thirteen commandments. The Ten Commandments are ten general categories, under which all the other commandments fall. "Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy" includes all the festivals. "Do not steal" includes

all business ethics and laws of commerce. "Do not murder" includes all moral obligations to our fellow human beings, and so on. They are parent categories, under which lie hundreds of offshoots.

So the ten really includes six hundred and thirteen. Therefore the ten plagues must also include six hundred and thirteen plagues, because for each and every commandment there is a negative counterforce that needs to be nullified for us to be able to perform that commandment. Now we understand why the Haggadah lists various ways our sages extrapolated more plagues than the original ten.

Let's look at the numbers in the order mentioned in the Haggadah:

There were 10 plagues Rabbi Yehuda groups them into 3 - Dtzach Adash Beachav Rabbi Yose lists 10 plagues in Egypt and 50 at the sea Rabbi Eliezer multiplies it into 40 in Egypt and 200 at the sea Rabbi Akiva finds 50 plagues in Egypt and 250 at the sea Now add up the sum total of all these numbers of plagues mentioned in the Haggadah:  $10+3+10+50+40+200+50+250 = 613$

The Haggadah is teaching an amazing lesson. The Ten Plagues came to clear the way for the Ten Commandments. But being that the Ten Commandments include within them 613 commandments, so too the ten plagues actually add up to 613. When the Jews left Egypt, every single layer of resistance was obliterated, and the Jewish soul was left open to accepting all of the commandments.

On Seder night, as we read through these plagues, we can each think of a mitzvah we have been resisting to do, and allow the power of telling the story of the plagues to rid us of any resistance to goodness, and free us to do what's right. Good Shabbos and a Happy, Kosher and Liberating Pesach,

## You Have to Just Face It

A quick question. . . my friends often tell me to smile more. But how can one always just smile and be happy if (not so) deep down one has pressing troubles, worries and problems to deal with? Must I smile when I am not in the mood?

### Answer:

What has smiling to do with your mood? What has the look

on your face to do with the feelings in your heart?

Your face is not your business. It is public property. You only have to look at your own face once briefly in the morning. Everyone else has to look at your face all day. So just because you are in a bad mood or going through a rough patch, doesn't mean everyone else has to be brought down too. The people around you deserve to be greeted with a pleasant face.

Of course, smiling is not only for the benefit of others, but for your own benefit too. The number one cause of misery is not life's troubles but rather self-absorption. The more you think about yourself and your predicament, the more you marinate in self-pity, the more miserable you become.

On the other hand, when you look outside of yourself, look around you and see how you can be of service to others, when you smile not because you are in the mood but because others deserve to be smiled at, you start to feel upbeat and light again.

This is not to say that there are never any real reasons to be sad, or that smiling is a magical cure for depression. The point is that smiling is a duty you have to others. And when you focus on your duties rather than your difficulties, you are on the road to happiness.

## Your Mommy or Your Wife?

Things have flared up between my mother and my wife. My mother insists that the family be together every Friday night dinner at her house, but my wife wants to be able to host dinners at our place too. I never missed a Shabbos dinner at home in my life, but now I am caught between my parents and my wife. And we are only married two months! Where should my loyalty be?

### Answer:

It is horrible to be caught between two people you love. But there is no question where your loyalty should be. The answer is found in the wedding ceremony.

When a couple gets married, they are led to the chuppah by their parents. But once the chuppah is over, bride and groom leave their parents behind, and walk towards their new life together. This is the choreography of shifting allegiance - you come to your wedding as your parents' single

children, you leave it as a couple.

Your parents will always be your parents. They brought you into this world with love, raised you with selfless devotion, and gave you the freedom and autonomy to get married and start a family of your own. But often this last stage is the most difficult for them. They will always see you as their little darling, and as much as they want to, it is hard to let go.

But let go they must. And you can help them. Make it gentle. Make it clear to them that you are not cutting off or rejecting them, you are just adjusting to the new reality of being married. Do it in gradual steps rather than sudden changes. I am sure your mother will be more open to you doing your own thing one Shabbos per month, if you reassure her that the other weeks you will be with the family. In time you can review it.

More important than anything, husband and wife must be a unit. In every situation, you must present a united front. It is not your wife who wants to make Shabbos, it is you as a couple who want to make Shabbos. Never let your wife feel stranded and alone in your parent's company.

Your parents led you to the chuppah, their faces beaming with pride. They are now watching you leave the chuppah, their hearts torn with mixed emotion. Be sensitive and give your parents their well deserved respect. Remember, it was their Shabbos dinners that shaped the person you are today.

## How Not to Save a Sinking Ship

A recent study on Jewish continuity divided the community into three categories. The inner core are those who are fully Orthodox and observant of Torah. They are not at risk. The outer layer are the Jews who are not engaged at all in Judaism, on the edge and most at risk of assimilation. Then there is a large middle layer, comprising those who are somewhat traditional, have a Jewish identity but are not religious. The study went on to say that communal funds and effort should be focused solely on the middle group. The religious core are fine, they are mostly

marrying within the community and having Jewish children. The outer layer are too far gone and too hard to bring back. It is the middle who are at risk of drifting away but still within reach. Do you agree that our money and effort should focus on them alone?

### Answer:

This analysis makes business sense. But Judaism is not a business, and Jews are not mere potential customers. When it comes to questions of identity, the Jewish people is not governed by the rules of the market, but by rules of the soul. The study above, by dividing the community into categories, ignores the most important of those rules: All Jewish souls are intertwined.

The fate of one single Jewish soul impacts the fate of the entire nation. To think we can help one part of the people and ignore the rest is ludicrous. It's like the captain of a sinking ocean liner announcing, "The upper decks are safe, so the people by the rooftop pool can stay there. The lower decks are gone already, so we are sorry about you. Let's just see what we can salvage in the middle."

That captain didn't get that we are all in one boat. Here is a leader that did:

A great rabbi of pre-war Europe observed that one of his best students was being lax in his Torah studies. So he told him, "You know, because of you there is a Jew in America who is dropping out of Judaism." The rabbi explained to his surprised student, "All Jewish souls are connected. Your actions do not just impact you, they have a ripple effect that touches others too. When you, a Torah scholar, do not concentrate on your

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# Dear Rebbby

By Rabbi Aron Moss

studies, it causes another Jew, less of a scholar, to not feel like coming to shul to pray. And that causes yet another Jew, slightly further away, to stop eating kosher, which leads another Jew to lose his faith in G-d, which leads to yet another Jew losing his identity altogether. All because you were slack in your Torah studies!"

The same applies in reverse. When a soul on the edge of the community, disconnected and disillusioned, is inspired to turn around and rediscover their Jewishness, this generates waves of spiritual energy that are felt throughout the Jewish world. Even the most committed Jew needs inspiration, and nothing inspires more than seeing a turned-off soul reignite.

We have to become one people again. Let the divisions between religious and secular fall away. Let those who are connected share their enthusiasm with those who are yet to feel that connection. And let those who question the relevance of Judaism to their lives ask those questions openly and consider the answers with equal openness. Rather than dividing our community into isolated groups, let's mingle as one big complicated family. We all will benefit, because we are all in the same boat.

### The \$499 Dilemma

I tell my nine year old son that people who work hard will progress in life and have what they need. Now I have a dilemma. There is a new electronic game which costs \$499 plus megabucks for each game. His cousin has one, his friends have it but we have no intention of buying him one. We don't have the money, and anyway it is not one of our priorities - there are far better things he could do with his time than play violent video games. He does everything properly, listens to us, puts in the effort at school and is now devastated that he has done it all and cannot have what he wants. How will I explain it to him?

Answer:

You have in front of you a wonderful parenting opportunity. It is a chance to teach your child two vital truths: that he can't have everything, and that he can't always understand why. The idea that kids needs to understand the rationale behind

every one of their parents' decisions is ludicrous. If children were capable of understanding their parents every motive, then children could be parents themselves. It is precisely their inability to appreciate why not every whim and fancy must be fed that makes them children. The parents' job is to set boundaries, and that means sometimes the answer is just no.

When a parent lays down the law and gives a clear no, they are doing a great favor for their child. Because their child will learn an important life lesson - you don't always get what you want. Sometimes it seems unfair, sometimes it seems to be without any justification, but it happens, and it happens to everyone, and it happens throughout your life - there are things you want and you can't have.

Sadly, many children are not taught this. Their parents give them everything they want. And then when they grow older they are shocked that the rest of the world doesn't do the same. These are the adults who think that their spouse, their friends, their country and G-d should all be giving them whatever they ask for. If only they were taught as kids that you can't have it all, they would be accepting of this as adults.

Your son deserves to be rewarded for his good behaviour and hard work, but perhaps that reward need not be the one he wants. It isn't easy, but it is far better to endure the tantrum of a disappointed child for a few days than to have a spoiled child who will remain a spoiled child for a lifetime. Like King Solomon said, "Train the child in his way, so that when he is older he will not stray from it". Today he will be upset, but one day he will thank you.

### G-d's Feminine Side

I am always fascinated by gender roles in Judaism. Why is it that women are the ones to light Shabbos candles?

Answer:

Male and female down here on earth are a reflection of male and female up there in heaven. Just as humans come in two forms, so too G-d, in whose image we were created, has two ways to interact with the world. G-d is of course one, but G-d's presence expresses itself in two distinct ways, male and female. During the working week, the

divine male energy dominates. On Shabbos, the divine feminine element emerges.

The working week is a time of tension, when the demands of a material existence encroach on our spiritual life. And so it is the male aspect of the divine, an energy that is competitive and forceful, that is needed to face the challenges of the mundane week.

Shabbos is when we step out of the material world and enjoy a more peaceful existence. Here is where the feminine divine side takes over, an energy that is nurturing and tranquil, soothing and at peace with the world. The human soul is described as the candle of G-d, for the soul was sent to this world to bring light. On Friday evening, the Shechina - the feminine aspect of the divine - descends to light up our souls and give them the light and warmth they need to illuminate the world in the

coming week.

The light of our soul may have dimmed during the week, when the pull of materialism clouds our spiritual flame. But the arrival of Shabbos brings us an increased energy and brightness. Our souls vibrate on a higher frequency on Friday nights, we are more alive and spiritually open, thanks to the closeness of the Shechina, G-d's

feminine presence. When a woman lights Shabbos candles, she is emulating the Shechina. Just as she lights her candles, so the Shechina is lighting her candles, the souls of Israel. And so, the Zohar says, a woman should light candles with joy and deep intention, for at that moment she reflects her divine source, and she too lights up the world.



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|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
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| Sunday        | 8:00 a.m.          | Chassidic Thought              | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Sunday        | 10:00 a.m.         | Parshat Hashavua               | Rabbi Schochet   |
| Sunday        | 11:00 a.m.         | Talmud Perek Hamafkid          | Rabbi Schochet   |
| Sunday        | 11:15 a.m.         | Talmud (Yoma)                  | Rabbi Spalter    |
| Sunday        | 7:30 p.m.          | Tanya                          | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Sunday        | 8:30 p.m.          | Shulchan Aruch                 | Rabbi Chaikin    |
| Sun. - Thurs. | 9:00 p.m.          | Rambam                         | Alternating      |
| Monday        | 11:30 a.m.         | The Joy of Judaism             | Rabbi Spalter    |
| Monday        | After Mincha       | Halacha                        | Rabbi Schochet   |
| Monday        | 7:45 p.m.          | The Weekly Review              | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Monday        | 8:30 p.m.          | Hilchos Shabbos                | Mrs. C. Zaltzman |
| Monday        | 9:00 p.m.          | Chassidic Insights in Tefillah | Mrs. N. Freeman  |
| Mon. - Fri.   | 5:30 a.m.          | Chassidic Thought              | Rabbi Yarmush    |
| Mon. - Fri.   | 7:10 a.m.          | Chassidic Thought              | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Tuesday       | 11:30 a.m.         | Torah Studies - Parsha         | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Tuesday       | 8:00 p.m.          | Talmud (Chulin)                | Rabbi Spalter    |
| Wednesday     | 11:30 a.m.         | JLI (the art of marriage)      | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Wednesday     | 7:30 p.m           | Talmud Perek Hamafkid          | Rabbi Schochet   |
| Thursday      | 11:30 a.m.         | Tanya (In Hebrew)              | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Shabbos       | 9:00 a.m.          | Chasidus                       | Rabbi Freeman    |
| Shabbos       | 9:00 a.m.          | Chasidus                       | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Shabbos       | Before Mincha      | Pirkei Avot                    | Rabbi Gansburg   |
| Shabbos       | 1 h. before mincha | Halacha                        | Rabbi Spalter    |
| Shabbos       | 1 h. before mincha | Pirkei Avot                    | Rabbi Schochet   |



Spotlight
Continued from pg. 10

back where the person wrote that he had suicide plans that were changed after he was invited to dance on a mitzvah tank and offered a Chanukah menorah.

**AS. Tell us about your Purim activities? Did you read the Megillah and take mishloach manos?**

**MM.** We prepared 2000 mishloach manos that were distributed to Jews across the GTA , the students spent their entire Purim distributing them to elderly, those in hospitals and to any Jewish person that they met. The majority of my Purim was spent in various correctional facilities: at each one we read the Megillah and distributed mishloach manos. One of my colleagues was told by an inmate who has been in prison for 18 years that “he has been in many different facilities over his 18 years yet the Chabad students have never missed a Purim”. Other students arranged Purim Parties and Megillah readings in offices. Throughout Purim the Megillah was read almost 300 times allowing thousands of people to hear the Megillah who otherwise wouldn’t have had the opportunity.

**AS. What activities do you have planned for Pesach? Do most of the out of town boys go back home for Pesach?**

**MM.** Yeshiva is not in session throughout Pesach, nevertheless students have taken the initiative to make a Pre-Pesach Mitzvah tank Parade where, Mitzvah Tanks fan out throughout the GTA distributing shmurah Matzo. This year with G-Ds help, there will be 11 Mitzvah Tanks on the road. In addition the students are all making sure that all the people that they visit have their shmurah Matzo and are selling their Chometz.Many students (me included) don’t even spend the Seder with their family; instead, they spend their time creating a Seder in an area where a Seder has never existed before like Russia. They organize, invite, cook, gather, schlep and do whatever is necessary to give hundreds of Jews a Passover to remember.

**AS. It is unbelievable. You are doing a terrific job and are an amazing Shaliach. Yashar Koach. Have a Kosher and Happy Pesach.**

Moshiach Matters
from page 2

one of those counter-intuitive user interfaces where you can't take a single step without looking in the manual, in our case, the Torah. The messianic times, on the other hand, are when the world will sport a whole new user interface. One look will be enough to tell that it's Shabbat today. It will seem ridiculous to light a fire or pick an apple off the tree. Shrimp simply won't look like food. Speaking bad about another person will feel like it really is—like sticking a knife in your own

back. Today, we run towards those things we believe bring us pleasure—and far too often end up with pain instead. In messianic times, people will have pleasure from acts of kindness and beauty. This is the effect of wisdom—to open our eyes and guide our human nature towards those things that are truly good for us and most fulfilling. And that is all that we are looking forward to, may it be realized very soon, sooner than we can imagine.

Slice of Life
from page 16

**MHB:** The way I see it, everyone has a path and no one can rush anyone’s journey. Judaism is a religion of cumulative mitzvoth, commandments. Each mitzvah is independent of others and lighting candles is as important and meaningful on its own, regardless of what you do after. So I keep adding and growing and being intellectually honest. And I know first and foremost that my faith in G-d will never waiver, just as my faith in the

sun coming up each morning doesn’t waiver. G-d can handle all of my complexity and struggle, and I know I will be okay.

**THD: In terms of your parenting, how important is giving them a Jewish home?**

**MHB:** I was really the one to lead the way and bring customs from my childhood to our family. I love Rebbetzin Jungreis and Slovie Wolff-Jungreis’ books on parenting, and they really

The Four Factions
Continued from page 2

storm without, so that we may foster the legacy of Sinai within.

An old Chassidic saying refers to a such-minded individual as ah tzaddik in peltz -- a holy man in a fur coat. There are two ways to warm yourself on a cold winter day: you can build a fire, or wrap yourself in furs. When the isolationist tzaddik is asked, "Why do you think only of conserving your own warmth? Why don't you build a fire that will warm others as well?" he replies, "What's the use? Can I warm the entire world?" If you persist, pointing out that one small fire can thaw several frozen individuals, who may, in turn, create enough fires to warm a small corner of the universe, he doesn't understand what you want of him. He is a tzaddik, remember, a perfectly righteous individual. There is no place for partial solutions in his life. "It's hopeless," he sighs with genuine sadness, and retreats into his spiritual Atlantis.

The Slave and the Warrior

A second camp says, "Let us return to Egypt."

Plunging into the sea is not an option, argues the Submissive Jew. This is the world in which G-d has placed us, and our mission is to deal with it, not escape it. We'll just have to lower our expectations a little.

This Exodus thing was obviously a pipe dream. How could we presume to liberate ourselves from the rules and constraints that apply to everyone else? To be G-d's chosen people is nice, but let us not forget that we are a minority, dependent on the goodwill of the Pharaohs who hold sway in the real world out there.

Certainly, it is our duty to influence the world. But then again, the Jew has many duties: it is his duty to pray three times a day, to give charity, and to observe Shabbat. So well do the best we can under the circumstances. Yes, it's a tough life keeping all these laws while making sure not to antagonize your neighbors, but who ever said that being a Jew is

easy?

A third response to an uncooperative world is that of the Fighting Jew. He understands that it is wrong to escape the world and equally wrong to submit to it. So he takes it on, both barrels blazing.

The Fighting Jew strides through life with a holy chip on his shoulder, battling sinners, apostates, Jew-haters, un-Jewish Jews, and non-fighting Jews. Not for him is the escapism of the first camp or the subservience of the second -- he knows that his cause is just, that G-d is on his side, that ultimately he will triumph. So if the world won't listen to reason, he'll knock some sense into it.

The Spiritualist

Finally, there is the Jew who looks at the world, looks at the first three camps, shakes his head, and lifts his eyes to the heavens. He knows that turning his back on the world is not the answer, nor is surrendering to its dictates and conventions. But he also knows that "the entirety of Torah was given to make peace in the world"; that "its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace." "You hope to peacefully change the world?!" say the other three camps. "When was the last time you looked out the window? You might as well try to empty the oceans with a teaspoon!"

"You're absolutely right," says the Praying Jew. "Realistically, there's no way it can be done. But we are not subject to this reality that you are so impressed with.

"Do you know what's the common denominator between all three of you? Your assessments and strategies are all based on the natural reality. But we inhabit a higher reality. Is not the very existence of the Jewish people a miracle? Ours is the world of the spirit, the

world of the word."

"So basically your approach is to do nothing," they counter.

"Again, you are employing the standards of the material world," answers the Praying Jew, "a world that views spiritual activity as 'doing nothing.' But a single prayer, coming from a caring heart, can achieve more than the most secure fortress, the most flattering diplomat, or the most powerful army."

Forward

And what does G-d say? "Speak to the children of Israel, that they shall go forward."

True, it is important to safeguard and cultivate all that is pure and holy in the Jewish soul, to create an inviolable sanctum of G-dliness in one's own heart and one's own community. True, there are times when we must deal with the world on its own terms. True, we must battle evil. And certainly we must acknowledge that we cannot do it on our own.

Indeed, each of the four approaches has its time and place. But none of them is the embracing vision to guide our lives and define our relationship with the world we inhabit. When the Jew is headed toward Sinai and is confronted with a hostile or indifferent world, his most basic response must be to go forward.

Not to escape reality, not to submit to it, not to wage war on it, not to deal with it only on a spiritual level, but to go forward. Do another mitzvah, ignite another soul, take one more step toward your goal. Pharaoh's charioteers are breathing down your neck? A cold and impregnable sea bars your path? Dont look up; look forward. See that mountain? Move toward it. And when you move forward, you will see that insurmountable barrier yield and that ominous threat fade away. You will see that despite all the evidence to the contrary, you have it within your power to reach your goal. Even if you have to split some seas.



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Allison (Jew in the City) Josephs asked me when we first started learning why I think G-d made me famous. I think she thinks she knows the answer but as for me, I am still finding out. I think my life is really amazing and complicated and I am grateful every day for the opportunity to open my eyes and stand up and be, hopefully, living B'Tzelem Elokim, in the image of G-d. That’s about all I can do, one day at a time!





## The Science of Marriage

Marital researchers can predict with an 80% -- 85% accuracy which couples will have serious relationship problems based on self-reporting information about themselves and their partner. These experts identify five personal and relationship dynamics that measure the likelihood of relationship success or failure. They are:

1. Realistic expectations
2. Communication
3. Conflict resolution
4. Personality
5. Religious orientation

Couples that fight or drift apart score low on these scales. Happily married couples score high.

### REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

When “expectations” are unrealistic (either too high or too low)—frustration and disappointment is imminent. When expectations are balanced and realistic, it is relatively easy to feel content.

It is essential to marital contentment that expectations are aligned with one’s partner’s aptitude.

“He may never be the best communicator, but it is ok.”

“She may never be well organized and tidy, but I can live with it.”

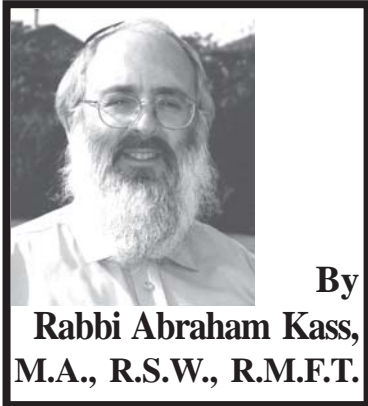
Adjusting one’s “expectations” to the reality of one’s partner contributes directly to relationship harmony.

As well, all successful couples and families must adapt to changing circumstances. Be they changes that are predictable—like the birth of children or advancing age—or changes that are unanticipated—such as unemployment or serious illness. All these “challenges” require an adjustment of one’s expectations.

### COMMUNICATION

Satisfying conversations between a husband and wife builds closeness and trust. Research has shown that there needs to be at least 5 positive interactions to each negative one for there to be feelings of closeness. Even one criticism, or angry outburst, can undo the value of many positive interactions. (The mind remembers negative interactions longer than positive ones!)

Understanding this highlights the importance of continually engaging in positive and pleasant communication, while trying to minimize negative interactions. The challenge is to



By  
**Rabbi Abraham Kass,  
M.A., R.S.W., R.M.F.T.**

produce the greatest number of positive verbal interactions with the fewest negative interactions.

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The goal in marriage is to live together in peace and harmony. However, for many couples, marriage will at times include occasional disagreements or conflicts. When this happens it is essential to keep the conflict small and contained.

Successful conflict resolution requires three primary criteria. 1) Stay respectful: No name calling, expressions of strong anger, bullying, or attempts to humiliate. 2) Stick to one topic: Stay focused exclusively on the issue at hand. Resist dragging into the conversation other areas of disagreement or disappointment. 3) Keep it small: The disagreement should only last a few minutes and then be quickly set aside and efforts should be made to restore positive feelings and constructive interactions.

### PERSONALITY

It is important that you are comfortable with your partner’s personality. He or she doesn’t have to be exactly as you—in fact if this were so, it would probably work against you. Remember, during courtship there was attraction. You chose to marry each other! Even after many years of marriage, that attraction it is still there—at least in potential.

True - years of misunderstanding and conflict can create deep resentment. This accumulated negative emotion can actually change your perception of your partner,

leaving you unable to accurately see who he or she really is. For this reason, as much as possible, conflict should be avoided, or at least you should try to look past it when it does occur and seek out the parts of your partner’s personality that you like.

### RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION

Dissimilar spiritual and cultural differences can stress relationships. Religious orientation includes a set of rules that guides the couple in setting goals, making decisions, and raising children. When religious orientation and culture are similar, this becomes a set of shared values that contribute to a healthy and cohesive family.

### YOUR TAKE-AWAY

Even though formal training in these personal and relationship dynamics are not readily available, you and your partner can work toward achieving a high score. The more you achieve, the closer and more comfortable you will feel with each other and the greater the likelihood your relationship will last the distance.

Take a few moments and review these five scales. Together with your partner, generate a list of suggestions that when implemented will give you the loving relationship you seek. Unlike what many believe, relationship harmony is not “chemistry,”—rather its hard work leading to concrete relationship skills . . . so roll up your sleeves and get started!

In Perke Avos (Jewish ethical classic) the question is asked: “Which is the right path a person should choose?” Answer: “That which is honorable and brings honor from others . . .” Thus, the “honorable path” is a path that is good for both individuals. A high score in these five scales are all honorable meeting places where partners can create relationship happiness.

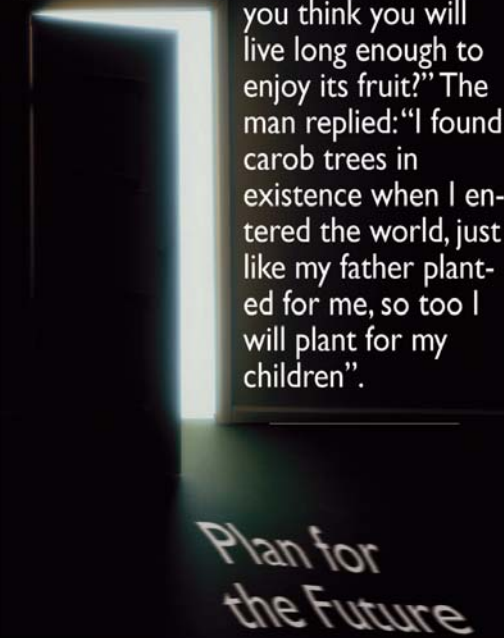
Research shows that couples that score high in these five areas, although not necessarily perfect in every way, share happy and meaningful lives.

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registered Social Worker, registered Marriage and Family Therapist, certified Hypnotherapist and award winning educator. He has a clinical practice working with individuals, couples, and families in Toronto, Canada. Rabbi Kass is the publisher of Wisdom Scientific self-help educational programs. He is a member of the Ontario College of Social Workers, the Ontario

and American Associations for Marriage and Family Therapy, and the National Board for Certified Clinical Hypnotherapists. These memberships are a guarantee of Rabbi Kass's professional training and high ethical standards. For more information or to arrange an appointment he can be reached at, (905) 771-1087 or visit his web at, [www.AbeKass.com](http://www.AbeKass.com).

The Talmudic Sage, Choni Hamagle once noticed a man planting a carob tree and inquired: “It will take seventy years to mature and bear fruit, do you think you will live long enough to enjoy its fruit?” The man replied: “I found carob trees in existence when I entered the world, just like my father planted for me, so too I will plant for my children”.



When planning for the future or writing a Will please consider the Chabad Lubavitch Organization of Southern Ontario. For further information and to arrange for special bequests.

Please call:  
Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum at  
905-731-7000.  
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# Actress, Neurobiologist, Mom, Proud Jewish Woman

By Talia Davis

In a sense I had known Mayim Bialik most of my life. I grew up with her as my television best friend when she starred on the TV show, Blossom. I remember being shocked that here was a girl who looked like me, with a ‘Jewy’ name like me, a Jewish kid on television! I thought Blossom was the coolest thing since sliced bread.

However, in recent years this Jewish actress came back into my line of sight. I learned that she was studying Judaism with a learning partner, and taking upon herself different aspects of Jewish observance. Pretty cool I thought. Then she appeared on the television show What Not To Wear and tried to explain the laws of modesty that she lived by to mainstream America. WOW! A real actress that only wore skirts like I did? I was hooked.

I continued to learn about her through her honest, direct and

her strength, determination, talent and down-to-earth approach. Not to mention her humor—the girl is hysterical!



Mayim Bialik

Then this gal showed up on the hit TV show, The Big Bang Theory as a modest-dressing neurobiologist nerd. How she managed to convince the producers to let her character dress in a skirt that covers her knees is remarkable. And while she is far from a nerd, the other aspects of her character really mirror her life. In addition to being an incredibly talented



Mayim Bialik on the set of The Big Bang Theory

relatable articles as she shared her lessons and insights ranging from holistic parenting (her first book just came out called Beyond the Sling), her reasons for becoming a vegan or her search for a modest dress for the Emmy’s. The more I read from her and about her, the more she blew me away with

actress, she really is a neurobiologist. It is so rare for a child actress to have a strong focus on academics as most feel they need not bother...they have already made it big. But not with Mayim. She always took her studies seriously, attending highly gifted programs in elementary and junior high

school and then receiving her undergraduate degree in neuroscience, Jewish studies and Hebrew (why have one major if you can have three?). Oh yeah, and then she continued on to her PhD in neuroscience. And the skirt wearing part of her character? Her growth in her Judaism is something she works on daily and modesty is so important to her.

So before I ever had the chance to meet Mayim, I felt like I knew her, related to her and most definitely admired her. And it was only by Divine fate, that we actually met face to face. And in typical Mayim fashion, when we first met she greeted me with “OH! You are the Talia,” as if I was the famous one of the two!

I have been fortunate that for the past year, Mayim and I have enjoyed each other’s company, traveling to Los Angeles or Denver to see the Maccabeats perform and joining her as she taped an episode of her television show with over 17 million viewers, The Big Bang Theory. In this time, she has inspired my Judaism, encouraged me to continue learning, and offered her shoulder to lean on. I consider her part of my mishpacha, my family, and am inspired by her daily. So here are a few of the ideas we recently discussed:

**Talia Hava Davis:** Growing up in LA, what was your religious identity? How were your parents raised?

**Mayim Hoya Bialik:** My mom was raised by Eastern European immigrants who never spoke English in the home and worked in sweatshops and assembly line piecework as tailors. They were Orthodox but also very “old country” so for my mom, that kind of Judaism didn’t speak to her a lot. My dad was raised by a more assimilated mother (she came to the US as a child) and an American-born father. They moved out of the Bronx to Long Island and went to more of a “Reform” style synagogue. I was raised Reform but with some remnants of my mom’s Orthodoxy: 2 sets of dishes, lighting candles, Yiddish spoken, and emphasis on fun holidays like Passover and Chanukah.

**THD:** What was the moment when you decided that Judaism was something you wanted to explore deeper in terms of observance?

**MHB:** It has come in waves since I was a teenager: my Bat Mitzvah was hugely profound for me, as was taking on aspects of keeping kosher as a teenager, and walking into UCLA Hillel to try and find myself in Judaism was enormous. My Rabbi helped me find beauty and meaning again and again, and studying with a kallah teacher [a teacher for Jewish brides] (more as an anthropological study than life course path) showed me that the

mikvah – something I thought I knew so much about and about how wrong and silly it was – can hold tremendous meaning and fulfillment, and Judaism may have more things like that waiting for me. I was right! Most recently, letting myself be challenged by an incredibly persistent and phenomenal chevrusa - learning partner- who has not let me rest on any laurels has been the most brave and boldest step in my

observance. (Editor’s Note: Chabad’s partnership in studying Torah is JNet.org).

**THD:** One of my favorite things that you have spoken about is your path in Judaism. That you may not be 100% where you want to be but it’s a journey. How does that come about in terms of taking holidays off, modesty, Shabbat observance?

Continued on page 14

1940...

Rabbi Joseph Isaac Schneerson, o.b.m., came to America, to bring the light of Torah and warmth of Mitzvas to a spiritual wasteland.

Then \$54.00 was considered a worthy donation.

His son-in-law Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson became the seventh leader of Chabad and encouraged his disciples to serve as Torah ambassadors throughout the world. During those 44 years, more than 1500 Lubavitch Centres were established throughout the world, serviced by some five thousand Shluchim (Emissaries) who have dedicated their lives to help enhance the quality of Jewish life.

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Today, the Shluchim, Chassidim and supporters of Chabad Lubavitch are indebted to the Rebbe for his unconditional love towards every Jew, his monumental endeavours on behalf of Klal Yisroel and for having had the opportunity to share in the fulfillment of his vision. We pledge to rededicate ourselves to his teachings and continue his sacred work with renewed enthusiasm and vitality. May we soon witness the rewards of these efforts with the imminent arrival of Mashiach.

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Should you wish to sell your Chometz for the duration of Pesach, please complete the form below & mail it at once to: CHABAD LUBAVITCH 770 Chabad Gate, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 3V9 so that it reaches us no later than Wednesday, April 4, 2012.

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## Certificate Authorizing the Sale of Chometz

### Delegation of Power of Attorney

This is to certify that I, the undersigned, fully empower and permit any of the Rabbi's under the administration of Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario, to act in my place and stead and on my behalf to sell all Chometz possessed by me (knowingly or unknowingly) as defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law, including chometz, doubt of chometz and all forms of chometz mixture. In addition, chometz that tends to harden and adhere to the inside surface of pans, pots or any usable cooking utensil are to be considered as above. I hereby delegate authorization to lease all places wherein the chometz may be found by me, especially in the premises located at:

\_\_\_\_\_ and elsewhere.

The said Rabbi has the full right to sell and lease by transaction, as he deems fit and proper and for such time which he believes necessary in accordance with all detailed terms and detailed forms as explained in the general authorization contract which the said Rabbi will use to detail the sale of Chometz.

This General authorization is made a part of this agreement. Also do I hereby give the said Rabbi full power and authority to appoint a substitute in his stead with full power to sell and to lease as provided herein. The above given power is in conformity with all Torah, Rabbinical regulations and laws and also in accordance with the laws of the Province of Ontario and the Confederation of Canada.

And to this I hereby affix my signature on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year 2012.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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